

WINTER 2022

THE LINK FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

WAGNER

A Light That Never Goes Out

*Wagner Alumni Lift The Curtain After
Broadway's Longest Intermission*

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After more than a quarter century on Grymes Hill, Senior Vice President Angelo Araimo moves into the corner office. Also: Four Wagner presidents who led through times of transition.

On The Cover

TURN THE PAGE TOO QUICKLY and you may miss the little details. Professional set designer and miniaturist Anthony Freitas '13 (right) brought life to Wagner's iconic Main Hall auditorium through a meticulously constructed paper and foam core ¼" scale model. The model and set pieces illustrate the reconstruction of the theater industry following Broadway's shutdown during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"It all comes back to the sense of community that theater builds," says Freitas. "The idea was our shared experience. When the pandemic started, where did we go? We found ourselves back at the theater, the recreation of that space, our home away from home." The photographs were captured in Main Hall's Light Lab, a room as dynamic as the imagination of all those who learned and refined their craft there.

Freitas's resume includes Wagner's "Rent" (2013) and "Nine" (2017), several Broadway productions, and a 2019 Paper Mill Playhouse Rising Star Award for Outstanding Achievement in Set Design. His true joy comes from collaborating with and contributing to the education of the next generation of theater students and enthusiasts, drawing inspiration from Richard "Dick" Kendrick, who taught Freitas's first model-building class at Wagner. "He was a formative person for me, allowing me to explore that creative part of my brain that I now use every day. He was just good at that — pushing students toward something they didn't know they were going to love, and then finding that love."

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From the President

Dear Friends,

THERE ARE MANY CHALLENGES facing our country and our world today. Living through this two-year pandemic, coupled with the political and cultural discord that often seems worse than at any time in living memory, has so many people despairing for our future. At the same time, the value of a college education, particularly a private, liberal-arts-based education, is now questioned on many fronts.

Most of you reading this magazine are Wagner alumni. You know about our 139-year history of providing a college education rooted in tradition while always looking toward progress and the future. That is why we were one of the first liberal arts colleges to offer professional majors in both business and nursing and to enroll women alongside men in the first half of the 20th century. Embedded in our mission has always been the noble aim of producing leaders who, to borrow a somewhat quaint but valid old phrase, strive to do well and to do good.

The Wagner College of today is as passionately committed to our mission as it ever was, and that is the reason I am optimistic about the future. Our faculty remains dedicated to student learning and success, and our students are just as committed to becoming future leaders while remaining civically engaged citizens, passionate about creating a better nation and world.

When you walk around our beautiful campus on Grymes Hill, you see students heading to class or the library to study and learn and, yes, even debate. You walk into Main Hall, and the sights and sounds of our performing-arts students in theater and music greet you. The Spiro Sports Center and the stadium feature



student athletes preparing for upcoming competitions. And just spend some time on the Oval or in the dining hall and you will see a very diverse group of young people laughing and engaging in the way college students always do. I am positive that the goals, ambitions and enthusiasm of our students are very similar to those of the Wagner students on this same campus many decades ago.

Yes, there are serious and unique challenges today. But did students 80 years ago not face the challenges of totalitarianism and World War II? Did the students of 50 and 60 years ago not face the challenges of potential nuclear war stemming from the (not so) Cold War or from Vietnam and the civil unrest of the 1960s? But through all of that, American higher education was the backbone of American progress and the remarkable spread of democracy throughout the world.

It is my firm belief that colleges still provide that pathway to a better future. With your support, and through the great work of our faculty and staff, and with the determination of our students, Wagner College will continue to be a leader on that road to a better future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angelo Araimo'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

Angelo Araimo

Interim President

From the Editor

Before coming to Wagner College, I was a historic preservation writer for the Lake Placid (N.Y.) News. I brought with me a heightened sense of what “ordinary” buildings have to tell us about the extraordinary decisions that shape our communities.

At Wagner, I was faced with competing institutional values — between preserving the historic nature of our campus buildings, and being able to continue using them for academic, residential and administrative purposes.

We faced that choice in 1977 when we tore down the crumbling two-level porch on North Hall (now called Reynolds House) rather than rebuild it, dedicating our limited dollars to rehabbing the building for continued use. That porch was one of the defining architectural features of a building that had stood on our campus since before it *was* a campus — but we could have preserved it only by sacrificing the more utilitarian refurbishment of the rest of the building.

We faced that choice again last year when we rebuilt much of the exterior of Cunard Hall, the oldest building on our campus. All of the outside woodwork was disintegrating — the eaves, the window frames, and especially the ancient, ornate, full-length front porch of the beautiful Italianate villa. We knew something had to be done, and quickly — pandemic or no pandemic. The question was, as always: What could

we afford? So we did what we could with what we had. In the end, we refreshed the facade of Cunard, but we lost a really significant architectural feature of this historic building: its lovely porch.

After Wagner Magazine reported on the Cunard project, an alumnus with a career in historic preservation, Gene Barfield '75, wrote to protest.

“I wonder sometimes if I’m the only Wagnerian who understands what a priceless teaching tool the campus itself is,” Gene said. “It is an eclectic collection of sites, structures and objects of such variety that it is the perfect embodiment of the history and development of the American college environment. It is nationally unique in more than one regard.”

The Wagner College community has never really had a conversation about the value of historic preservation, especially in the face of straitened financial resources and the continuing demands of maintaining our building stock in usable condition.

What do you think about the importance of preserving Wagner’s historic assets? Tell us! Write to us, as Gene did ... and continue making the gifts that help make Wagner’s preservation decisions easier.

Enjoy!

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WITH WAGNER

Our Strength Is Our Community. Together, we overcome new challenges, develop new ideas, and pave the way for the Wagner experience. With the support of the Wagner community, our students become leaders, givers, healers and teachers. This journey is only possible with you.

Please help make a difference by supporting the Wagner Fund today.



To give securely online visit wagner.edu/give, call Wagner College at 718-420-4551 or write to:

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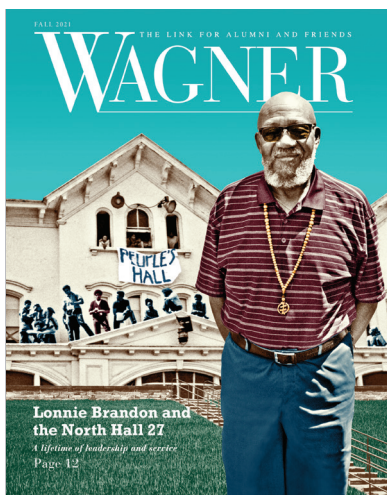
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From Our Readers

Passion and Enthusiasm

Thank you for your story about the retirement of Professor Kaelber in the Fall 2021 issue. He was one of my favorite professors, and he really made an impression on me as a religion/philosophy major. I remember his passion and enthusiasm in class. We had many discussions about what a broader view of religion entailed. I — and, I am sure, all of his students through the years — wish him well in retirement!

— Bruce Richardson '75



On our cover story, 'Lonnie Brandon & the North Hall 27'

Your article on the North Hall 27 stirred up a whirlwind of memories and a sense of how little we understood in 1970 about the Black experience. That year, I was a senior nursing student living on campus. When

the Black students (who knew there were so few?) took over North Hall, making it clear that they were serious about their demands, nursing students received a strong message from their department: “Do not engage in this process. Show up for your classes and clinicals. You have a professional obligation to perform your job, and there will be serious consequences for not doing so.” I remember feeling both pride in being a nursing student, and sad that I could not join in a protest for what I believed the Black students deserved. Until recently I would have said we have come a long way, but current events leave one wondering.

— Nancy Langman '70

Congratulations on your cover story about Lonnie Brandon and the Cunard Hall protest in 1970.

The article is comprehensive, fair and honest, and for me it filled in a lot of gaps I personally had. As a Wagner grad and having had Mr. Brandon in my modern European history class at Montclair High School, I decided I had to go to Wagner and ask for his reinstatement as a student after the Black Concern members were expelled. I do not recall the name of the person with whom I met, but I obviously had no impact.

Taking place at about the same time — in January 1970 — the Montclair High School Black Student Union led a walkout demanding many of the same things as the Black students at Wagner. In a few weeks I was appointed the school's principal and had to deal with those issues. It was a very challenging time for both Montclair and Wagner, but I think we are all the better for it.

— Tonnes Stave '58

Note: We forwarded the letter from Tonnes Stave to Lonnie Brandon as soon as we received it. That afternoon, the former history teacher and his student had an hour-long telephone conversation, their first in more than half a century.

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.

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Upon the Hill

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



New Provost Chosen

In November, Tarshia Stanley was named as Wagner College’s next provost. She succeeds Jeffrey Kraus, who served as provost from mid-2018 until last June, when he returned to the faculty of our Department of Government & Politics.

FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS, Tarshia Stanley has been the dean of the School of Humanities, Arts and Sciences at St. Catherine University — known to its friends as St. Kate’s — in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she has focused on developing programs and courses that engage the liberal-

arts learning process and embrace social justice across the university.

Stanley came to St. Kate’s from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, where she had been a member of the English faculty for nearly two decades. She served at Spelman as chair of the English Department and director of the college’s honors program.

9/11 Anniversary Ceremony

On September 11, 2001, ten Wagner alumni were among the nearly 3,000 people who died in a terrorist attack on New York City’s World Trade Center.

At this year’s 20th anniversary commemoration of those who lost their lives, Wagner College also honored the first responders on our Public Safety staff, many of whom are NYPD veterans who lost friends and colleagues in the 2001 attack.



RIGHT: Butterflies were placed in Trautmann Square to honor those lost in 9/11. FAR RIGHT: Public Safety supervisor Charlie Zambito spoke during the memorial program.



College Rankings

As has been the case for more than two decades, Wagner College scored strong ratings in this year's college rankings from five major news organizations:



For details, go to wagner.edu/accolades



Wagner College was ranked among the top 25% of northern regional universities in the **U.S. News & World Report's** Best Colleges rankings. Wagner was also called a "Best Value" among the 171 top-tier schools in its region.



Wagner College was named one of America's best colleges in the **Princeton Review's** "Best 387 Colleges" guide. Special kudos went to the Wagner College Theatre program, which was included on the roster of Great College Theaters.



Wagner College was listed among the top 12% of American colleges and universities for public service in the **Washington Monthly** magazine rankings of master's schools "based on their contribution to the public good."



For the eighth time, Wagner College appeared on the **Forbes** magazine's America's Top Colleges list, which includes less than 25% of American colleges — just 600 of the nearly 2,700 four-year schools in the U.S.



Wagner alumni salaries were ranked in the top 12% nationwide on the **PayScale** College Salary Report.

Horrmann Library Marks 60th Anniversary

FOR MORE THAN THREE DECADES, Wagner College students researched papers and studied for finals in a library shoehorned into the attic of the Admin Building, known today as Main Hall. The old library had just 40,000 books on its shelves and space for only 100 students. Plans in the mid-1950s for a new library were kicked up a notch when the Horrmann Foundation, a charity created by the local brewing family, contributed \$100,000 to the project.

It was a great day in September 1961 when the Horrmann Library finally opened its doors — and its huge, open great room — to the students of Grymes Hill. The new building had space for 90,000 books on its shelves and seating for more than 400 students.

In commemorating the Horrmann Library's 60th anniversary this fall, archivist Lisa Holland

observed that “construction on both the Horrmann Library and the Berlin Wall was completed in 1961. While the Berlin Wall was demolished in 1989, the library still stands proudly on the Oval!”



Honoring our Veterans

IN NOVEMBER, the Wagner College community gathered at the Delta Nu War Memorial Garden outside the Spiro Sports Center for our annual Veterans Day remembrance. The program was led by Interim President Angelo Araimo and David Martin, the college's director of planned giving and a retired United States Coast Guard captain.

Vocal Synergy & The Rockettes

VOCAL SYNERGY IS WAGNER'S PREMIER treble a cappella group. Over the last 13 years they've had some big moments, including a silver-cup win at the Varsity Vocals regionals and the international championship competition at Manhattan's Beacon Theatre. None, however, equaled the thrill of performing onstage this November at Radio City Music Hall with the world-famous Rockettes in the annual Christmas Spectacular program!



Walt Hameline, S.I. Sports Hall of Fame

Longtime athletic director and former head football coach Walt Hameline was inducted into the Staten Island Sports Hall of Fame's Class of 2019. (The induction ceremony had been delayed by the pandemic.)

“WALT HAMELINE, WHO WAS 29 WHEN he became the head football coach at Wagner College, guided the Seahawks to the 1987 NCAA Division III national championship and the school’s first and only FCS playoff victory,” said his Hall of Fame citation.

“Hameline’s 223 wins over 34 seasons put him in the top 50 in college football history, fifth among FCS coaches. The 2012 FCS National Coach of the Year is also the longest-tenured athletic director in Division I sports.”

