

# FRANKLIN COLLEGE

MAGAZINE | FALL 2021



## LEGACY AND VISION

Enjoy highlights from  
the Presidential  
Inaugural Celebration.

Pg. 6





*The Tower Tradition, begun in 2019, is a highlight of Welcome Week activities for first-year and transfer-students. The candlelight ceremony takes place on the Dame Mall ellipse, facing the east side of Old Main. A dramatic reading sheds light on the significant challenges Franklin College has overcome throughout its 187-year history, and encourages students to*



# LET IT SHINE



CHAD WILLIAMS

recognize the inner strengths that will enable persistence throughout their educational journey. College employees and guest alumni join in pinning students with a keepsake Old Main emblem and student-vocalists serenade the group with “Hail to Franklin” at the ceremony’s conclusion. Pictured are **Jailyn Wheatley ’25** and **Reese Otis ’25**.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Dear Alumni and Friends,

We celebrated Homecoming and Alumni Weekend, Oct. 12-17, and welcomed hundreds of proud Grizzlies home from across the country. Everywhere we turned, there were smiles and laughter, even handshakes and hugs. COVID is certainly not behind us, but we have learned to manage the environment and still enjoy most of the experiences that make small colleges like Franklin so very special.

These are not easy times for small liberal arts colleges. The challenges of COVID management, increased competition, concern over rising costs and impending population decline in traditional college-age individuals all contribute to the serious headwinds facing our sector of higher education.

However, I also see in the residual effects of the COVID experience an encouraging argument for the future prosperity of small private colleges. In many respects, only institutions like Franklin managed to preserve the essence of the traditional college experience safely and effectively during the height of the COVID challenge.

Students at Franklin were emphatic after the universal evacuation of campuses in the spring of 2020 that they wanted to be back on campus in person and would comply with whatever restrictions we thought necessary to ensure that safe return. Students held true to their word, and we managed in-person instruction and co-curricular experiences safely. The students and their parents felt reassured that a small campus could execute such a plan successfully, and we worked very hard to justify their confidence.

Academically, too, the reaction to the COVID phenomena has heightened student interest in and appreciation for the small college experience. The forced experiment in a virtual teaching/learning dynamic suggests that tomorrow's students will be even more eager for a personal, engaged college experience. Industry fears of students retreating to their laptops for higher education appear to have been not only exaggerated but also counterintuitive. Far too many high school students disengaged completely from remote learning. For many, academic achievement plummeted in response to the impersonal delivery of an experience best enabled by human interaction.

Parents forced into the role of surrogate teacher developed a renewed respect for the profession. They recognize not only the skills and talent required to be an effective teacher, but also the critical difference quality instruction and mentoring make in the academic development of their children.

Thus, it may well be that the pandemic will actually provide a tailwind for small private colleges like Franklin and the unique student experience only we can provide. I am very encouraged by the renewed excitement and appreciation of our current students and the high school students who visit our campus each day.

As we progress beyond the various types of distancing that have become commonplace during the COVID experience, students are taking a new and serious look at what they most value in their educational journey. That reflection is leading even more of them toward the small classes, personal attention and lifelong relationships best fostered on the campuses of small private institutions like Franklin College. We welcome them with open arms.

Sincerely,

**KERRY PRATHER**  
FRANKLIN COLLEGE PRESIDENT

# FRANKLIN COLLEGE

MAGAZINE | FALL 2021

## Volume LVII, No. 3

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### Franklin College Magazine

Published three times annually. Copyright by Franklin College.

### Background

Founded in 1834, Franklin College is a residential liberal arts and sciences institution located 20 minutes south of Indianapolis. Franklin offers a wide array of undergraduate majors as well as master's degree programs in Physician Assistant Studies and Athletic Training. The unique curriculum merges classroom instruction with immersive experiences, research opportunities and study-away programs. Our goal is to prepare career-ready graduates for today's global professions and those of the future. Small classes enable students to thrive through personal peer interaction and mentorship from professors who challenge and inspire them to think critically and perform confidently. Students participate in a vibrant co-curriculum that includes 21 NCAA Division III sports, Greek life, musical and theatre productions, and more than 40 student organizations. As the first college in Indiana to become coeducational with the admission of women, Franklin welcomes diversity of thought, belief and person into a community that values equity and inclusion. Franklin College maintains a voluntary association with the American Baptist Churches USA.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

Franklin College is committed to the principle and practice of equal opportunity for all its students, faculty, employees and applicants for admission and employment. For that reason, the College provides equal employment opportunities on the basis of merit and without regard to the individual's race, color, religion, gender, disability, age, national origin, marital status or sexual orientation, in accordance with state and federal laws and any other characteristic protected by law. The College prohibits, forbids and will not tolerate any verbal, physical or other conduct that belittles or demeans any individual on the basis of the above-listed statuses. All employees, managers, supervisors and job applicants are covered by this commitment. No person or employee, no matter his or her title or position, has the authority expressed, actual, apparent or implied to discriminate against any employee of the College. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, admission to and enrollment in Franklin College, including, but not limited to, recruitment, selection, hiring, benefits, educational policies, admission policies, financial aid, scholarship and loan programs, housing, athletic and other College-administered programs and activities.

### On the Cover

Franklin College President Kerry Prather (third from left) stands with spouse Cindy (his left) and their children, Robbie '17 and Katie '13.

PHOTO BY CHAD WILLIAMS





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Hundreds of Grizzlies returned to Franklin to be part of the Homecoming and Alumni Weekend tradition. See how they showed their college spirit!

# CELEBRATING LEGACY and VISION

On Saturday, Oct. 30, 2021, Franklin College inaugurated 17th President Kerry Prather, marking the pinnacle in a series of celebratory events across campus.

Recognizing the College for both its “esteemed past and unlimited future,” Prather delivered his inaugural address in the Spurlock Center to an enthusiastic crowd of faculty, staff, students, alumni, friends, local government officials and representatives of colleges and universities from across the Midwest.

Noting that an inaugural address is typically an opportunity for the president, a newcomer to the community, to introduce him or herself publicly for the first time, Prather, a Franklin College employee since 1982, focused instead on recognizing colleagues for their collaboration and teamwork.

Prather said, “Members of this community know me well. The successes we have shared over the past 21 months since I became president reflect the trust and camaraderie that we have developed over the many previous years of working together, focused on the best possible experience for our students and the best possible future for the institution.”

Prather also recognized his spouse, Cindy, and their children, **Katie '13** and **Robbie '17**, for their shared commitment to Franklin College. (See *related article, Page 10*.)

He said, “... The contributions I have sought to make at this wonderful place were never singular. Without question, the greatest reward of my work here and the greatest ingredient in whatever success that work has engendered, is the collective resolve, commitment and engagement

of my family. I did not say support, because that connotes a sideline role, peripheral to my efforts. Nothing could less accurately characterize their influence and our family’s relationship with Franklin College over the past 40 years.”

Prather’s gratitude also extended to retired college leaders.

“Beyond my family, I owe a special debt of gratitude to the three men who most directly prepared me for this role. Former Presidents Bill Martin, Paul Marion and Jay Moseley not only welcomed me into their senior leadership teams, but also into their confidence and friendship. They and many other colleagues too numerous to name have befriended and mentored me through the years. Any success I may have in this role also belongs to them.”

Prather’s remarks emphasized the College’s significance to students and to him, personally.

“I have stayed here for the same reasons so many others—scholar professors, staffers and trustees—have made this their ultimate destination. The work that goes on here is distinctive and transformational. It is personally rewarding and meaningful because it impacts our students and the world in unique and significant ways.

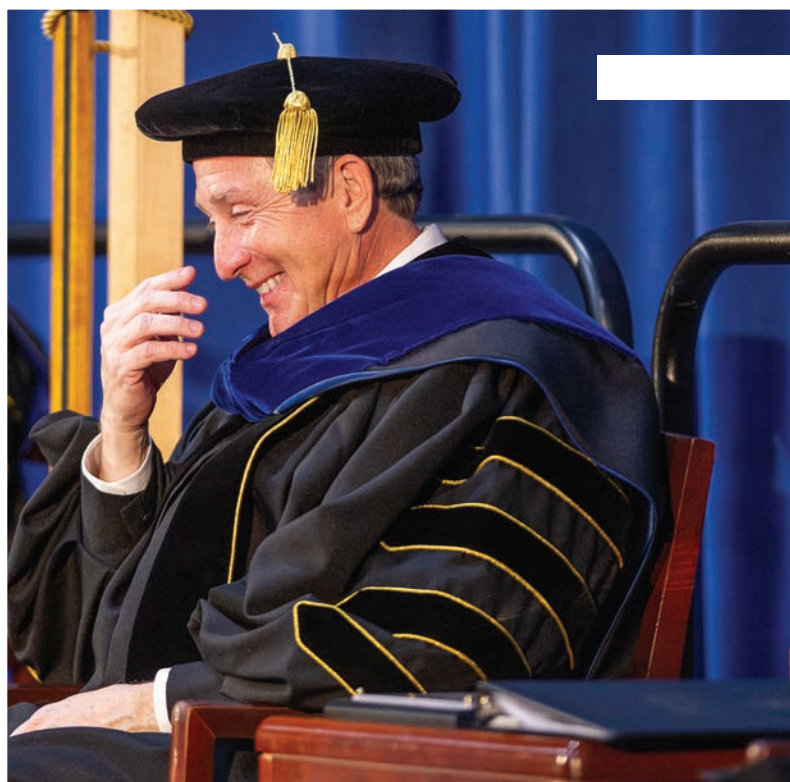
“Our talented faculty will continue to embrace new opportunities for preparing students to enjoy fulfilling lives and careers. And the indisputable evidence that the value of the Franklin College experience compounds itself over time





President Kerry Prather and Jim Due '82, emeritus board chair

PHOTOS BY CHAD WILLIAMS



Cindy and President Kerry Prather

**FIND INAUGURATION VIDEOS,  
PHOTOS AND FULL REMARKS AT  
[FRANKLINCOLLEGE.EDU](http://FRANKLINCOLLEGE.EDU).  
CLICK ON "ABOUT FC," THEN  
"OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT."**





**1: Pastor Paul Galbraith '09 gives the sermon as the Rev. Homer Ford and Franklin College Trustee Theresa (Ellis) Wright '72, M.D., listen from the stage.**

will continue to be reflected in the success of our graduates and their impact on the world.”

Prather concluded by sharing his optimism for the College’s future.

He said, “As we close in on our 200th anniversary, the soul of Franklin College continues to burn brightly. I am honored to sustain and nurture that soul while helping to position this great institution for a future that will demand and expect its very best. Let us all commit to being at once faithful to our legacy and ambitious in our vision for the future of Franklin College.”

Other inaugural events on campus included a reception hosted by Franklin College Trustees and leaders of Aspire Johnson County, an economic development and business chamber alliance that helps build community partnerships and leverage opportunities for success. President Prather’s remarks at the reception highlighted ways that the College and businesses in the area can collaborate to help students with professional development, and mutually benefit from their contributions to the workforce after graduation. Another celebratory event was a catered, campuswide tailgate that brought together students with college employees and their families for food, fun and prizes. A worship service at Richardson Chapel on campus included guest pastors, scripture readings by the Prather Family and friends and vocal performances by students and faculty. ■







- 2: The Aspire Johnson County Reception
- 3: Franklin College Trustee **Theressa (Ellis) Wright '72, M.D.**, and President Kerry Prather
- 4: **Jadyn List '24** sings at the Chapel service.
- 5: President Kerry Prather visits with students at the campus tailgate. **Vincent Fletcher '22** and **Luke Becker '24** face the camera.

PHOTOS BY CHAD WILLIAMS

# RINGING IN CELEBRATION

Guests and neighbors of the College were among the first to hear bells ringing across campus in celebration of President Prather's Inauguration Day. In perfect timing, as Kerry and Cindy Prather exited Spurlock Center after the ceremony, bells rang from the Old Main tower.

For some alumni and friends, it was a familiar sound, reminiscent of the days when hourly bells coincided with the start of classes, lunch break and close of the business day. Those bells actually were taped recordings played from a machine housed on the first floor of Old Main and amplified from speakers in the bell tower. The machine, the 680 Carillon, was a gift from **Roger D. Branigin 1923** (H.D. '56) and his spouse, Josephine, to honor several of their relatives who were Franklin College graduates.

Per the Branigins' wishes, the bells rang for the first time on Commencement Day, May 21, 1972. The 680 Carillon served the College for more than a decade, even surviving the chance fire that destroyed most of Old Main in 1985. According to *The Franklin* student newspaper archives, during Old Main's reconstruction, workers relocated the machine to the fourth floor, where it remained in operation until 1997, and then a new system was acquired. That system also played bell recordings, until the technology fell into disrepair. The College had been without bells since 2010.

As a gift to the College and in celebration of the inauguration, the Prather Family funded installation of a new electronic carillon system, the Adagio II. Coincidentally, it comes from the same world-renowned, family-owned maker, the Verdin Co., from which the Branigins made their purchase. The restoration of a beloved Franklin College tradition is a ringing success, with bells that play hourly and the "Alma Mater" resonating at the end of each day. Going forward, the bells also will ring to commemorate special occasions. The joyous bells will uplift the community for years to come. ■



# THE **BIG** PICTURE

By Amy (Kean) VerSteeg '96, Editor

## When President Kerry Prather looks around the Franklin College campus, it is as if turning the pages of his family photo album.

Over there, Richardson Chapel where he married Cindy, his spouse of 36 years now. Across the way, the Spurlock Center gymnasium where their children, **Katie '13** and **Robbie '17**, played hide and seek in the backdrop of basketball practices and nearly two decades later, in the same place, walked across stage in cap and gown to receive their bachelor's degrees.

West of the gymnasium, on the opposite end of campus, stands Old Main, where the Education Depart-

ment shaped by Cindy and integral to Katie's career preparation as an elementary school teacher anchors the third floor. One floor up from the Education Department, Robbie attended political science classes that helped guide him to the IU Robert H. McKinney School of Law and his career as an attorney.

