

RIDER

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS | SPRING 2022

For the love of science

The sciences are growing exponentially at Rider in the newly renovated Mike and Patti Hennessy Science and Technology Center





OLD GLORY

Last November, the Rider community came together once again to plant thousands of U.S. flags on the Campus Mall in honor of all who serve or have served in the armed forces. The flag planting has become an annual tradition at Rider since it began in 2013.

PHOTO BY PETER G. BORG



14

FOR THE LOVE OF SCIENCE

The sciences are growing exponentially at Rider in the newly renovated Mike and Patti Hennessy Science and Technology Center.

20

PURE GOLD

Olympic swimming coach Greg Meehan '01 reaches the pinnacle of his profession.

DEPARTMENTS

4 Rider Roundup

8 Faculty Profile

10 Go Broncs!

24 Class Notes

RIDER

VOLUME 23 / ISSUE 2

Editor

Adam Grybowski

Deputy Editor

Rachel Stengel '14, '20

Art Direction and Design

Tiffani Angelone '21

Photography

Peter G. Borg

Contributing Writers

Diane Cornell

A.J. Moore

Gregory Ott

Contributing Designers & Illustrators

Natalie Nguyen

Sarah Oskay

Megan Rosanova

Contributing Photographers

Maddie Meyer

Nathan Weyland

President

Gregory G. Dell'Omo, Ph.D.

Vice President for

University Advancement

Karin Klim

Associate Vice President for University Marketing & Communications

Kristine A. Brown

Alumni Association President

Stephen Brill '01

To reach us, write to:

2083 Lawrenceville Road
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-3099
609-896-5000
magazine@rider.edu
rider.edu/ridermagazine

Rider (USPS 892-560) is published for the Rider University community, including alumni, parents, faculty and staff, by Rider University.



Dear alumni and friends,

ONE FACT JUMPED OUT AT ME WHILE READING THIS ISSUE OF *RIDER* MAGAZINE.

When the recently renamed Mike and Patti Hennessy Science and Technology Center was originally constructed in 1961, Rider didn't offer a single science major. While students could take science classes, two years passed before Rider launched its first science programs, biology and chemistry.

All these years later, we can see how the decision to break ground on a building dedicated to science was much more consequential than simply launching two programs. It created a new foundation that Rider could build upon for the next 60 years and beyond.

And build upon it we have. Today, Rider offers 17 science programs. Our recently expanded science center is now home to some of our most popular and exciting academic programs, such as computer science, cybersecurity and exercise science. In our newest labs, students are simulating cyber attacks, building robots and performing virtual dissections.

That's why campus construction, such as the new wing of the science center, is so important. New and upgraded facilities help Rider attract new students and compete against



our peer institutions. Other strategic priorities, such as new academic program development, serve the same end. To underscore the point, consider the fact that the new academic programs Rider

has launched since 2016 now represent 17% of our total enrollment. Growing our endowment, which we have been able to do by about 36% since 2015, is also very important since this is a key to help keep a Rider education affordable.

In 1961, investing in yet-to-be created science programs could have been seen as foolishly impractical. But imagine where Rider would be today if yesterday's leaders lacked the vision and will to bring about this kind of long-term positive change. I look forward to the many positive changes to come at Rider in the future as a result of what we're doing today.

Sincerely,

Gregory G. Dell'Omo, Ph.D.
President, Rider University



The lifelong Bronc

Carol Curtis '69, '11 was 17 when she earned an associate degree and 61 when she earned a bachelor's degree, both from Rider. Since marking that latest educational milestone in 2011, she has audited a class nearly every fall and spring semester.

Curtis has thoroughly enjoyed learning alongside her 20-something classmates, never feeling out of place at Rider. When she was randomly selected to receive a free year's worth of tuition for providing proof of COVID-19 vaccination last fall, she asked Rider to choose someone else.

"I could have gone back to get my master's, but I couldn't knowing that there may be a kid struggling to pay for school or will be when they graduate," she says. "Let somebody who needs it use it. This will be a good help for them so they can stay in school and earn their degree."

Instead, she audited a class about Bruce Springsteen. She says that, after considering all her options, "Bruce won out."

On the record

Multiple recordings by the Westminster Williamson Voices, conducted by Dr. James Jordan and featuring the work of many Westminster Choir College alumni, students and faculty, were released last fall.

Breathe Free composed by Dr. Sarah Rimkus and *to know your love* composed by Dr. Thomas LaVoy '13 were released digitally in September. The album *A Scattered Light in Winter* was released in November. *Scattered Light* features a mix of poetry set to music and new arrangements of traditional carols and includes performances by Assistant Professor of Music Education Dr. Sangmi Kang, Assistant Professor of Voice Dr. Jay Carter and Associate Professor of Sacred Music Dr. Steve Pilkington, who accompanied the ensemble's performance of his composition *In the Bleak Midwinter*. The recording also featured music composed or arranged by several Westminster Choir College alumni.