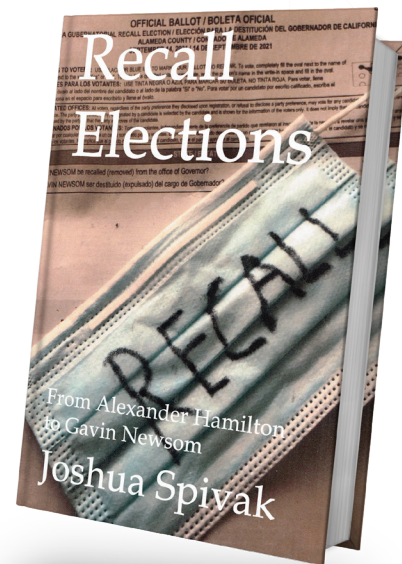
Hameline’s 223 wins over 34 seasons put him in the top 50 in college football history, fifth among FCS coaches.



High Profile Expert

THE BIGGEST NAME YOU’VE NEVER HEARD OF in Wagner College’s public presence may well be Joshua Spivak, a senior fellow at our Hugh L. Carey Institute for Government Reform. The Carey Institute was founded in 2006 by former New York state senator Seymour Lachman, the author of “Three Men in a Room: The Inside Story of Power and Betrayal in an American Statehouse,” an incisive critique of how government was run in the Empire State at that time.

Spivak, a former member of Senator Lachman’s staff, signed on to the new Carey Institute as an op-ed writer, specializing in essays laying out the true history of public policies being debated in the halls of power. Over the last 15 years, Josh’s op-eds have appeared in countless newspapers, magazines and websites, big and small, across the country and around the world — all highlighting the author’s Wagner College identity.



Move-In 2021

August 26 was the second move-in day for first-year students of the pandemic, and the mood this year could be described in a single word: exuberant!



WITH COVID VACCINATIONS REQUIRED for all students, we were able to allow the return of a more normal move-in routine for incoming first-year students and their families. Enthusiastic teams of resident assistants, community leaders and student-club members loaded new students' belongings into big, wheeled tubs, racing them in to Harborview Hall's dual elevator lifts.

The entire process, which took about four hours, helped ease the members of the Class of 2025 into their first year of college life. The 360 new students came from 23 U.S. states and 19 nations.

RIGHT TOP IMAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Flor Rosales-Euceda, Sam Marquez, Chami Goonewardene, Uterika Laguerre. RIGHT BOTTOM IMAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Jameel Jones, Andrew Kolar, Kate Durgin, Bridget Damon, Noah McKane.



Bashir Mason

The Athletic's '40 under 40'

IN NOVEMBER, SEAHAWK HEAD MEN'S basketball coach Bashir Mason was named to The Athletic's list of "40 Under 40: Rising Stars In Men's College Basketball." Coach Mason was featured at #15.

According to the article, Mason "has established himself as one of the top mid-major coaches in America."

Now in his 10th season as the Seahawks' head coach, Mason is closing in (at this writing) on 150 career victories.

Mason was the youngest head coach at the Division I level when he was named the 18th head men's basketball coach in school history on March 26, 2012, and he won 100 games more quickly than any other coach in Seahawk history.



Planetarium Reopening

In 1968 astronaut John Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth, helped dedicate Wagner College's original planetarium.

FORTY-FOUR YEARS LATER, a quarter-million-dollar state grant helped pay for a complete refurbishment of the facility, one of only three public planetariums in New York City.

This fall, the planetarium reopened after its long, Covid-imposed hiatus, presenting new shows to school children, community members and Wagnerians alike.

"We're exploring the possibility of expanding our current outreach to grade-school students, adding middle and high schoolers, with planetarium shows followed by lab experiences in Megerle Science facilities," said planetarium director Chris Corbo '06 M'08.

Wagner
alumni lift the
curtain after
Broadway's
longest
intermission

A Light **THAT NEVER GOES OUT**

by CAREY PURCELL



THE AMERICAN THEATER INDUSTRY WAS AMONG THE FIRST — AND THE HARDEST — HIT by the Covid shutdown, closing its doors on Broadway's 41 theatres for a year and a half. This story tells about the Wagner alumni who, in the face of tremendous odds, sustained the craft they love so deeply while building Broadway back — depicted with amazing scale models built by another alum. — Editor

IT WAS MARCH 11, 2020. **Anna Kate Reep '15** was ready to celebrate her wedding anniversary that night at a French restaurant with her husband. As she left work that afternoon, she smiled at her colleagues and joked, “See you later, losers! I’m going to celebrate my anniversary!”

Over the next 24 hours, every Broadway show in New York would shut down. The next time

Reep, a costumer in the wardrobe department of “Hamilton,” would see her colleagues was June 21, 2021. She began to regret her parting words to her co-workers.

“The next day I was thinking, ‘Uh oh — that was the last thing I said to a lot of people,’” Reep recalled. “I wouldn’t have said that if I knew the world was going to end!”

Miniatures design and construction: Anthony Freitas '13 | Photographs: Josh Campbell

FOR REEP AND THE THOUSANDS of other theater professionals working in New York, their world did come to an end on March 12, 2020. As the threat of Covid-19 grew, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo banned gatherings of more than 500 people, effectively closing every one of Broadway's 41 theaters. By 5 p.m. they had all closed their doors, and the Broadway community suddenly found itself without work.

At the time, the shutdown was supposed to last for 32 days, with performances scheduled to resume the week of April 13, 2020.

The news was a shock, but not a surprise to employees of the Great White Way. The threat of the coronavirus was widely reported, and a Broadway usher had tested positive on March 11. Some audience members had begun attending shows wearing face masks, and sales of hand sanitizer were skyrocketing. When one of Reep's colleagues tried to place an online order, the product was sold out.

"We were all talking about it," Reep recalled. "We knew coronavirus was going to be a problem. We'd been hearing rumors and were on pins and needles."

Her workspace had smelled like Lysol for the previous week.

Backstage at "Moulin Rouge!" things were tense. The lavish new musical, which attracted a large audience of international tourists, had already canceled its matinee and evening performances prior to Governor Cuomo's announcement.

No one in the production had tested positive, but a company member had a fever — one of the known symptoms of the virus.

The news was especially nerve-



wracking for **Caitlin Maxwell '10**, who had been working as assistant hair supervisor and make-up supervisor at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre — a job that required her to work "incredibly intimately" with the actors.

"The number of actors experiencing symptoms and later confirmed to be Covid-positive was quite high," she said. "Most of us knew the odds were not in our favor that we wouldn't experience direct exposure. I personally checked in on, or had changes with, many of the actors who became positive — including quick changes with some of our very sick actors [with] whom I would stand face-to-face in very small quick-change booths."

While the threat of the virus was widely known, little else was. "Caroline, or Change," a widely

anticipated revival, was hours away from its invitation-only dress rehearsal when the cast learned of the shutdown. The news was devastating for the cast and crew, especially the young actors playing children in the show. Backstage, **Ilana Bolotsky '12**, the show's child guardian, found herself with five crying boys in her arms and no answers to give them.

"It was a moment in time that I'll never forget," she said. "I can still picture that day vividly in my mind. As an adult, it was hard to wrap my head around the situation, let alone the kids who didn't fully understand what was happening — but honestly, no one really knew the full extent of the severity of it all, either."

THE PANDEMIC MARKED a first for the Great White Way. In more than 100 years, Broadway had never shut down for months at a time. The 1975 Musicians Union strike shuttered theaters for 25 days, and a stagehand strike closed its doors for almost three weeks in 2007. Performances resumed just two days after the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, and the 2003 Northeast blackout closed productions for only one night, with several shows selling out the following evening.

Reep was immediately aware that everything was going to change.

"It was very strange to suddenly find myself in a historic moment," she said, "when I knew I would remember working on Broadway before and after the pandemic."

But there was still the in-between. And with the curtains closed, cast and crew members

found themselves with a sudden lack of work and an abundance of time. Going from a packed schedule of classes, auditions, callbacks, rehearsals and performances — all with large groups of people — to no commitments and few, if any, peers was a shock.

The loss wasn't merely professional. It was deeply personal, actor and producer **April Lavallo '13** said.

"Actors, more so than I think in most professions, wrap up their identity in what it is that they do," she said, "so it's not just your job getting taken away. It feels like part of your identity is also taken away."

For Lavallo and her fiancé **Alex Boniello '13**, also an actor and producer, their time sheltering in place was a chance to expand their identities. Drawing upon his experience performing in "Dear Evan Hansen," and hers with the Trevor Project and Story Pirates, the two wrote a children's book, "A Case of the Zaps," which will be released in 2022.

Michael Bullard '13 had spent three years as a swing with a touring production of "Aladdin" when performances stopped. After more than a decade of performing, Bullard began training in the Gyrotonic Method, a movement system that had helped him recover from reconstructive knee surgery following a skiing accident. He earned his certification and began working with a chiropractor to treat injured patients as well as improving his own health.

"I hadn't been using my body expressively for a year and a half," Bullard said. "I was very out of shape and disconnected physically, so I found a way to kind of reconnect with my body in a healthy, energetic way without performing. I really do love that work."

New Yorkers had been ordered to stay at home as much as possible, only going outside for necessities such as medicine, food or exercise while socially distancing at least six feet from others. For performers trying to maintain their strength

and endurance, this proved to be a challenge. **Emma Pittman '18**, who had been preparing to debut in "Chicago" at the Ambassador Theatre, began tap dancing on a single piece of wood in her apartment. The winner of the web series "The Search for Roxie" also taught dance classes over Zoom in between an "incredibly unsuccessful" attempt at baking bread and joining a play-reading club.

No longer working on costumes, Reep began making masks, which she distributed throughout the city, and sewed plastic hospital gowns in partnership with the Broadway Relief Project. She also channeled her energy where she could see it: on the walls of her apartment. She and her husband had moved just one month before the shutdown. Faced with the loss of her work and her co-workers, she threw herself into decorating their new home. Missing the landmarks of New York, she painted the ceiling of Grand Central Station on her bedroom wall.



Prompted by the theme of connection, artists from around the country submitted their works of original theater, including monologues, spoken word, dance or music.

“It made me cry when I painted it because I felt so disconnected from the city I lived in,” she said. “I didn’t know when I would be able to enjoy the beautiful parts of NYC again.”

The free time provided a new opportunity for Cait Maxwell, who nannied her sister’s daughter for nine hours a day, five days a week. Along with cherishing the time with her niece — “She’s the coolest little human I know” — Maxwell savored the stable work schedule, which was a drastic change from the demanding hours of Broadway.

“For the first time in my life I had consistent evenings off and two-day weekends,” she said. “It was mind-blowing.”

engagement. We worked hard to try to create those moments of joy and engagement in the space that we were now working in. We really worked around the clock for two years, trying to keep the work going.”

Those moments materialized onscreen through the Reverb Theatre Arts Festival. The result of 24 pairings between participating and collaborating artists, the festival spotlighted artists with disabilities on the virtual stage. Prompted by the theme of connection, artists from around the country submitted their works of original theater, including monologues, spoken word, dance or music. Another shift to digital was seen in the Remote Arts Learning Project — “a massive sort of undertaking” in which Roundabout partnered with Carnegie Hall, Studio in a School and the 92nd Street Y Dance Lab to create a digital curriculum for theater, music, visual arts and dance for New York City’s 1.1 million school students.

DiBella was also looking to the future and how to continue Roundabout’s mission of nurturing young talent.

“My biggest concern was, how are we going to support these

young people who have put their faith in us to write, to be trained and be part of this industry?” she said. “I was very concerned about the young people in that program, our actual students losing their connection to the work that feels so fulfilling to them. ... Lots of education departments were just cut.”

Widespread unemployment and income instability spread throughout the community. Loss of jobs, for many, meant loss of insurance, a worry that Lavalle and Boniello shared. The couple lost their coverage — hers through the Screen Actors Guild, his through the Actors Equity Association — on the same day. After calling the Actors Fund for guidance, they purchased a plan through the Affordable Care Act.

FOR JENNIFER DIBELLA '04, director of education at Roundabout Theatre Company, the pandemic didn’t result in a change of job, but it certainly changed the job she already had. The nonprofit, which offers programs promoting social equity through the power of theater, serves more than 30,000 people in New York City. Following the shutdown, DiBella pivoted to digital work as soon as she could. Moving from offices in Midtown to her guest room, she found herself on Zoom for eight or nine hours a day.

“It seems like such an easy thing, but it wasn’t,” DiBella said. “I had to reimagine how our work could exist in a digital space, and the real magic of our work is in-person

ORIGINALLY, THE PLAN WAS TO SHUT DOWN BROADWAY until mid-April 2020. Then September 2020. Then May 2021. When an official reopening date of September 14, 2021 was announced, theater workers and lovers celebrated — cautiously.