Around practically every corner of the campus is a memory because for 40 years Kerry's life and his loved ones' lives have intertwined with the

college community, their Franklin Family.

"We would not have stayed or worked so hard, if not for thinking the work of the College was vital and important," Kerry said. "Our family's investment reflects how much we love the institution and believe in the mission of it."

From the start, Kerry and Cindy were intentional about connecting with the college community and involving their children.

"I always tell people Cindy and I decided we would do this the hardest way possible, which is we would do everything together. We did that through the entirety of my coaching career."

Their date nights often involved having popcorn and sodas while watching recruits play basketball in high school gyms. After they became parents, mealtimes and bedtimes flexed around basketball practices.

"The important part to note is that it wasn't me managing. Cindy did that while having an extraordinarily successful career in education. As much as I appreciate people recognizing my investment in the institution, underneath that, as part of that, she has worked twice as hard as I have," Kerry said.

Kerry's career always has involved education. After earning a bachelor's degree in English from Indiana University, he began teaching and coaching full time at secondary schools, while adding a master's degree in education to his resume. He had begun work toward a doctorate, when chance and opportunity intervened.

"The career transition to college was as much accidental as intentional," Kerry said. "One of my teaching colleagues and close friends, Mike



CHAD WILLIAMS

President Kerry and Cindy Prather



DeBord, came to Franklin for a job interview, and I jumped in the car with him. While he interviewed with Coach (Stewart “Red”) Faught, I had a conversation with Len Orr, then the men’s head basketball coach, and found out there was an opening. We hit it off, and the rest is history.”

Kerry joined the Franklin College staff in 1982 as assistant men’s basketball coach, and worked in the student affairs division. When Orr transitioned careers the next year, Kerry received an interim appointment to head coach. Halfway into that year, the appointment became permanent. In 1989, the College then added director of athletics to his role.

Cindy’s background in education also is extensive. She taught elementary school for 14 years prior to her 23-year career with the Franklin College Education Department. She came on board in 1994, initially as an adjunct instructor filling in for someone on sick leave, but requests for her continued involvement steadily grew until, ultimately, she became department chair. After a stint in higher-education consulting, she returned to the College as director of teacher education, a cherished opportunity to mentor aspiring educators.

“Kerry and I are both teachers at heart. Education at all levels is important to us, and was a priority in raising our children,” Cindy said.

## College Exposure

With their parents’ careers and several strong friendships anchored at Franklin College, Katie and Robbie grew up feeling at home on the campus. They learned to ride their tricycles and bicycles around Dame Mall, and ate with their parents in The Key (former campus dining option). As infants, they had joined their parents on the road, not only to basketball games,

but also on scouting and recruiting trips.

“Our children were always present,” Cindy said.

Meeting with prospective students and families was an opportunity Kerry and Cindy prized doing together. The Prathers viewed being part of a young person’s college journey a privilege, and they cared for student-athletes in the basketball program as if their own children.

“I mended and washed blood from players’ uniforms. I cooked for the team, and we entertained loyal fans after the ball games in our home,” Cindy said. “We were a coach’s family. It’s the life we knew.”

“I don’t necessarily remember, but I’ve seen pictures from a couple of my birthday parties where I’m surrounded by basketball players. In one, they’re crowded around me and wearing Barney the Dinosaur hats,” Katie said. “I had lots of honorary big brothers.”

As Katie and Robbie matured, their involvement in basketball grew. Both volunteered with their dad at summer basketball camps on campus; she helped with check-in and welcome decorations, and he helped lead drills. Cindy was there, too, usually helping with registration. The Prathers also fondly recall many Thanksgiving breaks that coincided with Grizzlies’ games, and spring breaks at NCAA Final Four games.

“One of the coolest aspects of being part of a coach’s family was the road trips, because of the connections we built with each other and the team,” Robbie said. Another advantage was getting a glimpse of numerous colleges across the region.

“I joke that my whole life was one long campus tour. We always took the time to look around campuses where

the team played, and thanks to my parents’ planning, had many vacations that included visits to cool towns with campuses in the middle. It was certainly a benefit by the time I had to make a college choice.”

Buying souvenirs from campus bookstores and collecting unique college T-shirts were family traditions, as was playing basketball together.

“We would see if we could get someone on each campus to let us into the gym so we could shoot around. It was always a family-bonding experience; it was our fun!” Katie said.

After Katie and Robbie were teens, Kerry and Cindy encouraged open-mindedness about their college options and made sure they were on plenty of admissions mailing lists, but when the time came, neither hesitated to choose Franklin College.

“It didn’t seem like any other college could foster the same familial feeling I had at FC; that’s where I always felt like I had 1,000 aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters,” Robbie said. “Throughout my childhood, I was met with kindness by faculty and staff every time I stepped onto campus, and the players dad coached taught me a lot by their example. I’ll be forever grateful to the ones who helped usher me through some personal growth processes.”

Katie’s college decision was unwavering.

“My parents set up a few unofficial college visits, and I wanted no part of it. Franklin College was the only place I applied,” Katie said. “I knew all the academic programs the College had were successful, and that students were held to a high standard, which was really important to me, even more than the familiarity factor. I would not change my college decision if I could go back.”



Another significant factor that motivated Robbie to attend Franklin College was the chance to help represent the men's basketball team. Having his father as head coach was a draw rather than deterrent, he said.

"Every practice and every game was time spent bonding with my dad. Even losses were times that I learned from him. I enjoyed every minute of it," Robbie said.

After his college graduation, Robbie joined Kerry on the sidelines as a volunteer assistant.

"It brought everything full circle, from being a fan, to ball boy, to player, to coach. It was really neat for both of us," Robbie said.

As Robbie's athletic career at Franklin had intersected with his father's coaching tenure, Katie's academic career overlapped her mother's role on the faculty. As an education major, Katie took several required courses Cindy taught.

"I feel like other people were more concerned about it than I was, to be honest. It wasn't difficult. She treated me like the other pupils; the only difference was I called her Mom rather than Professor Prather. I felt like, maybe, I was held to an even higher standard, but that was on me. I wanted her to know I was serious about wanting to become an educator, and I wanted her to be proud. I worked really hard."

## New Developments

The Prathers instilled a strong work ethic in their children by example. Besides Cindy's model of balancing family, community and career responsibilities, they have seen a pattern of exemplary efforts by Kerry.

Given his four decades at Franklin College, Kerry brings to the presidential role a resume unlike

any of his predecessors. In addition to head men's basketball coach and director of athletics, he previously served as assistant dean of students, associate director of admissions, acting vice president for enrollment management and acting vice president for administration. By extension of his executive leadership positions, he served much of his career as a President's Cabinet officer.

Former Presidents William B. Martin, Paul Marion and James G. Moseley were tremendously influential.

"That experience of serving on the Cabinet for Presidents Martin, Marion and Moseley allowed me to study some different leadership styles. It was the most enlightening in terms of really learning from multiple presidents how the institution runs and how important the leadership is," Kerry said.

"Also, I had with each of them a personal friendship that really allowed for a level of involvement in decision-making. Having an opportunity to help make a difference at that level was one of the things I enjoyed most."

Kerry also remains grateful to Interim President John Logan, who during his one-year appointment offered the head coaching position.

"I will always have a warm spot in my heart for Dr. Logan because he took me under his wing. He was a retired longtime president from Rose-Hulman, and was very wise. He helped Franklin significantly in his short time."

With wisdom gained and skills honed over the years, Kerry has made a tremendous impact at Franklin College, earning Associate Alumni status in 1999 and a street named Prather Way in his honor, next to Spurlock Center. Most notable, under his leadership as athletic director, the College expanded opportunities for

student-athletes to the current level of 21 intercollegiate sports, and upgraded and built new athletic facilities across the campus.

Even with the accolades and a remarkably long, fulfilling career at a place he loves, becoming Franklin College President was not part of Kerry's design. That changed when the College faced a crisis in January 2020, and he learned of the 16th President's arrest related to sex-crime allegations. The day Kerry received the news he was on the road with the basketball team, returning to Franklin after a victory, which gave the Grizzlies a two-game lead in the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC).

"We had a bus full of people so I couldn't say much on the phone. I was mostly listening and getting the rundown of what transpired. We pulled up to Spurlock, and I explained to the team I had to run. Normally, we would go in for post-game comments and then dismiss. I literally went from the bus to my car, and drove across town to meet with the College's general counsel and board leadership," Kerry said.

The same day, they offered him an interim appointment as Franklin College Acting President.

"Because of the circumstances there really was not in my mind an option to say no. You never envision something like that happening. I felt capable, and I felt like there was a responsibility to do it, even though I could not quite figure out in my head how all of it would work out," he said.

"The benefit of time has softened some of the worst possible outcomes of that turn of events, but at that time we were trying to anticipate and address every worst case scenario of how that scandal might impact the institution."





*Robbie '17, Cindy, Kerry and Katie '13 Prather*

Moreover, students, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners needed significant support as they worked through the aftermath of shock, sadness, fear and anger. Franklin College Board of Trustees Chair **Jim Due '82**, while endorsing Kerry for the job, stressed the magnitude of that responsibility.

“Chair Due emphasized that constituents were going to need reassurance that there was knowledgeable, competent, steady leadership from someone that understood the institution.

“I think what assured me that I was capable of doing the job was that Presidents Martin, Marion and Moseley had been so generous with their time, and had welcomed me into their confidence so that I just learned an enormous amount about the role of the president and the impact on the institution as a whole,” Kerry said.

As they always have, the Prather Family came together to talk about the unfolding events and their concerns.

Cindy said, “We are a very close family. We did not doubt Kerry’s leadership capabilities or his competence, but we were very concerned about our access to him and the impact the job would have on our family activities, traditions and travels.”

Another concern on their minds was the fate of the basketball team, which, at the time, had a strong chance of winning the HCAC tournament.

“We thought it detrimental for Kerry to step aside as coach. All four of us had unhappily lived through losing seasons. For him to stop coaching the team at such a crucial point in the season didn’t seem right. Likewise, the children and I wanted him to end his coaching career with the winning senior-led team accomplishing as much as it could,” recalled Cindy.

After serious consideration, and with his family’s encouragement and support from the board of trustees, Kerry decided to continue coaching in addition to serving as acting president.

“The one point made loud and clear to me was that my family would do whatever it took so that I could assume responsibilities as acting president and complete the basketball season, which had six weeks to go,” he said.

The days were long.

“My typical day involved working all day in Old Main in the President’s Office, with the benefit of really capable and understanding assistant coaches overseeing activities in Spurlock. I would usually arrive late, generally in a suit, with no time to change, and they would hand over practice to me. Then, I would go home and spend a fair amount of time on more work related to my day job, while also trying to keep on top of the basketball work. Then, I would get up the next day and repeat.”

The board of trustees was pleased with the swift and positive impact Kerry made when he stepped up as acting president, Jan. 14, 2020. Morale within the college community lifted and letters of endorsement poured in from constituents grateful to see order restored at the leadership level. To keep the momentum, the trustees promoted Kerry from acting president to president in February.

“Once that happened it became obvious my coaching career was going to come to an end. At that point, we had won a conference championship, which was a wonderful experience. I felt like the timing was perfect because I could hand off to a veteran assistant a program that was in really good shape. I wasn’t leaving a reclamation project. I felt good about that, and at peace with that,” Kerry said.

## First 90 Days

On March 3, 2020, Kerry retired from his Grizzlies’ coaching career with 528



wins, five conference championships, four league tournament titles, five appearances in the NCAA Division III national tournament, including one culminating in the Sweet 16 and an Elite Eight finish in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics national tournament.

One year later, the trustees announced his appointment as president would continue until at least July 1, 2024.

Though no longer coaching, he remains on the run. Kerry is a president highly engaged in the college community and in the greater Franklin community; he is visible and accessible. Any given day may include dashing across campus to lead a student academic awards ceremony, conducting a town hall meeting with faculty and staff, networking with alumni, collaborating with community development partners or strategizing with the Franklin College Trustees about the institution's future.

He also spends significant time addressing matters related to the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis that erupted in his third month as president.

"As COVID-19 was beginning to make the news, we saw one of the counties with the highest infection rates was Johnson so we immediately started focusing in on what that could mean. Fortunately, I had a longstanding relationship with the county health commissioner. He was able to give us data, and then it became a day-to-day vigil of monitoring the situation."

Initially, Franklin College suspended in-person classes and activities, aligning with the Indiana governor's statewide policy, at that time, which recommended social distancing to help slow spread of the virus. After the suspension on Friday, March 13, students had 48 hours to vacate their residence halls, and faculty and staff

**"FROM A 40-YEAR CAREER STANDPOINT, THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THIS FOR ME, AND THE MOST MEANINGFUL PART OF THIS WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE, IS THAT I WAS ABLE TO TRAVEL AND SHARE EACH MILE OF IT WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY."**

### **PRESIDENT KERRY PRATHER**

had equal the time to prepare for a complete transition to remote teaching and learning.

"We thought, and thought, and thought about how to continue operations as usual; schools at all levels were making various decisions based on where they were located and what infection rates were in their area. In mid-March, we were still functioning institutionally, but everything was changing at such a fast pace."

Once, again, the college community needed stable leadership and reassurance. With incredible teamwork from the President's Cabinet and Information Technology (IT) staff, the College began a pandemic pivot.

"That period of figuring out how to make the transition, how to get the equipment, how to train faculty to deliver the curriculum, how to educate students about how to be on the receiving end of a virtual education, all that was new to us. We turned that around in about 48 hours. Faculty patiently went through workshop training. IT staff worked around the clock, purchasing and expanding software. Then, we had to address students who didn't have equipment or Wi-Fi access."

Throughout the pandemic pivot, tremendous thought and care went

into supporting students and their wellbeing. A team of faculty and staff volunteers divided the student roster and maintained weekly contact throughout the spring semester, helping troubleshoot a variety of issues as well as provide a steady connection to the College. Virtual mental-health counseling and chaplaincy services also were available.

"From attitude, to aptitude, to adaptability, everyone showed amazing receptivity to dramatic change with little advance notice," Kerry said.