BRONC THE VOTE

Student voter participation at Rider rose from 52% in 2016 to 74% in 2020. The rise was enough for Rider to earn a gold seal from the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge last fall. The accolade recognizes student voter rates of between 70-80% in the 2020 election.

CHAMPION SCHOOL

Rider was designated a Special Olympics Unified Champion School last fall. It was one of only three institutions of higher education in New Jersey to receive such recognition in 2021. A Special Olympics Unified Champion School is defined by having an inclusive school climate that exudes a sense of collaboration, engagement and respect for all members of the student body and staff.





IN SERVICE TO THE NATION

Alfred K. Flowers Jr. '95, '97 was appointed brigadier general of the U.S. Air Force on Sept. 7, 2021, during a ceremony in Washington, D.C. The promotion burnishes a longstanding family legacy of serving the nation (Flowers' father, retired Maj. Gen. Alfred K. Flowers Sr., is the longest-serving Airman in U.S. Air Force history). In this photo from the ceremony, Flowers Sr. looks on while Brig. Gen. Flowers Jr. (center) gets his new rank pinned on by his sons, Kendell Flowers (left), a cadet at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and Ayden Flowers, a cadet at Texas A&M.



RETURNING TO JOY

The Westminster Choir returned to live public performance following a 20-month absence because of the pandemic. Conducted by Dr. Lynnel Joy Jenkins '94, the choir performed music that reflected the challenges and triumphs experienced by Westminster and musicians around the world. The sold-out performance in Gill Chapel preceded more returns to live performances throughout the semester for other choirs and ensembles, including Westminster Opera Theatre, the Westminster Jubilee Singers, the Westminster Concert Bell Choir and more. An Evening of Readings and Carols was also held in December, resuming a beloved annual holiday tradition.

Cataloging

Over only three weeks in Kosovo last fall, Dr. Sharon Yang and her project team helped network 48 libraries throughout the country and create a shared library computer system. The work was supported by Yang's second Fulbright Senior Specialist Award. Yang says the country is about 70 years behind American libraries, with many libraries in the country operating with no system at all. "Most did not even have a card catalog," she says. "Some libraries just write their materials on pieces of paper or use an Excel sheet."



“ THE BEAUTY OF VORA IS THAT
**ANYONE CAN FIND VALUE IN
 A CONVERSATION.** IF YOU HAVE
 FANS WHO WANT TO TALK TO YOU,
 THAT’S A VALUABLE THING. ”

- Isaiah Jean-Baptiste '20, who along with Derik Gadson and Brook Wilson '19 (pictured left to right), created the app Vora, which connects fans and social media influencers through video chats



Lord of the rings

Dr. Daniel Druckenbrod was awarded a National Science Foundation grant as part of a multi-university project that will generate data about how the climate has changed over time in Southeast Asia, from the Himalaya to the Southern Ocean, over the past 500 to 1,000 years. The project will build on and expand Druckenbrod’s ongoing research of measuring tree rings, which indicate a tree’s growth rate over time, to make inferences about past events.

Three Rider students will assist Druckenbrod with primary data analysis as he pushes ahead into new territory. The scope of the three-year project will give these students the opportunity to conduct research over an extended period of time in collaboration with premier research institutions like Columbia. Their involvement may also include working on publications and conference presentations.

ON THE LIST

President Gregory G. Dell’Omo, Ph.D., was named to the NJBIZ Education Power 50 list for 2021. The annual list recognizes influential leaders in education from around the state. This year’s list was heavily influenced by the coronavirus pandemic and the way that colleges and universities in New Jersey responded to its impact.

Honoring our vets

Rider's campus veterans affairs office was renamed The Dr. Eugene Marsh Center for Veterans and Military Affairs last November. The first space at the University to be named for a Black alumnus, it honors Dr. Eugene Marsh '13, '18, '21, a passionate student, war hero and dedicated veterans' advocate who died in January 2021 from complications of COVID-19. More than 150 people contributed \$97,000 to support the renovation, renaming and relocation of the office.



Wonder Woman

A story by Dr. Sheena Howard, a professor in the Department of Communication, Journalism and Media, appeared in *Wonder Woman Black & Gold #6*, the final installation of a new anthology series that marks the superhero's 80th anniversary. DC Comics released the comic last November. Set in Center City, Philadelphia, against the backdrop of an environmental disaster, the tale features Wonder Woman relying on her sister, Nubia, to rescue her from the hands of Poseidon and Athena.

"There's still a lot to do with Wonder Woman because her story is very flexible," Howard says. "All of the gender dynamics she stands for, there's a lot to play with there — and you can especially play with those dynamics as they change in society."

A scholar of Black comics, Howard has increasingly ventured into the creation of comics. Previously, she was the co-writer of *Superb*, one of the first comics to ever feature a superhero with Down syndrome.

PEACE PRIZE

As the news of Nobel Prizes rolled out last October, some Rider students were already looking forward to next year's announcements. That's because they played a role in selecting a nominee for the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize winner.

