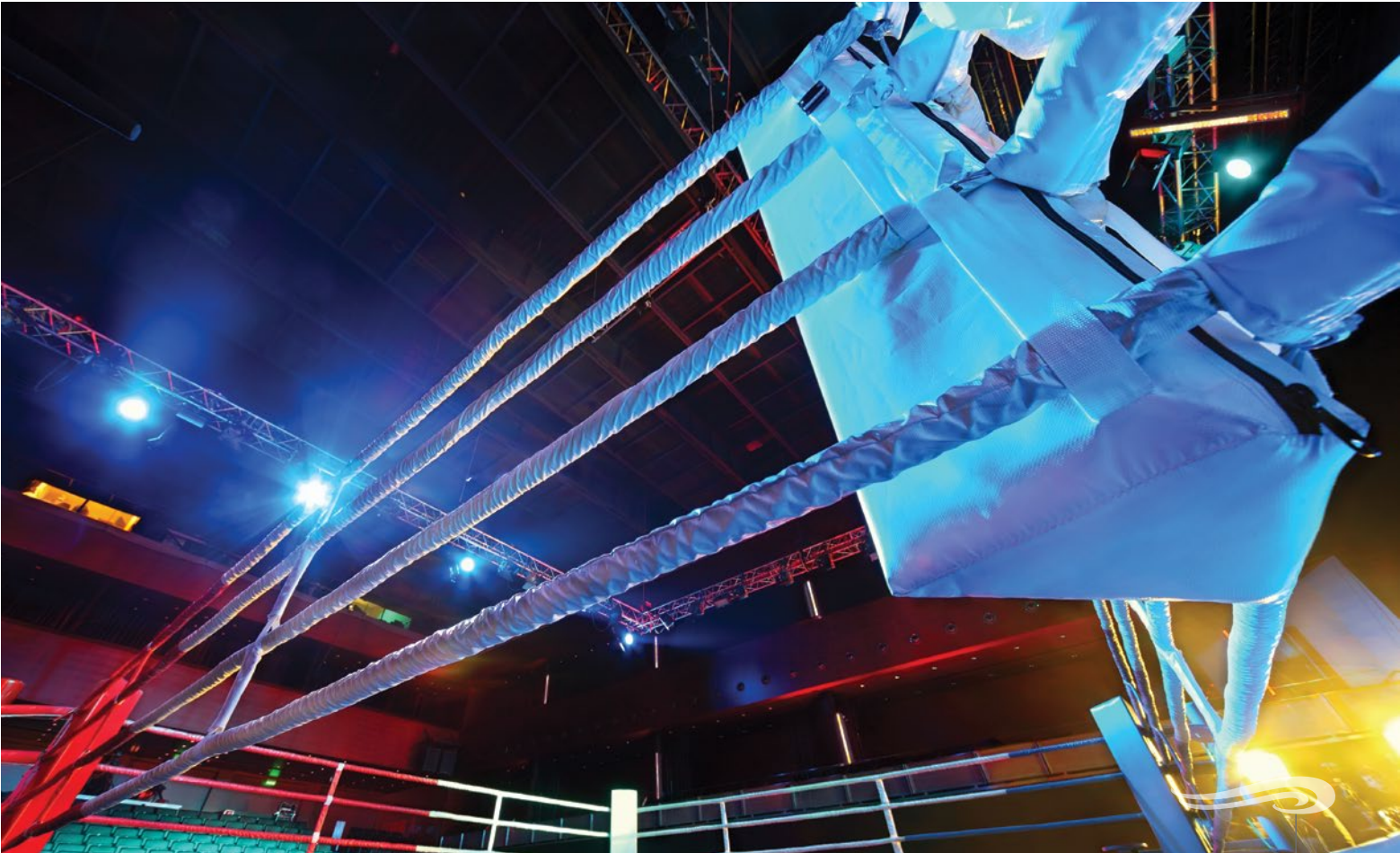


# illumine

—University of Southern Indiana—



GRIT | Spring 2018



features

**The Soul of a Champ**

**18**

The story of undefeated Sara Beth Vaughn

**45 - Under Siege**

**24**

An employee's active shooter experience

**Rites of Passage: A Presidential Path**

**26**

The life of Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett





38

How Jessi Got Here



12

The Big Picture



32

Behind the Scene



42

World View

departments

You Said	2	Colleges	34
State of the U	4	Open Dialogue	40
Coneucopia	8	Quotables	41
Student POV	14	Role Models	43
From the Desk of	15	Class Notes	44
Scoreboard	16	Tailfeather	48

## INQUIRING MINDS

*The article, "Dead Men Tell No Lies," contained a comment regarding the "handling of the real thing as opposed to a replica." It made me start to question, even in the realm of science, where do we draw the line when it comes to a human's right to rest in peace and the advancement of knowledge? I understand those who elect to donate themselves to science, but do you think that Mr. Harvey (or whomever you have) was given that option? He was someone's father, grandfather, great grandfather and son. Does he not deserve to be given a proper and dignified burial?*

*It appears that "certain mystique" comes at a very high cost to one who had no choice in the matter.*

Dr. Scott K. Stevens '80

**Editor's Note:** *This section was created with the express hope of receiving intellectually inquiring letters like Dr. Stevens and to offer a place for continued conversation, so I asked Dr. Michael Strezewski to respond to the questions raised.*

"When students are studying human osteology, there really is no replacement for actual bones, in terms of being able to identify important anatomical features. All the evidence we have is that the skeleton that was donated to us was prepared as a medical specimen many decades ago. He very well may have donated his body to science, though there is no way we can know the



intentions of the person without a doubt, given that mounted skeletons like this are anonymous individuals. If we were to bury the bones, there would also be a chance that we would be going against his wishes and so, unfortunately, there is no clear answer to the question."

### STORY UPDATE: SKELETAL FINDINGS FROM DR. SUSAN HELFRICH

*The Evansville Museum skeleton is not John Harvey, an executed man. There was no evidence that the bones were buried in soil, cut marks showed defleshing, and the skull and postcranial skeleton were from separate males. The skeleton was not prepared by a hobbyist wanting to preserve the authentic appearance of John Harvey. It was professionally prepared.*

### EMPLOYING EDUCATION

*I am a project manager at an IT company and I was reading about strategies to gain clients' trust. Immediately, game theory came to mind to aid in solving common conflicts. I brought it up to one of my superiors and they were very impressed with my knowledge and want me to teach others about maximizing gains/minimizing losses in project management via game theory. I just want to thank Dr. Curtis Price for teaching this course. I feel it has really helped me in real life more than any other.*

Jennifer Lehman '17

**CORRECTION:** The College of Nursing and Health Professions' Bachelors of Science in Respiratory Therapy degree completion program began in spring 2016. The four-year traditional program began in 2017.

*We invite readers to comment on articles and start conversations by bringing unique perspectives to relevant magazine topics. Correspondence and comments will not be limited to letters mailed to the editor, but may be from email or social media networks. Letters mailed to the editor may be published in the magazine unless the author states it is not for publication. Letters should be kept to 250 words, and may be edited for style, length, clarity, grammar and relevance to USI issues. Letters to the editor should be sent to [magazine@usi.edu](mailto:magazine@usi.edu).*





**Calli Fritcher**

96 hours, 10 movies, 6 inches of snow, 4 best friends, and 1 memorable, lazy & snowy weekend at University of Southern Indiana.



**brittneybuechler**

Thank you USI for the precious friends, sweet opportunities, and unforgettable memories that have forever changed my life. oh and I guess thx 4 the knowledge lol you rock



EDITOR

C. L. Stambush

WRITERS

Erik Estep '19  
John Farless '98  
Barbara Goodwin  
C. L. Stambush

DESIGNERS

Laura Everest '13  
Amy Ubelhor  
Zach Weigand '02

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Haley Teniente Cortez '21  
Ariel Holcombe '18  
Elizabeth Courtney Randolph

CONTRIBUTORS

Angela Ackerman '18  
David Branstetter  
AmyLu Riley '93  
Jessica Thomas '09

*Director of University Communications*  
John Farless '98

*Director of Alumni Relations and Volunteer USI*  
Janet Johnson M'05

*illumine* is published two times annually by the University of Southern Indiana for its alumni and friends. Reach us at: University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, IN 47712. Send editorial information to University Communications (812-465-7005) or [magazine@usi.edu](mailto:magazine@usi.edu).

It is the policy of the University of Southern Indiana to be in full compliance with all federal and state non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws, orders and regulations relating to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer, USI Human Resources Department, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, Indiana 47712.



**US Embassy Seoul**  
[@USEmbassySeoul](https://twitter.com/USEmbassySeoul)



Meet Seo Inho, a current [@GlobalUGRADWL](https://twitter.com/GlobalUGRADWL) student at [@USledu](https://twitter.com/USledu) who used braille to achieve academic success in a foreign language. [#BrailleLiteracyMonth](https://twitter.com/BrailleLiteracyMonth) <https://goo.gl/5QMzzE>



**NCAA Division II**  
[@NCAADII](https://twitter.com/NCAADII)

Southern Indiana sinks 44-of-47 free throws in 17-point upset of 15th-ranked Lake Superior State: [on.ncaa.com/1230usi](https://on.ncaa.com/1230usi)



**Jeffery Devine**  
[@jefferydevine](https://twitter.com/jefferydevine)

In Evansville from Port St Lucie Florida for our daughter's graduation from USI. It's now the entire family, me '89, wife Suzy '89, son Kyle '13 and Cayley '17 [#USIGrad](https://twitter.com/USIGrad)



**Josh Durlacher**  
[@JoshDurlacher](https://twitter.com/JoshDurlacher)

Campus Visit #2 today! This place is gorgeous! [#USI](https://twitter.com/USI)



**supastahh**

This MLK Day brought beautiful words of knowledge from our admirable Soror, Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole.



This is my farewell to readers as president of USI, but I will never say goodbye.

In my 15 years of service as a provost and president,  
I have worked with amazing people among faculty, support and  
administrative staff, students, alumni, donors, community  
partners and legislators.

I came to this office knowing the impact of Dr. David Rice and his wife Betty.  
Dr. Rice's tenacity in establishing this University and Betty's tireless service  
in fostering a sense of family among those pioneers, who took a chance and  
cast their lot with a young state university, shaped USI's culture.

Dr. H. Ray Hoops' dedication to developing a campus with contemporary  
structures brought a dream to reality. The community leaders from the  
Southern Indiana Higher Education, Inc. never accepted "no" as an answer  
and made it possible to have the land and residential mission we now enjoy.

I like to tell people I knew it was a "fit" when I first interviewed at USI in 2003.  
That is still true and I feel profound gratitude for the opportunity to serve  
our great University. Thank you for your patience, kindness, good humor and  
counsel. The future is bright and USI is on the ascent.

Go Screaming Eagles!









## DR. BENNETT'S RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT MOVED MANY TO REFLECT ON HER TIRELESS EFFORTS AS BOTH A LEADER FOR THE UNIVERSITY AND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. HERE'S WHAT A FEW HAD TO SAY...

One of the things I most admire about Dr. Bennett is her ability to connect with people from ALL walks of life. I've seen her interact with donors, students, faculty, University visitors and many other constituents. She can talk about anything and everything—from politics, sports, theater, her favorite meal and so much more.

I was very excited when she was selected to be the president of USI and to see a female in that role. She has been a FANTASTIC president; someone I admire and respect; and someone I consider to be a mentor, friend and role model. I am thrilled she will be staying in Evansville—she is an asset to our community! I love, love, love that woman!

Deidra Conner '87  
President, The Arc of Evansville

Dr. Bennett has been a wonderful asset for USI, the students, the faculty and the growth of the University. I'm glad she is going to be staying in our community where she can continue to be a part of the educational process. She will be greatly missed.

Vaneta Becker '94  
Indiana State Senator

Dr. Bennett was the perfect fit for USI at the time of her appointment as president. Now, after 15 years of service, she has not disappointed anyone. She had some big shoes to fill after the service of Dr. David Rice (who literally built USI from the ground up) to Dr. Ray Hoops (who magically seemed to build buildings and programs that many at the state level said could not be done). She's earned the highest respect for her leadership from the board of trustees, faculty and staff, and created yet another pair of extra-large shoes for our next president to fill.

John Dunn  
Chairman and CEO  
Dunn Hospitality Group Hotels

Dr. Bennett has the perfect blend of leadership qualities we all seek. She is extraordinarily bright, has a tremendous ability to communicate and maintains a wicked sense of humor. This unique combination of skills allowed her to take USI to levels of achievement never seen before, and more importantly build a platform for future growth that will benefit many generations. Her fingerprints will exist in our community for a long time through her commitment to endeavors such as WNIN and more.

Bob Jones  
Chairman and CEO, Old National Bancorp

It has been my good fortune to work with Dr. Bennett during her tenure as provost and president. She always exemplified a love and appreciate for education. Her leadership style showed an attitude of inclusion and being extraordinarily informed. Her role and the relationships she's formed have been exceptional, and we hope to continue to benefit from her knowledge, interest and commitment to our community, state and region.

Harold Calloway  
Agent, State Farm Insurance



President Bennett is an inspirational leader who has passionately built upon USI's successes by challenging her team to stay focused on 'quality student success.' She has embraced USI's vision to 'shape the future' by leveraging innovation with traditional scholastic delivery to provide unique opportunities for learning and life experiences. Dr. Bennett is very caring, enjoyable to work with and a legacy that I feel honored to have been a part of.