The pandemic pivot occupied most of the summer, as a Return to Campus Plan shaped up for fall 2020, and a comprehensive communication campaign was launched to encourage everyone to do their part in helping "Fortify Franklin." The College continues to stay on course and encourages community members to consider vaccination as the best preventative.

On top of the pandemic, Kerry inherited a significant budget deficit, and learned the education program was in serious accreditation trouble. He and Cindy coordinated the successful effort to regain Indiana Department of Education recognition of the teacher education program. He also spent countless hours with the College's chief financial officer going over the finances, scrutinizing the present as



well as considering short- and long-term circumstances.

"It became obvious early on we had to put brakes on some things that had been put in motion that we simply could not afford. That was not an easy process, to be the new person who steps in and says we have to pull back, but it was very obvious to me that we were digging a deeper financial hole than we could dig out of," Kerry said.

Early retirement incentives are one way the College has addressed financial concerns, along with tightening departmental budgets. The godsend of donor generosity since his presidency has accounted for new all-time records set in Franklin College fundraising. Total gifts in the 2020-21 fiscal year were more than \$5 million, and giving to the Franklin Fund exceeded \$700,000 for the second consecutive year, and only the second time in the College's history. Philanthropy affords the College greater flexibility to assist students with scholarships and financial aid, as well make crucial upgrades to teaching and learning technologies, all of which help strengthen retention and encourage degree completion.

"At times when challenges force Franklin College to rethink and redo, we always seem to thrive. We could not do so without generous donor support," Kerry said.

## Perspectives

In spite of immense institutional momentum, this is not a time of rest.

"That first stretch of months was literally crisis management every day. We're now looking forward; where does the institution need to be five years from now? What do we need to accomplish in the intervening years? It's an exciting prospect to do some long-range planning and strategic thinking for the institution," he said.

Leading an institution that provides a transformative liberal arts education and co-curricular activities, plus consistently strong athletic programs, campus housing, meal plans and a variety of self-enrichment activities is a 24/7 endeavor.

"Most of the good work that happens here happens away from the President's Office, but ultimately some part of it eventually crosses my desk. That's just the way small colleges operate. From a connectedness standpoint, you always have to be in the loop," he said.

That means postponing family Sunday dinners, sometimes, and accepting that vacations require some isolated hours dedicated to work emails and phone calls. Having a family that continually shows grace, gratitude and love in abundance makes the sacrifices possible and the hard work worthwhile, he said.

Just as Cindy, Katie and Robbie always have rooted for Kerry from the bleachers, they continue to give encouragement and want the best possible outcomes for the College and Grizzlies.

"I'm so happy that now people are able to see a side of my dad I'm intimately aware of, and they can experience what an empathetic and compassionate leader he is," Robbie said. "His driving motivation is helping students grow into productive, effective, loving members of society."

Katie is proud of College traditions her father has revived.

"Any events that my father is a part of, I try to go to show support for him, my family and the College," she said. "He brought back the tradition of outdoor commencement when it was postponed from May to October because of the pandemic, and I was really happy the Class of 2020 experienced an in-person graduation. The trees on

campus were beautiful, and it was the perfect fall backdrop for everyone to enjoy mingling on the mall. That day was really special to me because it was the first graduation dad was part of as president."

Kerry's presidency has been extremely productive in a short time. He has advanced bringing the Center for Tech Innovation and the Johnson Memorial Health Athletic Annex to campus, launched a competitive esports program and created a digital fluency initiative that serves as the capstone to the already transformative education Franklin provides. His leadership earned the confidence of Lilly Endowment Inc., which awarded a \$1 million grant in 2020 to help the College strengthen technology integration and expand learning opportunities. He also welcomed the College's largest new class in five years, and has expanded diversity, equity and inclusion efforts. He has pledged Franklin College will graduate leaders capable of and committed to making our communities, states and nation more fair, just and more compassionate.

With his inauguration as 17th president celebrated, Kerry is eager to accomplish more Franklin College milestones, and fill the Prather Family photo album with new memories.

"For all that I inherited, I think back to all the challenges the College has survived over the years. I've read *The Centennial History of Franklin College* (by John F. Cady, Ph.D.), and the moral of that story is that tough times created a very strong, tough institution. That's a lesson we share with our students about what it takes to persist and succeed."

"From a 40-year career standpoint, the most important part of this for me, and the most meaningful part of this wonderful experience, is that I was able to travel and share each mile of it with the entire family." ■



# A WEIGHTY GIFT



SUBMITTED

Indiana University Head Football Coach Tom Allen

*Four outstanding football careers came to a close when **Ray Webster '61**, co-captain, **Art Brebberman '61**, **Tom Allen '61**, co-captain, and **Jerry Hicks '61** played their last game, which was a 20 to 13 victory over Indiana Central, now University of Indianapolis.*

Strength training with weights and exercise machines is synonymous with today's health and fitness regimens, but 63 years ago students at Franklin College had few resources for working out to build muscle. That troubled a perceptive student who realized the potential benefits Grizzlies were missing so he took action.

That was 1958, and the student was **Tom Allen Sr. '61**, a football team member, who went to then head coach Stewart "Red" Faught and persuaded him to get "a little bit of weight training equipment" for The Barn, now known as the Fitness Center. The equipment included a bale of hay and some concrete blocks. Thus, Allen was responsible for the first weight-training effort on the Franklin College campus.

Over the summer, his son, Indiana University Head Football Coach Tom Allen, made a gift commitment that will create a new weight room at Franklin College, continuing the Allen family legacy. The Johnson Memorial Health Athletic Annex, for

which ground was broken in October, will house the new weight room.

"This gift to Franklin College presented our family an opportunity to give back to an Indiana community, while at the same time honoring dad in a way that reflects his passion for instilling in us the value of hard work," said Tom and spouse Tracy Allen in a joint statement.

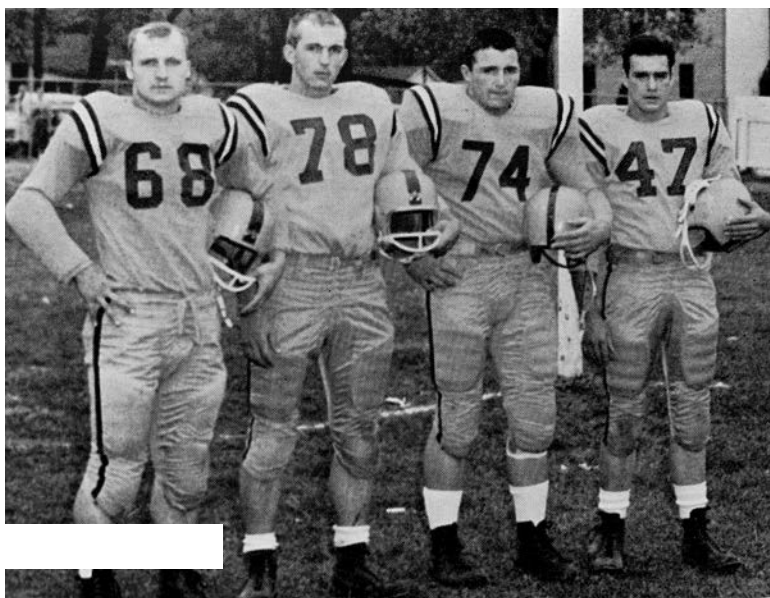
The new room in conjunction with the existing Spurlock Center weight room will more than double the dedicated weight-training space available. The additional capacity will allow more flexibility in scheduling team workouts and provide more availability for non-athlete students, faculty and staff.

"This generous gift from Coach Allen provides a long-lasting legacy in honor of his father, and we are very grateful to him and the entire Allen family for their support," said Franklin College President Kerry Prather. "This facility enhancement will make a significant impact on the campus community, and especially our athletic program."

The College's athletic program has expanded significantly in recent years, with nearly 44% of the student body participating in the 21 men's and women's sports. In 2020, the Spurlock Center weight room was booked for team trainings nearly every day of the week, all day long.

"The modern athlete utilizes strength-based training as a fundamental part of their regimen," said Andrew Hendricks, athletic director for Franklin College. "This new weight room will give us an increased advantage in recruitment and student-athlete development." ■

THE ALMANACK





## Franklin College broke ground Oct. 13, 2021, for the Johnson Memorial Health Athletic Annex.

The 10,819 square-foot facility will be located at the southwest corner of Park Ave. and Second St. on the College's campus. Completion is targeted for late fall 2022.

A \$1 million commitment made by Johnson Memorial Health (JMH) in December 2020 and a gift commitment from Indiana University Head Football Coach Tom Allen (See Page 16) help make the athletic annex possible.

In his remarks at the groundbreaking, Franklin College President Kerry Prather said, "The significance of the Johnson Memorial Health Athletic Annex cannot be overstated. It will be the first new indoor athletic facility constructed on campus since the Spurlock Center was built in 1975, and then subsequently renovated and expanded in 1996. This construction also reflects institutional progress and our commitment to supporting students with the resources they want and need."

CHAD WILLIAMS



# BUILDING ON ATHLETICS

JMH President and CEO **David H. Dunkle '94**, M.D., also spoke at the groundbreaking. "Johnson Memorial Health is very proud to partner with Franklin College on the construction and plans of the athletic annex. JMH values our community partners, and Franklin College is a very long and trusted partner," he said.

Examples of the longstanding partnership include JMH's hosting of Franklin College undergraduate student-interns, and more recently hosting of graduate-level students in various clinical experiences. In 2018, the Franklin College Graduate Health Science Center, a space shared with JMH, opened at 2085 Acorn Blvd., in Franklin. JMH also facilitates nurse staffing for the College's campus health center. Further, JMH is the preferred provider of health-care services for student-athletes.

Two Indiana-based businesses are involved in taking the athletic annex from vision to completion. Jones Petrie Rafinski of Elkhart is designing the facility, and Dunlap & Co. of Columbus is the general contractor. The athletic annex will feature retractable batting cages for baseball

*Jones Petrie Rafinski Architecture Department Manager Dj Charvat, Dunlop & Co. Executive Vice President Tom Dowd, JMH President/CEO and College Trustee David H. Dunkle '94, M.D., College President Kerry Prather, College Trustee Susan (Wohlmuth) Williams '67, College Trustee Todd Bemis '84 and College Athletic Director Andrew Hendricks have their shovels ready.*

and softball practices, along with similar areas suitable for men's and women's golf. With the batting cages retracted, the open space with artificial turf will provide indoor practice opportunities for many sports. The annex also will add a second weight room to the campus. According to Prather, the athletic annex will provide beneficial new space for year-round conditioning and skills building.

The College previously updated athletic venues in 2011, with the addition of outdoor facilities for tennis, softball and track and field in Grizzly Park, as well as the renovation of Stewart "Red" Faught Stadium, which added a turf field and lights for the football, soccer and lacrosse teams. ■



# NOTEWORTHY

## THANK YOU, DONORS!

You have done it again. In another very challenging year, you proved to be a source of pride and inspiration for the entire college community. In the midst of the continued COVID-19 anxiety and associated financial stresses, you recognized the pivotal difference philanthropy makes, and you stepped up in support of Franklin College. Thank you!

To learn more about donor impact, watch the thank-you video from Franklin College President Kerry Prather at [FranklinCollege.edu/giving/honor-roll-of-donors](https://FranklinCollege.edu/giving/honor-roll-of-donors). Then, look for your name in the 2020-21 Honor Roll of Donors shared below the video.

## SUPPORTING EMPLOYEE RENEWAL

As Franklin College employees continue pouring themselves into the work of caring for and educating students through a pandemic, there is a new opportunity available for their self-care and professional renewal.

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) makes the opportunity possible with its Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) Professional Development Award of \$9,770 to Franklin. NetVUE is a nationwide network of colleges and universities formed to enrich the intellectual and theological exploration of vocation among undergraduate students. The CIC administers the NetVUE awards initiative with generous support from Lilly Endowment Inc. and members' dues.

Franklin College's NetVUE-supported employee reinvigoration effort revolves around a yearlong vocation exploration program. Participants view short virtual presentations addressing themes related to vocational discernment and identity, and engage in reflection and discussion about the content. The program aims to help participants articulate a renewed vision for their own vocation and place in the world, and enlist new knowledge and tools to help guide students in forming their own vocational identity.



The program will be a catalyst for Franklin's future design of vocational programming, and will inform the reconceptualization of academic-advising practices. Careful consideration will be given to how vocation exploration topics can be embedded into the delivery of a variety of course content, supervision of student-internship experiences and co-curricular offerings.

## PARTNERSHIP BROADENS DEGREE ACCESS

Ivy Tech Community College and Franklin College are new partners in providing students an accelerated pathway to a bachelor's degree. The institutions' presidents and academic deans signed a Guaranteed Admission Articulation Agreement formalizing plans in August. The agreement, based on certain provisions, gives students the opportunity to earn an Ivy Tech





associate's degree in 11 months, followed by a Franklin College bachelor's degree in two years.

The agreement specifies only students who earn an associate's degree in liberal arts through Ivy Tech's Associate Accelerated Program (ASAP) first are eligible for the guaranteed admission program to Franklin College. Ivy Tech's ASAP is for high school graduates committed to completing rigorous coursework over five eight-week terms, Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Upon completion of the associate's degree, ASAP students may transfer their credits to Franklin and complete one of 17 select bachelor's degrees in two years. Guaranteed admission eliminates any loss of credits while minimizing cost to students and ensuring they can complete their bachelor's degree on time.

The partnership with Franklin College builds on the ASAP foundation to give

students a well-rounded, bachelor's degree that can propel them into careers or on to additional higher education. Ivy Tech and Franklin's guaranteed admissions partnership for ASAP students is the only arrangement of its kind in Indiana.