The opportunity to nominate an individual or organization began with a new class on the Nobel Peace Prize. It was offered for the first time last spring through Rider's global studies program. In addition to learning about the history and purpose of the prize, students were tasked with persuading their classmates who deserved to be the latest recipient of the famous award.

Their choice was submitted through an official nomination from an eligible Nobel Peace Prize nominator. "Honestly, I still cannot believe it — I never thought from a college course we could do something like this," says Paola Carlesso, a sophomore double majoring in global studies and Spanish. Standing next to her is Dr. Roberta Fiske-Rusciano, who taught the course.





Dr. Hee Young Kim

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

“ I TEACH BECAUSE OUR STUDENTS HAVE INCREDIBLE POTENTIAL AND CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ”

Dr. Hee Young Kim was building a career in investment banking after earning her bachelor's in economics from the University of Pennsylvania. Nearly five years in the field, she realized she was much more interested in watching her coworkers than producing financial models.

“I always found myself observing interpersonal relationships rather than doing my job,” she says, laughing.

Now, 15 years and a pandemic later, Kim is an expert in organizational behavior, or how people interact in groups. She earned her doctorate in management from New York University. Much of her research focuses on cross-cultural differences and status within the workplace, but the pandemic influenced her latest line of inquiry.

Kim and her fellow management scholars conducted two studies about how public gratitude affected less visible essential workers — correctional officers, teachers, social workers, and transportation and warehouse workers. They found that those who felt thanked for their work were more likely to participate in positive recovery activities such as exercising or meditation. Those who did not favored more negative activities such as drinking, smoking or using illegal drugs.

“Public gratitude really matters,” Kim says. “You saw people clapping for nurses and doctors. They are obviously our heroes, but there were people who were forgotten. They also risked their lives but did not nearly get the love or visibility of other workers.”

WHY FOCUS ON GRATITUDE?

I don't know if I would have been a gratitude researcher had it not been for the pandemic and observing so much of this very salient gratitude toward some types of workers and not others. I'm now looking at other work about gratitude. How does receiving gratitude make you feel? How can it help people better cope with work stressors?

WHAT ARE SOME LESSONS LEADERS CAN TAKE FROM THIS RESEARCH?

When I worked in industry, there were superstars who were highly admired and treated special. Some of the most important work gets done by those who dutifully show up and do their work but aren't recognized. The effect that we've seen on marginalized essential workers may also be applied to everyday folks, who may not be superstars but are doing their jobs. We need to pay more attention to these workers.

CAN ANYONE BE A GOOD LEADER?

People think management and leadership are common sense, but they are not. If that was the case, everyone would be a great manager. People think you're either born a leader or not, but these things can be learned. Research tells us that some qualities of a good leader are setting an example and presenting a compelling vision. Leaders are the ones who are supposed to show us the way and motivate us. People want to work for something that's bigger than just a paycheck.

By Rachel Stengel '14, '20
Photo by Peter G. Borg

FALL 2021

ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS



“

IT'S A HUGE HONOR FOR ME AND IT'S
HEARTWARMING TO FEEL THAT MY HARD WORK
HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED. MY BEST MOMENT
DURING THE SEASON WAS WHEN I SCORED
TWICE AGAINST QUINNIPIAC. I HADN'T SCORED
IN TWO GAMES LEADING UP TO THIS ONE, SO
IT WAS A CONFIDENCE BOOST
TO FINISH THE SEASON STRONG.

”

Senior **Zaki Alibou** was named the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Men's Soccer Offensive Player of the Year, becoming the first-ever Bronc to receive the honor. This season, he was named to the All-MAAC First Team and MAAC Player of the Week for his performances against Quinnipiac and Niagara.

FIELD HOCKEY

Senior **Julia Divorra** was named the Northeast Conference Field Hockey Offensive Player of the Year for the third straight season and Second-Team Mid-Atlantic All-Region.

VOLLEYBALL

Junior **Morgan Romano** was selected to the All-MAAC First Team for the third-straight season.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Graduate student **Dimencio Vaughn** became Rider men's basketball's all-time steals leader, passing previous record holders Ryan Thompson '10 and Stevie Jordan '20.

CROSS COUNTRY

Senior **Teagan Schein-Becker** finished eighth at the MAAC Championships to earn All-MAAC. She also earned All-East with an eighth place finish at the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championships.

A WHOLE NEW BALLGAME

A.J. MOORE ON SPORTS AND MEDIA

Student workers

New NCAA legislation welcomes the professionalization of college athletics

By A.J. Moore



Associate Professor of Journalism A.J. Moore is the director of Rider's program in sports media.

It used to be in college athletics that the most recognized three letter acronyms were those like PPG (points per game), ERA (earned run average) and SOG (shots on goal). Add a new one to this list — NIL (name, image and likeness).

New NCAA legislation, rightfully so, allows college athletes to be compensated for their work away from the game via endorsements, commercial association and sales of their autograph or memorabilia.

The era of the professionalization of college athletics is upon us.