**Ken Sendelweck '76**  
*Vice President, Merrill Lynch*

It is an honor to know Dr. Linda Bennett as a friend, mentor, leader and community supporter extraordinaire. Her legacy will always be what she has accomplished. With her finesse, USI is indeed a remarkable learning institution that knows no boundaries. Students, faculty, community leaders and the state of Indiana have all prospered and grown under Linda's leadership. We have been blessed by her presence.

**Linda E. White**  
*Deaconess Foundation Executive Director; CEO Emerita, Deaconess Health System*

As a student photographer for USI, I often attended events where Dr. Bennett was present, taking candid shots of her, especially during commencement. After photographing two years of commencement ceremonies, it was my chance to walk the line. As I tucked my camera away and began to walk away from Dr. Bennett, she called me back and requested a photo of the two of us, because she wanted to celebrate my special day with me. Her gesture reminded me that my dedication hadn't gone unnoticed.

**Aleisha Jones '17, M '19**  
*Billing Coordinator, University of Southern Indiana*

When I think of Dr. Bennett, the word commitment comes to mind. Her unwavering commitment not only to USI, but also to many community and nonprofit organizations. She has worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the University, and has dedicated her time, expertise and experience to help so many other organizations.

**Shawn McCoy**  
*CEO, Deaconess Health System*



Working in USI's Enrollment Management, Susan Todd hears stories of struggling students dealing with family, money and personal issues. Knowing that many college students struggle with adjusting for the first time, she wanted an anonymous way of uplifting them.

Todd heard of The Kindness Rocks Project, a national movement that encourages leaving kind and inspiring messages on rocks as a way of "changing someone's entire life," and a light bulb went off. The artistically inclined Todd painted 300 rocks and attached small stickers saying, "Throw Kindness Around Like Confetti," and placed them around campus.

Word spread about the mysterious rocks and Todd's goodwill, leading Academic Skills to ask her to provide special classes for their UNIV 101 classes, which all freshmen attend. "Small acts of kindness are scientifically proven to make us happier," says Brody Broshears, assistant vice-president for academic success. "Plus, helping students tap into the creative process as part of this project was extra cool."



## ATTENTION BOOKLOVERS

Interested in joining a book club but don't have time to meet in person? Check out the new virtual book club for USI alumni. There will be a private, online forum where people can discuss the current book and network with each other.

The book club will read books about lifelong learning, social issues, business, psychology and more. Participation is free for USI alumni, so sign up at [usi.edu/bookclub](http://usi.edu/bookclub).

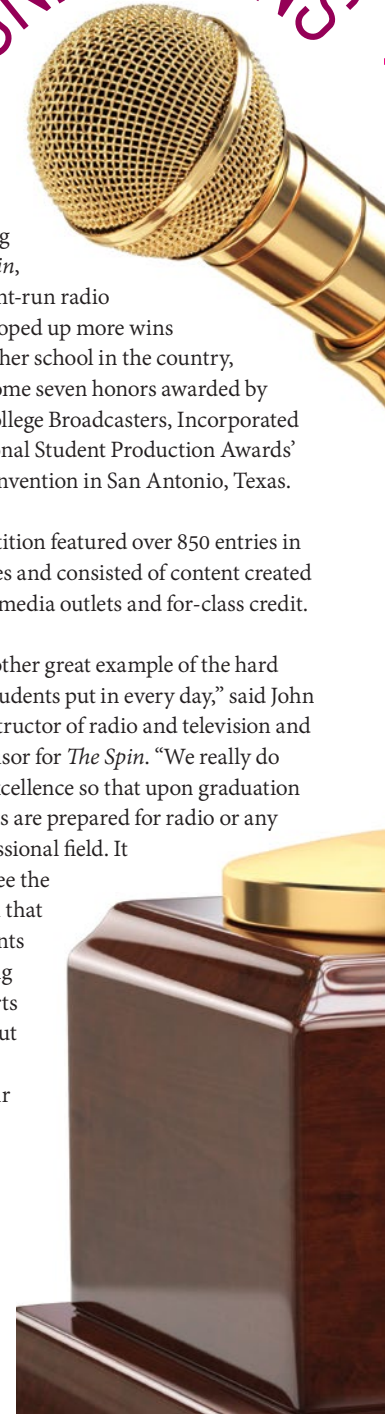


## REIGNING WINS

Students representing 95.7 *The Spin*, USI's student-run radio station, scooped up more wins than any other school in the country, bringing home seven honors awarded by the 2017 College Broadcasters, Incorporated at the National Student Production Awards' national convention in San Antonio, Texas.

The competition featured over 850 entries in 25 categories and consisted of content created by campus media outlets and for-class credit.

"This is another great example of the hard work our students put in every day," said John Morris, instructor of radio and television and faculty advisor for *The Spin*. "We really do reach for excellence so that upon graduation our students are prepared for radio or any other professional field. It is great to see the recognition that these students are receiving for the efforts they have put out, in and around their work."





# [ CLOSING ] [ THE TECH GENDER GAP ]

The mission is simple: to build a movement of women in STEM... enough to flood the gates, "closing the gender gap in tech, one girl at a time." Now, USI has started a local chapter of the Girls Who Code movement, a partnership between the Computer Science Program in the Romain College of Business

and the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. The program rolled out to middle school students and will be expanded to the high schools. "We are very excited to already have 20 middle schoolers interested in participating," said Dr. Srishti Srivastava, assistant professor of computer science, the group's USI

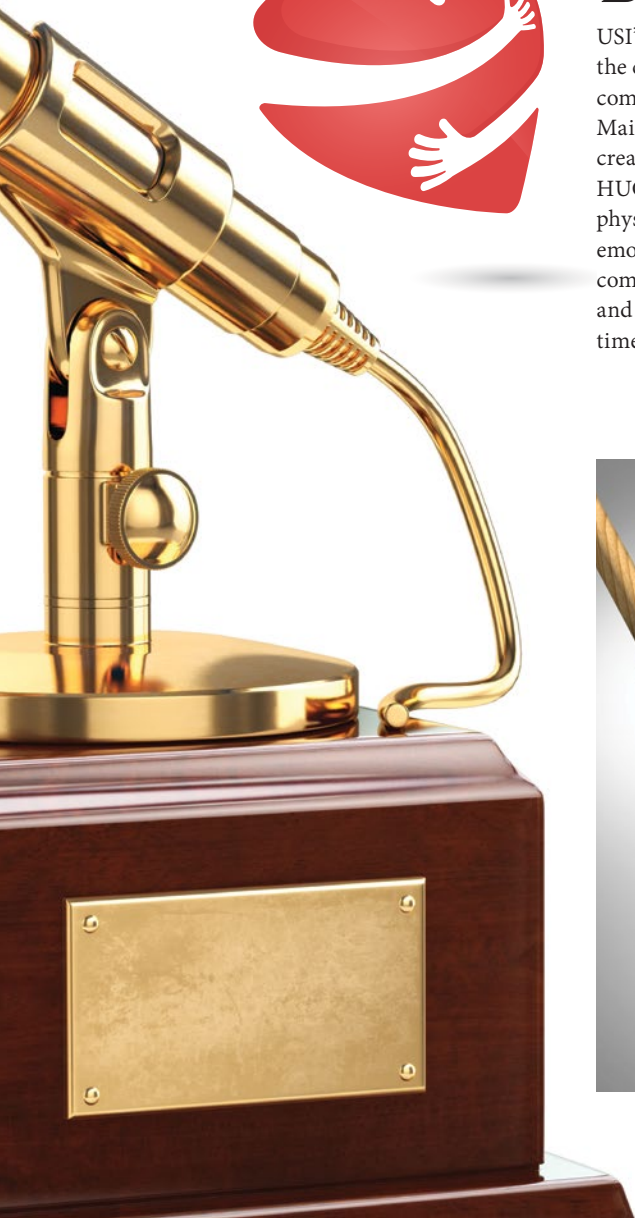
facilitator. Originating with one woman and 20 girls in New York five years ago, the movement has now been embraced in all 50 states, teaching more than 40,000 girls to "become change agents and build apps, programs and movements to help tackle our country's toughest problems."



## BROADENING THE BOUNDARIES

USI's faculty understand education exceeds the classroom, often venturing into the community to help improve lives. Jeanette Maier-Lytle, instructor in accounting, created a 501(c)3 non-profit called HUG Alliance, Inc. to provide spiritual, physical (food and housing resources) and emotional support for distressed people and communities that's staffed with six former and current students who volunteer their time and expertise.

"An underlying vision of HUG is the idea that distressed people can obtain long-term healing as they give of themselves in support of a common cause," Maier-Lytle says. "We will provide guidance and support to distressed individuals while instilling a theme of healing through giving." This healing process includes chosen resources for individual situations or problems, life coaches and community outreach programs.



## IGNITING CHANGE



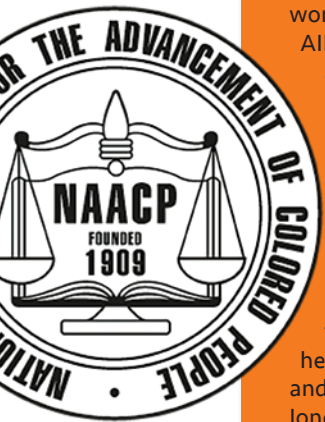
The recently formed Women of Color in the Academy (WOCA) is a campuswide network at USI, committed to highlighting the work of women of color scholars and staff, promoting their development and advocating for institutional change on their behalf. WOCA came out of the 1977 National Conference of Women, when a group of African American women got together and formed the Black Women's Agenda. "There are two legs to WOCA," said Sakina Hughes, assistant professor of history and chair of the WOCA faculty steering committee. "On one leg, we are here to support women of color from all walks of life. But we recognize building community means including everyone. With the second leg, we want to support everyone no matter what the background. We would like to bridge the gaps between people."

## ACTION ORIENTED

After Shawneis Jones '18, master of business administration student, heard NAACP president Cornell Brooks speak at USI in 2017, she walked up to him during the Q&A and asked what she could do to take action. His instructions were clear, she said, "He told me to start an NAACP chapter on campus." So Jones teamed up with other students and established a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People at USI.

In its first months, the chapter focused on recruitment, worked with the Evansville AIDS Resource Group to advocate for health and safety issues concerning HIV, and campaigned for climate justice. "The USI NAACP educates the University and its members on pertinent issues facing minorities, and fights for justice in areas such as health, education, civil rights and political issues," said Jones. "All people, regardless of race or gender, have to work together in order to make change."

Students like Jones, who helped establish a platform for students to make a difference, make us all proud.



## Write that Tune

It's time to rewrite USI's fight song as well as create an *alma mater* song, as part of USI Foundation's 50th Anniversary this year. Alumni, students, current and retired faculty and staff are invited to submit new, original lyrics for each. The creations can be the efforts of one person or more (at least one member must have a USI affiliation),

reflecting USI's history and triumphs in the stanzas. This is a blind competition with an esteemed panel of judges for each song. If a winner is selected, there is a \$1,000 award for each lyric competition. Deadline for entries is April 27, 2018. For more information, visit [usi.edu/songcontest](http://usi.edu/songcontest).



Ryan Loehrlein '19, mechanical engineering, is one of many USI students making a positive impact on the world. As a 16 year old, he was horrified to learn his sister (then a sheriff's deputy) had to enter a housing complex blindly, looking for potential suspects.

Inspired to protect his sister, he began developing a drone to survey situations and determine possible threats. Now, at USI, he's perfected his drone—equipped with cameras to give police a clear picture of situations—and impressed Evansville's Fraternal Order of Police so much that it's funded further development of his project. Loehrlein presented his drone, dubbed The Guardian Angel, at TEDx Evansville as well as entered it in science fairs and competitions, winning awards from Yale, Notre Dame and all four branches of the military.

View Loehrlein's TEDx Evansville talk titled "Innovation from a Spark of Curiosity," at [usi.edu/ryan](http://usi.edu/ryan).





# SHAPING UP

Not only does USI's Sport Management Club offer a variety of runs, it now has a program designed to help students and community members reach their athletic goals. The Rising Eagles—a training program for beginner runners or walkers—provides the right guidance and support for anyone to start a successful and rewarding walking or running program. In the

Rising Eagles program, you can progress to a level of fitness that will allow you to complete the Screaming Eagles Running Series 5k, 7k and 10k.

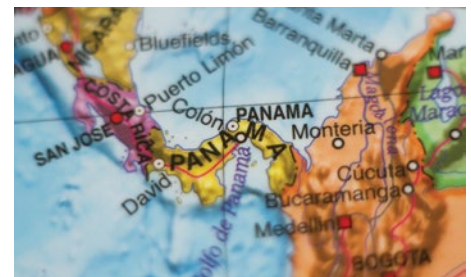
Group workouts are on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday on the USI campus and in the Evansville community. For more information, visit [usi.edu/running](http://usi.edu/running).



## Fostering Success

Student success is ingrained in USI's mission, so it's no surprise when a new program—Women Unlocked—was designed to promote achievements for African American women. The brainchild of USI's Multicultural Center, the program connects and empowers these students to create opportunities and build relationships to influence their successes. The weekly gatherings allow the women to express themselves in a non-threatening, non-judgmental environment, while fostering respect, inspiration, sisterhood, networking, giving back to the community, celebrations and graduations. The results since its inception: 70 percent of participants maintain an average GPA of 3.67, and 35 percent made the Dean's List. Victories worth celebrating.