"We are excited to partner with Ivy Tech through this targeted articulation with their Liberal Arts ASAP program," said Kristin Flora, Ph.D., Franklin College vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college. "Such a partnership increases the accessibility of a Franklin College education to high-achieving students throughout the state who begin their educational journey on an Ivy Tech campus. We are confident that this relationship will positively contribute to our state's goal of 60% of working-age Hoosiers having a quality college degree or credential by the year 2025." ■

*Ivy Tech Columbus Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Jackie Fischer, Ph.D., speaks at the lectern as Ivy Tech Columbus Chancellor Steven Combs, Ph.D., Ivy Tech Community College President Sue Ellspermann, Ph.D., Franklin College President Kerry Prather, Franklin College Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College Kristin Flora, Ph.D., and Franklin College Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management and Marketing Thanda Maceo await the agreement signing.*

The Statehouse File reporters, Hope Shrum '22, Carolina Puga Mendoza '22, Taylor Dixon '22, Alexa Shrake '23 and Sydney Byerly '24, stand under the Indiana Statehouse dome.



COLLEEN STEFFEN '94

# SPREAD THE NEWS

By Alexa Shrake '23, Pulliam Fellow

This year, The Statehouse File celebrates 15 years as a Franklin College immersive-learning experience and 10 years as a full-time, student-powered news outlet. How did it get here?

In 2006, Pulliam School of Journalism (PSJ) Director **John Krull '81** had a recurring problem as student newspaper adviser; the reporters kept interviewing their roommates. Nothing he assigned pushed them out of their comfort zones. He knew things had to change to enable their professional development.

"I don't know what I envisioned," Krull said, but he figured getting students away from their campus environment was a logical first step. "I had a friend

who offered us office space in downtown Indy."

The initial agreement was for one month, over the College's Winter Term (now Immersive Term). At the new space, Krull began sending students across town to report on Indiana Statehouse activities and asking they return to produce news stories on the same day. The students distributed the stories free to media partners who in exchange for use agreed to publish their bylines and credit Franklin College.

"Students seemed to enjoy it, and they seemed to grow from it because they learned in that pressurized environment," Krull said.

The Statehouse File news bureau was born.

Initially, PSJ offered the bureau only over Immersive Terms, but newspapers statewide said they wanted coverage to continue and would pay for it. Krull realized there was a journalistic need and a student opportunity that a larger scale program could address.

With his responsibilities as PSJ director and journalism professor pressing, Krull also recognized the bureau needed a distinct adviser.

"John was looking for someone to take over running the bureau, and he wanted it to go full time," said Lesley Weidenbener, currently editor of the *Indianapolis Business Journal* (IBJ) and formerly a Statehouse reporter for *Kentucky's Courier Journal*. The College hired her in 2011 as The Statehouse File's inaugural executive editor.



"I had only wanted to be a reporter at that point. I had never thought of being an editor," Weidenbener said. "It created a whole new lane for me to think about, and gave me a ton of new skills. Working with students was just an inspiring thing. I absolutely loved it."

The bureau has evolved with a change in location and additional news delivery tools. Headquarters today is at the Indiana Statehouse, in a room which students share with the Press Corps. The bureau itself is now a digital powerhouse encompassing a website and multiple social media accounts. In 2011, The Statehouse File was among Indiana's first news outlets to implement a paywall, a method that restricts access to content for those without a paid subscription. Media partners statewide subscribe to use the articles, photos and videos that Franklin College students produce. The content helps media cover stories that

would be out of reach with solely their own resources.

"We wanted the students to understand what they're doing has value, and we wanted people reading to understand there is value they should pay for," Weidenbener said. Both goals remain today.

Franklin College journalism alumni of The Statehouse File include reporters in newsrooms from IBJ to CNN, entrepreneurs running public relations firms and communication specialists in government affairs, corporate relations and nonprofit services. Their resumes featuring real-world reporting experience and professional journalism awards stand out among peers.

**Erica Irish '21** started as a reporter with The Statehouse File in her sophomore year and rose to the Russell Pulliam Student Editor position her senior year. Through Statehouse reporting, she became the

first Grizzly on record to win the Society of Professional Journalists Student Journalist of the Year award.

"Being a journalist for The Statehouse File increased my capacity to act quickly, think on my feet, be adaptable and figure it out," Irish said. "That's been hugely beneficial for me in the career I'm in now." She is a marketing partner for Innovatemap in Indianapolis, and an Orr Fellow.

The Statehouse File has grown from five media partners in its infancy to 35 with subscriptions today. The program also has begun a new partnership with The Indiana Citizen, a nonpartisan, nonprofit platform dedicated to increasing the number of informed, engaged Hoosier voters. Any student can participate as an extracurricular activity, semester-long course or a full-immersion experience, based on their interests and career goals.

**Colleen Steffen '94**, current executive editor, follows several outstanding women who previously held the role. There was Janet Williams, whose background was in corporate communications for Cummins and reporting and editing for *The Indianapolis Star*, and Rachel Hoffmeyer, now a deputy chief of staff and communications director for the Indiana Secretary of State.

One aspect of Steffen's advising role that differs from predecessors is the COVID-19 pandemic. Since she accepted the position in January 2020, nearly every day has involved helping students navigate new ways of reporting via Zoom, livestream, phone and six-foot distances.

"It's not easy," said Steffen. "Every piece we create is going out to a real audience and can go through dozens of revisions. Sometimes ours is some of the only state political news reaching Indiana's news deserts; these are big, important stories affecting real people's lives. And politicians are not the easiest to talk to!"

Students persevere.

"In that environment, I watch these students explode in skills and confidence. It is a real privilege to be a part of."

View student work and subscribe at [TheStatehouseFile.com](https://TheStatehouseFile.com).

**"BEING A JOURNALIST FOR THE STATEHOUSE FILE INCREASED MY CAPACITY TO ACT QUICKLY, THINK ON MY FEET, BE ADAPTABLE AND FIGURE IT OUT. THAT'S BEEN HUGE BENEFICIAL FOR ME IN THE CAREER I'M IN NOW."**

**ERICA IRISH '21**

# FOSSILS FUEL **LEARNING**

By Amy (Kean) VerSteeg '96, Editor

**A new learning opportunity in biology was unearthed this fall to engage students in paleontology with an experienced dinosaur bone-finder.**

Bio 375, the Fossil Lab with instructor Steve Bodi, takes students through the process of fossil discovery, excavation and preservation.

"We're covering the techniques to take a fossil from the ground to a museum exhibit," Bodi said.

Bodi is founder of the Southern Indiana Paleontology Institute (SIPI) in Martinsville, Indiana. SIPI is equal parts fossil preparation lab and educational center. Since 2015, SIPI has hosted interns from high schools and universities, and Bodi has mentored them through the process of cleaning and preparing bones for display.

He is excited to broaden the experience to Franklin

College. Though he teaches the Fossil Lab on campus, at the Science Center, students took a field trip to SIPI at the semester's start. There, students had the chance to see and hold some of his prized finds, including a four-inch long T-Rex's baby tooth that he refers to as a "Holy Grail."

Bodi has been a devoted paleontologist for 20 years, but fossils have been a life-long passion. His Bachelor of Science from Indiana University is in public and environmental affairs. He is largely a self-taught paleontologist who has benefited from mentors at the Indianapolis Children's Museum who involved him in fossil-hunting out West.

Now, he regularly goes to the High Plains to camp on ranches, usually weeks at a time, and hunt for fossils. Extreme heat, predators such as mountain lions and rattlesnakes and occasional natural disasters, such as storms, add to the thrill of the hunt. Each hunt takes thorough planning that involves getting a land-owner's permission to prospect and dig, and discussing compensation. Many ranchers decline payment because they simply are excited to be involved, Bodi said. He has built friendships with several ranchers over the years who now allow him to return at will.



*Steve Bodi works on extracting fossils at a Montana dig site.*

When Franklin students visited SIPI in August, Bodi had recently returned from Montana with a flatbed trailer of 66-million-year-old triceratops fossils. Students gazed upon the trailer where field jackets, protective casings similar to the hard cast an injured person would wear, encased the fossils. They will remain wrapped until Bodi is ready to begin chipping away at the excess rock encrusting them; the fossils and rock combined weigh 4 tons.

"The bones themselves were replaced cell by cell by the surrounding rock," Bodi explained.

*Jada Gaskin '22 gets the backstory on fossils displayed at the Southern Indiana Paleontology Institute. Steve Bodi, right, founded the institute.*

AMY (KEAN) VERSTEEG '96





Separating a single small fossil from rock takes Bodi an average of 30 hours at the workbench. Dental picks, Dremel® tools, X-acto® knives and straight pins are tools of his trade.

“We use the least invasive techniques first and foremost, always with the goal of doing no harm,” Bodi said.

His goal was to have each Franklin student complete the cleaning and preparation of one bone for study or display by end of the semester.

“We’ll begin practicing with hand tools on fossils less precious than dinosaur bones, things like marine mammals,” Bodi said.

**Alli Gootee ’22**, a biology and secondary education major, was eager to start. “I’ve loved dinosaurs since I was a kid; they’re the reason I fell in love with science. Now that I’m planning on becoming a teacher this lab experience will give me more ways to connect with my students and make their learning about dinosaurs memorable.”

This Fossil Lab is possible through a charitable bequest from the Estate of **John M. Spears ’47**, M.D., and his spouse, Betty. John died in 2016, after retiring as a distinguished pediatrician, and Betty, a retired nurse, died in early 2021. The Spears were members of the Founder’s Society for Lifetime Giving at Franklin College. ■

# DUCK, DUCK, RESEARCH!

Franklin College faculty and students are getting their ducks in a row to immerse in the important work of applied wildlife research. A recent \$300,489 grant will enable their study of the movement, survival, habitat selection and productivity of Great Lakes mallards.

Ben O’Neal, Ph.D., associate professor of biology, will serve as principal investigator for the three-year study. Funding comes from the Wildlife Restoration Grant (F21AF02467; W-51-R-02), in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Fish & Wildlife and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife Restoration Grant Program. The study is part of the Great Lakes Mallard Research Project, a collaborative effort for better understanding of mallard ecology across the Great Lakes region, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin.



**Ben O’Neal, Ph.D., associate professor of biology**

“Mallards are a shared migratory resource with great significance to the recreation, economy and environment of the Great Lakes region,” said O’Neal. “Unfortunately, this population has experienced a substantial decline since the mid-2000s, and waterfowl biologists have struggled to understand why. Research aimed at understanding the reasons for low mallard abundance can lead to improved management strategies to benefit mallards, other wetland-dependent species and people.”

New data will inform state and regional decision-making regarding the monitoring, management and harvest of mallards. O’Neal emphasized that the study will employ state-of-the-art technologies, including satellite telemetry, DNA sequencing, stable isotope analysis, GIS mapping and statistical modeling to help answer key questions. Throughout the study, Franklin students will have the opportunity to engage with the technologies and enhance their digital fluency.

“With dedicated professors like Dr. O’Neal leading and cultivating learning outside the traditional classroom, students gain applied research experience through development of methods, execution of field work, data analysis and the presentation of findings,” said Kristin Flora, Ph.D., vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college.

Partners in the study will include Ducks Unlimited, Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Natural History Survey, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Division, Michigan State University, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Winous Point Marsh Conservancy and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. ■

# DIGITAL DRIVE

In August 2021, Franklin College received recognition as an Adobe Creative Campus. The distinction puts Franklin in select company, as only the second higher education institution in Indiana and, at publication time, one of only 54 in the world whom Adobe recognizes for a commitment to digital fluency. The College has pledged to achieve strategic goals and outcomes related to digital fluency, including integration of Adobe Creative Cloud into cross-disciplinary curricula.

“By intentionally integrating digital skills with our foundational liberal arts curriculum, we aim to equip students with skills that will make them valuable

employees and leaders in the modern workforce,” said Kristin Flora, Ph.D., vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college. “Creative Cloud specifically will help students think flexibly and creatively about what they are learning, and how best to demonstrate that learning in innovative ways.”

Through the Creative Campus Program, individuals with a registered Franklin College email address may access unlimited Adobe Creative Cloud apps and services on their mobile and electronic devices. Several faculty, including assistant professor of history Katie Streit, Ph.D., began integrating Adobe software into their courses this fall.

Students in Streit’s First-Year Seminar started the semester by analyzing the attributes of cartoons and the extent to which they can shape an individual’s self-identity and world-views. Later in the semester, students teamed up to design an original, animated cartoon series and write a business pitch backing their idea. Students used Adobe Character Animator, Photoshop, Media Encoder and After Effects to create their animations.

Streit said, “The project aimed to build students’ collaborative skills, as well as increase their familiarity with software they can continue using during college and in their future careers. Another

important objective was to empower students. Most students had little-to-no previous experience with the software. They watched tutorials and worked together to learn and implement it.

“We all pushed ourselves to learn something new, problem-solve when issues arose and celebrate our successes, even the seemingly small victories of getting an animated character to wave! My hope is that students completed the semester with a conviction that they have the tools needed to succeed in other areas.”

Adobe program offerings also include Creative Jams, during which students can hear from an inspirational speaker, receive software training from an expert and complete a team challenge. Teams then present their work to a jury of industry experts and peers for a chance to win prizes and bragging rights. The Master-Class immersive online experience is another option, providing the chance to learn from the world’s best practitioners in business, leadership, sports, arts and entertainment.

*New, unlimited access to Adobe Creative Cloud apps and services gives students, like **Janae Johnson '23**, a variety of digital tools to support learning, creating and collaborating.*



CHAD WILLIAMS



# STEMstimulus

Franklin College Director of Digital Fluency Andrew Rosner said, “The Adobe Creative Campus distinction demonstrates to prospective and current students that we are committed to their success in the classroom and in the modern economy. Additionally, it allows us to offer skills-development workshops led by Adobe-product experts, and to provide teaching and learning resources directly from Adobe. Our college community members also may collaborate with other Adobe Creative Campus institutions to share best practices and to network with other thought leaders in the digital-literacy space.”

“We are excited to have Franklin College added to the expanding global Adobe Creative Campus community. Digital fluency skills are becoming more essential for graduates to possess in the modern workplace,” said Sebastian Distefano, director of the Creative Campus Program at Adobe. “Unlimited access to Creative Cloud for the whole campus enables Franklin College to expand its innovative teaching practices and seamlessly nurture digital fluency into learning outcomes, preparing students for success both inside and outside of the classroom.” ■

## The Indiana Commission for Higher Education recently awarded Franklin College a \$40,000 grant from the 2021 STEM Teacher Recruitment Fund.