Rather than bemoan the movement because it goes against long-standing "amateur" tradition, college sports fans are better served by adjusting to the new landscape — one that features college athletes coming and going on different rosters almost as regularly as those in the professional ranks.

This new college landscape is centered around the transfer portal, basically a de facto form of free agency. Since student-athletes can capitalize on NIL deals, and those may be more advantageous on other campuses, expect them to leave their current schools unlike ever before.

If you think it is happening a lot now, it is only going to escalate.

The free agency birth in sports from the mid-1970s that led Catfish Hunter to leave Oakland for New York eventually found its way to other major sports leagues in the ensuing years. Inevitably it would come to the college ranks.

Well, it's here, brought on by the massive amount of money pouring into the power conferences, the rise in overall media coverage of college football and basketball, the influential O'Bannon v. NCAA court case, and the scrutiny over the relative hypocritical moves made by a number of coaches and athletic directors who left their schools under contract for greener pastures.

So now college athletes have more freedom of movement and the ability to receive compensation for their name, image and likeness.

That means the days of a program and its fans hitching all their support behind a freshman sensation like a Patrick Ewing or Ralph Sampson won't return. Not just in basketball or football, but in any sport.

We now must view players and think about their status much differently. Those like quarterback Caleb Williams following his coach from Oklahoma to USC or Oscar Tshiebwe bolting from major West Virginia to even more major Kentucky will be the norm.

Those college athletes who stay at one school for four years? Soon they will be the unique cases to point out.

Just as the NCAA has evolved as a business over the past few decades, college sports fans must evolve as well.

Dr. Barry

AS THE HEAD COACH OF RIDER BASEBALL FOR 18 SEASONS, DR. BARRY DAVIS HAS CULTIVATED THE WISDOM BEHIND A WINNING FORMULA

By Adam Grybowski

Ushered in by the strategy of the Oakland Athletics and popularized by Michael Lewis' influential 2004 bestseller, *Moneyball*, the use of data in baseball has been one of the biggest changes to America's pastime in recent decades.

Data is one thing, wisdom is another.

Dr. Barry Davis has been cultivating the latter over 18 seasons as the head coach of Rider baseball. That kind of age-old knowledge may not change much over the years, but today, in the information age, players and coaches have greater access to it than ever before.

"With podcasts and YouTube and documentaries, there's more information out there now than ever to learn about great teams, great players and great coaches — information that was true decades ago and still applies today," Davis says. "You used to have to work to get that information, but now it is literally at your fingertips."

At Rider, Davis has led the Broncos to three conference tournament championships and two regular-season championships. Last May, the team qualified for its third NCAA regional appearance, which helped earn Davis Rider's 2020-21 Coach of the Year Award.

He says the standards he sets for excellence have never changed, even as he has evolved as a coach. "I've gotten more patient and I pay attention more without talking, without being reactive," he says. "There's still an intensity there for me, but I've taken a broader view on

teaching and setting an example."

In 2019, Davis earned a doctorate in sports leadership from Concordia University-Chicago. Evidence of the commitment it took, Davis can rattle off in casual conversation when he started and ended the program, down to the day — Aug. 24, 2014, and July 9, 2019, respectively.

Pursuing a doctorate had been in the back of his mind for some time. "It was sort of a test, a challenge, and it was fulfilling," he says. "Now I want to put that knowledge to good use."

When Davis returned to school, he had to adjust to working mornings and evenings while still fulfilling his role as the head coach. That year, the Broncos won the regular season title, and Davis was named MAAC Coach of the Year for the third time.

In total, Davis has been coaching baseball for 32 years, and he still believes in always putting in the effort to outwork the competition. But to truly understand what is working and what is not, more insight and knowledge is needed beyond that. Winning, Davis says, isn't accidental, and neither is losing. He's learned that a wise coach is one who can decipher the deeper underlying reasons behind the win/loss columns.

"Along the way, I've made some missteps, but when I was younger, I didn't reflect on why," Davis says. "As I've gained more experience, I can now reflect back on what we're doing and how to improve."

baseball



PHOTO BY PETER G. BORG

For the love of science

How an alumni love story
led to Rider's largest
gift for the sciences

By Rachel Stengel '14, '20 | Photography by Peter G. Borg

WHEN THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER was constructed in 1961, there were no science majors at Rider. About 20 science courses were offered at the time. Just two years later, the building was renovated and the budding scientist could major in biology or chemistry.

In the 61 years since the building was created, science has made a number of achievements possible — the first human heart transplant, landing Apollo 11 on the moon, cloning Dolly the Sheep and decoding the human genome. Let's not even talk about how the internet, iPhones and social media have changed life as we know it.

Today, students in Rider's 17 science programs are dissecting synthetic cadavers, programming drones to fly independently, simulating cyber attacks and much more. Much of this work is taking place in a 9,500-square-foot addition completed in January.