For many, it felt like they were going home.

“I was so very, very, very excited,” Maxwell said. “I had been missing so much about the Broadway experience and was so pumped to be going back. I have been working theater professionally since college, so I had felt like a limb was cut off over the pandemic.”

Reep’s return to the theater for a two-show day was an emotional one. Having worked on “Wicked” and “Hamilton,” she was invited to both dress rehearsals, and she was overwhelmed at seeing her friends and colleagues in theater aisles again.

“It felt like you had to touch everybody to have confirmation that we had made it through this hideous time,” she recalled. “The act of being in the theater and just having that communal experience again hits a bit differently.”

While it’s back to work, it’s not back to normal for theater professionals. Testing protocols have been established, masks are mandated backstage and in audiences, and actors no longer greet their fans at the stage door after the show.

“Getting swabbed multiple times a week is not my favorite thing,” Reep said, “but it’s amazing to be back at work and feeling safe doing this. Everyone I work with is vaccinated, all the audience members are vaccinated. Even though I don’t love walking up and down the stairs with an N95 [mask] on, it’s so worth it to be able to do what we do and not be scared.”

Backstage, at “Caroline, or Change,” Bolotsky continues to care for the safety and well-being of young actors during a difficult time while also ensuring they don’t go onstage while wearing a mask.

“Every day is different, especially in a pandemic,” she said. “Emotions run wild all the time, so it’s really important for me to really get on [the children’s] level and make sure that they’re ready to go for the show every day.”

For Bullard, the joy of reopening “Aladdin” was twofold — September 28, 2021 was his Broadway debut — but the joy was short-lived. Some cast members had tested positive the day of the reopening, and the following day the show was canceled with continued positive cases detected.

It was a bizarre experience, Bullard said.

“We had just started to gain a sense of community,” he said.

The show soon reopened, but many other productions have since canceled performances when cases have been detected.

—◆◆◆—
PITTMAN IS STILL WAITING to make her Broadway debut. Originally booked to star as Roxie in “Chicago” in August 2020, she has found herself without a confirmed start date, but the Wagner alumna has remained focused on the bigger picture.

“The entire world is going through so much,” Pittman said. “The last thing I’m worried about is making my Broadway debut. I’m worried about how can we make sure everyone’s safe and how can we make sure that we can get back to our business in a safe manner.”

By the time Pittman does step into the spotlight, the industry may look different. The Black Lives Matter protests for racial justice and police reform that followed

the death of George Floyd echoed within the theater community as calls for more diversity, equity and representation drove conversations both online and in person.

The “general vibe” had changed, not just at “Moulin Rouge!” but throughout the industry, Maxwell observed.

“I think there’s a lot of harsh realities of working in theater that were difficult to return to: the hours, the personalities, the ancient white patriarchal power structure that we all have been grinning and bearing for far too long,” Maxwell said. “When you take a long break from all of that, the calluses you had spent decades building up to be able to keep pushing yourself through those things get broken down, and those things feel much more difficult to keep dealing with.”

Moving the conversations forward and really affecting change will take time, Pittman said, adding that she hopes the industry will continue to sustain this momentum.

“I’m really grateful that we are being reflective and conversations are being had and people are getting the parts they deserve and people are finally being seen and put to the forefront where they have worked so hard to be,” Pittman said. “I do hope that it is actually a conversation that is going to be continually ingrained in creative processes moving forward — not just a one-liner, but the whole play.”

Some ripple effects have already been seen and heard in “Caroline, or Change,” a musical chronicling the experience of a Black woman who works as a maid for a Jewish family whose personal experiences are framed by the political change brewing within the country,

including the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

“The pandemic really shifted so much with the Black Lives Matter movement, social justice and all the relevant themes that happen in the show,” Bolotsky said. “It was like we came back and everyone was able to really dive into their characters even more, and into the storyline, and just be really thankful that we’re there every day — because you know that at any moment, anything can change.”

THAT EPHEMERAL FEELING makes Broadway’s reopening even more precious, Bolotsky said. What they had once taken for granted — gathering people together to create and enjoy art — was now seen as fragile and possibly fleeting.

“The closure, I think, really shook all of us to our core, to see that specifically the theater industry was so vulnerable to

something like this,” Bullard said. “I think it was a time for a lot of reflection, for us to be like, ‘Is this a sustainable industry? Is this something that I want to pursue? How could this even happen? How could we do this safely?’”

With vaccines, and masks, and audience members’ love for theater, the industry’s recovery continues to move forward. And its workers will continue to create its magic.

“What’s so amazing about working in theater is that so much happens behind the scenes that no one witnesses from their seat in the audience — and that’s the magic and beauty of it all,” Bolotsky said. “Audience members get to see the incredible work done by the actors on the stage, all while (literally) hundreds of people are working together every single day to successfully run a show. And after almost two years of being shut down, everyone who is working is so grateful to have the opportunity to be back and be doing what they love to do.” ■



A portrait of Angelo Araimo, a middle-aged man with dark hair, wearing a dark blue suit jacket, a light blue dress shirt, and a green tie with white polka dots. He is standing in a well-lit, wood-paneled room, possibly a hallway or office. The background is softly blurred, showing warm lighting and architectural details.

Meet President Araimo

*After more than a quarter century on the Hill,
Senior Vice President Angelo Araimo moves into
the corner office*

Angelo Araimo was born in 1960 to working-class parents in Queens, the middle son of three boys.

“We always saw ourselves as middle-class growing up,” Angelo said. “We never wanted for anything. We knew we didn’t have a lot of money, but somehow it always seemed to work.”

He was a first-generation college student, graduating from St. John’s University with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in history. Angelo met his wife Mary after they had both graduated and were working as UPS couriers in the World Trade Center. They married in 1988.

“We used to go back every year and stay at the Vista International Hotel at the World Trade Center, until 9/11,” Angelo said.

Mary, who had graduated from Fordham University, became a teacher.

“I was going to be a teacher, too,” Angelo said. “That’s why I had enrolled in a doctoral program. I’d started at NYU, but then I got offered a teaching fellowship at St. John’s, which made it free and also gave me the opportunity to see if I liked teaching.”

Angelo taught for two years at St. John’s, two courses a semester — and, like many young academics, he “jumped jobs all over the city,” he said. “Some semesters, I was teaching five courses.”

One of the schools at which he taught was St. Joseph’s College, in Brooklyn, “and that’s actually where I got into administration,” he said. “One day Sister Margaret, the academic dean, asked me if I’d like to recruit a little; they needed more men after going co-ed in 1980. I said, ‘Sure! I like talking to people.’”

A year later, Sister Margaret asked Angelo if he would like to become admissions director



Mary and Angelo Araimo

— and, at the age of 29, he agreed.

“She said they needed 70 to 100 more students,” Angelo recalled. “I thought, ‘I can do that by knocking on doors!’ Well, it was really hard, but we did it.”

“I was director of admissions there for about four years, and I found I enjoyed it — but I also started to wonder. I didn’t think I was going to become a college professor, so I got away from my

doctorate. I was a classic A.B.D.,” Angelo said — a doctoral student who had completed all his coursework, all his exams, *all but dissertation*. “I just didn’t have enough passion for any one thing to do it right.”

Then came 1993, a year of decision for Angelo Araimo.

“I was ready to enroll in law school at the University of Wisconsin,” Angelo said. “In April, I gave St. Joseph’s notice.”

But over the summer, family complications arose that made it necessary for the Araimos to stay in New York.

Angelo found a teaching job at the Garden School in Queens, where he was to start that fall — but he also saw an ad in the New York

Times for a job as admissions director at Wagner College, for which he applied. The interview was positive — but after several weeks, he hadn't gotten a call back.

"I started the teaching job and figured, that was that," he recalled. "And then I got a call in mid-October saying, 'We'd like you to come in and meet with President Smith.'"

Angelo finished out the semester at the Garden School and, in January 1994, started working as admissions director at Wagner, later becoming dean of admissions.

In 1995, son Christopher Araimo was born to Mary and Angelo, followed in 1997 by daughter Catherine.

In 2005, Angelo Araimo was named vice president for enrollment and planning, a portfolio that was later expanded to include institutional advancement, a fancy term for fundraising in higher education. Over the years, Angelo has overseen Wagner's offices of admissions, alumni relations, financial aid, athletics, extension programs, institutional research, and communications and marketing.

It was therefore no big surprise this October, with the announcement of President Joel W. Martin's impending resignation at the end December, when the trustees asked Senior Vice President Angelo Araimo to step in as interim president.

To ensure the college's stability, Angelo was asked to serve in the president's office at least through the 2022-23 school year.

Angelo Araimo acknowledged that most presidential transitions don't happen in the middle of a semester, making this one especially challenging.

This transition came at a particularly crucial time, just a couple of weeks before the conclusion of two major undertakings: the search for a new provost, and the college's reaccreditation.

"But I've been here for a long time," Angelo said, "and I was the senior vice president, so Joel [Martin]

and I met more than anyone else. I was already involved in both of those things."

The provost search and the reaccreditation were two factors in the trustees' decision to ask Angelo to immediately assume the responsibilities of president, rather than wait for Joel Martin's resignation to take effect at the end of the year.

One of the things that happen at the conclusion of a reaccreditation evaluation is that the accreditation committee usually gives the school a series of recommendations for better performance.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education "is going to give us these recommendations," Angelo explained, "so why not have them given to you, since you're going to have to implement them?"

"The same went for the provost search. ... The idea was to let them [the final candidates] get to know me, the president they would be working with, and me get to know them, and be really transparent with the three finalists. That's the first thing I did."

"Five minutes after I was told [about the transition], I called Ruth Shoemaker and told her what was happening," Angelo said. Ruth Shoemaker Wood, managing director for the firm Storbeck Search, was handling our provost search. "Can you get me a Zoom call with the three finalists?"

All three candidates said they would remain in the search.

During their campus visits, Angelo, Interim Provost Nick

Richardson and three faculty members had dinner with the candidates each night before they delivered their in-person vision talks to interested members of the campus community. Afterward, Angelo met with the search committee to gather input.

"All I did there was listen," he said, "and then I thanked them for what they had done, because I thought they really presented us with three great finalists. And then, ultimately, I made the decision.

"In one way, it was a difficult decision — but it was not difficult to the extent that there was

This transition came at a particularly crucial time, just a couple of weeks before the conclusion of two major undertakings: the search for a new provost, and the college's reaccreditation.

“I think our greatest opportunity is to invest in the programs where Wagner already has a strong reputation.”

real unanimity about which one rose completely to the top.”

(You can read about our next provost, Tarshia Stanley, at the top of this issue’s “Upon the Hill” section.)

With the provost search and the accreditation report out of the way, Angelo was able to turn his attention to the two enduring challenges of the Wagner College presidency: enrollment and fundraising, both of which provide us with the resources we need to fulfill our mission.

Covid, of course, had created major enrollment challenges for Wagner College. Travel restrictions had reduced enrollment from other states and countries. Health-safety rules preventing campus visits had further reduced enrollment, particularly in areas that depend on in-person interviews or auditions like our physician assistant and theater-performance programs.

But Wagner’s biggest enrollment challenges predate Covid.

“The challenges are not surprising, but they’re there,” Angelo said. “People talked about Covid, Covid, Covid as if it created all these problems in higher education. Of course it did, over the very short term, but what it really did in higher ed is exacerbate problems that already existed.

“There were already these tremendous enrollment challenges for small colleges, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest, because of changing demographics.”

There are several steps that many small colleges take when faced with enrollment challenges: beefing up enrollment efforts, increasing their “discount” (as college-provided financial aid is often called), looking

for more local students, and lowering admissions standards.

Angelo ruled out the last one.

“We increased the discount and lowered standards once before in our history,” he said, “and that brought us to the edge of bankruptcy.

“Yes, we’ll be bringing in more local students, because we think we have great appeal to them — but our admissions recruiters are also going back on the road, and I think New York continues to be a place students want to come.

“I think our greatest opportunity,” Angelo said, “is to invest in the programs where Wagner already has a strong reputation, programs that students around the country want to major in right now: health sciences, the performing and visual arts, and business.”

It’s easier to increase the college’s available resources by growing enrollment, Angelo explained, than through fundraising — but both are critically important.

“Adding 100 residential students to our enrollment generates \$4 million in revenue, after financial aid and everything else,” he said. “With 300 more, you can start to make real investments — so that’s our goal for the next five to seven years, and it’s not an unrealistic one.”

By contrast, he said, “you have to raise \$80 million to generate \$4 million a year in endowment income,” a fact that shapes the college’s planning priorities — the first of which is, therefore, enrollment growth.

“Number two,” Angelo said, “we need to invest in our facilities and our faculty in order to grow enrollment.”