## PARTNERING WITH PANAMA



USI is now one of only two public institutions in the United States approved as a scholarship recipient for the National Secretariat of Science and Technology of Panama's (SENACYT) Institute for the Formation and Use of Human Resources. This spring, USI welcomes the first cohort of degree-seeking Panamanian students into Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education.

SENACYT's promotion of science, research and innovation for sustainable development, inclusion and competitiveness aligns well with USI's mission, and it supports approximately 2,000 scholars in different areas of study around the world.

"With our scholarships, we would like to ensure a robust base of human capital with a high level of education, trained in the best universities in the world," SENACYT said in a statement about the new partnership. "We are sure USI will give a warm welcome to our Panamanian scholars and that our students will seize the opportunity they have received to be part of the USI community."







Giving Indiana kids a leg up in the sciences while offering them an opportunity to explore USI's vibrant campus are great reasons for hosting state championship tournaments, such as FIRST LEGO League (FLL). Before USI got into the game in 2011, the 600 families who attended the 2017 event, held in USI's Performance Center, would have had to travel far north to watch their children compete. Instead, 60 talented and dedicated-to-education volunteers from across campus and the community—USI students-refereed and alumni-judged—joined forces to successfully host USI's first FLL state championship tournament.



## THE BIG PICTURE

Judges scored the 24 teams, a 60/40 mix of fourth to eighth grade boys and girls, on their robots' designs, their presentations and their sportsmanship. The tournament provided an eye-opening experience for parents and competitors, many of whom weren't familiar with what USI has to offer. The wheels of opportunity just keep turning for Hoosier kids.



# STUDENT P.O.V.

Joyce Witherspoon '18  
English Literature Major

## An American Identity

I was not prepared to be anything other than African-American while living in America. It's a classification that was at the core of my identity and ideals, until I found myself in a situation where I would be called upon to give a perspective on political, social and economic issues; a perspective from someone who was a minority and whose culture was at the center of race-related issues in all three categories. Before encountering this, I was constantly searching for others who looked like me to feel as if I belonged. I was in search of acceptance. I found it in the most unexpected place: Europe.

There my race did not define me. There I was American, not African-American. The privilege that eluded me at home was what I felt while abroad. I knew how it felt to be black in America, but while in Bulgaria I was learning how to be an American.

I was starting to grow and change as I soaked up different cultures. Like most students who go abroad, I was looking to experience new cultures and become a more aware individual. But as I sat on a bus in the dark, in the middle of nowhere, Serbia, watching a mountain village as I rode by, there was nothing to feel but peace. I was engulfed with silence, something I didn't hear in urban areas even at 3 a.m.

W.E.B. DuBois explains the concept of "double consciousness" that plagues African-Americans; there are two lineages in one being, not only African heritage but also the newer American heritage. While he claims that we deal with both simultaneously, I disagree. I have focused on my African side the most, because that is the most visible. With the darker skin tone comes stereotypes

and discrimination. I have embraced that side since I was able to talk, but what about the other? It took being abroad to see a world from my American viewpoint. When I was disliked, it was not because of my skin color, it was because of my nationality. I had entered a world vastly different from the one I'd always known, and I loved it there. I was left wondering, "What if I don't return?"

That thought followed a complete feeling of contentment that I've only had twice in my life—once in rural Macedonia, where no one could pronounce my name, the other, sitting on a bridge in Budapest, my bare feet feeling the mist from the Danube River as I finally conquered my fear of bridges. There I felt understood. There I felt light. There I felt no racial expectations. There is anywhere but America. There is where I feel American.

continue the conversation at [#illumUSI](https://twitter.com/illumUSI)

*suggest a subject at [magazine@usi.edu](mailto:magazine@usi.edu)*



# DESK OF...

## FROM THE



Russian society today is very different from when it was a part of the Soviet Union. Gone are the shortages and long queues to buy basic items; Russian culture is now more dynamic with world-class music, theatre, art and cuisine. But, as I learned on a recent trip as a visiting scholar doing research on writing letters to the editor in the late Soviet era, Russian politics still has clear connections to its Soviet past.

Because the Soviet government prohibited opposition parties, protests and strikes, letter writing became one of the few tolerated ways Soviets could express their opinions publicly. When they wrote to newspapers they knew they were also writing directly to Soviet authorities because there was censorship of media.

At the party archives, I initially ordered dossiers of letters without a problem. I could see a bureaucracy had developed around monitoring the opinions of ordinary Russians expressed in letters. If a letter was not fit for print or deemed important enough, newspaper editors often sent it to a special office of the local or national Communist Party. In the second order of dossiers from the archive, I noticed the librarians had paper clipped certain letters and their responses together. When I asked what was going on, they replied that the letters were secret and I was not to read them. By the end of my stay, librarians stopped fulfilling some of my requests to work with entire dossiers because they were secret.

Soviets often wrote anonymously when they discussed the corruption and incompetence of the USSR's leadership. When they did attach their names to critical letters, they had to package

DR. ANDREW BUCK  
Associate Professor of Sociology

them in a politically correct way, expressing criticisms of specific situations that did not suggest larger social problems. They often singled out people and organizations whose actions lacked moral character. The focus on particular people and organizations made it seem like it was “just a few bad apples.”

Soviet authorities conducted elaborate research on the letter writers and their personal lives, often attempting to establish their identities by examining their handwriting and other details. In these inquiries, no facet of a citizen's personal life was too small because it could be used as compromising—*kompromat*—material. Even if Soviet authorities agreed with the criticism, letters writers could expect to be called in for a conversation at the Communist Party headquarters.

Much like during the Soviet Union, President Vladimir Putin and his ruling party today do not face a significant opposition, are intolerant of public protest and silence critics who do not use prescribed ways of expressing opinions. Addressing authority through personal appeals endures too. Putin holds an annual televised event where he directly answers citizens' questions about the problems they face. The practice of controlling public opinion through discourse that Soviet authorities developed around letter writing also persists. Russian authorities use the politics of *kompromat* today by spreading rumors and innuendo about opponents through social media. “Troll farms” in Russia have gone relatively undetected on the internet, altering perceptions about candidates and parties during elections. Russian authorities may have even exported these practices to manipulate public opinion of politicians from other countries.

After spending my days in the archives working with letters, I went out in the evenings and on weekends to enjoy the vibrant culture of St. Petersburg. The city has wonderful opera, ballet, symphony, theatre, museums, public lectures, restaurants and cafes that its citizens support. While Russian culture is thriving, Russian politics has not changed as much from its Soviet past.





# score | BOARD



## Goodwill Afoot

The numbers are in and they're amazing. USI's has hosted the NCAA Division II Cross Country Championships four times—1987, 2004, 2009 and 2017—the last one delivering a \$500,000 economic impact to the community. USI partnered with the Evansville Sports Corporation to bring the event to Evansville's Angel Mounds. The race attracts college athletes from across the nation, and "allows USI a chance to put our student athletes, coaches and community on a national stage and show folks from all over the country some southern Indiana hospitality," says Jon Mark Hall, USI's director of Athletics.

## Where are they | NOW?



Anastasia Carter '16 watched her mom, a certified financial planner, visit with clients while she was growing up. An accounting major, Carter broke records as a member of USI's women's golf team before moving to Florida after graduation to pursue golf professionally. For the next 18 months, she

spent two or three weeks every month traveling to tournaments while working part time for a wealth management company. Carter's competitive, and loves playing golf; however, the expectations when playing for money chipped away at her love for the game. In November 2017, she ceased participating in





professional tournaments and reverted to amateur status. Now, she works full time in wealth management while studying for her Series 7 securities license. She uses her leisure time to pursue soccer, doubles tennis, surfing, ballroom dancing and more. She plans to continue golfing as a leisure activity and loves ballroom dancing almost as much.



## MILESTONES: HIGH SCORES BY STUDENT ATHLETES

**500** WINS

Men's Basketball  
at the PAC



**1,400+**

**CAREER POINTS**

Kaydie Grooms '18, Alex Stein '18  
Women's and Men's Basketball  
**JOINED RANKS OF TOP-FIVE,  
ALL-TIME SCORER**

**1,900**

**CAREER  
RECORD DIGS**

Shannon  
Farrell '18  
Women's  
Volleyball

**15<sup>TH</sup>**  
**NAMED  
GLVC  
RUNNER OF  
THE YEAR**

Austin Nolan '20  
Men's Cross  
Country

**7<sup>TH</sup>**  
**STRAIGHT WIN  
(12TH OVERALL GLVC  
CHAMPIONSHIP)**  
Women's Cross  
Country











# SOUL of a CHAMP



by AmyLu Riley '93

*"Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion.  
Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare.  
Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing."*

*—Muhammad Ali*



# S

## Sara Beth Vaughn's feet have a lot to say.

They tell an important part of her lifelong story of hope over hopelessness, one that began the moment she was born, three decades ago, and failed to take her first breath.

Due in November but born in August, alumna Sara Beth's life began as a fight for survival. As a premature infant with blood clots in her brain, she was not expected to live, or—if she did—to ever be self-aware.

She did live, however, and became much more than self-aware. Even as an infant, Sara Beth—who now enjoys karaoke and performing comedy at open mic nights—was highly verbal, speaking in complete sentences by age one. But as a result of brain damage, she has spastic cerebral palsy (CP), a condition that affects motor development. Because of CP, her leg muscles were permanently contracted—*crooked legs* was the term she used as a child to communicate her condition. Her right arm, although normal in appearance, wasn't functional. And her feet—"my not-so-beautiful feet," she calls them—were so turned inward that her parents were told that she would likely never walk.

At a young age, she felt hopeless in the face of all the dim prognoses she heard doctors giving her parents—dismal prospects about everything from walking and cognitive ability, to independent living. "As a child, you have ears," she says. "It disheartened me."

But then came social services and Shriners Hospital. Social workers helped her replace *can't* with hope, and surgeries physically changed her. Pegs implanted in both ankles held her feet straight, and surgeries to lengthen her Achilles tendons brought her feet down flat, instead of on tiptoe. Other treatments to straighten her legs weren't successful, but with the changes to her feet, she could now walk, at age 5, for the first time with a walker. But when Sara Beth began elementary school, she stopped using her walker. "Out of stubbornness," she says. "When I realized that none of the other children had a walker, I decided right then and there I wasn't going to use mine anymore."



After many falls, for which her parents endured some criticism, Sara Beth eventually learned to walk without a walker, using her stomach muscles to move her legs. Now, more of life that had previously seemed out of reach, such as driving, living independently and having a career, seemed possible.

Inspired by her childhood social workers, Sara Beth became one, earning both a bachelors and masters in social work from USI in 2011 and 2012, respectively. She spent the first five years of her career at Aurora, Inc. in Evansville, serving as an assessment specialist, providing empathetic crisis diffusion and counseling to people experiencing homelessness; then she was a development specialist, focused on grant writing, program renewals, reports, performance measures and public relations. She's been a social worker for the Vanderburgh County Health Department, too, where she helped people navigate their medical diagnoses and treatment choices, while seeking "to understand the *why* behind the *what*" of another person's situation. This kind of compassion is healing, she says, for others and for herself.

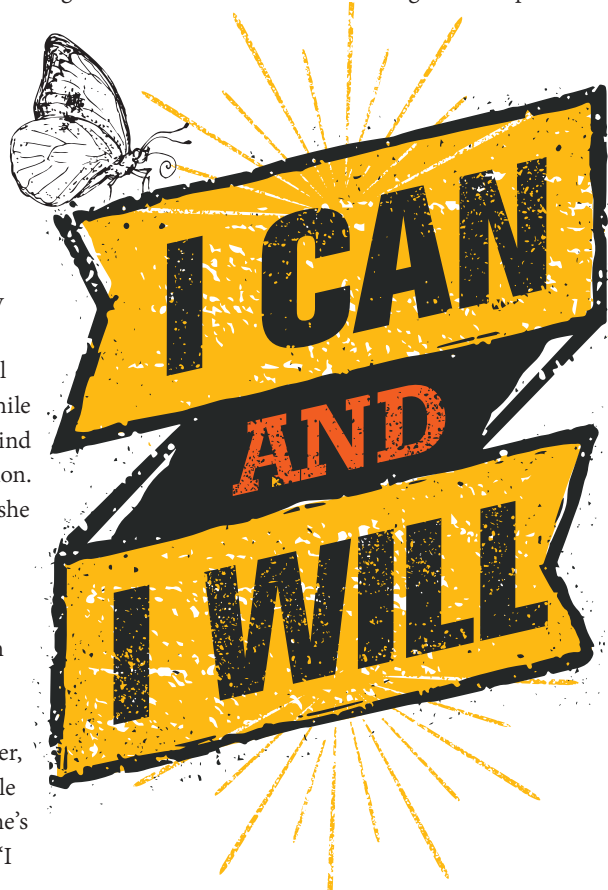
From her own experience, Sara Beth knows the importance of hope in difficult times. That's why she's begun a new path as a public speaker, sharing her message: *You can*. While she loved her life of local service, she's dedicated to expanding her reach. "I would like to be, at some point, an international speaker and author," she says.