According to the Commission’s website, these grants support programs that recruit, prepare, place and retain educators in schools with teacher shortages in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subject areas. Franklin’s grant proposal, “Preparing STEM Teachers as Competent, Caring Decision Makers,” was on the mark.

“For Indiana to have a competitive, skilled workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow there must be a strong pipeline of students pursuing STEM fields,” said Indiana Higher Education Commissioner Teresa Lubbers. “Teachers play a critical role in getting students interested in these fields and preparing them to be successful to pursue them after high school.”

During year one of the two-year STEM grant, funds will support approximately nine pre-service teachers at Franklin College and nine in-service teachers at Franklin Community Schools, explained **Amanda (Morris) Henry ’09**, Franklin College education technology specialist. Expectation is that in year two the grant will support approximately 20 pre-service teachers and 20 in-service teachers, with the potential of supporting more in the College’s Transition to Teaching Secondary Education Program. After completion of the second year, approximately 60 STEM teachers will work at Indiana schools, increasing the pool of high-quality STEM teachers in the state.

The funds will enhance Franklin College’s current STEM-teaching coursework with additional hands-on tools and materials as part of a STEM lending library to assist teachers during coursework and clinical-field experiences. As part of its partnerships with Franklin Community Schools, the College also will support teachers in obtaining STEM Essential Teaching Certificates from the National Institute for STEM Education. The certificate recognizes competency in 12 essential STEM-teaching practices, including scientific argumentation, engineering solutions, technology integration and project-based learning.

“Along with enhancing the affiliation partnerships with schools in Johnson County, a focus on STEM teaching will allow additional partnerships to develop,” said Cindy Prather, Franklin College director of teacher education. “The Center for Technology Innovation at Franklin College will serve as another way for pre-service teachers to develop STEM teaching skills and potentially recruit new students into STEM teaching. Local industry partners in STEM sectors can be identified and community partnerships formed.”

Indiana has invested more than \$28 million in STEM teacher recruitment and supported over 1,500 new educators in high-demand STEM fields since 2015. Franklin College received grant notification in August 2021, and program implementation began with the start of the fall semester. ■

# HAPPENING

## BOARD CHAIR TRANSITION

The Franklin College Board of Trustees has elected **Pete Cangany '80** as the next board chair. He assumes the role from retiring board chair **Jim Due '82**, elected in 2018.

Cangany is retired from EY (Ernst & Young), where he successfully built a nearly 40-year career. Over the years, he and spouse Ann have provided generous philanthropic support for a variety of Franklin College initiatives, including scholarships. The couple reside in Bellevue, Washington, and are the proud parents of three married children and two grandchildren. Read more about Cangany in our spring magazine issue.

## ART APPRECIATION

Art's significance throughout world history is central to liberal arts education. Providing students broad access to the arts is one way Franklin College enriches curricula, supports cultural expression, encourages critical thinking and inspires creativity. As a reflection of the College's commitment, the art department faculty recently were involved in selecting a prominent space on campus to exhibit the full collection of Native American works generously gifted by a donor.

The Johnson Center for Fine Arts, second floor, is now home to The Tull Collection of Native American Art. The entire college community can enjoy the collection for its aesthetic beauty as well as learn from the themes

it communicates about history and culture. The collection features 58 original works, including jewelry, pottery, baskets, framed art, blankets, Kachina dolls, woodcarvings, miniatures and hand-stitched needlepoint chair cushions.

The late **Joyce (Vinson) Tull Hutcheon '36** (HD '00), a Franklin College Trustee, 1968–71, then trustee emerita, 1989–2005, generously gifted the collection in 1992. A recognition plaque displayed with the collection encapsulates her philanthropic spirit: "It is with great pleasure I give this collection to Franklin College, where it will be shared by all, loved as I have loved it, and studied by artists and friends of art."

## SEAHORSE SAVIOR

A preeminent authority on seahorse ecology and conservation, Amanda Vincent, Ph.D., spoke at Franklin College as part of the Indianapolis Prize Lecture Series on Sept. 28, 2021.

The Indianapolis Prize is the world's leading award for animal conservation, and Vincent is the 2021 winner. She is a biologist and professor at The University of British Columbia, Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries, where she directs Project Seahorse. Vincent's study of seahorses in the wild, documentation of their extensive trade and effective approach to conversation distinguish her career. Since 1996, Vincent and Project Seahorse have trained more than 175 professional conservationists and

inspired countless amateur conservation advocates to contribute to science and conservation. There are now conservation projects across six continents and 44 known species of seahorses.

A nine-person jury named Vincent the Indianapolis Prize Winner after evaluating her and five finalists for the significance of their achievement in the conservation of an animal species or multiple species, the measurable outcomes resulting from their work, the quality of science involved in their efforts and demonstrated cooperation with zoological societies and other conservation institutions. Vincent is the eighth winner of the Indianapolis Prize and the first to focus exclusively on marine conservation. In 2006, the Indianapolis Zoological Society created the Indianapolis Prize to recognize and reward conservationists who have made significant progress in saving an animal species, or multiple species, from extinction.

## POWERFUL POETRY

Franklin College hosted "Oracles of Change: Interfaith Understanding Through the Art of Poetry" on Nov. 11, 2021. The virtual program was part of Central Indiana's 2021 Spirit & Place Festival, and part of the College's Carlson-Stauffer Visiting Writer Series.

The program featured poets Sadiyah Bashir and Preeti Kaur Rajpal, who shared thought-provoking works reflective of their personal experiences in contemporary society. Moderators





led audience discussions about community change, diversity, prejudice, healing, art and faith between the poetry recitations.

Bashir is a two-time youth Grand Slam poetry champion with works featured by Al-Jazeera, Apple and UNICEF. Her first book, *Seven*, explores trauma and triumph through the lens of Black Muslim womanhood. Rajpal has been a Poetry Fellow at literary institutions across the United States, and received the 2019-20 inaugural Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship in Literature. Her forthcoming book of poems explores contemporary Sikh experiences in the United States through the lenses of family, nation, history and memory.

In 2020, Franklin College hosted its inaugural Interfaith Understanding through the Arts event during the Spirit & Place Festival. The initiative is the inspiration of Franklin College Professor Emeritus David Carlson, Ph.D., and Director of Religious Life and Chaplain Hannah Adams Ingram, Ph.D. Both are active with the Indianapolis-based Center for Interfaith Cooperation and often represent Franklin College at various interfaith celebratory events and educational workshops. A grant from the Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation makes the Interfaith Understanding through the Arts series possible. It aims to highlight and celebrate the differences and similarities of various faith traditions that are rooted in the arts and humanities. ■

LINDA STRIGGO



1

- 1: Franklin College Board Chair Emeritus **Jim Due '82** and newly elected Board Chair **Pete Cangany '80**  
2: The Tull Collection of Native American Art  
3: Amanda Vincent, Ph.D., seahorse conservationist



2

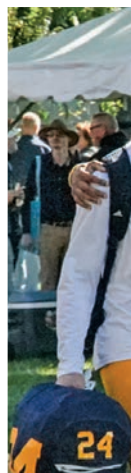
CHAD WILLIAMS



3

SUBMITTED













CHAD WILLIAMS

# REUNION

## FOR THE AGES

When the Class of '71 members gathered for Homecoming and Alumni Weekend, they joyfully swapped stories and effortlessly recalled inside jokes. Casual observers would never have guessed five decades had lapsed since some had seen each other.

Perhaps because, as diverse as they are in life experiences, the classmates share a profound bond that has grown more meaningful over time. Their 50th reunion was a time to affirm friendships and the lifelong impact Franklin College has made.

In that spirit, Class of '71 members at the Homecoming – Old Gold Luncheon united in gratitude and generosity to make a Reunion Gift of \$20,000 to the Franklin Fund. The Reunion Gift is the largest of its kind on college record. Class of '56, '65 and '69 members in

attendance at the luncheon raised gifts, as well.

In addition, **Ellie (Truesdell) Ackley '71** announced that she has included Franklin College in her estate plans, with a \$3.9 million commitment. To date, hers is the largest bequest ever designated to the College.

Ellie said, "The joy of giving is amazing! I hope others will consider surpassing my gift and looking into the variety of philanthropic options available to help support Franklin College."

Ellie said her estate commitment was inspired by the "lifetime of skills and lifelong friends that made college memorable." As a native of New Jersey, she was far away from home and family during college, but involvement in Zeta Tau Alpha sorority, field hockey and the traveling concert choir provided her a strong sense of community. She also valued studying away her senior year at the U.N.

Ellie said, "In high school, I had felt like a little fish in a big pond." The environment at Franklin College was



a welcome change, with its small class sizes, caring faculty and inclusive student organizations and activities. With so many new and exciting opportunities to learn and grow, Ellie felt for the first time like a “big fish.”

“I blossomed at Franklin,” she said.

Her life since graduating college has been exciting and rewarding. She and her spouse, Bob, were married for 43 years prior to his death in 2017. Franklin College Senior Director of Development and Planned Giving Tom Armor, now retired, flew to Florida to attend Bob’s Celebration of Life. The gesture deeply touched Ellie.

She said, “Tom was a ray of sunshine on a very dark and sad day; I was thrilled to see him. His visit is an example of the care and strength that come with being part of the Franklin College Family.”

Bob was retired as a vice president of Micromedex, Inc. He ran the office in Dayton, Ohio, where the couple lived

for 30 years. Ellie was a public school guidance counselor for 30 years and started her own company, Sunshine Vacation Villas, in 1990. She loved both careers, helping kids and families and renting luxury condos on the best beaches in Florida.

Ellie and Bob have two children. Their son, Bob, is a civilian in the Air Force, after two tours of duty in the Middle East. “We were so grateful he came home safely both times,” Ellie said.

Their daughter, Jennifer, is a registered nurse specializing in critical care. “She has devoted the last two years exclusively to taking care of COVID patients, which has taken a toll. I’m very proud of her,” Ellie said.

Ellie and Bob also have three grandchildren, Connor, Rachael and Cecilia. “They are all doing well in school and will be heading off to college soon — hopefully Franklin!” Ellie said.

Ellie remains a member of Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church, where

Bob also attended. As a couple, they enjoyed entertaining, traveling, playing bridge and spending time with their grandchildren. The Ackleys went on scuba diving adventures around the world, and loved boating.

Since retiring in 2001, Ellie has been active in philanthropic causes. She is a past president of Gulf Isle Neighbors, a social and charitable organization. She is a passionate supporter of an animal shelter called A-Hope, which aims to help seniors keep their pets as life circumstances change. She also belongs to an international philanthropic women’s group called Impact100. The group donated \$1 million this year to local nonprofit organizations in Florida. Ellie has lived in the Sunshine State for the last 20 years, and enjoys sharing time on the Gulf of Mexico with family and friends.

She said, “Life has been good to me, and I am very blessed. I find great joy in giving.” ■

*Class of '71 members in the front row are Vicki (Fulmer) McComb, Joyce (Byer) Shook, Judy (Jones) Ross, David Hall, Sandi (Wulfhorst) Zets, Van Hoang, Jenny (Buck) Menser, Linda (Barteck) Unsworth and Bill Unsworth. In the middle row are Ellie (Truesdell) Ackley and Mark Kevitt. In the back row are Don McCombs, Bob Shook, Dave Musgrave, David Shaw and Jim Bond.*



CHAD WILLIAMS

# 2021 AND THE AWARDS GO TO . . .

# GIV

By Amy (Kean) VerSteeg '96, Editor

For 67 years, the Alumni Council has called some of the most inspiring Grizzlies back home for the Hail to Franklin reception, a highlight of the Homecoming and Alumni Weekend tradition.

During the reception, the Alumni Council conducts an awards program recognizing distinguished individuals for their accomplishments and contributions. Criteria include leadership, volunteerism, professional excellence and/or college loyalty. The 2021 Hail to Franklin honorees are **Yolanda M. "Yoyo" Askew '90**, **Leonard L. "Len" Bissonnette '62**, M.D., and **Brad Rateike '02**.

The athletics department also conducts an annual awards program recognizing college alumni and friends for coaching/playing achievements and/or college loyalty. The honorees are inducted into the Franklin College Athletic Hall of Fame, recognized at a dinner banquet and invited onto the field during halftime of the Homecoming football game. The 2021 honorees are **Mark Britner**, **Jeff Craver '74** and **Lindsey (Roberson) Shaw '06**.

Congratulations to all of the award winners! Learn more about them on the next pages.

To nominate future Hail to Franklin honorees, use the form at [alumni.FranklinCollege.edu](http://alumni.FranklinCollege.edu). Per Athletic Hall of Fame criteria, nominations are only accepted from former letter winners at Franklin College, and they can be sent to the director of athletics, **Andrew Hendricks**, at [ahendricks@FranklinCollege.edu](mailto:ahendricks@FranklinCollege.edu).



# ING COMPASS

**Time. Talent. Treasure. Testimony. Yolanda M. “Yoyo” Askew ’90 gives generously in many ways. Investing in whom and what she believes keeps Askew true to her personal compass, grounds her principles and guides her decisions. For most of her life, she has been charting a course that involves improving the lives of others.**

Askew’s Franklin College activities provide a glimpse of the career path that began emerging 30 years ago. She was a founding member and later president of the Student Association for Support of Minorities (SASOM) and a member of the Student Entertainment Board (SEB) and the International Club. She also worked as a Resident Assistant. All the experiences helped provide skills for the real world.

Now employed with NBCUniversal, a global media and entertainment company, Askew is a proven solutions innovator. She joined the company in 2007 and has continually been involved in projects that uplift communities and support diversity, equity and inclusion.