Key to those investments, he explained, is a debt restructuring exercise currently underway that will allow the college to finance a range of deferred maintenance projects.

“Number three,” he said, “we need to then launch a fundraising campaign where we target things that we simply can’t do through tuition dollars or debt restructuring.”

Scholarships and endowed faculty positions would be two particular targets of such an endowment campaign, he said.

“I think there’s an appetite among our alumni for helping students who are first-generation,” Angelo said, “and I think that’s great, because so many of our alums were first-generation.”

And that’s where our interview ended: looking to the future of the college that Angelo Araimo is now charged to lead. ■

The Times, They Are A'CHANGING

This is not the first time of transition in Wagner College's 139-year history — nor is Angelo Araimo the first person charged to lead Wagner through such a time.

Here's a quick look at four of the presidents who've been faced with the demands of change on The Hill and have steered us through to the other side.



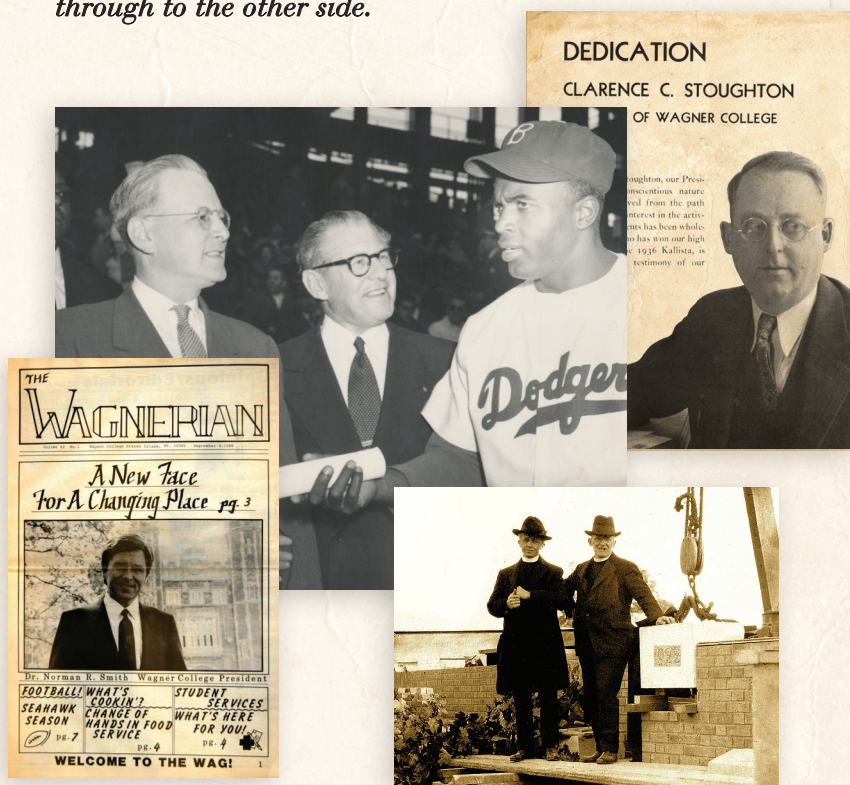
Adolf Henry Holthusen 1918–1925

Adolf Holthusen led Wagner College through the greatest transition it had experienced since its founding: the move from Rochester, New York, to Staten Island.

A Lutheran pastor and the son of the headmaster of a Lutheran day school on Manhattan's Lower East Side, Rev. Holthusen and his young family moved into the brand-new Kairos House when he took over the 42-student seminary prep school in 1918.

Under his leadership, enrollment doubled to 84 students, and our junior-college unit evolved into a four-year program. To accommodate the larger student body, a new dormitory was opened in 1923: South Hall, later renamed Parker Hall.

After his presidency, Holthusen became pastor of a church in New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he served until September 1942, just three months before his death.



UPPER LEFT: Walter Langsam, left, at Ebbets Field on May 4, 1951, with retailer Benjamin Namm and Brooklyn Dodgers great Jackie Robinson, profiled as the "Brooklyn Personality of the Week"

UPPER RIGHT: Kallista 1936 was dedicated to Wagner's new president, Clarence Stoughton

LOWER LEFT: The Wagnerian of Sept. 8, 1988, introduces students to the college's new president, Norman R. Smith

LOWER RIGHT: Wagner board chairman Frederic Sutter, left, and President Adolf Holthusen lay the cornerstone for Parker (South) Hall, Oct. 18, 1922



Clarence Charles Stoughton

1935–1945

Clarence Stoughton, known to his students familiarly as “Prof,” was the first president of Wagner College who was not a Lutheran minister. A former reporter and University of Rochester graduate, “Prof” Stoughton joined the Wagner community as an English and history teacher in 1919.

Stoughton served the college in a number of roles before becoming president in 1935. Noted for his vocal opposition to the growing Fascist threat in Europe, he led Wagner through the war years, overseeing the creation of a night-school program as well as our nursing school.

After leaving Grymes Hill, Stoughton became president of Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. He died in 1975.



Walter Consuelo Langsam

1945–1952

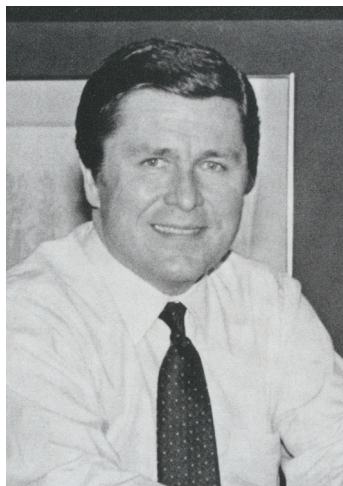
Stoughton’s successor, Walter Consuelo Langsam, was born in Vienna, Austria, to a Jewish family that had

converted to Lutheranism. Brought to America by his parents when he was just 10 months old, Langsam was raised in Manhattan’s Yorkville neighborhood.

A historian educated at City College and Columbia, Langsam was recruited during World War II as a spymaster by the U.S. Office of Strategic Services. Among his agents was a “fisherman” in the Baltic city of Peenemünde, where Nazi Germany developed its rocket systems.

Langsam led Wagner through its period of greatest numeric growth (from 440 students in 1945 to 1,942 students in 1951), the purchase of our West Campus, and the construction of Guild Hall and the Sutter Gymnasium.

He later served as president of Gettysburg College and the University of Cincinnati. Langsam died in 1985.



Norman R. Smith

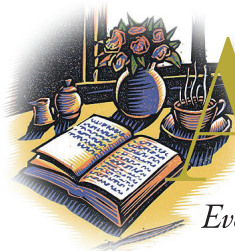
1988–2002

Norman Smith came to Wagner College in 1988 from Harvard University, having also served in administrative posts at Drexel, Philadelphia University and Moore College of Art and Design.

Hired as Wagner’s president with the expectation by some that he would wind down the school’s troubled operations, instead he took steps to shore up the college’s finances, rebuild its admissions program, recruit top-flight administrative and faculty talent, and move Wagner to “top tier” status. During his presidency, two major expansion projects were completed, the Spiro Sports Center and Pape Admissions House, in addition to major upgrades to the campus grounds and facilities.

At the end of his tenure, Wagner’s Board of Trustees named Norman Smith president emeritus.

Smith was president of Richmond University in London, England, from 2002 to 2007. Since then, he has served as interim president at three institutions while they searched for new leadership: Dowling College, Suffolk University and Elmira College (where he was also awarded emeritus status). ■



AlumniLink

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

Wagner Weekend!



More than 1,000 alums, family members and friends took part in the long-overdue “welcome home” event that combined the best of our beloved Homecoming and Reunion Weekend traditions. It was a truly unforgettable occasion, reuniting those who had been apart for so long and providing a chance for them to relive old memories — and make some new ones!



WAGNER WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

Friday Night Pep Rally



Students, parents and families gathered to cheer on their fellow Seahawks before the big homecoming football game on Saturday, celebrating with music, food,

giveaways and more. Later that evening, families relaxed with a movie night on the lawn as they watched “In the Heights.”

The Grand Celebration

Meanwhile, another event was underway beneath the Oval’s big-top tent: the weekend’s Grand Celebration, featuring the annual alumni awards presentation, delayed for the past two years by *you know what*. Multiple classes made up for lost time with reunions and dancing into the night with old friends.

Alumni Memorial Service

On Saturday morning we fulfilled another old Reunion tradition with the memorial service,

We all know how strange the last couple of years have felt, with the pandemic keeping us from coming together and renewing our bonds of friendship and camaraderie. This Oct. 1 and 2, Wagner College alumni were finally able to reunite and return to their beloved Hill for a new kind of celebration, custom-made for the occasion: Wagner Weekend!





remembering comrades who have left us since our last gathering. The beautiful voices of alumni vocalists were joined by members of the Wagner College Choir to honor in song those we've lost over the past two years.

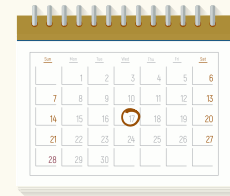
Golden Seahawk, Bregenz Reunions

Several big reunions took place on Saturday morning: the Golden Seahawk gatherings for the classes of 1970 and 1971, marking their 50th anniversaries, and a special reunion of Bregenz alumni reminiscing over their study-abroad experiences at Wagner's Austrian study center.

Wagner Weekend on the Oval

As Saturday morning passed into afternoon, the day's pace kicked into high gear with multiple activities staged on the iconic Sutter Oval: local food vendors, a rock-climbing wall, jousts, games and giveaways, wrapped up by the rousing music of the Seahawk Marching Band leading the Homecoming royal court's float across Howard Avenue to Hameline Field for the big game.

Wagner Weekend brought together both familiar and new faces to remind us that our alumni, students, families and friends are our foundation. They are — you are — what makes Wagner *Wagner*. ■



Upcoming Events

APRIL

Career Conversations
4/6/22
The University Club, NYC

Graduates of the Last Decade Happy Hour
4/28/22
NYC

MAY

Nursing Night Out
5/11/22
Staten Island, NYC

JUNE

OUTWagner Pride Brunch
6/11/22
NYC

SEPTEMBER

Wagner Weekend 2022
Sept 16-17

FOR MORE INFORMATION

on upcoming events and registrations, visit our events calendar website: WAGNER.EDU/ALUMNI-EVENTS

Events and dates are subject to change.

QUESTIONS? Please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-390-3224 or alumni@wagner.edu

The Song Remains the Same



with grant support from the City Artist Corps: “A Concert Celebrating Survival, Hope and Community,” performed at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Stapleton, Staten Island, and recorded for presentation on YouTube. Enjoy this uplifting 90-minute program here:

A Concert Celebrating Survival, Hope and Community



wagner.edu/stretto-performance

ROGER WESBY directed the Wagner College Choir for more than two decades, from 1996 until his retirement in 2019. Today, the professor emeritus continues working with a couple dozen Wagner alumni

in two ensembles: the smaller, more intimate Stretto and the larger Concord Choral Consortium.

Last February, with technical help from video producer Andy Wesby, the ensembles performed

for the 16th Annual Staten Island Black History Town Hall. (See the videos on the Wagner website — wagner.edu/alumni-sing.)

In November, they produced their most substantial venture yet,



Wagner College Heritage Society Chardonnay, created just for us by one of our own!

Old Winery, New Bottles

ONE OF THE highlights of Wagner Weekend was a wine-and-cheese event hosted by our Heritage Society — and one of the highlights of that highlight event was a specially labeled Wagner College Heritage Society Chardonnay, created just for us by one of our own!

Joe Greff '66 and wife Vickie Greff are the owners of Blue Mountain Winery in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley. Starting from vines Joe planted as a hobby in 1986, twenty years out of Wagner, Blue Mountain produced its first wine in 1993 and has been busily vinifying away ever since!

Breakfast with Waggies



IT'S NO SECRET THAT Wagner students love the place so much that hundreds of them come to work for the college after graduation. In fact, at last count, more than 300 of our faculty and staff members hold a Wagner bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree.

On Nov. 17, we invited those who could tear themselves away from their desks or classrooms to join us for an alumni-employee breakfast in the Union's Faculty Dining Room. It was so nice, we just may do it again! ■



Promote Internships or Entry-Level Job Opportunities to Wagner Students

Wagner College's Center for Academic and Career Engagement, which serves students as the primary location of academic support and advisement, has partnered with Handshake to connect employers and students with internships and job opportunities.

Register with Handshake to post your openings.



Handshake

wagner.edu/handshake



His First Love

RICHARD BARATTA '73 is a film industry veteran with a long and distinguished list of credits dating back to “Desperately Seeking Susan” and most recently including “Joker” and Martin Scorsese’s “The Irishman.”

But after a long and very fruitful career in the film business, Rich desperately wanted to return to his first love: making music — and today, he couldn't be happier.