"There has never been a better time to be a science major at Rider," says Dr. Kelly Bidle, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The \$9 million expansion was made possible through the generosity of a \$4 million leadership gift from Mike Hennessy '82, who died unexpectedly last November at 61. The gift is the largest ever received for the sciences and the catalyst behind the project. Hennessy made the gift in honor of his late wife, Patrice "Patti" Shelmet Hennessy '82.





MIKE AND PATTI
HENNESSY
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY
CENTER

From left, students and faculty utilize writable walls to enhance classroom learning and work on robotics kits. Below, Michael J. Hennessy Jr., Ashley Talamo '08, Shannon Pulaski and Christopher Hennessy '11 tour the Mike and Patti Hennessy Science and Technology Center.

MIKE AND PATTI HENNESSY met like many Rider students — in class. One weekend in the early 1980s, Patti brought her younger sister Pamela along to attend an off-campus party she knew Mike would be at, saying she needed to see the boy she was going to marry. In 1983, she did just that.

The health care industry was a draw for both Mike and Patti early in their careers. Patti worked at Johnson & Johnson as an event planner before becoming a stay-at-home mom as their family grew to include four children — Shannon, Ashley '08, Michael and Christopher '11. Mike started a career in medical publishing, following in the footsteps of his father, Jack Hennessy Sr., who worked in the field. Mike's company, MJH Life Sciences, would become the largest privately held independent, full-service medical media company in North America. His son Michael is the current president and CEO. Christopher leads mergers and acquisitions. Ashley worked as publisher of *Pharmacy Times*. Shannon, a lawyer, does much of the trademark work for the company.

But, it had humble beginnings, says Ashley Talamo '08, Mike and Patti's daughter.

"I remember being young and my dad would be working in the attic on his business," she says.

Despite the ups and downs of start-

ing a business from scratch, Talamo says her parents' motto was "family, faith, education and health."

As Mike's business was growing exponentially, Patti was diagnosed with stage 2b ovarian cancer in 2011. She visited multiple doctors before her diagnosis, knowing something wasn't right, but none recognized the signs.

"Ovarian cancer is known as the silent killer," says Talamo. "She had all the classic symptoms if you knew you had ovarian cancer. There was a basketball-sized tumor in her stomach and doctors were just not listening to her."

Patti began a 10-year cancer battle. A few years after her ovarian cancer diagnosis, Patti was diagnosed with an extremely aggressive form of triple negative breast cancer. She also learned that she was a carrier of the BRCA1 gene, which greatly increases a person's likelihood of developing certain types of cancer. Patti and Mike became devoted to patient advocacy and providing a platform for oncologists' and clinicians' research. Oncology became a premier sector for MJH Life Sciences, providing the latest news, research and more for oncologists. Patti was a featured speaker at a number of conferences and online forums.

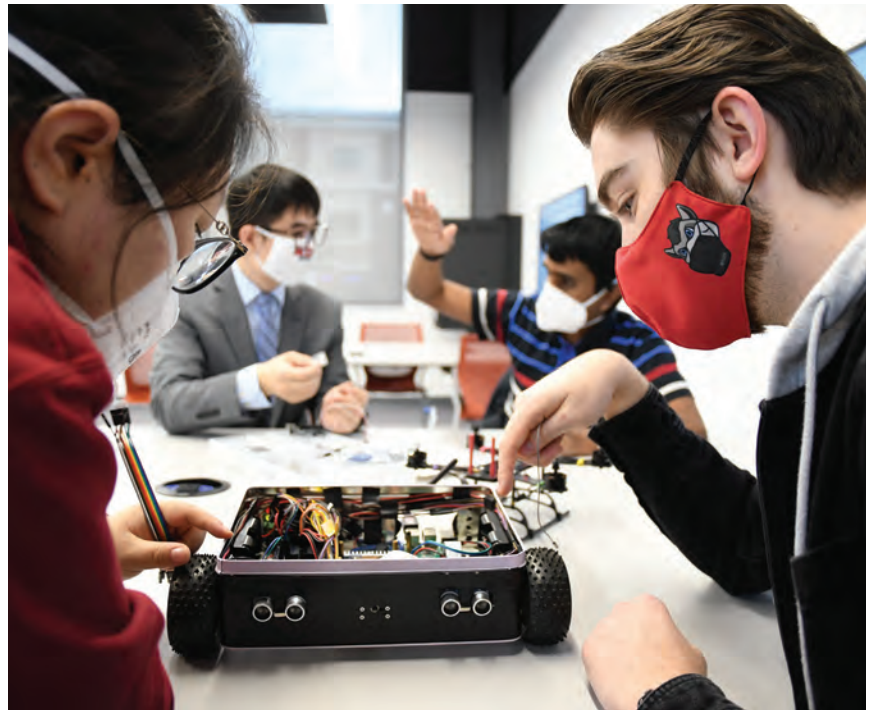
"With stage four cancer, they basically tell you that you have six months to live," Talamo says. "To live 10 years from that is just honestly a miracle."