Sara Beth's words tell *another* part of her story that can't be told just by seeing her feet—or her legs, or the rest of her petite body. And this inner part of her story gets complicated, because it's *not* easily reconciled with the visible reality. She *talks* about there being "no limits," and about the power of the words *I can*. "I think when you're told, 'No,' and, 'You probably won't,' and, 'You

probably can't,' you kind of take on the attitude of, 'Yes, I will, and I don't need anyone's blessing to do it.'" But she's so pragmatic about her *actual* limits and what she can't do, that there seems to be a contradiction between the story that her physical body is really *experiencing*, and the story that her spirit—expressed in her soaring words—would *like* to be true. For alongside her many successes and accomplishments, and a very full life, some doors have remained closed to Sara Beth because of physical limitations.

Her legs are still permanently, painfully bent, making many activities unsafe or impossible, and she lives with severe arthritis. She would have liked to have done the outreach type of social work, visiting people in their homes, but that was ruled out because she could require physical assistance—like navigating stairs—when help might not be available. And she would have loved to have joined the military; she craves service, structure, exercise. Although she uses a treadmill every morning, set on the highest incline to give her contracted leg muscles more of a workout, balance is always a challenge. She needs the handrails, so she can't ride a bike. She recalls with visible joy, however, how her family has always encouraged her to try things. "They bought me a bicycle when I had walking casts, and I could sit on it, and I had dreams of riding that bike," she says. "That was something the doctors could have told me up front—that balance is not something you can acquire, no matter how much you practice.

"I don't like admitting limitations," she says, "but in truth they are there." And that's the crux of the seeming contradiction of Sara Beth's *I can* and her *I can't*. She *has* found immovable obstacles in her life. However, it is equally true that she has seen the boundary line of *can't* move before, and who knows when or whether she or someone else might be able to push that line again, with the right hope and help.










*“You do not have  
to define yourself  
by your own challenge.  
Your physical challenge  
does not have to be limiting  
to who you are or how you fit  
into the landscape of your own  
community, in your own world.”*

**SARA BETH VAUGHN**

Every statement Sara Beth makes about her identity, her life, seems tied in some way to the experience of living in a body that has weighed in so dramatically on her options, and, in doing so, has made her so empathetic to other people experiencing life’s challenges. So it is a puzzle when she says she wouldn’t speak about her physical limitations unless asked direct questions about it, yet readily describes herself to others through the lens of the physical disability they see (her LinkedIn profile leads with her cerebral palsy). Is this a contradiction?

No longer the insecure child at the New Harmony, Indiana, pool trying to hide her feet, Sara Beth is now proud of the outwards signs of CP and says she mentions it as a way to take down barriers and helps others connect with her.

Clearly, this is a complicated dance, this two-step between her tiny body and her towering spirit. It reflects the ratio in which her formation has taken place—the fingers of circumstance molding her, versus her breaking, or else accepting, each limitation. And that’s the part of the story her feet cannot fully tell; the story to which her bent legs have contributed at every turn. 



# 45

## UNDER SIEGE

By Nicole Ward '16 M '18

**On September 20, 2017**, I was at Mattoon High School in Mattoon, Illinois, to recruit students for USI. I was scheduled to talk with a group of students at 11 a.m., but arrived late because I was stuck behind a train. When I got there, I was introduced to Dr. Aaron Hale, a guidance counselor, who escorted me to a classroom down the hallway. Before he left me to speak with the students, Dr. Hale offhandedly asked me to close the classroom door later on my way out, as it locked automatically from the inside and he wanted to prevent students from entering it when it was unoccupied. He would have no idea how much that seemingly irrelevant comment would mean to me.

As Dr. Hale walked out, I began speaking with the 21 students present about the advantages of attending USI. I remember being on a roll that day—funny, energetic and really connecting with the students in the classroom. Midway through my presentation, I began hearing loud popping sounds echoing outside the classroom, followed by piercing screams. My heart fell into my stomach and my immediate response was to panic. I knew what those pops were: gunshots. I stopped mid-sentence and saw the look of terror on the faces of the students in the room as they quickly came to the same conclusion: There was a shooter in the school.

Without thinking, I bolted for the door, turned off the lights and closed it before placing a chair against it for the limited amount of protection it might provide. Along with a couple of students, we quickly but quietly moved the others into the corner of the room, away from the door, or under the conference table. While the students were trying to be as quiet as possible as they moved to safety, my fear was that the gunman would hear us. The door was a solid sheet of glass. It provided no protection from a gunman.

An alarm sounded and over the intercom a panicked female voice declared the school was on “lockdown.” Students began calling their parents or emergency personnel, but I quietly yet firmly asked them to stop talking on their phones. I was petrified the gunman would hear us and come after us. I told them they could text, but not to make any more phone calls. I tried to call emergency personnel myself, but I assumed they were receiving too many calls related to the shooting, because no one would answer. I became desperate, so I called my fiancé in Evansville and asked him to keep calling

emergency personnel to alert them about the shooting.

The next 40 minutes were agonizing, waiting in silence to hear what we were supposed to do next. I stood next to the door, thinking if the gunman was somehow able to break down the door and enter the classroom, I would tackle him in an attempt to save the students. While I was standing there, I began to fear that I was not doing everything in my power to protect them. I texted Rashad Smith, USI director of undergraduate admissions, asking for advice. He told me I was doing everything right and just needed to remain calm.

Eventually, a figure walked up to the classroom door and tried to enter the room. Seeing the shadow moving outside the room struck terror into me once again. When I heard the doorknob jiggling, I knew this was the end—this was how the students and I were going to die. My body was rigid, and I was literally ready to fight for our lives. But when the door swung open, a police officer was there. I just stared at him for a moment before bursting into tears. All the emotions I’d been bottling up





for 45 minutes flooded out. The officer scanned the room and asked if everyone was all right, then told us to leave and follow the line of students exiting the building. He told us not to run, for safety reasons, but we didn't listen.

Outside, we were directed to the tennis courts where the other students waited, their terrified parents across the street, screaming for their children as a line of police and police cars separated them from the school's property. The students were loaded onto school buses and taken to another school across town where they were picked up by their parents. Two policemen went through all of my belongings and checked my ID before letting me leave the premises. Once I arrived at my car, I called my fiancé, mother, father and Rashad to let them all know I was safe and unharmed.

I don't think anyone can ever be prepared for the feeling of pure terror experienced in an active shooter situation. My actions that day, right or wrong, were a combination of instinct and the basic training I'd learned in high school. There was an information sheet in the Mattoon High School classroom I was in that explained what to do in the face of a shooting, but it was small and I would not have been able to read it unless I was in front of the door, risking being seen by the gunman.

The initial emotion I felt was fear, but it was immediately followed by a sense of protection. My worst nightmare was not losing my own life, but knowing there was absolutely nothing I could do to ensure the safety and lives of the students with me. I was only 22 at the time, and wasn't ready to die. But, I certainly wasn't ready for the students in that classroom to die without me doing everything possible to save their lives. I'm not looking for a pat on the back for my actions that day. I am not a hero. Anyone would have focused on saving the students.

I am eternally grateful to  
Dr. Hale for


mentioning that the door locked automatically from the inside. Otherwise, I'd have believed we were sitting ducks in an unlocked classroom. I'm thankful that not only did I receive this training in the past, but that all of the students in the classroom were more than willing to cooperate and encouraged one another in the worst moment of their lives. I witnessed students holding hands and patting each other on the back, and in that terrible moment, their kind actions gave me just the slightest spark of hope.

It's easy to go through shooter-training in a relaxed atmosphere and believe you have the knowledge necessary to act appropriately. However, expecting a person to react in that same rational manner when they are under extreme duress is unrealistic. Training can only prepare an individual so much for a real tragedy. There is a fine balance between knowing what to do while managing the overwhelming panic you are feeling in such a dire situation.

I'm a rule follower at heart. I like structure, and I believe that following a set course of actions leads to the best possible outcomes, for the most part. In this instance, though, even taking the most appropriate actions could still have ended in a horrendous outcome that I had no control over.

I wish I would have known the layout of the school and possible escape routes for situations like the one we were in. I had never been in this particular high school before and did not know how close we were to an exit. Looking back I wonder, did I act appropriately by locking us in the classroom? Would it have been wiser to have had the students run to the closest exit, if one was near to us? While the phrase "trust your instinct" is a cliché, it's the most crucial piece of advice I can give. In a moment of crisis, your adrenaline is flowing. You are at the mercy of an individual with a firearm and you are outmatched.

I like to think of myself as tough and able to handle anything thrown my way. This shooting forced me to realize my vulnerability and the lack of control I often have in the world. Even two months later, it's difficult for me to put into words the complete terror I felt on that day. I have not been diagnosed with PTSD, but I believe I have PTSD-related symptoms. The sudden ring of an alarm, loud bangs and other unexpected noises trigger a quickening of my heart and shaking of my body.

A few years ago, a younger me would have been embarrassed of these symptoms and would have tried to cover them up, never to speak of them. However, I received a bachelor's degree in psychology from USI and understand how bottled up emotions can be detrimental to one's mental and physical health. A shooting is not something you can forget about the next day, the next week, the next month or even the next year. I still get nervous before walking into a high school to recruit students. I still find myself thinking about escape routes too, whether it's a grocery store or USI's campus. But, while I still think about the shooting often, I will not let this one terrible experience define me for the rest of my life. I am too strong for that. 

*The University of Southern Indiana's Public Safety offers training for departments and units around campus. Training takes around 45 minutes to an hour and can be scheduled at a time that works best for the unit or department scheduling. More information, videos, response guidelines and information about active shooter training can be found at [usi.edu/security](http://usi.edu/security).*



# rites of PASSAGE:







**T**HERE IS A MOMENT FROM PRESIDENT LINDA L. M. BENNETT'S LIFE THAT, IN MANY WAYS, NOT ONLY DEFINES HER LOVE OF EDUCATION BUT SET HER ON THE PATH TO A **LIFE-LONG CAREER IN IT.** She was 4 years old and throwing a temper tantrum on the streets of Cincinnati, Ohio, because she was too young to attend school with her older brother Jerry. "I was absolutely having a *meltdown*," she says, her telltale wry humor surfacing.

# A PRESIDENTIAL PATH

by C. L. Stambush





Jerry and Linda Mayfield



Dr. Bennett with granddaughter, Chelsea



Ushering her off the street and into a shop where a friend worked, her mother explained the scenario behind the scene, and the friend said, “Take her up to the school and test her to see if she can go.” That hadn’t occurred to Mrs. Josephine Mayfield, despite her precocious daughter’s ability to read and write. “I read a lot, so I lived in other worlds, and she’d give me letters from her mother to practice my writing,” says Bennett, noting her mother’s motive may have been to keep her amused and out from underfoot.

Some children entering school prematurely aren’t as emotionally equipped as those who matriculate on a traditional timeline, but one look at the expression on her face in a photograph taken when she was in the first grade excises any notion of Bennett being anything other than determined. “During my younger years, if you’d said I was driven, you wouldn’t have been far off.”

That drive—born of a cocktail of DNA, personality and having witnessed what life without an education offered—shaped her future.

Neither of her parents (born in Pulaski County, Kentucky, during Prohibition) finished high school, although her father later earned a GED in his 40s and discovered he had an aptitude for math. Instead, Wayne

Everett Mayfield joined the Army during World War II and served in the European theater. Later, back home and married with a young son, he gathered his family and migrated north to Cincinnati, Ohio (where Bennett was born), as part of the diaspora of people from the Appalachian area seeking better jobs in the early 1950s, and found employment in factories working nightshifts.

Bennett describes herself as being a “bookworm” and “self-contained” during school, and says her childhood was “relatively uneventful,” except for one evolutionary moment that redirected her life, even more than testing into kindergarten early.

In 1967—a time of free love, race riots, redistricting and desegregation moves—Bennett, a junior at Hughes High School, returned from summer break to discover the school’s educational mission had changed. “I was on the college-preparatory track, and they’d changed my entire schedule,” she says, “giving me five hours of executive secretary training instead.”

The switch snapped something inside her, and what emerged was a 15-year-old she did not recognize. Bennett called her mother and said, “Call Walnut Hills High School and see

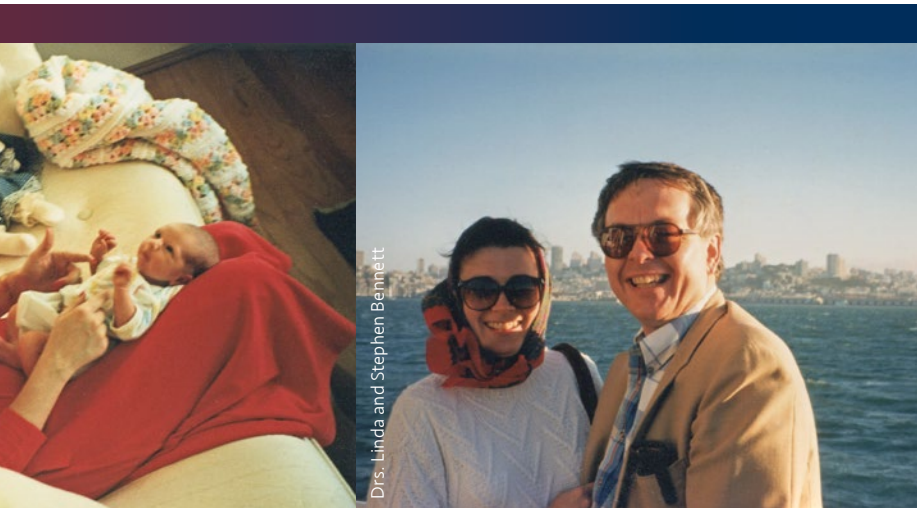
if they’ll accept me.” She’d already taken and passed the stringent entrance exam required to enroll in Walnut Hills—one of the nation’s best all-city, college-preparatory high schools.