“I’m telling you, I’m in heaven,” he says (on his website). “I just want to keep it going. A light bulb has gone off in my head and the music seems clearer, fresher and more illuminating than ever.”

That’s how Richard Baratta and his Gotham City Latin Jazz Septet came to perform in the Union Atrium at his alma mater on the night of Sept. 30, kicking off Wagner Weekend.

And, for a little late-breaking news: A track off Richard Baratta’s 2020 album, “Music in Film: The Reel Deal,” was nominated in November for a Grammy award in the category of Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Cappella.



The track, “Chopsticks,” was arranged by the record’s music director, the masterful jazz pianist Bill O’Connell — and it may well be that, by the time this magazine reaches you, the record will already be a Grammy winner.

Born Tyrrell Winston Mooney | His professors and classmates will remember him as Tyrrell W. Mooney, Class of 2008 — but as Ty’s career developed, he dropped the surname. “I looked at Andy Warhol having been Warhola,” he said, “Ralph Lauren having been Ralph Lifshitz. Those were two of my models.” Today, he is Tyrrell Winston.

Raised in Orange County, California | Father: Lutheran pastor. Mother: Art teacher. “There was always this kind

Tyrrell Winston

of angst that I had, growing up, being in the suburbs ... this is boring here, too ‘cookie cutter.’ It was like, the grass is greener somewhere else ... L.A., New York.”

Transferred | “I’d gone to Cal Lutheran for two years; I had a good group of friends, I was in good standing at the school ... but I just woke up one morning [in 2006] and said, ‘You know, if I don’t leave Southern California ...’ ”

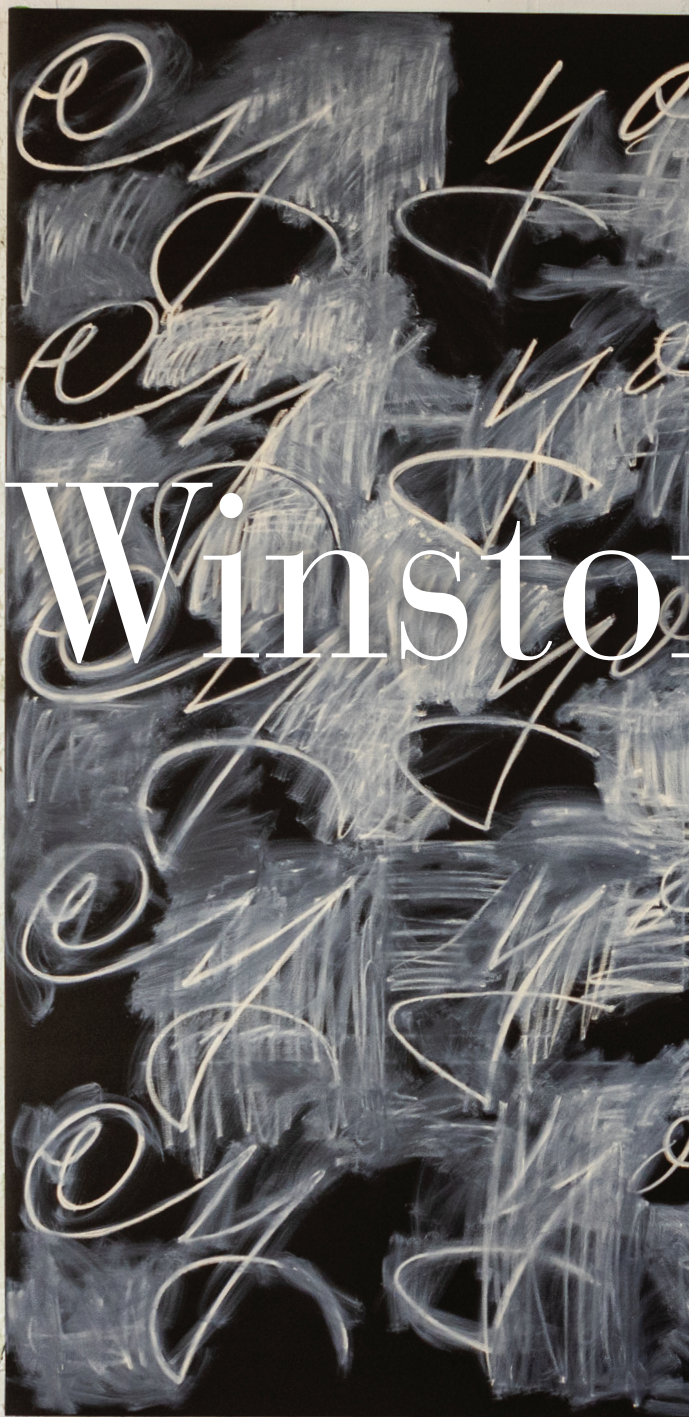
Arts administration major | “I’m so thankful that I went to Wagner, and that I didn’t leave New York after graduating, because I can’t imagine that I would have the career, the life I do now. ... New York gives me so much energy. It takes a lot, but it is like a giant playground.”

“My classes with Todd Price and Jebah Baum were stoking this fire in me to learn about the history of contemporary art.”

Irrationally inspired | Tyrrell’s first exposure to the Dada artists of early 20th century Europe was life-changing — and it came on a Wagner class field trip to the Museum of Modern Art.

“Honestly, I can still remember what the air smelled like that day. ... I was just overwhelmed with this idea of ‘antiart’ in this collective of artists who marched to their own beat and worked with found materials and created new contexts — and that new context created new worlds.”

Photographs: Josh Campbell



on '08

Today, Ty is a well-known artist who often works with found objects, like his Dada heroes did. Ty's best-known pieces incorporate deflated basketballs and used basketball nets into works that are particularly popular with collectors from the world of athletics.

First job, post-Wagner | Real estate; ended with the Crash of 2008.

Last job, pre-art career | From 2014 to 2018, for "MTV Re:Define," the network's big annual charity art auction. "MTV was kind of a grad school to me," Tyrrell said. "It opened doors and gave me access to spaces I probably would have never seen." MTV downsized "Re:Define" in 2018 — about the same time Ty's art career started moving.

The big break | When a Belgian gallery approached him about exhibiting at Art Brussels, a big annual show. "They sold out the entire booth a day before the fair opened," Ty recalled, "and then sold pretty much everything I had available in my studio the next day. I went from having never sold anything for over \$2,000 to having work selling for over \$20,000. ... It was one of the more insane feelings that I've had — it's like, all of a sudden, you've got the capital you need to continue working, knowing that I stuck to my guns."

'Embedded history' | Tyrrell has said that these two words encapsulate the meaning of his art. "I'm taking these things that are forgotten or ignored ... you see a deflated basketball or a cigarette with lipstick ... it's trash, it's used up, it's done. ... But I'm fascinated that I can give something a second life," Ty says. The term "embedded history" refers to the life stories of past owners that are embedded in the objects they use and discard.

Marriage | In 2018, Ty married Coco Cook, a woman he'd met at the opening for a friend's art exhibition. "I saw Coco outside, and I was quite struck with her," he said. They'd begun talking when she mentioned she was thirsty, "so I ran across the street and bought her a bottle of water at the bodega. I thought I'd just buy myself 10 minutes ... and now I'm married to her. She's absolutely incredible. She's a photographer, art director, and she has really helped me push my work to a level that I did not know I could go to. ... I couldn't imagine a better partner in helping me navigate this."

And a baby | Just one month before our interview late last summer, Ty and Coco had a baby, Helaena Winston. "I did not know that it was possible to love something so much," the new father said.

Kick it | "I signed a shoe deal with Reebok," Tyrrell said. "I'm doing two shoes that come out in 2022. As far as I know, I'm the first artist that has done this. ... The initial connection was because of the basketballs, the nets ... It's a childhood dream come true" for this skateboarder and basketball enthusiast. "It's a very full-circle, very cool moment, and not a lot of artists get that." ■





When the first issue of their underground paper was published, pen names were used for everyone involved. Even the front-page photo of The Observer's staff was taken from behind so that nobody's face was shown.

Photographs: Josh Campbell

MARK ANDERSON '69

THE OBSERVER

The only student newspaper for virtually every living Wagner alumna and alumnus was The Wagnerian, first published Nov. 8, 1934. But for one brief period in 1964-65, there was another student newspaper on Grymes Hill: **The Observer**.

DESPITE THE COINCIDENCE OF TIMING, The Observer was not inspired by the well-known Berkeley Free Speech Movement, which swept the University of California's flagship campus that year.

No; it arose from students' aggravation at the college's quashing of a calendar of campus events developed independently of The Wagnerian.

"At that time, The Wagnerian was produced using a hot-type letterpress," Mark Anderson '69 told us. "It took three or four days to get the thing out."

Because that lead time made it sometimes impractical to publish a listing of upcoming events in The Wagnerian, the paper's production manager decided to publish something small and low-tech on his own: a single-page, weekly, mimeographed newsletter called The Grapevine.

Unfortunately, doing so violated a school rule that all publications be approved by the administration — so The Grapevine was summarily shut down after its first and only issue.

Several weeks later, a few students irritated with the college's heavy-handed response came back with another mimeo newsletter, a two-pager called The Grape. In addition to descriptions of upcoming events, The Grape contained editorial comments on college operations.

Again, the college shut it down after just one issue.

Adding to the indignation over student censorship was The Wagnerian's rejection of a satirical (and very popular) "final examination" for a mandatory religion course. The first question gives a good indication of what the "test's" 18 multiple-choice queries looked like:

One of the still-existing traditions of the ancient Hebrew religion which has been described as a health law is: (a) not eating on the Sabbath, (b) not eating in the Hawk's Nest on the Sabbath, (c) not eating during chapel hour, (d) not eating in the Hawk's Nest.

One group of students decided they'd had enough.

Wagner College needed an underground newspaper, they said — and Mark Anderson should head it up.

Mark, you see, knew something about how things were printed. His father ran a company that specialized in publishing corporate annual reports, so printing was in his blood.

One factor, however, gave Editor Mark pause: the college's prohibition of such publications.

When the first issue of their underground paper was published, pen names were used for everyone involved. Even the front-page photo of The Observer's staff was taken from behind so that nobody's face was shown.

The first issue — Dec. 16, 1964 — made an impact.

But it wasn't until April 1965 — when The Wagnerian was put on hold while the college's Publications Board addressed some editorial questions — that The Observer really came into its own ... real names, and all! For a couple of months, Wagner's underground newspaper was its only newspaper.

And then ... as quickly as it appeared, The Observer was gone after just five issues in print.

.....

AFTER EDITING THE OBSERVER, it took Mark Anderson a few more years to complete his Wagner degree.

"One of the last courses I took was an elective, Business Law, taught by an old warhorse lawyer," Mark recalled. "Everyone else hated that course, but I enjoyed it, and it occurred to me that maybe this was something that was right for me."

When the course was over, Mark asked the professor what he thought about his idea of attending law school.

"Absolutely," the professor told Mark, "you're a natural" — and, apparently, he was right.

A law school course on land use set Mark on his career path.

"By the time I got through law school," Mark said, "I had a pretty good idea of where I was going: I wanted to work for a small office. I wanted to be in a growing area of New Jersey — which seemed like Somerville, at the time. And I wanted to do land use.

"I took a job here [at the firm of Woolson Anderson Peach, in Somerville], and I've been with the same firm, through several name changes, since 1972."

Somerville, the seat of Somerset County, is just a stone's throw from Mark's hometown of New Providence, New Jersey, where his father had served for a dozen years on the local school board. The only sheepskin hanging on the wall in Mark's office is his junior high school diploma — signed by his father, who was then president of the board of education.

"I was raised to value public service," Mark said, which is one of the reasons he is so proud that his firm represents several nearby municipalities and local land-use boards. ■



Wagnerian staff from Kallista 1965: Mark Anderson (back row, 5th from left), Russ Johnson '67 M'72 (back row, leftmost), Richard "Dick" Mollette '67 (back row, 5th from right), Jim McKinley '65 (back row, 3rd from left), Van Bucher '67 (back row, rightmost).



authentically Dani

Dani Fava '00 is different. And she's 'beyond fine' with that.

A LOT HAS CHANGED FOR Danielle Delgado Fava '00 since her Wagner College commencement, half a lifetime ago.

Starting with her lawn care routine.

"I have a John Deere lawn tractor now," Dani said. "My favorite pastime now is putting on my overalls and riding that thing."

Dani Fava, who majored in business at Wagner College, is the head of strategic development for Envestnet, a 23-year-old financial technology firm with offices in suburban Berwyn, Pennsylvania.

Photographs: Matt Stanley

For Dani, life in a historic, rural hamlet outside Philly is still a novelty.

"I was born and raised on Staten Island," she told us. "I went to Catholic grammar and high school — very Catholic. Very traumatic."