“

**THERE HAS
NEVER BEEN
A BETTER
TIME TO BE
A SCIENCE
MAJOR AT
RIDER.**

”

– DR. KELLY BIDLE,
DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES





Faith Patterson, a senior health sciences major, uses Rider's new Anatomage table to view various structures within the body.

“

**MY FATHER'S
HOPE WAS
TO EXPAND
THE SCIENCE
CENTER SO
THAT RIDER
STUDENTS
COULD REACH
THEIR FULL
POTENTIAL.**

”

– ASHLEY TALAMO '08

THE NEWLY RENOVATED science building on campus has been renamed the Mike and Patti Hennessy Science and Technology Center.

“With the way that science and technology is evolving so quickly, my father’s hope was to expand the science center so that Rider students could reach their full potential and make their own unprecedented advances, which would hopefully impact other generations to come,” Talamo says.

A number of new science programs have launched in just the past five years, including computer science, cybersecurity and exercise science. This year, the computer science major also added three new tracks — cybersecurity, software engineering and artificial intelligence — to allow students to further specialize.

Collaboration is the emphasis in each of the new labs and spaces.

“When we talk to employers and people in industry, they really want people who have worked in teams before and can collaborate well with others,” says Dr. John Bochanski, chair of Rider’s Department of Computer Science and Physics. “These spaces really drive that home.”

The new greenhouse has been transformed into a classroom space for biology and ecology courses. The sun-filled room features new plant stands with growth lights, laboratory benches and a flexible workspace.

The software engineering and cybersecurity labs feature large display screens where professors and students can project their work for the entire

class and among small groups. The cybersecurity lab also allows students to simulate cyber attacks and defenses. On the second floor, a new artificial intelligence space is part classroom, part maker space that can accommodate work with drones and robots.

The anatomy and physiology lab is the first space dedicated solely to these studies at Rider. Two pieces of equipment are the true game changers of the lab — a synthetic cadaver and an Anatomage table.

The synthetic cadaver, called a SynDaver, is a life-sized model of a body made out of materials that replicate the feel and appearance of human tissue. Students can remove organs, perform dissections and visualize structures and connections of major body organ systems. Rider is the only four-year college or university in New Jersey to own a full-body SynDaver.

The Anatomage table is a three-dimensional virtual dissection table. Rider is one of only five universities in the state to have this device. The table displays a number of cadaver images that students will be able to manipulate to view various structures within the body and perform virtual dissections and physiology simulations. The touchscreen table features an array of MRI and CT scan images of real-life cadavers.

“For a place like Rider that doesn’t have a medical school, that’s huge to have that opportunity for our students,” says Dr. Drue Stapleton, assistant professor in the Department of Biology, Behavioral Neuroscience and Health Sciences. ■





PURE GOLD

U.S. OLYMPIC COACH GREG MEEHAN '01 REACHES THE PINNACLE OF HIS PROFESSION

By Adam Grybowski

Prior to the 2020 Summer Olympics, which were postponed a full year because of the coronavirus pandemic, only war had caused the games to be postponed or canceled.

The outbreak left coaches and athletes straining to cope with the unpredictability of the virus. Before the International Olympic Committee announced the postponement, countries threatened to withdraw from competition. Athletes complained training was all but impossible. Borders closed. Safety precautions intensified.

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to compete at the highest level on the world stage had become, for many, an interminable bout of anxiety, frustration and inconvenience.

At a moment when he was standing at the top of his profession, Greg Meehan '01, the head coach of the 2020 U.S. women's swim team, was struggling to book pool time for athletes who should have been training at the peak of their abilities.

Meehan has coached and mentored swimmers for more than two decades, including the nation's top women's swimmers, such as legend Katie Ledecky and the first African American woman to win an individual Olympic medal in swimming, Simone Manuel. As the Paul A. Violic Director of Women's Swimming at Stanford University, Meehan led the Cardinals to their first national title in 19 years in 2017, the beginning of a three-year championship run.

Tokyo would not even be Meehan's first Olympics — he had previously served as an assistant coach for Team USA at the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. But despite his extensive experience, nothing had readied him for the challenge of mentally and physically preparing a group of elite athletes under these conditions.

"We were navigating this space where we were being responsible from a health and safety perspective," he says. "Normally, we have every hour of every day scheduled out. We probably spent hundreds of hours on the phone and Zoom trying to come up with a plan that made sense. It was a heavy weight for us to carry, and it was a very difficult time."

A total of 54 medals were at stake for the women, the winners to be determined through 18 events, including two that would debut on the women's side. A new relay, the mixed 4x100 medley, had been added to this year's competition, and, for the first time ever, women would swim a 1,500-meter freestyle at the Olympics.

When Olympic competition belatedly arrived, the Tokyo Aquatics Centre, newly built for the games and capable of holding 15,000 spectators, was nearly empty judged by the standard of typical Olympic events. A no-spectator policy had been issued to combat rising cases of the coronavirus. As swimmers from around the world were announced for their events, many emerged wearing masks.