As Director of Sales Fulfillment and Special Projects, Askew has leadership roles with three NBCUniversal initiatives. She helps steer the 21st Century Solutions Grant Committee, which identifies and vets organizations for funding in support of civic engagement, education, environment, jobs and economic empowerment, media and technology for good. She also is an NBCUniversal Black Employee Network Global Adviser, overseeing 16 national and global Black Employee Network Resource Groups, impacting more than



4,000 employees. Her focus is on helping grow, develop and retain the Black talent population within NBCUniversal. Further, she is co-founder of the Young Professional Academy, which pairs employees with young men of color who attend public boys’ high schools serving the boroughs of New York City and Newark, New Jersey. Mentors work with the same group of young men over a two-year span, helping them to build their professional profile. It is personal and gratifying work for Askew, a native of Queens.

Beyond her career, Askew is a hardworking volunteer. She established the First Book Jamaica Lab program, and helped raise funds that provided more than 12,000 free books for underprivileged children over a 15-year period. Further, she has been a Girl Scout leader, and led dozens of donation drives for back-to-school supplies and victims of natural disasters. She is a former trustee for a nonprofit that provides food and resources for underprivileged families. She is especially excited to be working with Franklin College on a new initiative to involve alumni in helping students prepare for and access internship opportunities.

She resides in Jamaica, New York. ■

# WHOLE LIFE

CHAD WILLIAMS

**Physician. Veteran. Humanitarian. Leonard L. “Len” Bissonnette ’62, M.D., has spent a lifetime demonstrating integrity and helping others. He lives wholly and generously.**

From the beginning, Bissonnette was a high-achiever at Franklin College. He earned memberships of distinction in the Blue Key and Chi Beta Phi academic honorary societies while double majoring in biology and chemistry. He also was active in Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and WFCI campus radio.

Franklin built a bridge to the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, from where Bissonnette graduated in 1966, entering thereafter into the U.S. Army Medical Corps and serving during the Vietnam War. He earned a Bronze Star for meritorious combat-medical service.

Returning stateside, he became board certified in radiology and in nuclear medicine. He practiced medicine in Tampa and Brooksville, Florida, prior to beginning a nine-year stint with Oak Hill Hospital, also in the Sunshine State. In that time, he served as vice chief of staff and medical director for radiology and nuclear medicine, with the roles overlapping four years.

He enjoys being retired today, but Bissonnette and his spouse, Teresa, also a physician, have contributed meaningfully to mission work in health care throughout their lives. Primarily, their efforts have focused on the Philippines, Teresa’s native country. They are funders of a mobile hospital equipped with two operating rooms, and have participated in the unit’s medical outreach in remote areas. The Bissonnettes also serve on the Philippine Cultural Foundation Board of Directors, helping to preserve and present the culture as a legacy for future generations.

The couple’s philanthropy extends to other cultural, religious and humanitarian nonprofit organizations and educational institutions, including Franklin College. Since 2006, they have funded two endowed student scholarships in pre-medicine, honoring Len’s education and their lifelong



love of medicine and service to the community. The couple also made a significant gift toward launching the Franklin College Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program in 2018 and subsequently funded an endowment to support engaged learning in the sciences in 2019. Most recently, they made a \$100,000 gift to establish the Bissonnette Endowed Scholarship Fund for Physician Assistant Studies. It will provide support for student expenses related to the master’s program. The Bissonnettes strongly advocate learning opportunities such as undergraduate research, internships and conferences that help broaden student involvement beyond campus. They supported the Franklin College Campaign for the Sciences, and the Science Center features three areas named in their honor, the zoology and botany labs and the museum.

The Bissonnettes reside in Florida. ■



**Brad Rateike '02, founding principal of Bar Communications, has a growth mindset. He believes a well-rounded and fulfilling life largely depends on one's willingness to keep learning and putting in the work, in the classroom, in a career and in relationships. He intentionally tries to raise the bar daily to keep fulfilling his potential and succeed in helping others.**

# BETTER EVERY DAY



CHAD WILLIAMS

Today, he is an entrepreneur and public relations pro, but the skills he uses to help clients with messaging and reputation management remain grounded in the liberal arts he studied at Franklin. Rateike majored in English, minored in leadership studies and applied what he learned during internships with Indianapolis business leaders. And as Franklin College Student Congress President, Rateike learned the importance of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in order to develop pragmatic solutions.

His post-graduate endeavors included serving as an organizational development volunteer with the Peace Corps in Uzbekistan. His work there helping nonprofit organizations become sustainable reinforced his belief that prioritizing what matters most in life every day is critical to decision-making. The same approach enables Rateike to help clients make strategic decisions efficiently and effectively. His clients include corporate, government and nonprofit organizations in the Midwest and Washington, D.C.

Prior to founding his communications firm, Rateike served for five years as deputy press secretary and policy director for former Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels. In that role, he handled media outreach and worked with state agencies and external stakeholder groups on grassroots initiatives to advance the governor's legislative agenda. In 2016, he took a hiatus from Bar Communications to serve as a communications and policy adviser to the Trump Campaign and the Trump/Pence Transition Team. He also was recruited to serve as director of Cabinet communications at the White House.

Currently, Rateike is a monthly columnist on business and political issues for the *Indianapolis Business Journal* and a pro bono communications adviser for the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation. He is a graduate of the FBI Citizens Academy and was selected as a member of the Stanley K. Lacy Executive Leadership Series Class XLI. Further, he is a member of the *Indianapolis Business Journal's* "Forty Under 40" Class of 2020 and previously served as chair of the Indianapolis Citizens Police Complaint Board.

He and spouse Lawren Mills reside in Indianapolis. ■

# LEGACIES CEMENTED

By Ryan Thomas  
Assistant Athletics Director for Communications and  
Amy (Kean) VerSteeg '96  
Editor

A Grizzlies' coach and two former student-athletes are the newest members of the Athletic Hall of Fame. The College inducted Mark Britner, **Jeff Craver '74** and **Lindsey (Roberson) Shaw '06** over Homecoming and Alumni Weekend, and their engraved portraits now join previous inductees honored in the Spurlock Center gallery. Here is a glimpse of their athletic achievements:

**Britner** served as head coach of the Grizzlies' volleyball program from 1978–96, compiling a 487–246 record. During

his coaching career, the Grizzlies captured six National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) District 21 championships and two Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championships. Britner led the Grizzlies to NAIA National Championship quarterfinals three times, finishing in fifth place twice and taking seventh place on one occasion.

Under Britner's leadership, the Grizzlies also set Franklin College program records for most wins in a season (41) and most consecutive wins (22) in

1983. He coached three American Volleyball Coaches Association All-Americans, had six players named NAIA Academic All-Americans and saw more than 40 players named to NAIA or NCAA all-district or all-conference.

Since retiring from the coaching ranks at Franklin, Britner has stayed involved with the sport through Team Indiana Volleyball club and USA Volleyball High Performance (HP) programs. He is developer of an HP manual used at the latter's camp programs. He is currently a professor of exercise science at Franklin College.

Britner resides in Franklin.

**Craver** was a four-year starter and middle line-backer for the Grizzlies' football team. He also handled play-calling duties for Franklin's defense and served as a team captain from 1971–73. He was a member of the legendary 1970 Mineral Water Bowl championship team and helped Franklin advance to the semifinals of the 1972 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Tournament, earning Defensive MVP in the semifinal game. He was a two-time First Team All-NAIA selection in football. Craver also

Mark Britner, **Lindsey (Roberson) Shaw '06** and **Jeff Craver '74**





played first and third base for the Grizzlies' baseball team.

Craver graduated from Franklin with a bachelor's degree in history and physical education. He went on to earn teaching certification from Butler University, and he taught high school for a year. After relocating from Indiana to Southern California, he earned a Master of Business Administration from Pepperdine University and began building a long and successful career in transportation and logistics. After 12 years on the West Coast, he returned to Central Indiana. He held leadership roles with several companies prior to retiring in 2012 from Osram Sylvania, where he was director of import and export compliance for the North American Free Trade Agreement (also known as USMCA).

He and spouse **Rhonda (Robertson) '74** are the parents of three children and have four grandchildren. The Cravers reside in Carmel, Indiana.

**Shaw** was a powerhouse on the Franklin College women's basketball team. She earned four varsity letters and played a vital role in helping the Grizzlies claim three Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) regular-season titles, two HCAC tournament championships and three National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Tourna-

ment appearances. Shaw played 113 games, scored 1,561 points (13.8 average), made 584 rebounds (5.2 average) and completed 222 assists (2.0 average). She is the women's basketball record holder for most three-pointers in a season, 81, and for a career, 255.

With Shaw on the team, the Grizzlies went 88-25, with a 46-10 mark in HCAC play. Individually, Shaw earned HCAC MVP in 2005 and 2006, and was a First Team All-HCAC selection all four years of her collegiate career. In each of her final three seasons, she made the HCAC All-Tournament Team and earned NCAA All-American status in 2005 and 2006.

She graduated from Franklin with a bachelor's degree in biology, and then earned her teaching license from Indiana Wesleyan University. In 2007, she began teaching science at Eastern Hancock Middle School in Greenfield, Indiana, where she currently is in her 15th year. She was head girls' basketball coach there for four years, and returned to Franklin College for a year to serve on the sidelines with her former head coach, Kim Eiler, Ed.D.

She and spouse **Eric Shaw '06** are the parents of Zayden and Emmry. The Shaws reside in Greenfield, Indiana. ■

# SEASON ROUNDUP

Get a glimpse of the Grizzlies' fall athletic achievements below, and follow **@FCGrizAthletics** on Twitter, **Franklin College Athletics** on Facebook and **FranklinGrizzlies.com** on Instagram for real-time updates.

- The men's soccer team made its first Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) Tournament appearance since 2014 and hosted its first-ever post-season contest at Faught Stadium. The team went 5-3-1 in conference play. **Jon Moore '25**, striker, earned HCAC Newcomer of the Year honors after matching the program's record for goals in a season with 10. Midfielder **Angel Tapia '22** was named Honorable Mention All-Conference and set a single-season program record for assists with seven.
- The women's soccer team made their second consecutive post-season appearance, advancing to the quarter-finals of the HCAC Tournament. **Lilly Haines '23** and **Kaitlyn Hewitt '24** were named Honorable Mention All-HCAC.
- Volleyball placed three players on All-Conference teams. **Miranda Wilson '25** was named First Team All-HCAC and earned a spot on the league's All-Newcomer Team. **Allison Thompson '25** and **Billie Jarrett '24** were named to the Honorable Mention Team.
- Cross-country had four runners earn All-Conference accolades. **John Asplund '25** and **Haley Makowski '25** were named First Team All-HCAC while **Ella Bashor '25** and **Jack Sells '24** collected Honorable Mentions for their showings at the conference championships.
- At the HCAC Women's Golf Championships held in Franklin, **Maci French '22** became a three-time All-HCAC selection after finishing third overall.
- The football team captured a Homecoming win, 45-6, over the Bluffton Beavers, and recaptured the Victory Bell for the first time since 2017, with a 27-6 win over Hanover. For the first time since 2012, a Grizzlies' football player also collected Newcomer of the Year honors from the HCAC, thanks to running back **Garrett Cora '25**. He led the Grizzlies with 700 yards rushing and added 205 yards receiving on 16 grabs, finishing with 11 total touchdowns. ■



# SHOWS must go on

By Alexa Shrake '23, Pulliam Fellow

Every successful production needs hardworking people behind the scenes. From set and wardrobe designers to lighting and sound technicians, it takes many talented people to put on a great performance. When it comes to the business of entertainment for the greater good, it also takes committed volunteers. **Robert "Bob" DeVoss '69 and Melanie J. Norton '90** are two such people.


DeVoss, The Cabaret Board of Directors outgoing chair, and Norton, his successor, are passionate about helping the Indianapolis nonprofit elevate and promote the cabaret art form

by entertaining, educating and engaging audiences and artists.

The Cabaret's season lineup regularly includes nationally and internationally

acclaimed Broadway stars and jazz musicians, as well as professional development workshops for emerging artists and talent-cultivation activities for local colleges and high schools. Through





its variety of entertainment and outreach, The Cabaret proclaims to provide “radical hospitality that gives patrons a memorable experience and personal respite from everyday life.”

DeVoss, a board member since 2013, is proud of The Cabaret’s extensive impact. When he became board chair in 2019, he eagerly took on more responsibilities to advance the mission, but never could he have imagined the crisis ahead. The COVID-19 pandemic shut down stages worldwide in 2020, crippling the economy’s arts and cultural sectors. The Cabaret avoided devastation thanks to Artistic Director and CEO Shannon Forsell and DeVoss’ leadership throughout the continuing pandemic pivot.

“We’ve been really successful in moving on in a positive way with the future of the organization,” DeVoss said. “We’ve been fortunate to participate in a variety of federal, state and local grants that have allowed us to continue.”

With the postponement of live performances as a safety precaution in 2020, The Cabaret found new ways to honor its mission, including sharing virtual performances and creating an outdoor gathering space called The Alley.

Presented in collaboration with the Arts Council of Indianapolis and Buckingham Cos. and funded by Lilly Endowment Inc., The Alley enables guests to experience local art and free live performances. The Cabaret also began offering other community organizations the chance to rent its space. DeVoss, coincidentally, helped The Cabaret find its current quarters on Pennsylvania St., back in 2018.

“We fancy The Cabaret as an entertainment center that is like sitting in your own living room and being able to enjoy a performance,” he said. “It’s a small venue.”

Like DeVoss, Norton is proud of the small venue making a big impact in the performing arts and across the community. Helping individuals and organizations enhance the world in which we live drives her volunteerism and career with Norton Philanthropic Counsel. She is the company’s founder and CEO.

“I’ve always been the type of person who feels the moral obligation to give back,” Norton said. “I think volunteering is a way to lift up our society as a whole.”

She became acquainted with The Cabaret years ago when sought for strategic planning services. Over time, she felt compelled to help in other ways, and

DeVoss encouraged her participation on the board.

“The arts need our help, particularly in times of financial turmoil. They bring the color to the fabric of life,” Norton said.

Norton will assume DeVoss’ role as The Cabaret Board of Directors Chair in January 2022.