"I was the only Hispanic person in my grade, and I was not out yet. I lived a great, big lie for a really long time."

"Even so," she reflected, "I don't know if I would have changed anything about my life, because I love where it led me."

Dani's college career started not on Grymes Hill, but at SUNY

Albany. Discipline issues forced the freshman to return to Staten Island, where Wagner offered her a transfer scholarship.

"My dad was the only one in his family to go to college," she said. "He made a nice career for himself, but his siblings were very much the opposite, just kind of bouncing around. I wanted the sort of stable life that my dad had, with a college degree, and I believed at the time that was the only way to do that."

At Wagner, Dani was strictly a commuter student. "I just went to classes," she said.

Her college career became especially challenging with her pregnancy.

"I stuck out like a sore thumb on campus," Dani said, "and it made it a little awkward for me to make friends and have conversations. I tried to stay as 'under the radar' as possible."

Through it all was her fascination with the world of business operations.

“I was very drawn to Wall Street, finance, accounting,” she said. “Actually, I loved accounting in college; I just understood math, any math-related economic business. I had some teachers that I absolutely loved at Wagner.”

Dani’s Wagner education combined with her inclination toward independent problem solving to guide the development of her real-world career.

“I don’t like to learn how to do something,” she explained, “I like to *figure out* how to do something and create my own solution.”

And that’s exactly what Dani did on her very first job out of college.

At the time she started work, she already had a young daughter she was dropping off at daycare very early each morning.

“I worked for an investment manager,” Dani said, “and one part of my job was to prepare reports every morning and go drop them on everybody’s desk. I had to get in early to get this done before the stock market opened, and I’m thinking, ‘There’s got to be a better way.’”

And there was.

“We worked on this [software] platform where you type in commands to get it to respond to you,” she said. “I learned how to get into the system, using its own language, and schedule jobs to run so that, when I came in, these reports would be sitting on the printer, all ready. All I had to do was put a staple in them and drop them on everyone’s desks.”

During diagnostic checks, the software manufacturer discovered what she was doing. They offered

her a job, and her career in financial technology innovation was born.

That turning point in her life was followed, a few years later, by another.

Dani’s career was on a roll. She had married; a son had been born.



Photo above, left to right: Camryn O’Neill, Jesse Goldstein, Frank Fava and Dani Fava.

“I have learned through trial and error that I can no longer cover up who I am, nor do I want to, nor will I spend energy doing it.”

“I have to say, the moment of coming out was a turning point in my career,” she said. “Up until then, I was faking it — faking being in a happy marriage and having this sort of typical nuclear family. I lied to everyone, and I covered [up] every day. I tried to look the part, be the part, have the same kind of story as everyone else — and I hid everything about myself. That takes

a lot of energy and planning ... and living in fear sucks!

“After I came out and started living a more authentic life and sharing more with people, that’s when my career sort of skyrocketed. The weight of being something that I was not was just lifted — and then, all of a sudden, my uniqueness became my superpower.”

Stints in product development at Fiserv Investment Services and Citibank led to a long stretch at TD Ameritrade in fintech (financial services technology). In the course of leading highly engaging training sessions for hundreds of fellow fintech professionals on products she had helped develop, Dani became something of a video sensation, with a strong following whenever she appeared as someone’s podcast guest.

All of which led her to where she is today, living in a 220-year-old National Historic Register home and working close to the top of her field at Envestnet, putting powerful, hi-tech investment tools in the hands of more and more ordinary people.

Successful.

And happy.

“I have learned through trial and error that I can no longer cover up who I am,” Dani said, “nor do I want to, nor will I spend energy doing it. I just go out there. I am myself, and people accept me or they don’t, and I don’t spend any time worrying about it. I can work with anyone.

“I really believe my different point of view and my different experiences make me valuable to the company, to the industry. It’s what makes me different, or else I would just be like everyone else.

“And I’m fine — no, beyond fine — with that.” ■



ClassNotes

Updates from old friends across the generations

1947

Agnes H. (Thomson) Piscopo was honored in September as the oldest living resident of Warwick, Massachusetts during the town's Old Home Days celebration. She was profiled in the Greenfield Recorder. Agnes, who was born and raised on Staten Island, became a nurse at the Marine Hospital, marrying John Piscopo in 1949. "Most of [her] career was spent as a public school nurse and teacher in a small town outside of Ithaca, New York," Zack DeLuca wrote in his profile of Agnes.

1957

Three years ago **Salvatore Tuzzo** retired from his Mountain View, California physician's practice after 53 years. He remains active

with skiing, hiking and his four grandchildren.

1959

Doris Olson Smith says, "We are delighted to welcome our first great-grandchild, a lovely little girl whose name is Ella James."

1961

Carolyn Miller Barrick says that "Wagner's nursing program prepared us very well! I went from staff nursing to assistant director." She has retired.

Connie Lange Lord has retired after substitute teaching for 19 years. "In retirement," she says, "I'm enjoying quilting, gardening, reading and renewing friendships." Last year, after not seeing her four sons and their families for more than a year, she hosted a reunion in New

Jersey. "What a joyous day that was!"

1965

It was a packed house — or, rather, tent — at the memorial service held this summer for the family, friends and admirers of the late **Brian Morris**. The service, deferred by the pandemic, was held on the grounds of the Staten Island Zoo, where Brian had worked as a publicist before his death in June 2020. Among the luminaries remembering Brian was an array of leading Staten Island politicians and community leaders with whom he had worked.

1967

Russ Johnson has published his 18th novel, "The Virgo Paradox," a sci-fi thriller set in the midst of the next

pandemic (!) punctuated by the arrival of a visitor from outer space. In a cover blurb, Harvard physicist Avi Loeb calls Russ's new book "a wonderfully written thriller that passes with flying colors the threshold of scientific plausibility. It expands our imagined horizons for what other actors on the cosmic stage might be doing." Russ says that "in the book's acknowledgments I credit Professor Greg Falabella for help he gave me with some fancy calculations." The book is available on Amazon.

Bruce Thomas had already lived through two careers — teaching in Jersey City, N.J., for 34 years, and working for the Hudson County (New Jersey) Office of Aging for 15 years — when he embarked on his third career: working as a substitute school crossing guard for Union Township, New

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 31, 2021.

Content: Wagner welcomes your news and updates. 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: Photos must be clear and of good quality. They will be returned at your request (please attach your address to the photo). Low resolution images will not be accepted.

Knot Notes

Jersey. “At 75, I see no reason to stay home and be idle,” Bruce said, “when I can be out in the fresh air for a couple of hours a day helping children get to and from school safely.” *(This note was mis-placed in the last issue, so we are running it again with Bruce’s correct graduation year. We regret the error. — Editor)*

1969

Last spring **Philip Straniere** ’69 M’73 participated in a panel conducted by the National Judicial College. The panelists, all American judges, taught Ukrainian judges about the operations of small-claims courts. A Wagner history graduate, Phil was a supervising judge of the New York City Civil Court on Staten Island and an acting justice of the New York Supreme Court. He retired from the bench at the end of 2017.

1976

In 2020 **Charles Bauer** retired from Commack (New York) High School as a history teacher and coach of the golf and soccer teams. He’s kept busy with kayaking, biking and hiking, and he’s started his own website (theriverchaz.com) to encourage others to take up an active lifestyle. He’s writing a children’s book that he hopes to publish in coming months. Tony Award-winning actress and Wagner College Theatre alumna **Randy Graff** will be joining Billy



Wagner College 2017 graduates Matt Stanisci and Meg Haase were married on Oct. 2 in Galloway, New Jersey, just outside Atlantic City. “We met first night of freshman year in Harborview during our orientation,” Matt told us just before their wedding. “We joined Greek life together, both presidents of our respective organizations (Theta Chi and Alpha Sigma Alpha), and now we will finally be saying, ‘I do.’” Check out their wedding website at www.zola.com/wedding/astaniscistory.

Crystal in the musical adaptation of “Mr. Saturday Night,” opening this March on Broadway.

1977

Lynne Varteresian Karanfil, who has been a nurse in the field of infection prevention for over 35 years, recently won the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America’s 2021 Advanced Practice Infection Prevention Award. “I am proud of this award,” she says, “since it embodies all the people who supported me starting from Wagner College and my mentor Professor Julia Barchitta, who was a close friend and persuaded me to go to Wagner.”

Carrie Ceder Root has published a new book, “The Other Soft Skill: How

to Solve Workplace Challenges with Generational Intelligence,” available on Amazon.

1978

Nick Kvasic was the recipient of the 2020 Bobby Thomson Ambassador Award at the long-delayed Staten Island Sports Hall of Fame outing and reunion last May. A three-year starting soccer midfielder at Wagner and the first soccer captain at his high school alma mater, Port Richmond, Nick was honored for his community work as a coach, referee and game ambassador. He won six Public School Athletic League city championships and two Metro Bowl titles in 34 seasons as the girls’ soccer coach at New Dorp High

School on Staten Island, and he started or revived programs at three other Staten Island high schools as well as the College of Staten Island.

Jodi Pulice, a 2013 Wagner Alumni Fellow in business, was recently accorded two additional honors: She was one of the two honorees featured in the 2021 New York City Columbus Day parade by the Columbus Citizens Foundation, and she won the 2020 Bernard H. Mendik Lifetime Leadership in Real Estate Award from the Real Estate Board of New York. Jodi is the founder and CEO of JRT Realty Group, the largest full-service woman-owned commercial real estate services firm in the country.

In October **Philip Summers** took over as executive director of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce in Middlebury, Vermont. Phil was executive director of the Virginia Youth Soccer Association, having previously worked in marketing and sales for Cablevision, Sirius Radio and the National Football League.

1980

In September, **Claire Regan** was voted president-elect of the national Society of Professional Journalists. She will become SPJ president at the organization’s annual meeting this fall.

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1981

Sharon Stakofsky-Davis and husband Marc Davis welcomed two new grandchildren into their family last year, Eloise Ruth Davis and Jacob Kade Davis. Sharon says, “We are thrilled!”

1985

Nurse practitioner and Air Force 30-year veteran **Karen Sclafani** '85 M'98 is pursuing her doctorate.

1986

In August **Wade Appelman** was named president and chief operating officer of Aceinna, a sensor manufacturing company based in Andover, Massachusetts. Previously, Wade served as vice president and general manager of the depth-sensing division of ON Semiconductor following the acquisition of SensL Technologies, where he was vice president of sales and marketing.

Laurie Thurston Johnson is a nurse practitioner in pulmonary pediatrics at the Golisano Children's Hospital in Rochester, New York.

Jim McGrath, Pete Radigan '87 and Janet Mauk have published “Tragedy to Triumph: The Story of Tom's Heart,” recounting the story of how Jan allowed surgeons to transplant the heart of her 16-year-old son, Tom, to

save Pete's life in 1997. The book had its genesis in a 2016 reunion between Pete and TKE brother Jim McGrath, a writer based in Alexandria, Virginia. The book is available on Amazon.

1987

In October **Patricia Celardo** became chief financial officer for the borough of Fanwood, New Jersey. Patricia had worked for the borough for 15 years as bookkeeper, assistant treasurer and deputy registrar. She lives in Fanwood and has two grown children.

In September **Kevin Edick** M'87 retired after working for 33 years as an athletic administrator and head baseball coach for the SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Marcy, New York. Kevin's collegiate

baseball coaching career started with his graduate assistantship at Wagner. In addition to creating the baseball program at SUNY Poly, Kevin coached five other sports over the years: golf, bowling, women's basketball, men's soccer and softball.

Pete Radigan, Jim McGrath '86 and Janet Mauk have published “Tragedy to Triumph: The Story of Tom's Heart,” recounting the story of how Jan allowed surgeons to transplant the heart of her 16-year-old son, Tom, to save Pete's life in 1997. The book had its genesis in a 2016 reunion between Pete and TKE brother Jim McGrath, a writer based in Alexandria, Virginia. The book is available on Amazon.

1988

In July **John Chaney** was inducted into the Capital Region Football Hall of Fame. An all-star at Albany (New York) High School, John went on to become a 2011 Seahawk Hall of Fame member for several big plays that helped Wagner capture the 1987 Division III national championship.

Andrew Ostrowski published his first book, “E-Notes and Anecdotes: 50 First Impressions of Musical Masterpieces Through the Ages,” available on Amazon.

1989

In August **Monique Howard** was named inaugural senior director of women's health initiatives at the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Global Women's Health. Monique has been a public health practitioner with a focus on women's health for over 25 years. She earned her bachelor's degree in microbiology from Wagner, her master's degree in public health from East Stroudsburg University and her education doctorate in human sexuality education from Penn.