The elite new school presented a dual learning curve, scholastically and culturally. “I’d had a couple of years of French at Hughes, where we were still doing vocabulary drills. I walked into class at Walnut Hills and they were reading French literature,” Bennett says. “The teacher had studied at the Sorbonne.”

Bennett embraced the challenges, despite two long bus rides to her new school and being of a different social class than her peers. There she found, instead of friends dropping out due to pregnancy, a supportive faculty that proved invaluable. In her Sino-Soviet Totalitarian class, where they read the original texts of Chairman Mao, her teacher Harriet Russell recognized Bennett’s talent as a researcher and writer, and encouraged her to attend Smith College.

“It was in that setting and all those years of being self-contained and reading a lot, that I blossomed,” she says. “Everything in that atmosphere was about going to college, and that’s what I wanted.” Her family wanted it





Drs. Linda and Stephen Bennett

for her too, especially her father. “He was really a strong advocate,” Bennett says. “He didn’t care what I studied. He just said, ‘You’ll have more options.’”

A product of both of her role model parents—her mother’s people skills and her father’s stick-to-itiveness—Bennett dreamed of being an attorney while earning her undergrad degree in political science from University of Cincinnati. She continued toying with that career all the way through her poli sci master and doctorate programs, and up until she accepted a position as a visiting assistant professor at Wittenberg University. “I was so convinced I was going to get a degree in law that the bus driver called me Perry Mason,” she says. But, when true love calls, the wise don’t question it, and Bennett found hers when she began teaching at Wittenberg. “I love teaching,” she says, “and really became a good teacher because of Wittenberg.”

Over the course of her 13 years at the Springfield, Ohio, college, she rose to full professorship and department chair before being wooed to Northern Kentucky University (NKU) as a department chair. “NKU was a big learning experience, going from a private church-affiliated college to a public university,” Bennett says, “but I really liked it.” When she later left to become dean of the College of Arts and Science at Appalachian State University (ASU), she told her colleague at NKU that if she ever had the opportunity to return, she would. When he called a few years later she says, “I thought, ‘you’re calling me back.’” But no, he wanted to tell her about a provost position at the University of Southern Indiana “It’s a place a lot like us,” he said, ‘and I think you’d be a good fit,” she recalls. “He was right.”

**B**ennett immersed herself in USI’s story, and its unique history hooked her. “I had never heard of an institution where people took out payroll deductions to pay for the land,” she says. It was much more than the University’s founding, however, that captivated her heart. “I liked the way people interacted with each other,” she says. “They looked at you. The students looked at you. They were curious. They were interested.”

- Blue circle:** *Educating Rita* is her favorite film because it speaks to the way she views education.
- Green circle:** Was a political commentator from 1992-1994 for WHIO-TV in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Red circle:** Her retirement plan includes “me time” on a chaise lounge with a thick book.
- Yellow circle:** Her “babies” are a cat named Ally after singer Alison Krause, and two longhaired Dachshunds named Buttercup and Fannie.
- Red circle:** Loves watching Major League Baseball with her husband Stephen.
- Pink circle:** She has a photo of Betty Rice’s plum pudding recipe (used in the Madrigal Feast) on her phone, but won’t cook it or anything else that calls for 30 cups of flour.
- Purple circle:** Sings along with her favorite female vocalists: Mary J. Blige, Emmylou Harris, Linda Ronstadt and more.
- Blue circle:** Admits to being a drama queen, especially when reading stories to children.
- Green circle:** Spent part of kindergarten under the piano for talking too much to her best friend.
- Dark blue circle:** Loves commencement ceremonies.



Still finds the law fascinating.



Believes any kind of ice cream is good for you.



Grew up believing she was part Cherokee but a year ago discovered she was less than 1 percent; instead, she's 48 percent Irish.



The L. M. in Linda L. M. Bennett stands for Louise Mayfield (her middle and maiden names).



She has an "inner Maggie Smith."



Has a "perverse" enjoyment of the political process.



Didn't drive a car until she married in 1977.



Her mother made her wedding dress.



Taking her first cruise—an Alaskan inland passage—this summer.



Is a chocaholic.



As provost, the inveterate dabbler expanded her interests and broadened her education in unfamiliar subjects. "When I was a department chair at Wittenberg and NKU I loved working with colleagues, and when I became dean at ASU, I had a lot of fun going on archeological digs, listening to poetry readings and working with the Appalachian Cultural Museum to preserve some cultural elements," she says. "As USI's provost, I got to play across all those departments and more; I got to work with colleagues in business and health and science."

Six years as provost led to nine years as USI's first female president, a role that allowed the political scientist to practice for the first time what she'd studied and taught others all her life. Within a few months of taking the position, legislators summoned her to Indianapolis to explain why USI's tuition increased. "I felt sweat trickle down my back," she says, noting the increase was necessary due to a decline in state funding and a sour economy. "I'm sitting there telling myself, 'You have a Ph.D. in this subject. You've taught courses on Congress and the presidency. You can do this.'" And, she did.

As president, Bennett's leadership focused on raising USI's visibility and telling the institution's story to help people understand its unique niche in Indiana's higher educational system, an effort that's resulted in transforming some legislators into USI cheerleaders. "When I go to Indianapolis now, there are legislators who 'get it,'" she says.

Before Bennett's awareness campaign and strategic planning (she implemented the first in USI's history), legislators and members of the Indiana Commission of Higher Education didn't know what to think of USI. "We weren't a research institution and we weren't a research institution wannabe," Bennett says. "We are different, but that *difference* is our *magic*. The fact that we are very focused on the individual student. The fact that we value the quality of that teaching exchange. The fact that we are very externally focused in getting our students out there into the community, into businesses, into not-for-profits, into the world of the performing arts. Getting them





out there to experience it is a terrific place to be for this University.”

**T**asked with advancing USI’s vision of *shaping the future through learning and innovation* in an increasingly competitive educational sphere required Bennett to implement a “slightly more selective” entrance policy for the University. While USI was never an open admission campus, Bennett says, “We did have a high proportion of students we accepted who really had challenges with college-level work.” Improving students’ success rates, both in and after college, meant raising admission GPA requirements. “That wasn’t about trying to posture in terms of being a ‘public ivy.’ That was about being very clear about the expectation of what it would take to succeed at the college level,” she says. “I think sending that message is a true advantage to high school students and high school guidance counselors. It helps them to say, ‘yes, you have to work hard even through your senior year.’”


Lifting up students has always been Bennett’s passion. She tweets their successes (“I love to brag”) and invites them to her office for chats, inquiring if they have internships and offering to help them get one. “I tell

people my job is to brag and to nag. If I go to a restaurant in town, I’ll actually interview the wait staff saying, ‘Are you a student? At USI? Do you want to come by and see me and talk?’” she says, “and I’ll give them my card.”

Meeting, knowing and encouraging students are the *crème de la crème* for Bennett. “The best part is seeing them walk across that stage and get their diploma,” says the self-confessed ceremony junkie. “You just feel such pride, and then you wonder what their next steps are going to be.”

**B**eing president isn’t all joy. Some aspects of it have kept Bennett awake at night, and some of the harder decisions she’s been compelled to act on have left her frustrated and wishing she could have done more for the students, faculty and staff, especially in the arena of state funding. “We get good support in Indianapolis, but our state funding per Hoosier student is still in the lower ranges,” she says, adding, “we are still one of the most affordable colleges in the state of Indiana and the multistate region.” Given that, she says, “I’ve been disgustingly happy in this job.”

When Bennett became president, one of the founding fathers gave her some advice:

*Decide what you want to do, and don’t stay too long.* During her 15 years of service—not long enough for faculty, staff and students who wish she’d stay or at least be cloned—Bennett has accomplished what she set out to do. In her wake, she leaves the University’s cultural legacy she inherited from her predecessors, Dr. David Rice and Dr. Ray Hoops, infused with her own brand of leadership. “Whenever you feel as if you’ve moved things in the direction you’ve hoped for,” she says, “then fresh eyes need to be brought in...and you can’t be afraid of that.” 

**NOTE:** In the 1967 class photograph on this feature’s opening spread, Dr. Bennett is in the second row, second person from the left.





1



4



3



# BEHIND THE SCENE

The trajectory of USI's new students photo on The Quad—a formation of their graduation year—has its roots in WWI, when 650 soldiers were photographed standing in the shape of a horse head as a tribute to the eight million steeds killed in conflict. At USI, Rob Millard-Mendez, professor of art, maps, draws and artistically executes the formation using The Quad as a canvas and students as brushstrokes. But he can't do it alone. AMIGOS (student leaders), USI's Photography and Multimedia team, Housing and Residence Life staff, and, of course, the 1,200 new students, who willingly comply to his directions of “move up,” “shift left,” “squeeze closer,” work in tandem to create a human mosaic.

and his crew of five AMIGOS laying baselines, running neon-colored mason line and centerlines, and planting hundreds of surveyor's flags like seeds, to create the outline of the number on the morning of Convocation. As they do this, a “caller” stands on the labyrinth wall in front of the College of Liberal Arts with the blueprint of Millard-Mendez' design, making adjustments to ensure the perspective of the number doesn't turn out wonky in a photo taken from a four-story angle. Once students are corralled in place, they're asked to pick up the flags and AMIGOS run around collecting them. Finally, team members feverishly work to keep students' spirits from flagging in the heat while the photo team clicks away from the rooftop.

The process takes hours and involves Millard-Mendez

1. Millard-Mendez has about 12 minutes to get students in place and the photos taken before they start squirming and fidgeting in the hot August sun, and their “year” melts into a mess.
2. Visiting artist John David Mooney first used the 400 flags needed to outline each year's shape, as well as The Quad as a canvas, for his art installation, using sawdust and hundreds of tea-lights, titled “Dancing with Daffodils” in April 2008. Millard-Mendez had to use a shop vacuum afterwards to remove all traces of sawdust and return The Quad to its previous beauty.
3. It's never rained while setting up or photographing the number. It's rained before and after, and students have stood on soggy ground, but it's never rained during. Fingers crossed good fortune continues.
4. The time-lapse depicting students filing onto The Quad and doing the wave and/or cheering, averages around 1,200 frames.
5. These students consumed 640 popsicles in less than 10 minutes, as a reward for their patience and cooperation in the formation.







## CONNECTING ON THE FIELD

As part of the College's strategic plan to promote diversity, 12 sections of UNIV 101 read the award-winning book, *I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai. Engaging students in deeper learning, however, goes beyond books, so

last fall 50 freshmen took to The Quad for a game of cricket and insight into another's world.

Cricket is a large part of Yousafzai's book; she played it with friends and neighbors, as it was a staple of her childhood. When

things took a turn for the worse in Pakistan, she said people quit playing cricket. For many, the game is freeing, a place where religion, gender and class don't really matter on the field. This appealed to Dr. Martin Koen, USI assistant professor of criminal justice, who remembered playing cricket as a child in South Africa. He wanted to create a way for students to have something in common with Malala.

"I thought this was an innovative way to engage students," Koen said. "For those who didn't read the book, it hopefully had them asking deeper questions about Pakistani culture. For those who did, it was a way to experience something through Malala's eyes."

The students divided into two teams and played for three hours, after Koen taught them the basics of the bat-and-ball game. "This was a cool way to experience another culture and see it in action," said Kiara Jesch '21, an international studies student. "It really put things into perspective and showed that we have a lot in common with Pakistan."



While the College of Liberal Arts has always delivered outstanding education to its majors, its 2017-2018 strategic initiative aims to develop a greater sense of community among its first-time, full-time freshmen as well as its excellence in education through the lens of diversity. "My team has been hard at work listening to students and their concerns as they transition to life at USI," said Dr. James Beeby, dean of the College.

The plan supports the University's 2016-2020 focus on "Excellence in Learning for the Entire USI Community" through the lens of diversity and community building, and has designed several new initiatives, such as the Diversity Programing, aimed

at increasing the number of diversity-related events and programs through collaboration with USI's International Programs, the Multicultural Center, the advising centers and other colleges.

"What is clear is that we are seeing great improvements with retention, up over eight percent in just one year for first time, full-time freshmen, the largest freshman class in several years, and high-quality teaching and dedication from our faculty," said Beeby. "Students are exploring issues of diversity in all its forms, and gaining an appreciation of the importance of diversity in the modern world."



## A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

As the Romain College of Business (RCOB) planned its 2017-2022 strategic plan, Dr. Mohammed Khayum, dean of the College, and his team knew they wanted to refine the College's mission and vision statements to ensure alignment with the University's 2016-2020 strategic plan.

Under the College's new five-year strategic plan, it continues to build on the groundwork developed in its 2011-2016 plan. The previous mission focused on placing students at the center of the College's activities, both in and out of the classroom, as well as remaining committed to offering a value-driven education. The current strategic plan absorbs the previous goals and seeks to promote excellence in learning through three defined avenues:

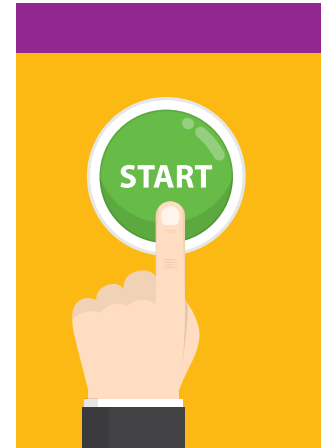
- Utilizing an experiential learning environment
- Leveraging an evolving, technology-based infrastructure
- Engaging business leaders

The new vision operates under the banner "excellence in the classroom; excellence in business," and aims to execute and achieve this goal by combining diverse faculty skills with an engaged community to create a culture of learning which fosters excellence in the capabilities of the College's students.