At any moment in history, leading an Olympic team carries elevated meaning. Meehan believes that outside of serving in the military, representing your flag in the Olympics might be the greatest honor citizens can have in service to their country. He is particularly cognizant of its significance during a divisive time across the nation.

"There is just something about the Olympics that can create those moments of pride and excitement — that's a real thing," Meehan says. "We talk to the team about how our performances are going to make people proud to be Americans. In these times, we need good things to celebrate and the Olympics are a good way to do that. That's one reason we work so hard and why it's worth it. You know the impact it's having on these young people and the people watching at home."

In Tokyo, Meehan led the U.S. women's swimming team to a leading 18 medals, including three gold. World-record holder Ledecky, whom Meehan has coached at Stanford as well as on two Olympic teams, added to her medal count. She now has 10 Olympic medals, including seven gold.

"Our vision for the Olympic experience was very different than the ultimate reality," says Meehan. "When the world

stopped because of the pandemic, the initial piece of what we were dealing with was uncertainty and the nervousness of the unknown. We just hammered away trying to come up with a plan that made sense. We wanted to make it as best an Olympic experience as possible because the athletes deserved that."

Recalling his experience watching the Olympics as a child, Meehan says, "No matter what, you always cheered for the folks with that American flag on their swim cap."

Originally from Broomall, a small town in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, Meehan is the youngest of five children. Neither of his parents were particularly interested in swimming, but after Meehan's oldest brother took to the sport following routine swim lessons, interest spread amongst all of his siblings.

He focused on swimming in high school and, the summer before college began, he received his first taste of coaching, with a club team. The experience gave him an idea for a professional path forward. Perhaps, he thought, he could become a high school teacher and also coach the school team. Today, the three-time NCAA Swimming Coach of the Year still believes that path would have been enough to make him happy.

Meehan enrolled at Rider in the '90s and chose a double major of mathematics and secondary education. Early on, Meehan realized he wanted to be a coach who helped athletes outside the pool as much as in it. Looking beyond training them to reach their peak physical selves, he also wanted to mentor young people and teach them life skills.

That philosophy was shaped through his experience with Rider's swimming and diving coaches, including Stephen Fletcher, Shannon Daly and Rich Coppola. Today, Fletcher and Daly remain at Rider, and the University's swimming and diving teams compete in a pool named after Coppola, who coached at Rider for 30 years and won

more than 250 meets. He revived the men's varsity swimming and diving program in 1968 and founded the women's program in 1984.

By the time Meehan was swimming at Rider, he says the lore about Coppola's legendary career was palpable. "He was an amazing human being. He cared deeply about us as people and was always motivating you to work and be better, but he also allowed you the space to figure things out. Whether I was struggling or succeeding, he treated me the same. He was fun and he was funny, but he kept us accountable."

As a young undergraduate, Meehan initially encountered obstacles. "I enjoyed my swimming experience at Rider so much, but my first two years I really struggled because of immaturity," he says. "I had a very high standard for myself and I didn't handle failure very well. But through it all I was learning about myself and learning about where I wanted to improve and how much I loved the sport."

He became a valued member of the swimming and diving team. At the time, he swam the second-fastest 200 backstroke and the third-fastest 100 backstroke in Rider history. For those accomplishments as well as his coaching career, he was elected to the University's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2017.

Reflecting his topsy turvy experience in Rider's pool, Meehan often talks about how athletes have to learn how to fail as well as succeed. Especially for the elite athletes he now works with daily, many of them have never tasted failure. "We create opportunities for them to fail, and to do so early," he says.

That approach is integral to his coaching philosophy, but at his core, Meehan is driven by an intensely competitive nature. "Coaching is a passion as much as a profession," he says. "I love winning. I don't get defined by that, but I love to be in the arena with the opportunity to win. I want our team to be great. That's what motivates me and gets me out of bed every day." ■

“
COACHING
IS A
PASSION
AS MUCH
AS A
PROFESSION.”

PHOTO BY NATHAN WEYLAND







Weddings, births, engagements and gatherings



- 1 **Kevin Bordner '13, '14 and Jennifer Bordner '13, '15** welcomed a baby girl, Savannah Mae Bordner, on April 7, 2021.
- 2 **Steven Wyrwas '16 and Alexa Wyrwas (née Caplinger) '16, '20** were married on Aug. 14, 2021. Several faculty and staff of the Norm Brodsky College of Business were in attendance. From left to right, Elizabeth Carrion, Jaime Hall, Lisa Rufer, Patricia Adams and Mariann Ubry.
- 3 **Brianna Celiano '13 and Michael Hutton '12** were married on Sept. 25, 2021, in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.
- 4 **Tyler Bakely '14 and Caitlin Bakely (née Cronin) '13** were married on May 22, 2021.
- 5 **David Eggert '18, '20 and Alexis Esposito '17** plan to marry in March 2023 following their engagement on Oct. 23, 2021, in Cape May, New Jersey. Both teachers, the couple met during their first year at Rider.
- 6 **Kel Werner-Vallery '14 and Adam Werner '12** welcomed Wesley Werner on June 2, 2021. Kel and Adam met on a business trip in Cincinnati and can't wait to bring their baby Bronc to their favorite city.
- 7 **Nichole Hitchner '14, '17 and Joseph Fessenden** were married on Oct. 2, 2021.
- 8 **Lauren Pileggi '12 and Daniel Friga '13** became engaged to be married on Nov. 11, 2021, on campus. The couple returned to watch a men's soccer game, with a nostalgic stop at Varsity Pizza for dinner first. Before the game, Friga proposed in front of the flags displayed on the Campus Mall for Veterans Day.
- 9 **Chris Caruso '12** proposed to **Allison Russo '12** on May 1, 2021. They met as freshmen in Conover Hall and began dating their senior year. The couple are celebrating nine years together and are set to marry on May 14.
- 10 **Nick Maglione '16 and Jessica Spinosa '17** were married on Oct. 16, 2021, after becoming engaged on campus in 2019.