1990

Aaron W. Dobbs, a trustee of the Coy Public Library in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania since February 2019, was profiled in the



When Wagner College Theatre alumna Debby Field Barri '88 came to town in October for a Broadway Teachers Workshop, she called up Charlie Siedenburg to see if he could round up some Waggies for an impromptu reunion. The response? Of course he could! Left to right: Michael Walsh '91, Rose Cortico '90, Christian Miller '84, Nicholas Buchholz '17, Michael Poulin '90, Lee Ann McCarthy '86, Stefania Cardinali '89, Charlie Siedenburg '95 and Debby Barri '88.



Christina Rosso-Schneider '13 is the proprietor of an independent bookstore outside Philadelphia, A Novel Idea on Passyunk, and the author of a new book, "Creole Conjure." Published by Maudlin House, a Chicago-based small press. Christina's book was launched with a special outdoor event on Halloween Eve – most appropriate for a short story collection that mixes and matches folklore and fairy tales to create a unique mythos of its own. Christina's writing has been nominated for Best of the Net, Best Small Fictions and the Pushcart Prize. For more information, visit christina-rosso.com, or find her on [Twitter@Rosso_Christina](https://twitter.com/Rosso_Christina).

Shippensburg News-Chronicle. Aaron was characterized as "an avid public library patron since the early 1970s [and] an eager reader, but not an eager student until after high school." After graduating from Wagner, Aaron earned a master's degree in library science from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and he has spent his career working as a librarian.

1991

In July **Walter Thorne** became market president and publisher of the Albany (New York) Business Review, one of 44 local business publications owned by American City Business Journals. Walter joined the Albany Business Review in 2019 as advertising director,

working previously for Advance Media and several local companies in the Capital Area. He lives in Malta, New York, with his family.

1992

Psychology graduate **Esther (Behar) Giordano**, who earned her master's degree in speech language pathology from Kean University, has produced "Junganew: A Herd of Sounds," an interactive speech/sound learning



platform, app and book that teach word sounds with stories about colorful, playful animals and the sounds associated with them. Visit junganew.com for more information. Esther and her husband, **Thomas Giordano**, have two grown daughters.

1994

In October **Bartholomew Cambria** was appointed deputy executive director of Staten Island University Hospital. Bart first joined SIUH in 1994 as a physician assistant in the Emergency Department. He took his first leadership role at SIUH in 2006, and in 2018 was named senior director of patient/customer experience and cultural leader. During the pandemic, Bart served as incident commander in charge of creating a field hospital at the South Beach Psychiatric Center that operated through the first two Covid surges in one of the hardest-hit boroughs of New York City.

1995

Charlie Siedenburg, with assistance from Nicholas

Gerrity '21, directed Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" for Staten Island's Spotlight Theatre Company in November at the New Dorp Moravian Church Parish House.

2000

Former weekend "Fox & Friends" TV host **Jedediah "A.J." Bila** has published "Dear Hartley," a book of letters to her son, with Center Street, a Hachette Group imprint known for signing conservative authors. Before joining Fox News in 2013, she was a high school academic dean and Spanish teacher at a private New York City school.

2001

Last summer **Kurt Alger**, a professional Broadway theatrical costume and wig designer, turned his online home décor business into a brick-and-mortar store, Vanity House Designs, in the new Empire Outlets mall, adjacent to the Staten Island Ferry depot. Actor and historical interpreter **Meridoc "Doc"**

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Naofall "Ming" Folahan '14, assistant coach of the Edmonton (Alberta) Stingers, proudly holds the team's national championship trophy on Aug. 30. It was the second championship in a row for the Stingers in the Canadian Elite Basketball League, the all-Canadian pro league founded in 2017. Just one week after the Stingers' big win, Ming was named assistant men's basketball coach at St. Mary's University in his home town of Halifax, Nova Scotia. Congratulations, Ming!

HISTORY MAKERS



Harold Haas '39 H'58

By Lee Manchester



I

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF WAGNER MAGAZINE, we ran an in-depth story about a crucial period in the college's history: the occupation of Cunard Hall in

April 1970 by a group of Black students, and the retribution taken upon them by the college.

Central to the entire episode was a little-known administrator, Harold Haas, a 1939 Wagner graduate and the recipient of an honorary doctorate from the college in 1958.

The historical record is clear: During a tense standoff between Haas and a large group of Black students in his office, he believed that the students were holding him hostage (though both the students and their faculty adviser, who was present during the confrontation, said otherwise). This resulted in the students' expulsion from Wagner — despite the fact that, a year earlier, a similar group of White student activists who had confronted Haas in his office under very similar circumstance faced no disciplinary measures at all.

But I knew nothing more about Haas himself than what was reported about him in the newspaper coverage of the day — and he died in 2016, so I couldn't ask him any questions.

And I had a few.

What was Harold Haas taught about race as a child? Did he actually march with Martin Luther King Jr., as several stories said? And what did Dean Haas, himself, think about the issues that were so important to our students back then?

Then, after the Cunard story ran, I received a surprising email: Harold Haas's daughter, Carolyn Haas Henry '66, had a copy of her father's memoirs — and she wondered if I would like to read it.

My response: You bet I would!

Carolyn's father was a man of his time, for good and for bad, and was deeply committed to his Lutheran faith. Born in 1917 in Union, New Jersey, his world was a strictly segregated one. While growing up, virtually the only Black people Harold ever met were the two Black men who graduated with him from Wagner College in 1939.

"In spite of my limited racial contacts," Haas said, "I found myself growing beyond my background."

Harold wrote about an incident burned into his memory from the mid-1950s, when he was pastor of a Lutheran church in Jersey City. A Black guest had worshipped with his congregation during Lent.

"I suspect this had been the first time in the long history of that congregation that a Black person had attended (or wanted to attend) a church service," Harold wrote. "The general reaction was curious but friendly."

But not everyone welcomed this guest.

"One of the church council members informed me that the minute a Black person became a member, he and his family would leave," Harold recalled.

"I informed him that the minute a Black person was refused membership, I would be gone.

"So, I hope the time comes soon when one of us will leave," Pastor Haas said.

After serving in Jersey City, Harold became executive secretary of the Lutheran Church in America's Board of Social Ministry, a position in which he served from 1962 until 1966. It was in this capacity that Haas attended both the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where he heard Martin Luther King Jr. deliver his "I Have a Dream" speech, and a 1965 Selma, Alabama, march with King from the Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church to the local courthouse.

"IN SPITE OF MY LIMITED RACIAL CONTACTS," HAAS SAID, "I FOUND MYSELF GROWING BEYOND MY BACKGROUND."

"I don't want to give the impression that we were leaders in this struggle," Haas wrote. "But we were participants. Some of the real heroes were the bishops (then presidents) of the southern Lutheran synods. They had to live with the struggle every day amid competing claims and anger."

This was the Harold Haas who, as a top Wagner administrator in 1970, was faced with responding to our Black students' demands for greater access and support from the college.

"The impact the whole thing made on me," Harold concluded, "was because I was emotionally divided in myself: the College could not run with such tactics; I felt I had some understanding of the injustices that had motivated the students."

Harold Haas's memoir provided me with greater insight into the previously undisclosed conflicts of a man of goodwill — and of his time — who struggled to do the right thing for his college as well as his students at a moment when those two things appeared to be mutually exclusive. He was neither a hero nor a villain — just a human. ■

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Burkhardt produced a video presentation on “The Battle of Connecticut Farms and the Death of Hannah Caldwell” last May for the Madison (New Jersey) Historical Society. The video included a tour of the Caldwell Parsonage, now home of the Union Township Historical Society, given by Doc in the role of the Rev. James Caldwell.

2004

In September **Candice Guardino** brought her semiautobiographical comedy show, “Italian Bred,” home to the St. George Theatre on her native Staten Island. For more about Candice, visit her website at candiceguardino.com. **Robert Trama** is head operations manager at Fodera Guitars in Brooklyn, where he has worked since 2009. Previously he was scenic carpenter and assistant technical director at the Juilliard School. Rob lives with his wife, Alison Cappuccio Trama '03, in Marine Park, Brooklyn, with their daughters Annabelle (9) and Scarlett (3).

2005

Paul Marrone Jr. won a decisive victory in November’s election for one of two New York State Supreme Court seats on Staten Island. From 2011

through 2017, Marrone was chief of staff for another Wagner alum, New York State Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis M’10, who currently represents Staten Island in Congress.

2006

In October **Diane Recinos** M’06 was named interim president of Berkeley College in Woodland Park, New Jersey. Recinos began her career at Berkeley in 1992 as director of financial aid for the college’s Woodbridge, New Jersey, campus, later taking on expanded roles in financial aid, technology and analytics. She previously served as senior vice president for enrollment management. **Lauren Lebowitz Stanton** has opened an online jewelry restoration business, Novali New York, based in Freeport, Long Island. To find out more, visit the business’s website at novaliny.com.

2007

During last year’s Pride Month, the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center Newsroom featured a profile story, “Meet **Ben Hegel**, a Proud and Fierce Family Man” (<https://bit.ly/3x1TaPP>). A senior program coordinator for two Sloan Kettering Institute research programs, Ben is married with two children. Last summer Seahawk track alumnus **Jason Paderon**



Fabia Maramotti '18 M’20 was the women’s champion at Italy’s first Ironman Triathlon competition, held on Sept. 17 in Cervia, an Adriatic seaside village in the Emilia-Romagna region. She was also the women’s champion at last year’s Ironman Arizona triathlon on Nov. 21. Maramotti, the top Seahawk finisher at the 2018 USA Triathlon Collegiate National Championship, hails from Reggio Emilia, Italy and lives in New York.

took over as head coach for the cross country and track and field programs at his alma mater, Moore Catholic High School on Staten Island. The Colonia, New Jersey, resident, a former sports writer and photographer for the Staten Island Advance, previously started the track program at Berkeley College’s Manhattan campus. He is a manager at Verizon in Menlo Park. Jason and his wife Coleen have a young daughter.

2008

Seahawk water polo standout **Elisabeth “Billy” (Hoelck) Pugliese**, dean of counseling at the Meadows School in Las Vegas, Nevada, earned her Ph.D. in educational leadership

last August from Texas A&M. Billy and her very proud husband John are parents to Frankie Blue (4) and Ricky Sol (15 months).

2009

Former Student Government Association president **Harry S. Jackson** has been named partner in the corporate department and gaming-law practice group at Fox Rothschild LLP. He represents casino owners and operators, internet gaming companies and other interests in the gaming industry. In May, **Allen Koehler** and husband Brian moved to Delaware in connection with Allen’s new position as assistant vice president for enrollment management at Salisbury

University in Salisbury, Maryland.

2011

After graduating, **Aneta Kielkucki** lived in Spain for three years, where she met her husband, Javier González Vázquez, and worked as an English teacher. In 2014 she earned her master's degree from Hunter College in teaching English to speakers of other languages. She is currently an English as a New Language teacher in Brooklyn and will be mentoring new ENL teachers for the first time.

2013

Wagner College Theatre alumna **Melanie Brook** played Buzzy in the Disney Channel's reboot of the Halloween movie, "Under Wraps," about a mummy discovered by three tweenage friends in a neighbor's basement. **Allie Dufford**, associate company manager for Broadway's "Moulin Rouge: The Musical," was beyond excited the morning after last fall's Tony Awards. "Four years on 'Moulin Rouge,'" she posted on her Instagram. "It's been tough. And it's been well worth it. Last night we celebrated the years and years of hard work. And OMG we won ten Tonys!"

2014

In October **Meagan Sills M'14** was named deputy executive director of Staten Island University Hospital. Meagan began her career at SIUH in 2009 as a graduate medical education coordinator. In 2013 she was named administrative director of research. Meagan earned her Executive MBA from Wagner in 2014. Since 2018 she has fulfilled several leadership roles for SIUH's Prince's Bay campus, including associate executive director of hospital operations.

2016

Nursing graduate **Alaina Bontales**, who works as clinical director of patient care for inpatient oncology at Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, New Jersey, was honored by the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore last summer as one of eight Phenomenal Women Under 40.

2017

Seahawk football right tackle **Greg Senat** was waived from the Cleveland Browns' injured reserve list in September, freeing him to join the Indianapolis Colts' practice squad in October.

2018

Ben Lucas, a Seahawk quarterback and Student Government Association vice president, has amassed

an extraordinary amount of experience in just a few years, including work on U.S. Senator Susan Collins's successful 2020 re-election campaign. In September, Ben joined the Maine State Chamber of Commerce Advocacy Team as government relations specialist on energy and environmental issues.

Billy Martin, who has served as a volunteer in the Huntington (New York) Fire Department since 2018, was named HFD's 2020 Firefighter of the Year in September.

Pittsburgh native **Daniel O'Neill** joined the Fort Wayne, Indiana law firm of Barrett McNagny LLP as a law clerk last summer. Dan had finished his second year of law studies at Indiana University's Mauer School of Law, where he was vice president of the Business Law Society and submission editor for the Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies.