In the coming four years, the College will continue to strive to improve and

develop programs and practices that impact students, the University, the business community, and the profession through engagement in learning, the discovery and application of knowledge, and the integration of innovative approaches in service, research and teaching. The Romain College of Business defines engagement, innovation and impact as follows:

- Engagement is achieved through meaningful academic and/or professional interactions involving constituencies that are internal—faculty, staff, students—as well as external—community partners, advisory groups, other academic units and professional organization—to the College.
- Innovation involves new ideas, processes, structures and/or practices leading to continuous improvement in teaching, learning, intellectual contributions and engagement central to RCOBs three labs: experimental economics, strategic social media, and user perception cognition and interaction.
- Impact seeks to understand how the College and its endeavors are making a difference in businesses and society, and have a strong, evidence-based effect on stakeholder groups through its academic programs, intellectual contributions and engagement activities.

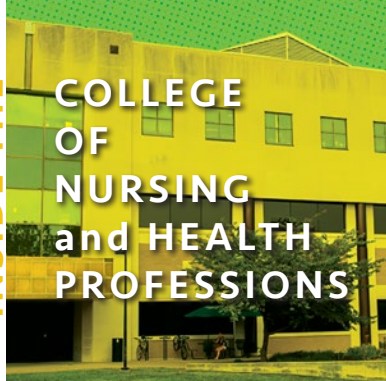


## WANTED: ENTREPRENURIAL IDEAS

Interested in becoming an entrepreneur or have an idea for a new product?

### STARTUP WEEKEND EVANSVILLE 7.0

will be held April 6-8, 2018, at USI's Business and Engineering Center. This is the seventh straight year USI has hosted this wildly engaging and idea-orientated event. For more information, visit [usi.edu/startup2018](http://usi.edu/startup2018)



## TAKING A BITE OUT OF POOR HEALTH

The path to good health has always been in the food we eat, something Hippocrates noted in 400 B.C. when he said, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." But impoverished wages and poor picks have led many of us to make detrimental food choices, resulting in obesity and hypertension.



To combat the issue locally, faculty and students from four courses within the College of Nursing and Health Professions' Food and Nutrition Program designed and executed a pilot project to serve low-income populations. Strategically addressing the issues based on a combined approach of nutrition, education and counseling, food preparation, and health/nutrition assessment makes for a powerful approach to a growing issue.

Collaborating with area food pantries and their patrons, the program combined research/data collection with service learning to provide students with an opportunity to apply course content to real situations, improve community members' health and allow faculty to produce publishable insightful material to share with their peers.

Food and nutrition students applied knowledge gained in their respective courses to:

- Conduct focus groups and established criteria for healthy food bags based on pantry inventories,
- Develop nutrition education material to insert in the bags,
- Create recipes based on food bag ingredients, and
- Survey and screen 102 initial participants for dietary history, blood pressure and body measurements.

"Empowering low-income populations in making healthy food choices has the potential to improve health and reduce dependency on unaffordable medical interventions," said Dr. Serah Theuri, associate professor of food and nutrition.

REMAKING  
THE WAY  
WE LIVE

MAGIC will be realized when the University of Southern Indiana and USI Foundation, with support from the state and national AARP, partner with Dr. Bill Thomas, a nationally-renowned expert on aging, on a year-long pilot project aimed at transforming the culture on aging. The project will create a MAGIC—Multi-Ability, multi-Generational, Inclusive Community—framework with participation from the University, its faculty and students, local for-profit and non-profit organizations, and volunteers.

MAGIC will "turn words into reality" through the fabrication, assembly and use of Dr. Thomas' modular, prefabricated Minka (a Japanese term meaning "house of the people") dwelling designed to maximize independence and well-being through smart-home technology integrated with community and home-based supports and a minimalist ethos. A Minka will be assembled on the USI campus and will serve as a model and educational environment to drive innovation for future design and functionality of similar units or Minka communities.

The project reinforces the University's place as a leader in interdisciplinary health care strategies, bringing nursing and health professions together with disciplines like social work and engineering, through research and innovation, to help change the way we look at aging.



## MEETING REGIONAL NEEDS

A program that began in January 2017 partnering Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC Crane) with the University of Southern Indiana is showing early success as it nears the end of its first year. The new Technician-to-Engineer degree program gives students with some previous technical college education the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary engineering from USI.

"This partnership is the result of a request from Crane and a response to a regional need. Crane has been a longtime and important partner for us," said Dr. Zane Mitchell, dean of the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. "We have a long history of collaboration and we've made great strides in the tech transfer and commercialization areas. Crane is a great employer of USI grads."

While the program is open to anyone, the main focus is on advancing careers for employees at NSWC Crane. The first cohort began in January and is primarily made up of Crane employees, with the addition of a couple of outside contractors.

"The objectives for this program are to provide our employees with education

opportunities for personal growth and skill development, while at the same time increasing our organization's technical capabilities and growing our engineering workforce," said Scott Karcher, program coordinator for NSWC Crane. "In addition, we hope this program will serve as a model for more postsecondary educational offerings in this region."

Students take two to three classes each semester while working full-time. Mitchell said most students should be able to complete their degrees within four to five years, depending on how many college credits transfer. Most students come into the program with a year or two of credits. Classes primarily meet at the WestGate Academy, located just outside the base in Odon, Indiana, with a mix of either distance learning or in-person instruction from USI faculty.

Tanner Bailey '21 jumped at the chance to take part in the first cohort of students in the USI Technician-to-Engineer degree program. He graduated from IUPUI in 2015 with a four-year electrical engineering technology degree. "I have a good career here at Crane," he said. "But having an engineering degree would

benefit my career greatly—not only the financial difference, but the ability to advance in my career. My current role includes a lot of coding and programming for testing and data analysis. Having an engineering degree would further enhance my knowledge and ability to analyze and explain anomalies."

For Aaron Eaker, another Crane technician, finding a way to continue his education while still working and supporting his family seemed impossible. He instead chose to pursue a bachelor's degree in business administration from Oakland City University, a task he completed in three years by taking night, online and video teleconferenced classes. Now, Eaker is enrolled in the first cohort of students in the Technician-to-Engineer program. "With a USI engineering degree, I feel I'll be a productive member of the engineering community at NSWC Crane, much like I have been as a part of the technician community," said Eaker. "Also, having my business management degree I'll be able to offer both technical contributions as well as assume a formal leadership role."

**"IT CAN BE CHALLENGING GETTING THROUGH THIS ENGINEERING CURRICULUM AFTER WORKING AT CRANE. WE'RE TALKING TWO OR THREE HOUR CLASSES ON TOP OF AN EIGHT OR MORE HOUR WORK DAY. BEING ABLE TO PROVIDE DISTANCE LEARNING AT WESTGATE ACADEMY DECREASES THE AMOUNT OF TIME THEY SPEND IN THE CAR WHICH IMPROVES THESE STUDENTS' CHANCES OF SUCCESS AND QUALITY OF LIFE."**

Scott Karcher, Representative for Crane Division, University at NSWC Crane

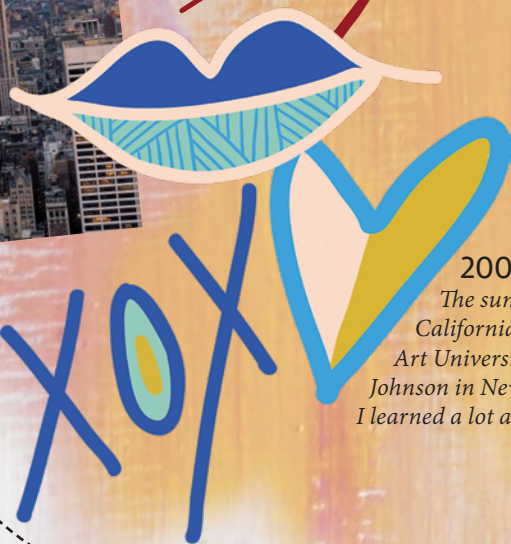


Evansville native Jessi (Thomas) Raulet '09 didn't know, when she was 3 years old and drew a mural of *The Little Mermaid*, that she'd one day be an entrepreneurial artist living in Paris, France. That illustration put the communication major on the path to a life-long love affair with art that's grown into a thriving business.

# How

2005-2009

*I wanted to study art but my parents were worried I'd end up a starving artist, so I elected advertising. Participating in the National Student Advertising Competition helped hone my direction, but it wasn't until my copywriting instructor encouraged me to look into being an art director, after seeing a storyboard I drew, that I found my career path.*



# Jessi

2009

*The summer before I moved to San Francisco, California, to earn an MFA from the Academy of Art University, I interned with fashion designer Betsey Johnson in New York City. As her social media persona, I learned a lot about branding, consistency and voice.*

2009-2011

*Living in San Francisco was freeing and inspiring for me as a black woman coming from southern Indiana. The environment was vibrantly festive, open and encouraging. The city's culture heavily influenced my studies, where I collaborated with many creatives while exploring various art forms: photography, video, illustration and graphic design.*





## 2011-2013

As an art director at an ad agency, I worked with diverse clients—LinkedIn, San Francisco 49ers, Monterey Bay Aquarium and NBC. Creating in various styles allowed me to discover my strength: color. Grueling work hours in front of the computer compelled me to make art with my hands again.

While at USI, I had studied jewelry making abroad in Florence, Italy. Using what I had learned in 2007, I began repurposing broken pieces of my grandmothers' jewelry, selling them through my Etsy shop—EttaVee—named after my grandmothers, Charles Etta and Janie Vee.



## 2014-2015

I moved to Paris, France, with my now husband, and my art directing career path took a radical shift. Paris is a very beige city and I missed the vibrant colors of San Francisco. I began designing colorful home decor pieces for our new apartment—a process that led to the development of my current style and brand—and posted them on Instagram.

People were interested in buying them, so I opened an online store under the name EttaVee Studio to sell my colorful art prints. While getting my business off the ground, I worked at a French ad agency, but the projects didn't inspire me. I really wanted to make my business work, and the only way to do that was to give it 100 percent of my time and attention.

E  
**Got**

## 2015-2018

Attending SURTEX trade show in New York City, where companies buy art to go on surface and textile products, opened my eyes to a new avenue for my business. A break came when an artwork-licensing company discovered my work, purchasing several designs for journals sold in T.J.Maxx stores globally.

One of my designs became the lining of a trench coat that debuted at Paris Fashion Week 2016. I use Instagram to attract new clients and share my portfolio, journey and inspirations.

I'm still learning my business—becoming a mother has made me more organized and efficient—but my experiences, training and advertising background allow me to achieve my goals by working smarter.

**Here**



### TAKEAWAY:

Use your natural talents, and share your work with the world.





I've been working on this sleeve tattoo for the last six months and will be finished by the end of March. It represents nature and the balance of the Universe. Each piece—flames, birds, flowers, planets and more—holds its own significance, and that significance is determined by the observers and how they choose to put it all together.

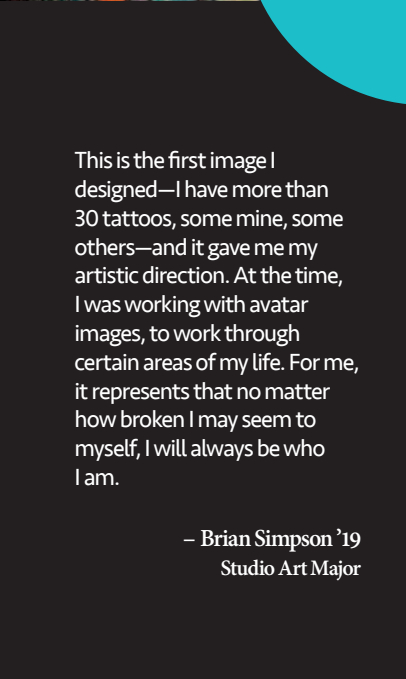
– Seth Gorman '19  
Environmental  
Science Major

## Open Dialogue inked



My best friend and I are both Sagittarius—the Archer—and our birthdays are one day apart. She was looking for a tattoo and showed me one she liked, and I suggested we get the same one. We modified this one to fit the place we wanted to have it on our bodies. The arrow is for the Archer and the ribcage represents support and protection within the body. Hannah and I have been through so much together, and if we ever move apart I'll always be reminded of her.

– Tabatha Chinn '18  
Studio Art Major



This is the first image I designed—I have more than 30 tattoos, some mine, some others—and it gave me my artistic direction. At the time, I was working with avatar images, to work through certain areas of my life. For me, it represents that no matter how broken I may seem to myself, I will always be who I am.

– Brian Simpson '19  
Studio Art Major



My tattoo is based on the myth of Lilith (the first Eve and depicted as an owl), who refused to be sexually submissive to Adam, and was rejected from paradise. She's often remembered as a villain, and said to have coupled with evil to spawn many demon children. But, I am more sympathetic. Lilith refused to accept subservience to man, and I just love that. The plants are a bunch of medicinal plants, many of them common weeds. I think of those weeds as Lilith's demon children.