“The chance to follow Bob and have that Franklin College connection, which is so special, is a real honor for me,” she said. “Bob has provided a remarkable service to the organization during a very transitional time. As I think about my role next year and what that is going to look like, there are a lot of unknowns.”

Norton is certain, however, The Cabaret will continue providing topnotch programming, focusing on diversity and inclusion, and supporting its followers. DeVoss is eager to see The Cabaret’s continued success.

Since retiring in 2008 as owner, partner and president of Retirement Management, Inc., he has been a highly active volunteer throughout Indianapolis and in Franklin. A college trustee since 2007, DeVoss has chaired various committees, including one that brought

the Indianapolis Colts to Faught Stadium for practice in 2009. For the past three years, he has supported a relationship between KIPP Indy Schools and Franklin College, introducing children and teens to college life and, in particular, opportunities at Franklin College. More recently, he chaired the committee that oversaw Franklin College President Kerry Prather’s inauguration. DeVoss also is a past member of the Alumni Council.

“The work I’ve done at Franklin College has been satisfying and rewarding,” DeVoss said.

Both DeVoss and Norton said they are thankful for their Franklin College undergraduate experiences, including the liberal arts foundation, lifelong friendships and strong alumni network. All have helped provide them a foundation for fulfilling careers and meaningful community engagement. Norton encourages everyone, no matter their stage of life, to explore volunteer opportunities.

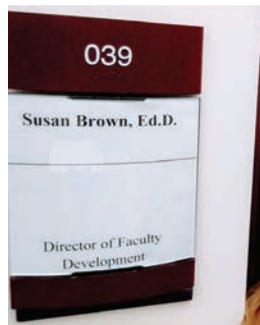
“Find something you’re passionate about,” she said. “If you get out and start to do things, other opportunities also will come your way. Volunteerism leads to so many other great things that you could never even imagine.” ■

# CLASS NOTES



## Let's connect!

Join Franklin College Connect (FCC) for access to all things GRIZ! Submit Class Notes, register for events and volunteer opportunities, post jobs and internships, explore the alumni directory and more at [alumni/FranklinCollege.edu](http://alumni/FranklinCollege.edu).



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

### '50s

**Dick Fisher '55** and spouse **Bea (Wilson) '57** celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Sept. 2, 2021. They were married at the First Baptist Church in Franklin, Indiana, their hometown. They both attended Franklin College prior to Dick's Army assignment at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. Dick retired from A. E. Staley Manufacturing, and Bea was a teacher and worked in retail. They reside in Decatur, Illinois, and have four children, 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

### '60s

**Lee Ryker '63** shared in a recent letter to the editor that he "framed a home in a mountain valley in 1995, married Cassie in 1986 at age 46 and retired from teaching at public schools in 2002." Since 2015, he has taught biology at Pacific Bible College in Medford, Oregon. He wrote, "It's a fun way to spend retirement." His recent self-published works include *God's Presence in My Life/An Ordinary Joe*

*Hears From the Lord* and *A Scientist's Discussion of Creation for Pastors*.

### '70s

**Geoffrey Doughty '72** has written 29 books and numerous articles about railroad, passenger train and transportation history. His latest release, written with co-authors, is *Amtrak, America's Railroad: Transportation's Orphan and Its Struggle for Survival*, available online. His railroad career began in college, when he worked summers for the Chicago and North Western Railway. After graduation, he taught two years in private schools, and then went to work for Maine Central Railroad. There, his career included positions in the transportation, revenue accounting, engineering and safety departments. One of his major accomplishments was the formulation of the Northeast rail industry's first drug- and alcohol-use testing programs, two years before federal regulations were enacted covering the rail industry. He was also instrumental in organizing the "Operation Lifesaver" highway-grade crossing programs in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

**Helen (Kunkel) Dwyer '74** retired as a computer programmer from the Indiana State Bureau of Motor Vehicles. She volunteers with the Mid-America Unitarian Universalist Organization and is a trustee of All Souls Unitarian Church. She resides in Carmel, Indiana.

**Jay Wickliff '74** recently began his second post-retirement career as the director of strategic planning for

1: **Dick Fisher '55** and spouse **Bea (Wilson) '57**  
2: **Susan Irwin Brown '86, Ed.D.**



International Academic Competitions, which operates in 42 countries. In addition to strategy development, he is launching the National Political Science Bee and the inaugural non-English competitions in Poland. Wickliff recently taught at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, named the best high school in the United States by *U.S. News and World Report* in 2020 and 2021. There, he also coached three state-championship tennis teams and a national championship History Bowl team. Wickliff's previous business career included serving as global vice president of human resources for Gerber Scientific.

**Dave Lyon '75** recently retired and relocated from Iowa to Indiana.

**Dedra Montgomery '76** retired in 2015 as guidance director at Jac-Cen-Del Jr. Sr. High School in Osgood, Indiana. She previously was the school's athletic director for 15 years. Prior to that, she taught physical education and health, and coached.

**Joan Serverson '76** serves as district deputy grand exalted ruler for the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. She resides in the Buzzards Bay area of Massachusetts, with her son and granddaughter. She works for Cape Cod Healthcare.

## '80s

**Susan Irwin Brown '86**, Ed.D., has been appointed president of the Friends of Washington-Centerville Public Library in Ohio, where she and her spouse, Harold, are recent empty nesters.



Central Indiana's Shelbyville Middle School is technically home of the Golden Bears athletic teams, but several Franklin College Grizzlies are on the teaching and coaching staff. In conjunction with the College's Homecoming and Alumni Weekend, they showed their Franklin spirit by wearing blue and gold apparel and Griz gear to the workplace.

Pictured in the front row are: Pat Parks (PE teacher for Shelbyville and Franklin College assistant defensive line coach), **Scott Fitzgerald '98**, **Rex Olds '11** and **Eli Veach '04**. In the middle row are: **Marijo (Posz) Hamblen-Snow '94**, **Bambi (Holzhausen) Garrison '02**, **Rachel (Whipker) Hutchinson '10** and **Misty (Roland) Harger '01**. In the back row are: **Betsy Means-Davis '96**, **Matt Thomas '19** and **Kim (Mullen) Clark '00**.

Susan is director of faculty development at the University of Dayton.

**Michael W. Daniels '86** recently was selected by the Mayor of Shelbyville, Indiana, to serve as the city's behavioral health and justice equity director. He is also vice president for justice outreach of Anchored to Hope. He previously served as director of justice policy and programs for Franklin County, Ohio. He has an extensive background in science, business and justice, and has managed nationally recognized programming for mental health, addiction and reentry from incarceration.

**Karen (Pate) Swan '86** serves as director of a new private school in Lebanon, Indiana, the Redwood Christian Montessori. The school focuses on Christian values and individualized learning for children, starting at age 3 and continuing to third grade.

**Bill Hacker '87** recently retired after 31 years of teaching middle school in Indiana for the Greenfield-Central Community School System. He taught language arts for 28 years and physical education/health for three years. He also coached at the middle- and high school-levels for more than 20 years, guiding programs in football, basketball, baseball, wrestling and cross-country at different points in his career.

## '90s

**Christine Childers '90** shared the following in a recent note: "I am retired and spend time enjoying family. Jack passed away July 2, 2013. We had been married 40 years. Both my sons have passed. My daughter, Ahnyka, is a nurse. I am the proud grandmother to Ryan and Amanda and great-grandmother to Asher."



## Write on

Two published authors with creative writing degrees from Franklin College were featured presenters on campus Nov. 2, 2021, as part of the Carlson-Stauffer Visiting Writer Series. **Brooke Lauren Davis '15** and **Samantha Fain '20** gave readings of their works and discussed the creative process with guests.

Davis' *The Hollow Inside* (Bloomsbury Publishing) hit bookstores in May 2021. Her website says the novel "explores the murkiness of right and wrong, of choices and consequences, of heroes and villains, in an eerily compelling and thought-provoking small-town saga."

Fain debuted her first chapbook, *Coughing Up Planets* (Vegetarian Alcoholic Press), in March 2021. Her collection of poems is described as "orbiting the bodies of dogma, family, identity, sexuality, environment and outer space." She also produced a micro chapbook, *sad horse music*.

A grant from Indiana Humanities in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Humanities makes the writer series, named in honor of Franklin College English professors emeritae Kathy Carlson and Emily Stauffer, possible.

Davis' novel was an alumni book club selection. ■

**Maj. Larry D. Jenkins '90** announced his retirement from the Indiana State Police in August 2021, after a career spanning nearly 30 years. Throughout his career, Jenkins served in many roles, including trooper, field training officer, tactical intervention platoon member, S.W.A.T. team member and firearms instructor. In 2004, he began serving as a computer generalist with the Information Technology Section of the Criminal Justice Division. A series of subsequent promotions over the years earned him the final rank of major and assistant chief of staff for communications and information systems. Jenkins and his spouse have three children.

**Scott Johnson '92**, head varsity baseball coach at Carrollton High School in Georgia, celebrated his 400th career victory as a head coach this spring. Johnson previously coached at three Indiana high schools, Angola, Hamilton Southeastern and Mt. Vernon. He has coached for 26 years, with 22 as a head coach.

### '00s

**Lora (Todd) Hoover '00** was appointed this summer as president and CEO at Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis. She previously was principal at Fundswell.

**Laura (Farner) Bridges '01** was named vice president and COO at Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI) this summer. She has been part of the ICI staff for 15 years, in a variety of roles. Bridges learned about her first job opportunity at ICI through a referral from the career services office at Franklin College. Today, her work at ICI directly impacts Franklin and 28 other colleges and universities that provide private higher education in Indiana. Bridges facilitates collaborative initiatives that provide professional networking, training and cost savings to participating institutions.

**Kellie (Chittick) Schmidt '02** recently made the career transition from instructor of English at Franklin College to associate dean for student success. She has worked at the College since 2016.

**Matt Dorsett '03** is senior corporate attorney for Louisville Gas and Electric and Kentucky Utilities. He resides in Sellersburg, Indiana.

**Andrew M. Clotfelter '04** is serving as graduate studies coordinator for the J. Irwin Miller Architecture Program at Indiana University. He and spouse Jill reside in Columbus, Indiana.

**Katy (Sheehan) Alexander '05** recently joined the Franklin College staff as the campus nurse and coordinator of student health services. Her spouse, **Jim '06**, also works at the College, as department chair and assistant professor of religious studies. They reside in Franklin, with their three children.

**Stacey (Fehr) Schmidt '05** was named this summer to the Greater Cincinnati United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Hall of Fame, with special recognition for Superior Performance. Her high game is 300, and high series is 806. Her parents, brother, aunt and grandfather are also hall of fame bowlers.

**Jen (Nebesny) Whitson '06** recently accepted an administrative assistant position with Leadership Johnson County at Franklin College. She previously worked at the College from 2008-17 as the associate registrar. She and spouse **Clint '05** are the parents of three sons and reside in Greenwood, Indiana.

**Charlee (Beasor) Mitchell '07** recently was promoted to associate commissioner for communications and outreach at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. She previously served as communications director. In her new role, she oversees communications, marketing and outreach



efforts, and manages a team of 16. Charlee and spouse **Ben '07** reside in Brownsburg, Indiana, with their daughters, Clara and Lucy.

**Luke Bosso '08** recently became managing director of government consulting at KSM (Katz, Sapper & Miller) in Indianapolis. Since August 2021, he has been an adjunct faculty member/lecturer of journalism at Franklin College, where he also serves on the Alumni Council.

**Adam Dunigan '09** recently was promoted to senior director of advancement services and analytics at Franklin College. He began working for the College in 2009, as part of the Information Technology Services (ITS) team. He held a succession of ITS roles with growing responsibilities, which in 2019 led to his successful transition to the Institutional Advancement team, on which he specializes in data management and business process design.

**Candace (Beatty) Phelan '09** and spouse Matthew are the parents of a son, Elijah Eugene, born Oct. 11, 2021. He joins a brother, Sam.

**Sarah (Zeigler) Plummer '09** and spouse Kurt are the parents of a son, Isaac Nathan, born Sept. 6, 2021. He joins three sisters, Katelyn, Brookelyn and Shaelyn.

## '10s

**Aaron Hommell '11** is serving as director of alumni services and corporate relations for Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. He is a 2007 Roncalli graduate. After earning his journalism degree from Franklin College and graduating from Mississippi College School of Law, he had a private practice for seven years. More recently, he was the director of public relations for St. Patrick Catholic High School in Biloxi, Mississippi.

**Elizabeth Kuka '11** made a career transition this summer, accepting

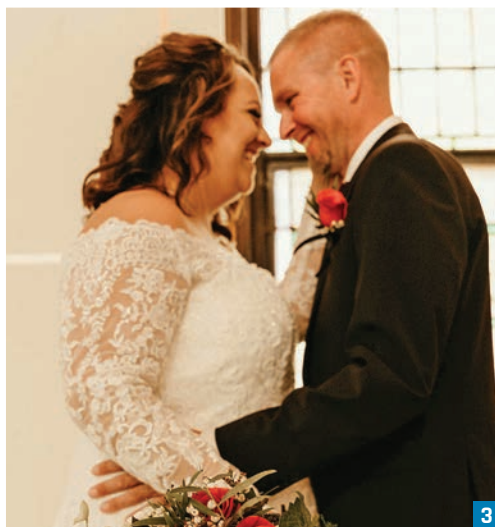
a position with Eli Lilly as a senior associate on the channels team in corporate affairs. She also is the social media and newsletter coordinator for Leadership Johnson County at Franklin College. She previously worked as the brand content strategist at One Click Ventures. She resides in Franklin, Indiana.

**Trung "Jack" Le '11** and spouse Van Nguyen are the parents of a daughter, Maia, born Sept. 16, 2021. The family resides in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

**Zach Morris '11** joined the U.S. Navy in 2014, graduating from Officer Candidate School and commissioning as an ensign. His next step was flight school in Florida at the famed Naval Air Station Pensacola, where he completed the program and collected

his Wings of Gold in 2016. A helicopter pilot, Zach was assigned to a fleet tour in San Diego, where he completed three deployments and the pinnacle qualifications of helicopter aircraft commander and level III tactics pilot. He is now stationed at Naval ROTC Purdue University as an assistant professor of naval sciences. Zach and his spouse, **Rachel Konchinsky-Pate '11**, were married in 2014. Zach shared, "We are happy to have returned to our home state, Indiana, for this tour!"