After graduating from Wagner with a nursing degree, **Jacqueline R. Otake** joined the staff of Johns Hopkins Hospital, working in the cardiac ICU until the pandemic required that her ward become a dedicated Covid ECMO unit (pumping the patient's blood through an external artificial lung). For much of the last year, Jackie worked as a travel nurse in Texas, New Mexico and California. Last fall she entered the doctoral nurse anesthesia program at Cal State

Fullerton, from which she expects to graduate in 2024.

2019

This summer **Conor Trollo** graduated from the NYPD Police Academy.

2020

In October a short play by **Savannah Beckford** was part of StreamOn Productions' online presentation of four 10-minute plays on race, identity and theater. The play, "Carnivorous," is about two sisters who reunite over dinner to discuss the absence of their White mother. Savannah is currently enrolled in the Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in Peckham, London, U.K., and working on her performance master's degree in acting from the University of East Anglia.

2021

Nicholas Gerrity assisted Charlie Siedenburg '95 in directing Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" for Staten Island's Spotlight Theatre Company in November at the New Dorp Moravian Church Parish House. Seahawk football defensive lineman **Chris Williams**, signed to the Indianapolis Colts in August, played four games and was re-signed to the practice squad in October. The Indianapolis Star profiled him in its Sunday, Sept. 5 edition (<https://bit.ly/3FzZoJs>).

In Memoriam

Celebrating lives that enriched the Wagner family

ALUMNI

Dorothee Heins Holmstrup Bryant '41
Michael Perfect '42
Walter Boecher Jr. '43
Muriel Christian Johnson '43
Robert L. Greenhill '45
Alice Tregde Johnson '48
William G. Luger '49
Donald C. Betzler '50
Lydia P. Peters Jacobs '50
Howard L. Anderson '51
Emil Cenci '51
Arne K. Lorentzen '51
Robert C. Kellner '53
Richard W. Hahn '53 M'57
Roswell S. Coles '55
John F. Schick '55
Margaret H. Farlow '56
Una Louise "Chou" Lawrence '56
Jane T. Tilson Brier '57
Annabel Bassett Schwartz '57
Vivian C. Mattson Corgan '58
Joan Kinsley Hall M'59
Augusta Chiarello Loddings '59
Herman W. Baruth Jr. '60
John A. Bianco '60
Charlotte A. Furman '60
James F. Hamilton M'60
Carey Ellen (Boone) Nelson M'60
Robert Larson '61

Smedley W. Lynn '61
Shirley M. Gifford Mulligan '61
Eleanor L. Warren Derr '62
Richard H. Ackerson '63
Robert H. Mertens '63
V. Leonard Codella '64
Marilyn Fehl Haug '64
Harold F. Robinson '64
Roy W. Andersen '65
Dorothy Wasielewski Heller '65
Joseph F. McCarthy Jr. '66
Andrea N. Natale Pecoraro '67 M'84
Edward Joseph Bottone M'68
Jane Harrison Casey '68
Gary Dehmcke '68
Michael Murray '68
Christine De Ricco Marino '69
Richard A. Pirrera '69 M'75
William Hayes Jr. '70
Andrew Senese Jr. '70 M'73
Susan Lukawski Ruzsala '71
E. Allen Breuning '72
Ann Marie Di Bona '72
Kathy P. Larsen Miracco '72 M'74
Arlene M. Schroeder '72
Cal Tribiano '72
Campbell S. Mills '73
Karen Nowell Requa '73
Guy Sconzo '73
Jennifer (Richter) Straniere '73
Robin V. Alston '74

Alana Cerrone Long '76
Brian Galligan '77
Dorothy E. Cumby '78
Louis M. DiLuzio '84
Laurent F. Osipovich M'85
Daniel P. Burak '92
Carole L. Borruso Bruce M'94

FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGE

Arnold Beiles
Paul J. Bittler
Phyllis Cassetti
Anthony J. Cassetti
Eleanor Conforti
Richard C. Herrmann
Barbara Roderick
Robert Turner
George M. Wambold
Lucille Waters

FACULTY & STAFF

Kyra M. Dashe
Frank Fontanarosa
Bill Russo
Mimi Stern-Wolfe

*Information received from
May 1 through October 31, 2021*





Eleanor Conforti

Eleanor Conforti, a great friend of Wagner College, died on Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021. Born Feb. 2, 1931, in Brooklyn, she was the only child of Mary and Frank Finelli. Eleanor earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Hunter College and relocated to Staten Island in 1963, becoming a public school teacher and president of the Staten Island Federation of PTAs.

Staten Island Advance columnist Carol Ann Benanti called Eleanor "a courageous and passionate advocate for Staten Island's charitable causes," saying "she championed health and education issues, especially those related to the welfare of children."

One of the causes Eleanor championed was Wagner College's DaVinci Society, which she co-chaired with former Staten Island borough president Ralph Lamberti. The organization showcased Italian culture and community leadership at its annual scholarship fundraising dinner.

Eleanor won many distinctions throughout her life, the greatest of which was probably her recognition as a Staten Island Advance Woman of Achievement in 1977.



Muriel C. Johnson '43

After the fall 2021 issue of Wagner Magazine was distributed, we received news that **Muriel Christian Johnson '43** had died on Dec. 16, 2020, just one month before her 101st birthday. Muriel was the widow of **Werner E. Johnson '41**, a naval officer during World War II, who passed away in 2004. Both were native Staten Islanders.

The couple lived on Longview Road, just a block from the campus of their alma mater, in a house they built a couple of years after their 1943 wedding. Both of the Johnsons were actively involved in Wagner activities for the rest of their lives, and Wagner's beautiful campus served as a safe and friendly playground for their three children. Werner, a great supporter of the Seahawk athletic program and a founder of the original Touchdown Club, was honored after his death with the naming of the Werner Johnson Coaches Award for Leadership, given to a student athlete. Muriel was a longtime member of the Wagner College Guild and a faithful patron of our theater program.

Both had careers as New York City educators; in addition, Werner taught science classes in Wagner's night-school program in the late 1940s.



Guy Sconzo '73

Guy Sconzo '73, who died in April 2020, was posthumously honored last year with the naming of the Guy M. Sconzo Early College High School in Humble, Texas, north of Houston. Sconzo, who retired as Humble school superintendent in 2016 after 15 years of leadership, worked in education for four decades, serving students in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma and Texas. He led the Humble district through the opening of 14 new schools and, in 2007, was named Texas State Superintendent of the Year. Guy is survived by his wife Diane Greico Sconzo '73.

Creating in Confidence

by Vinnie Potestivo '99

When I pulled up to Harborview Hall with my sturdy word processor on my first day at Wagner College, I knew only one thing: I had chosen this small school up on the hill because of its newly installed computer center. Soon after unpacking my brand-new quilt and newly purchased flip-flops, I made my way to Spiro Hall and quickly befriended the small team that helped students troubleshoot their tech issues.

Little did I know that the skill set I was building in Spiro from 1995 onward would help me unlock the creativity that lived within this tech-savvy kid and give me the foundation to launch my career as a media multi-hyphenate. Spreadsheets and databases would quickly turn into show decks, TV pitches, casting calls and talent “one sheets” that would be used to propagate and propel the careers of some of the biggest brand names in modern pop culture, including Mandy Moore, Ashton Kutcher, Beyoncé Carter, Jessica and Ashlee Simpson, “The Osbournes,” “The Challenge” and “Wild 'n Out.”

The Spiro Computer Center was a safe haven where I spent hundreds of hours learning about webpages, central processing units, Java and SQL. It was there I mastered this new thing called

“The Spiro Computer Center was a safe haven where I spent hundreds of hours learning about webpages, central processing units, Java and SQL.”

Microsoft. It's there I became fluent in this creative program called Photoshop. I learned how to admin a server, lay LAN lines, and replace printer paper like a champ. When VHS tapes went obsolete, I knew how to convert to digital. I helped build Wagner College's first website; I helped assign email addresses to students; and when everyone suddenly needed a digital photo, I was there at the scanner helping them turn their glossy hard copies into jpegs.

Nowadays we all have mini computer centers in our pockets or pocketbooks, and despite each generation's gripes against technology, we've managed to

overcome the odds and find ways to connect in truly meaningful and creative ways we'd never before imagined. Because of that, new stars are born. Dermatologists, contractors, real estate agents and small business owners have taken over television, and their audiences want more.

It's been my life's mission to help people master ways to create and stand out in media, no matter what your technical, creative or business background is.

In the fall of 1998 I launched my current agency, Vinnie Potestivo Entertainment Inc., out of my dorm room in Guild Hall. For \$20 I secured a small advertisement in Backstage Magazine, a well-known entertainment industry publication, that prompted actors to send me their headshots and resumes. In hindsight, I wish I hadn't listed my on-campus student address as the destination for Hollywood and Broadway's hopes and dreams, as the influx of mail ultimately raised some eyebrows and red flags on campus ... but I was off to a start.

My first project was a staged reading of a play written by my roommate Tom Baldinger. The second project was to source a group of 20-somethings for a special at MTV, which ultimately led to my decade-long career with the iconic Viacom brand.

My boss at MTV was — and is — a legend in unscripted programming. While I'm sure my eye and my energy had a lot to do with initially being hired, I am confident I wasn't asked to help launch MTV's first talent development department because of my limited experience or non-existent Rolodex. I was great at one-sheet summaries, editing, organizing media and tracking growth without letting pieces fall through the cracks.

I am so grateful for my technical skill set and the ability it's given me to help creatives organize, produce and present. Long before "can you send me a deck?" was corporate shorthand, I was writing pitches for shows that were being handed off to creative teams worldwide. When I needed to manage hotel assignments, talent riders and ever-changing media schedules for the iconic "MTV Spring Break" series, I was able to mine my experience as Wagner's choir president, where I had juggled travel logistics for more than 50 collegiate singers on our choir tour. Booking accommodations for A-list talent for "Spring Break" was a natural extension of those experiences with Wagner's Spring Break Choir Tour.

I often joke that the top two questions I get from my colleagues from within the entertainment industry are "Can you fix my email?" and "Can you fix my TV?" Lucky for me, the answer is (usually) yes. Those yes's have since turned into a prolific career in brand building and media strategy, allowing me to help



business owners tackle creative obstacles that come with today's ever-changing media landscape.

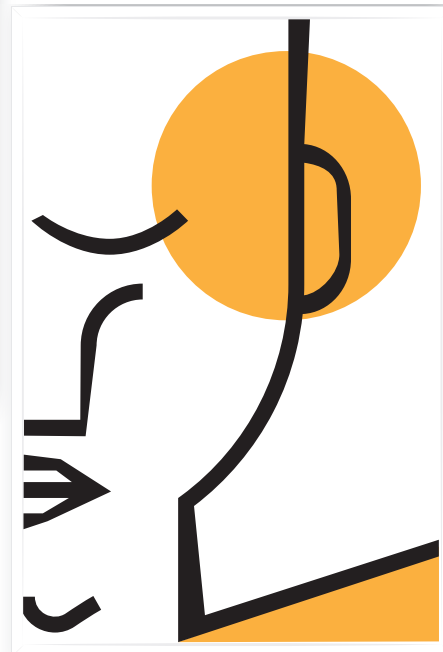
At Wagner I was able to put my technical skills to good use, which helped me gain the professional experience to find my footing as a leader and a communicator at large. My time as an entrepreneur and brand specialist have taught me that creativity is innate — but it can also be acquired and conditioned, if exercised.

When I advise colleagues on how they can build their brands in modern times — those financial advisors, lawyers, contractors, real-estate agents and small-business owners I mentioned earlier — I encourage them to create space.

Create space for your creativity to live and thrive.

You don't need to be an award-winning producer, host or artist to be an effective creative. You just need to create space.

Start with a blank page in your notebook, a new Google Doc or even a Post-It note. Give yourself the space (and your ego the grace) to create. And let go. Your next idea is right beneath the surface, waiting to be unlocked.



I was able to put my technical talents to good use at Wagner, which helped me flex my leadership skills, my ability to read a room, and my skill set to communicate at large.

Throughout my entire creative career, I've come to realize three truths about creativity: Creativity is innate. Creativity can be acquired. Creativity can be conditioned, if exercised.

Create space, and get started on that new creative project today! ■

Vinnie Potestivo '99 is a media brand adviser, personal brand strategist and content coach. His podcast (called "I Have a Podcast") seeks "to inspire and help you tap your inner creativity." You can find it wherever podcasts are distributed as well as on YouTube.

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All About Business

"I couldn't ask for a better program," said Samantha Marquez '23 when speaking about her experience in the Nicolais School of Business. Sam and her classmates were interviewed for a video to be shared with future Wagner students. See it for yourself by visiting wagner.edu/business-2022 or scan the QR code.