– Grace Howard  
Assistant Professor of Gender Studies



In high school, I fought to overcome some personal challenges, and with help I've overcome those problems. The cross, sun and rose were always in my life, but it wasn't until I received help that I found my connection in all three. The cross is for my faith, the sun for sunlight and the rose represents love. The triangle in the middle, where the three are in color, represents hope and reminds me that I am a survivor."

– Jaelynn Lindsey '20  
Political Science Major



I was pretty late in the game to getting a tattoo; it was only 2 ½ years ago. I saw my wife's new tattoos and realized that tattoos can be beautiful works of art. I picked something that has no inherent meaning to me, but would be something that I could look at the rest of my life and not get bored with it. Over time, I realized that it had become part of my identity, and influences how people perceive me when I am wearing short sleeves or they know I have it.

– Dr. Todd Schroer  
Associate Professor of Sociology and  
Criminal Justice





“IT’S ALL ABOUT MAKING THE *players* feel THEY ARE NOT GETTING GYPPED... “ BUT THEY ARE... *mathematically.*”

TOM ALLEN '08 | *mathematics alum speaking on the basics of slot machine design*

# “OVERHEARD QUOTABLES”

“IF YOU GO BACK FAR ENOUGH, *every single one of us* HAS COME FROM THE AFRICAN CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION. THE SOONER WHITE FOLKS CAN *admit they're African too*, THE BETTER THE WORLD WILL BE.”

DR. JOHNETTA COLE | *speaking at the 2018 Martin Luther King, Jr. luncheon*

“*Imagine* TOMORROW MORNING YOU GO TO YOUR BANK AND YOU *discover* THAT \$86,400 WAS DEPOSITED INTO YOUR ACCOUNT. HOWEVER, WHATEVER YOU DO NOT SPEND BY THE END OF THE DAY YOU LOSE FOREVER. HOW WOULD YOU SPEND IT? NOW IT GETS EVEN *better*. EVERY DAY YOU WAKE UP YOU ARE GIVEN 86,400 SECONDS. AT THE END OF THE DAY THEY ARE GONE *forever*. HOW ARE YOU SPENDING THEM?”

MATT JONES, THREE-TIME CANCER SURVIVOR | *speaking on enhancing patient experience in health care at USI's Fourth Annual Health Informatics Tri-State Summit*

“THERE ARE OVER *six million job openings* IN THE U.S. THAT'S GOOD NEWS FOR GRADS.”

KEVIN HAMMETT '90 | *president and chief executive officer of Regency Properties, speaking on the adaption of retail to e-commerce at the 2017 Romain College of Business' Executive-in-Residence*

“TECHNOLOGY ON ITS OWN CANNOT *change peoples' behavior.*”

DR. MARTIN KOEN | *assistant professor of criminal justice, speaking on body cameras worn by the police at the College of Liberal Arts' 11th Colloquium*

“PEOPLE HAVE THIS *misperception* THAT WHITE POWER CONSISTS OF REDNECKS AND ILLITERATES. THERE ARE *white power members* OUT THERE WITH PH.Ds. YOU JUST DON'T SEE THEM, SO YOU GET A WARPED PERCEPTION OF THOSE IN THE MOVEMENT.”

DR. TODD SCHROER | *associate professor of sociology and criminal justice, speaking on white supremacy, the alt-right and Charlottesville at the College of Liberal Arts' 11th Colloquium*

“I DON'T CARE IF *circumstances* THEN TOLD YOU THAT YOU CAN'T HAVE IT NOW. I DON'T CARE IF A *lack of money* THEN TOLD YOU THAT YOU CAN'T HAVE IT NOW. I DON'T CARE IF, SADLY, A *loved one* OR AN ENTIRE SOCIETY TOLD YOU THEN THAT YOU CAN'T HAVE IT NOW. THE WAY THAT YOU MAKE AN *impact* FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS IS TO *fight for every good thing* THAT YOU WERE TOLD YOU COULD NOT HAVE!”

XAVIA HARRINGTON-CHATE | *instructor in English, speaking on the urgency of now at USI's third annual Black and Brown Summit of Excellence*



## VOICES OF CHANGE

In the summer of 2010, 23 bright and engaged students arrived at USI from Iraq as participants in the **IRAQI YOUTH LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAM UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (IYLEPUS)**—a program designed to prepare them to be leaders and make positive change in their country and the world. While at USI—one of two U.S. universities selected by World Learning to participate—the students integrated with the campus community, developing strong bonds as cultural barriers and apprehensions dissolved and a sense of shared community evolved. Their experiences at USI enhanced and developed leadership and problem-solving skills, a sense of civic responsibility, a commitment to community development, an awareness of current and global issues, and more. Eight years later, we've asked a few of them to reflect on the impact the program had on them, and update us on their lives.

### ABDULLAH MAHGOUB

The program and the people at USI—even though it was only for 40 days—dramatically changed my life. It changed how I view things, and made me adaptable to others and to be ready for the next challenge. It introduced me to American culture, strengthened my language and helped me transfer the good things of this community into mine. I'm currently in Virginia, working as a dental assistant, and was recently accepted to an advanced education program at Columbia University's College of Dental Medicine. After completing this program, I will be able to practice dentistry in the United States, which has always been a dream of mine. This dream would not be coming true if not for IYLEPUS.

### NAWRAS MAHMOOD

The program gave me direction and helped me craft my plans toward my vision. Where I am today, and where I will

be in the coming years, is because of the program. It's been five years now, and I'm working for the Kurdistan Save the Children Organization. After finishing my MBA, I was hired as the public relations manager to brand aspects of the organization. I'm the organization's representative for Iraq's Humanitarian Response Plan Forum and Child Protection's National Cluster. I was one of the beneficiaries of this organization in 1997-1998 when I was a child, and now I'm a staff member. So, working in this organization is living my dream!

### EUGENE QILO

IYLEPUS is the one program that fundamentally altered the course of my life forever by equipping me with valuable knowledge and enabling multiple opportunities, which would not have been possible without the program. Today, I'm working as a technical prime at IBM, leading

a team of seven strong developers on a high-impact project for Bell Canada. I can attribute this achievement to a few (things), IYLEPUS being at the top of the list.

### SAMAR AL-QURAISHI

The program had a huge impact on me. I used to be kind of a shy person, but my participation in IYLEPUS increased my self-confidence and my ability to take the initiative and speak in front of people. Since the program, I have become more focused on setting my goals and also I learned how to work harder to achieve them. During the program, I was fascinated by the educational system, and I set a goal of returning to the U.S. and getting a degree. Currently, I live in Pennsylvania with my husband and daughter. I was accepted in the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine as part of their international dental





program to get my Doctorate of Medicine in Dentistry degree. I am more than grateful for the program, to my USI family for everything we learned from them, and for the wonderful times we spent together.

### ALNASERBELH AL-NASERI

After the amazing month-long leadership and public health program, I returned to Iraq where I worked as an emergency physician. When ISIS swarmed parts of the country, I became a program officer for a U.S.-based non-profit working in conflict zones. I moved to Houston, Texas, in 2015, where I now lead clinical research in America's largest ophthalmology practice. I owe the majority of my continuing success to IYLEPUS; it opened my eyes to horizons I was blind to, and armed me with a large network of professionals. For that, I am eternally grateful.



### NOOF AL-FALAHY

The main things that really had an effect on me were to be open to different backgrounds and people, and that I don't need to wait for others to make changes for me, that I should be the one who changes things in my life. Currently I'm a gender-based violence specialist with emergency programming, working with the International Rescue Committee in Iraq. I design and build programs and teams that provide services for women and girls who are survivors of gender-based violence, providing them with psychosocial support and enhancing the protection for them in emergency settings, like camps.



# Model Campaign

What sets USI alumni apart from others is their leadership qualities; their integrity and desire to leave a positive impact on others. Wrapped up into two words, we're talking about role models, the focus of a new marketing campaign, "Where Role Models are Shaped," unveiled by the University this spring. Centered on relationships, and capturing the quality of both education and experience, it includes a new commercial, debuted during the Super Bowl, and available on the USI website.

Stories of USI role models are all around us—for example, Dr. Katie Ehlman, associate professor of gerontology, and Carlos Caballero '17 M'18, health services and health administration.

"Dr. Ehlman has been the perfect role model for me; always welcoming me and helping to nurture and develop my strengths," said Caballero. "She, along with other USI faculty, staff and peers has played a crucial role in helping to mold and prepare me for my career."

Faculty at USI are known for reaching students—delivering quality education, but also molding them into effective and authentic citizens and humble leaders in their communities, countries and the world.



"My passions drive my purpose as a professor," said Ehlman. "I'm honored to be thought of as a role model. It's not something that I necessarily strive to be but, at the most basic level, I try to create trust in my relationships with students in the classroom, with my advisees, with colleagues in research partnerships and in collaboration with community partners. Carlos brings passion, creativity and knowledge to his work."

Caballero sees the impact sticking with him into his career. "The University transformed me into a servant leader—one whose desire is to serve and not to be served. I see myself one day in hospital administration—with a humble servant leadership mentality that strives to help every person become their best." Visit [usi.edu/rolemodels](http://usi.edu/rolemodels).

# Class Notes

## 1970s

**Joe Kendall '74**, sociology, was selected by AARP Indiana to receive the 2017 AARP Andrus Award for Community Service.

**Donna Laymon '76**, secretarial administration, retired after 40 years in the physical plant at the University of Southern Indiana.

## 1980s

**Curtis Uebelhor '81**, art, '94, visual art (teaching), is having his new series "Drive by Archaeology" displayed at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery in St. Meinrad, Indiana.

**Ellen Mullen '82**, mechanical engineering technology, is the president/owner of Crane Environmental Services in Evansville.

## 1990s

**Trisha Kennedy '94**, communication, M'05, liberal studies, was named North Tampa Community High School's new secondary secretary in Traer, Iowa.

**Doug Watson '94**, business administration, is the owner of Jasper Dog Haus in Jasper, Indiana.

**Tamara Lickteig '95**, is the office coordinator for City of Largo, Florida.

**Jason Hargitt '97**, sociology, was named the acting chief of police for the Henderson Police Department.

**Kandi Pepmeier '97**, dental hygiene, was voted best dental hygienist in 2017's People's Choice Contest by *The Salem Leader* in Salem, Indiana.

**Wendy Bredhold '98**, sociology, is the senior campaign representative for Indiana and Kentucky (Beyond Coal) for Sierra Club in Evansville.

**Shane Wessel '99**, general science, received the team lead-national specialty retail accounts at Monster Energy Company in Evansville.

## 2000s

**Jeffrey May '01**, finance, M'06, business administration, is now a vice president financial advisor with Old National Investments in Evansville.

**Kester Phillips '02**, biology, is a neuro-oncologist at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, Virginia.

**Charles Miller '02**, is the vice chair with the Indiana Parole Board in Indianapolis, Indiana.

**Braden Walker '04**, radio and television, is a new content producer for CNN in Los Angeles, California.

**Kara Schotter '05**, biology, '06, science (teaching), is the associate professor, allied health division chair at Jefferson Community and Technical College in Louisville, Kentucky.

**Joyce Will '07**, health services, M'09, business administration, started a new job as project manager at Scripps Health in San Diego, California.

**Gabrielle Snider '09**, accounting and professional services, is a senior project accountant with Energy Systems Group in Newburgh, Indiana.

**Emily Cromley '09**, public relations and advertising, is a community programs and partnerships specialist with the United States Air Force as a civilian.

## 2010s

**Kristin Rice '10**, nursing, is the clinical supervisor of critical care at St. Vincent Evansville.

**Michelle Louzon '10**, elementary education, is a teacher at Danville School District No. 118 in Danville, Illinois.

## STAY IN TOUCH

EMAIL us  
at [alumni@usi.edu](mailto:alumni@usi.edu).

UPDATE your information and send photos via the form at [USI.edu/AlumniUpdate](http://USI.edu/AlumniUpdate).

*Class notes may be edited for length or clarity. We regret that we may not be able to use all submitted photos, and reserve the right to select which ones are included.*







**Jared McIntosh '11**, business administration, is vice president of business banking/relationship manager with Fifth Third Bank in Evansville.

**Myra Harris '11**, social work, **M'12**, social work, is the licensed clinical social worker for Tell City-Troy Township schools.

**Rebecca West '12**, finance, is a billing and member services supervisor for WIN Energy REMC in Vincennes, Indiana.

**Melissa Walden '12**, radio and television, is the new director of marketing and development at The Arch of Gibson County in Princeton, Indiana.



**Robert Tincau '12**, public relations and advertising, is a business relationship manager with Verizon Enterprise Solutions in Nashville, Tennessee.

**Kira Long '12**, art with emphasis in photography and interactive media design, is the archivist and designer with Browning Genealogy in Evansville.

**Keith Wise M'12**, liberal studies, is the director of TRIO Student Support Services at Kishwaukee College in Malta, Illinois.

**Benjamin Hirschauer '13**, criminal justice studies, was named a financial advisor with Edward Jones.

**Karla Gilles '14**, occupational therapy assistant, is a certified occupational therapy assistant-licensed with Blue Ridge Healthcare in Buchanan, Georgia.

**Aaron Anstett '15**, history and German studies, is production support at T1 Automotive in Ossian, Indiana.

**Richard Patel '16**, business administration, opened The Rooftop restaurant in downtown Evansville.

**Stephanie Willis '16**, social work, is a juvenile probation officer at the Harrison Circuit Court in Corydon, Indiana.

**Amethyst Turner '16**, public relations, advertising, and Spanish studies, is the community living assistant with the Hopewell Center in Anderson, Indiana.