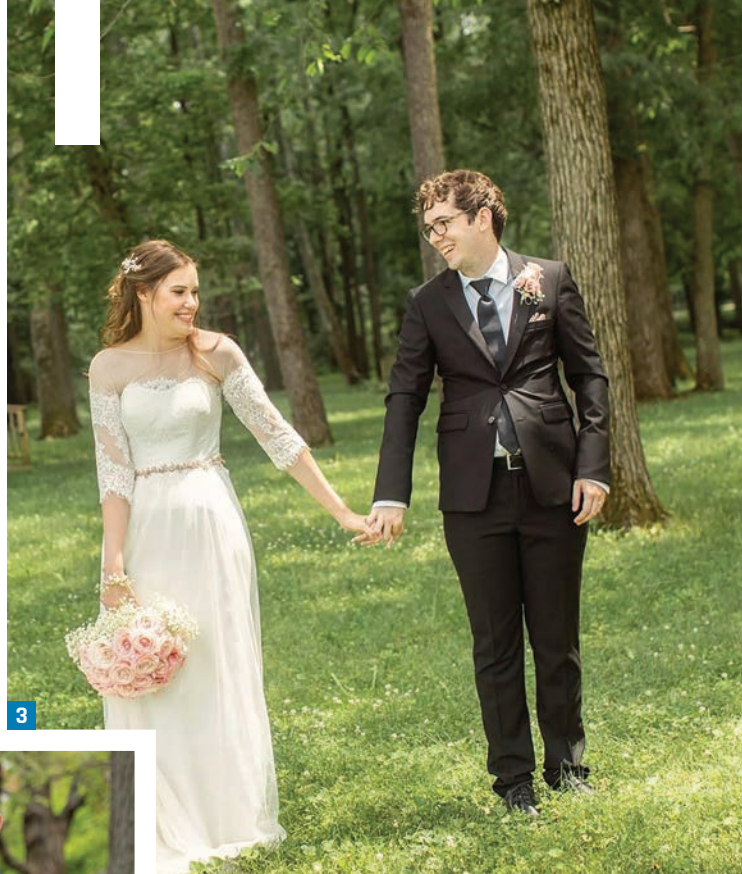
**Mandie Waling '11** and Kyle Greiwe married on June 26, 2021. This summer, she also was named founding director of the OneAmerica Center for Personalized Learning at Marian University. She previously was assistant director of the Disability Resource Center at Purdue University.



**1: Stacey (Fehr) Schmidt '05**  
**2: Zach Morris '11**  
**3: Mandie (Waling) Greiwe '11**  
 and spouse Kyle

SUBMITTED PHOTOS





- 1: Morgan (McClellan) Andreanopoulos '14** holds son Gideon, a future Franklin College Grizzly
- 2: Natalie (Owens) Garrett '14** holds son John Asher, and spouse Charlie holds son Owen
- 3: Katie (Cavin) Bodkin '16** and spouse Jack
- 4: Bryce Woodall '17** holds son Wiatt, and spouse Ciara holds son Radley
- 5: Madison Meador '18, DPT**
- 6: Caitlyn (Cherry) Shepherd '18** and spouse Adam '18
- 7: Abegayle Polston and spouse James '19**

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



**Suzannah Couch '13** received a promotion to editor of the *Brown County Democrat*. She began the new role on Aug. 25, 2021, coinciding with her seven-year anniversary at the publication, which she joined in 2014, as a reporter and photographer. Couch grew up in Brown County and was an editor of the high school newspaper. Her Franklin College journalism experiences included reporting for the Statehouse File and interning in Washington, D.C., for then Sen. Richard Lugar, now deceased.

**Morgan (McClellan) Andreanopoulos '14** and spouse Stephen are the parents of a son, Gideon Michael, born June 7, 2021. The family resides in Indianapolis.

**Natalie (Owens) Garrett '14** and spouse Charlie are the parents of a son, John Asher, born July 12, 2021. He joins a brother, Owen. The family resides in Madison, Indiana.

**Ryan Hammer '15**, Franklin College assistant men's and women's tennis coach, and spouse Chelsea are the parents of a son, Connor Michael, born July 20, 2021.

**Katie Cavin '16** and Jack Bodkin married on June 20, 2021. They reside in Westfield, Indiana.

**Chelsea Platt '16**, head tennis coach at Central Indiana's Waldron Jr./Sr. High, received the Dedicated Coach Award for the 2020-21 academic year from *The Shelbyville News*. The newspaper cited "her strong character and dedication as a coach." Platt works hard to help her players grow on the court and in the community; she involves the team in volunteerism and expects high academic performance. Waldron was one of 73 teams in the state named Academic All-State (team average GPA of 4.04) after the season. Platt was named Mid-Hoosier Conference Coach of the Year for 2019-20, after Waldron dominated the conference. Platt also is

junior varsity girls' basketball coach at Waldron.

**Michelle Rojas '16** recently earned her master's degree in strategic leadership and design from the University of Indianapolis. She is the Scholarly Concentrations Program Manager at Indiana University School of Medicine.

**Brandon Lindman '17** married Taylor VanRemmen on Dec. 19, 2020. He also graduated from the University of Pittsburgh's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences with a master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies. He is a physician assistant working in primary care at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center in Michigan.

**Bryce Woodall '17** and Ciara Cummins married on July 16, 2021, on their 10th dating-year anniversary in Stuart, Florida, on the beach. The couple have two sons, Wiatt, 2, and Radley, 11 months.

**Caitlyn Cherry '18** and **Adam Shepherd '18** married on May 23, 2020. They reside in Franklin, Indiana.

**Daniel Hicks '18** and **Rachel Santos '18** married on June 17, 2021. They reside in Indianapolis.

**Madison Meador '18**, DPT, recently graduated from Indiana State University with a doctorate in physical therapy and received news that she passed her board certification exam. She works at Select Physical Therapy in Franklin, Indiana.

**James Polston '19** and Abegayle Bass married on Aug. 1, 2020. They reside in Fairland, Indiana.

## '20s

**Kassidy Andrews '20** is the new access services coordinator for B. F. Hamilton Library at Franklin College. As a student, Andrews worked in the library her entire college career, giving her firsthand knowledge of the circulation

functions and interlibrary loan requests she now oversees.

**Austin Grunden '20** graduated from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy in June 2021. He is an officer with the North Vernon Police Department in southern Indiana. He has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

**Christopher Knight '20** has joined the North Vernon Police Department in southern Indiana. He interned at the Seymour Police Department while he was in college and earned a dispatcher position after graduation. His next goal is to graduate from the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy and become a K9 officer.

**Adam Hedinger '21** works as a tax associate at BKD in Indianapolis.

**Calista Spears '21** purchased a home this summer and began medical school at Marian University. ■



## Pack your bags!

Join us for an adventure to Alaska in 2022! Our alumni and friends cruise takes place Aug. 12-19. Scenic highlights and excursions will encompass nature, history and culture to provide you lifelong memories. Handcrafted meals on board the ship will complement your social activities. Find details at [alumni.FranklinCollege.edu](https://alumni.FranklinCollege.edu).



# ROLL WITH IT

Want to show Franklin College pride wherever you go?

Roll up with our signature college license plate on your car, truck or motorcycle.

When you buy a plate, you also help students. Sales support the **Franklin Fund**, which helps provide student scholarships and other vital college resources. When you order your first plate or renew an existing one, the BMV will collect and forward your \$25 contribution to the College. Standard plate registration and processing fees also will be applied to your purchase and paid to the BMV.

Start the process at

[alumni.FranklinCollege.edu](http://alumni.FranklinCollege.edu).

Franklin College license plates are available to Indiana residents only, but the bookstore offers a variety of license plate frames and other College merchandise. Shop at [bkstr.com](http://bkstr.com)

## IN MEMORIAM

With these obituaries, we honor the memory of alumni and friends who have helped shape – and were shaped by – Franklin College.

### '30s

**Betty Catherine  
"B.C." Williams '38**  
Shelbyville, Ind.  
Oct. 3, 2021

### '40s

**William A. Fisher '45**  
Rock Hill, S.C.  
Jan. 15, 2021

**John C. "Jack" Ragsdale '48**  
Prospect, Ky.  
Oct. 8, 2021

### '50s

**Dean L. Thomas '52**  
Fort Wayne, Ind.  
Aug. 23, 2021

**William G. "Bill" Woods '52**  
Franklin, Ind.  
Oct. 9, 2021

**Lucy Chesser-Smith '57**  
Franklin, Ind.  
July 16, 2021

**Merrill M.  
Wesemann, M.D. '57**  
Franklin College  
Heritage Society  
Franklin, Ind.  
Aug. 14, 2021

**Larry L. Phillips '59**  
Bristol, Ind.  
Nov. 3, 2021

### '60s

**Samuel "Jerry" Hicks '60**  
Venice, Fla.  
Aug. 23, 2021

**John R. Buerger '69**  
New Albany, Ind.  
Sept. 26, 2021

**James S.D.  
Eisenhower III '69**  
Manassas, Va.  
Aug. 11, 2021

### '70s

**Scott W. Geyer '73**  
New York, N.Y.  
July 15, 2021

**Casey L. Miller-Apple '78**  
Butler, Ind.  
Aug. 6, 2021

### '80s

**Lewis H. Washington '81**  
Louisville, Ky.  
Sept. 3, 2021

**Kathryn Jean (MacDonald)  
Clark '82**  
Mooresburg, Tenn.  
Aug. 15, 2021

*The Heritage Society recognizes individuals for extraordinary lifetime giving, both to the Franklin Fund and to specific projects that may include deferred gifts (appropriately documented) and gifts in kind. Lifetime giving also may include contributions made in the member's name through corporate gifts and matches and through private foundations, as well as by the member's spouse. The Horizon Society distinguishes individuals who have included the College in their estate planning.*



## Hero for life

SUBMITTED

His final earthly act was that of a hero; **Ryan D. Wilcoxon '12** chose organ donation to save other lives. He was 31 years old when he died Feb. 25, 2021, as the result of a brain bleed and irreversible damage.

Knowing that Ryan's heart, lungs, liver and kidneys were matches for individuals awaiting transplants helps give his widow, **Ashley (Burton) '12**, some peace of mind, as she and their two young daughters, Grace and Delaney, continue healing. Telling the world Ryan's story also gives Ashley purpose.

"I'm so proud of Ryan, and his legacy. He blessed many lives while he was on this earth, and continues to do so after his passing. Besides the matches found for his organs, he also donated his tissues and corneas for future need."

Ryan's selflessness always was evident, Ashley said. It is one of the reasons she loved him. He was a doting dad, content to spend weekends cuddled up for family movie marathons and college football games, as well as an extremely caring mentor to the students he taught and coached.

"Our family was his entire world; there was nothing he enjoyed more than staying home, but he also was passionate about helping students," Ashley said.

Most recently, Ryan was a special education teacher and the varsity baseball coach at Owen Valley High School in southern Indiana. He previously worked at Edinburgh, Eminence, Eastern Greene and Brown County high schools. After his death, baseball diamonds around the state of Indiana turned on their lights in tribute. Several local news stations aired coverage.

One way Ashley, her family and their friends continue to honor Ryan's memory is with a namesake scholarship for graduating seniors at Owen Valley, his employer, and Eastern Greene, his high school alma mater. They awarded inaugural scholarships in the spring, and subsequently hosted the Ryan Wilcoxon Memorial Golf Outing (follow on Facebook) to raise funds for future scholarships.

Learn more about organ, eye and tissue donation and the national registry at [unos.org](https://unos.org). ■



**Ashley (Burton) Wilcoxon '12** and spouse **Ryan '12** with daughters Grace (left) and Delaney

## Will and way

Estate planning is one of the easiest ways to protect your loved ones and everything you have worked hard for, but almost 70% of American adults do not have a will.

To make the process of creating a will easier than ever, Franklin College has partnered with FreeWill to provide a free, online will-writing tool. It only takes 20 minutes to get peace of mind, and feel secure knowing all that you love is protected, no matter what.

Get started at [FreeWill.com/FranklinCollege](https://FreeWill.com/FranklinCollege) today.

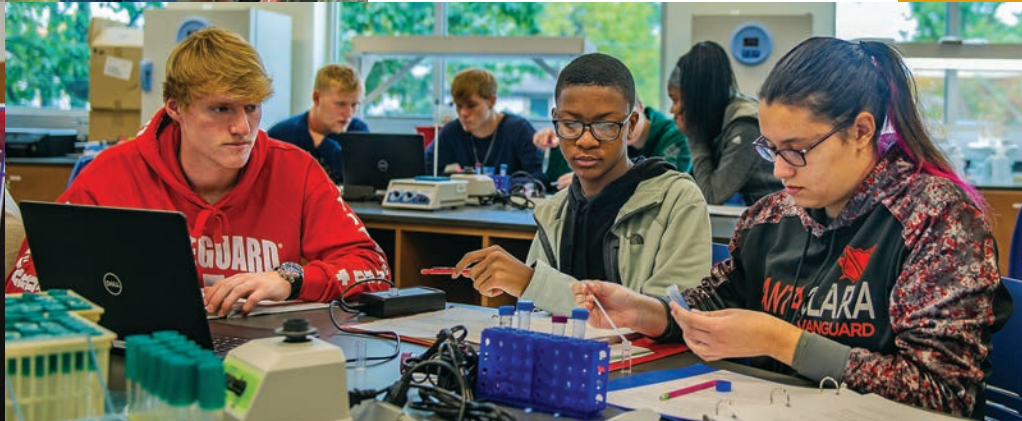


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- Help students who need scholarships and other financial assistance during the ongoing pandemic
- Advance innovation, leadership and action opportunities for students and alumni
- Demonstrate confidence in the College's reputation and value



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