**Ryan Abbott '16**, mathematics, is the budget analyst for the Indiana Department of Transportation in Indianapolis, Indiana.

**Ashton Mossberger '16**, social work, is the behavioral clinician with Meridian Health Services in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

**Blair Martin '17**, marketing, is the marketing and education coordinator with Keep Evansville Beautiful in Evansville.

**Martha McBride '17**, elementary education, is a kindergarten teacher with the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation.

**Nathan Criss '17**, marketing, is an in-plant specialist with Arbon Equipment in Charlotte, North Carolina.

## Photos

**1. Sarah (Walton) Eaton '10** and Kevin Eaton married on August 5, 2017.

**2. Greg Grotius '93** recently launched his second novella *Tears in the Clover* and held a book signing at River City Mercantile in Evansville.

**3. Chaze Patrick '18** at the White House with the American Legion's Boys and Girls Nation program. "During the summer semester, I had an opportunity to complete an internship with The American Legion in D.C."

## DID YOU Know...

Sam Kuban '13 was in a comedy sketch-writing group when he came up with the idea of turning the creative process into a game called "Rotten Plots." The interactive media design major, who earned a certificate in creative writing, broke down standard Hollywood plots into cards that players put back together in winning ways. The plots, considered quite risqué, caused four companies to pass on his design. That, however, only inspired Kuban to create his own company, Dead Ends Entertainment, to release the game. Two years later, he's got a growing business, selling his game online to enthusiasts all over the world.





## Photos

4. Sara Rappee '06 working with sterling silver at her in-home artist studio.

5. Allison '14, Amy '14 and Jack '17 Lipchik strike a traditional graduate pose on the Robert M. Kent Family Fountain.

6. Jean (Cunningham) Blanton '01 and son Jack had the first of what they hope will be a tradition of mother-son outings to Indianapolis for a Colts game. "Jack and I ended up on the Jumbotron during the game, so he thinks we're famous now."

7. Dental Hygiene Class of 1977's 40th reunion. (Left to right) Vickie Ripplemeier Armstrong, Holly Nalley Nixon Fuller, Tonya Brackett Schmitt, Mary Ann Krueger Shetler, Gayle Henderson Rolfes, Judy Foster Garwood, Debra Bowers Fife, Becky Johnson Pfeiffer, Lauralee Jost Paulson, Susan Ritter Browning, Angie Grebe.

8. Margaret (Hurm) Carnahan '13 and Max married December 31, 2017, after meeting on Tinder two and a half years ago.



## Marriages

**Jessica (Stein) Thomasson '05**, psychology, and Ethan, September 16, 2017.

**Michelle (Swan) Louzon '10**, elementary education, and Nicholas, June 3, 2017.

**Keith Wise M'12**, liberal studies, and Maritere, August 6, 2017.

**Katie Bickett-Burkhart '13**, mathematics, and **Evan Burkhart '13**, computer information systems and management, June 24, 2017.

**Kaitlin (Baker) Harpenau '14**, accounting and professional services, and Matt, November 11, 2017.

**Karla (Knust) Gilles '14**, occupational therapy assistant, and Brent, June 17, 2017.

**Lynnzee Matthews '16**, computer science, and **Matthew Floyd '17**, computer science, October 14, 2017.

**Stephanie (Jacobi) Willis '16**, social work, and Jared, September 15, 2017.

## Births and Adoptions

**Audrey Kidwell '08**, political science and international studies, welcomed Charlene on September 2, 2017.

**Gabrielle (Divine) Snider '09**, accounting and professional services, and **Clayton '09**, accounting and professional services, welcomed Claire Ellen on September 18, 2017.

**Sara (McBride) Fehrenbacher '11**, business administration, **M'16**, business administration, and **Lee '10**, engineering, welcomed Liam on October 6, 2017.

**Myra Harris '11**, social work, **M'12**, social work, and Eric welcomed Evelyn Lucille Elizabeth on May 19, 2017.

**Melissa (Garrett) Walden '12**, radio and television, and Kent welcomed Mila E. on July 12, 2017.

**Robert Tincou '12**, public relations and advertising, and Heather welcomed Gwyn on November 11, 2017.

**Ryan Strouse '12**, computer information systems, and **Stephanie '09**, health services, **'10**, nursing, **M'14**, nursing-gerontology, welcomed Emma on September 8, 2017.

## In Memoriam

**Myrl Potter '71**, elementary education, of Mt Vernon, Indiana, died December 5, 2017. He retired in 2004 after being a fourth grade teacher for 33 years at West Elementary. He coached basketball, football, track and baseball as well.

**Carolyn (Dick) Maasberg '72**, business education, of Evansville, died January 14, 2018.

**William Dale Middleton '74**, social science, of Evansville, died October 21, 2017.

**David Scheller '78**, management, of Evansville, died November 25, 2017. He was proud to be an All Sports Award recipient and Kiwanis Award winner in basketball.

**Bill Hanes, Jr. '79**, marketing, of Evansville, Indiana, died December 29, 2017.

**David Cave '80**, marketing, of New Albany, Indiana, died January 5, 2018.

**Larry Paxton '87**, political science, of Evansville, Indiana, died November 6, 2017.

**Jerilyn Skelton '87**, dental assisting, of Boonville, Indiana, died January 6, 2018.

**Chris Keegan '92**, history and health services, **M'96**, secondary education,



## USI FAMILY

### Retiring

#### COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Dr. Michael Kearns, professor of English  
15 years

Margaret Felton, instructor in psychology  
18+ years

Dr. Anne Statham, professor of sociology  
10+ years

Bob Jeffers, instructor in communications  
24 years

#### ROMAIN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Dr. Craig Ehlen, professor of accounting,  
28+ years

#### ADMINISTRATION

Cynthia Brinker, Vice President for  
Government and University Relations  
39 years

### In Memoriam

J. David Huber, of Evansville, Indiana, died December 26, 2017. David was a former member of the Board of Trustees at the University of Southern Indiana where he received an honorary degree.

Dr. Helen Sands, professor emerita of communications, died January 17, 2018. She was a member of the faculty for 31 years, and an ardent supporter of USI, having been a generous benefactor to the USI Foundation for more than 40 years.



of Evansville, Indiana, died December 1, 2017. She was a FAST recipient and a published author.

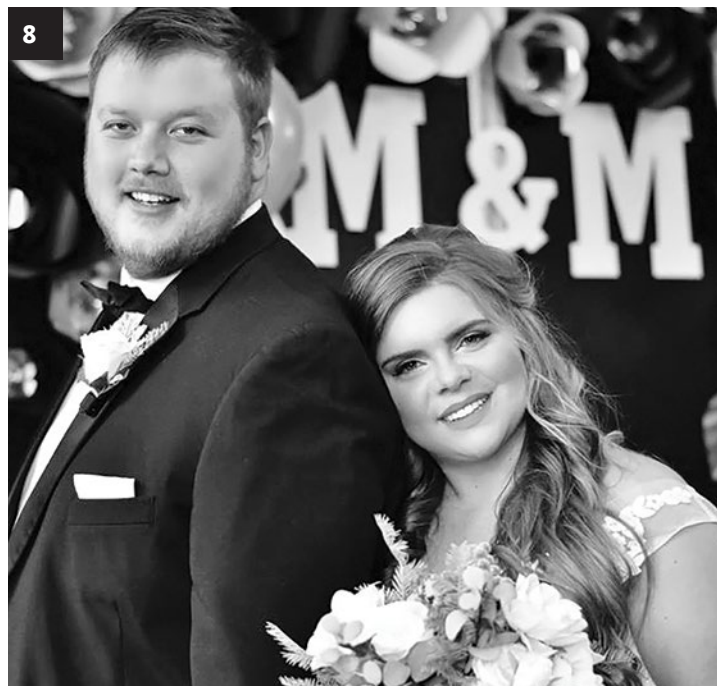
**Casey (Hughes) Lamb '03**, elementary education, of Evansville, died October 29, 2017. She ranked in nine of the 12 categories in the University of Southern Indiana women's basketball teams record book.

**Tess Starks '07**, nursing, of Evansville, died November 11, 2017. She was an excellent student who loved learning and animals, and was passionate about caring for others.

**Kevin Dowers '10**, industrial supervision, of Elberfeld, Indiana, died November 15, 2017. He loved hunting, animals, history and motorcycling.

**Kendall Murphy '13**, sports management, of Montgomery, Indiana, died November 10, 2017.

**Stephanie Bumb '17**, marketing, of Evansville, died December 6, 2017. She enjoyed gymnastics, soccer, cheerleading and loved the beach.



## DID YOU Know...



There aren't too many people who can say they have christened a ship. But Mary Susan "Susie" Hansen, '76, elementary education, and her son Patrick, history '15, (not pictured) are part of that select fraternity. Last October, they helped commission the United States Coast Guard Cutter Oliver Berry in Honolulu, Hawaii. Berry—a distinguished helicopter maintenance mechanic—contributed significantly to a 1946 world-renowned rescue of airliner crash victims in Newfoundland, by rapidly dismantling and reassembling Coast Guard helicopters. The Coast Guard invited Susie Hansen to christen the ship because she's Berry's closest living blood relative. Hansen was named a plank member (honorary members of the original crew) of the Oliver Berry.



A tattoo of a squirrel is on her forearm because they're over-prepared, curious, social, intelligent and sly (Stephanie's initials - S.L.Y.) creatures.

**W**hile quick to laugh, Dr. Stephanie Young's expertise lies in subjects that are anything but laughable: race/ethnicity and gender/sexuality. The visual rhetorical scholar and feminist autoethnographer examines these subjects in today's pop culture. The tenured associate professor of communication studies finds many subjects irresistible—she netted two majors and four minors from Purdue in four years before receiving her master and doctorate degrees from Ohio University. Her distinct perspective and experiences bring a richness to her seminars, earning her the designation of “role model” from students.



Jigsaw-puzzle enthusiast—the 1,000+ piece kind.

**What role does your field of expertise play in today's society?** I focus on issues of diversity and social inequality, critical contemporary concerns. Visual rhetorical scholars like myself are beginning to explore challenging topics of sexism, homophobia and racism. These topics are a daily debate in the Trump era—from sexual harassment to immigration, from the #BlackLivesMatter movement to LGBT rights. Critically analyzing these mediated messages is vital to understanding how they're constructed and communicated to audiences, and potentially providing a lens for promoting social change.

**Describe your teaching style and its impact on students.** My classrooms are interactive. I use video clips of films and television shows that students are familiar with to engage them with course concepts. I encourage lots of class discussion to get students to be responsible for, and engaged in, their learning.

**What do you inspire students to be?** Be kind. As educators, we can help students develop deeper capacities to care about others, to be more empathetic human beings. I encourage them to engage in Random Acts of Kindness.

**What's your most memorable moment in the classroom?** I had a student in public speaking who had high speech apprehension, to the point of walking out of the classroom during her first speech. I worked with her one-on-one, and it was great to see her become confident and be able to stand up and speak to her peers. A major assignment was a ceremonial speech, and most of the students were practicing for a wedding

toast or birthday or anniversary speech, and she did an Ode to Spring. I knew then she'd come a long way. As a professor, I just about cried. It was amazing. That was one of those teaching moments that's just powerful - to see her overcome her speech anxiety.

**What book should everyone read and why?**

Zora Neale Hurston's "Their Eyes Were Watching God". The novel centers on Janie, an African American woman, and the struggles she faces in life and love. Not only is the book beautifully poetic, highlighting the vernacular of the black South of the 1900s, but it also addresses key social issues including traditional gender roles, racism in America and finding one's independence.

**What have you consistently done since you were a child, and why?** Journaling. I have always enjoyed documenting and reflecting on my experiences. And it's become useful to engaging in autoethnographic research—using one's personal stories to make sense of wider sociocultural issues.

**What do your hobbies teach you?** Running has taught me about preparation, goal setting and perseverance. Cooking has encouraged me to be creative, flexible and willing to experiment. Photography has allowed me to capture ephemeral moments and preserve shared memories of family and friends.



Associated Press picked up and nationally reproduced one of her photos when she was

a student photojournalist for Purdue.

HAVE A FAVORITE PROFESSOR YOU'D LIKE TO SEE FEATURED HERE? Let us know at [magazine@usi.edu](mailto:magazine@usi.edu).



# *A Full Circle*



# **Legacy**

## **President Linda L. M. Bennett**

may be closing one chapter of her life as she retires, but her legacy will continue. Her dedicated care and support for USI students in academics and in life is a true gift. Now, as she reflects on her time in higher education, Dr. Bennett understands how this gift must keep on giving.

▼ Visit [USI.edu/onlinegiving](https://www.usi.edu/onlinegiving) to be a part of her legacy.

***Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett Student Care Endowment***

***Dr. Stephen E. and Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett Presidential Scholarship Endowment***

*Spirit and Heart of USI*



**"Events like Pakistan Culture Night offer opportunities to grow an understanding and curiosity for others' worlds, and have introduced me to different sets of values and beliefs. It's nice to know USI's Culture Nights allow students to talk about their background and let an audience grow a curiosity for their world. As a Hispanic student, I feel welcomed at these events, and look forward to the event that celebrates my culture on The Day of the Dead."**

Haley Teniente Cortez '21, Spanish Major from Rockport, Indiana

*Visit [USI.edu/spiritheart](https://www.usi.edu/spiritheart) for student submission guidelines.*