Dear alumni and friends,

I have served as the Alumni Association president for the past two years and despite a pandemic, we have been able to engage alumni in person and virtually. My colleagues on the Alumni Board are committed to working closely with the University to address our priorities.

During my time as a student and throughout my time on the Alumni Board, one of the most impressive Rider attributes I have observed has been the consistent determination to improve and succeed. I'm amazed at how the opportunities at Rider have continued to evolve and strengthen under President Dell'Omo's leadership.

We look forward to welcoming the latest alumni to the association — the Class of 2022. Just as Rider prepared me to succeed when I graduated in 2001, I know this new generation will be ready to accomplish their dreams.

Stephen Brill '01

President, Alumni Board of Directors and Alumni Association



Athletics Hall of Fame

INDUCTION CEREMONY | SATURDAY, JUNE 11

Congratulations to this year's honorees:

Jim Bolger '85 | Men's Basketball

Virginia Egusquiza '12 | Field Hockey

Christian Gonzalez '11 | Men's Cross Country and Track & Field

Priscilla Modrov '09 | Women's Swimming

Sean Olson '09 | Baseball

SPONSORED BY McGriff

'70s

Glenn Albano '71 and **Jim Barrett '71**, who played on Rider's basketball team as undergraduates, were back on campus celebrating the 50th anniversary of their graduation on Nov. 6, 2021, during Homecoming.

'80s

Yin Chung Becker '85 was named to the list of Top 100 Women Leaders of New Jersey for 2021 by the website Women We Admire. Becker, the vice president and chief corporate affairs officer of Stryker, ranked No. 12 on the list. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Rider.

Eileen Wirth '88, '95 was named to *South Jersey Biz* magazine's list of top CEOs and CFOs. She appeared on the cover of the publication — the only woman among four men. Wirth is the president and CEO of Moorestown Ecumenical Neighborhood Development (MEND). Appointed in 2020, she is the first woman to hold that title in the organization's history. She received a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in finance from Rider. In addition to those degrees, she is a certified property manager, a designation earned from the Institute of Real Estate Management.

Alice Funk '86 joined the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce in Pennsylvania as programs and member engagement director on July 26. In the role, Funk is responsible for planning, managing and facilitating all events and programs that will help develop and maintain chamber membership, including awards dinners, training and leadership programs, networking

and business card exchange events, and ribbon cuttings. Funk received a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Public Relations from Rider and a Master of Arts in Corporate Communications from Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Gerald Eckert '89 was elected to the position of business administrator/board secretary of the Hillsborough Township Public Schools in New Jersey in January. He previously served as assistant business administrator from 2008 to 2014. Eckert received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Rider and a Master of Arts in Educational Administration from Kean University.

Carl Sutter '89 was named Zurich North America's head of distribution for U.S. middle market. He received a bachelor's in business administration from Rider.

'90s

Kimberly A. Hullfish '91, '93 won the 2021 Construction Financial Management Association's Mid-Atlantic David Casey Founder's Award. She was also a finalist for *Construction Business Owner's* Outstanding Women in Construction list. Last year, Hullfish was promoted to C. Abbonizio Contractors Inc.'s director of accounting and compliance.

Michael Golembiewski '93 was named the chief financial officer of Seelos Therapeutics. He received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Rider and is a certified public accountant.

Bradley Hill '93 retired from the Willingboro Township Police Department as a lieutenant. He served the New Jersey community for 25 years. Hill earned a



Leading advocate

Janet Simms '94 leads Prospanica at a pivotal time for Hispanic professionals

By Diane Cornell

A Prospanica scholarship changed the life of Janet Simms '94 — and she didn't even receive one.

The mission of Prospanica is to empower and enable Hispanic professionals to achieve their full educational, economic and social potential. But by the time Simms learned of the scholarships funded by the advocacy organization, she had already received her MBA. The missed opportunity, while initially distressing, motivated her advocacy for Hispanic professionals.

"I was almost upset with myself," Simms says, recalling her reaction to being unaware of the scholarship opportunity. "The fact that I didn't know about it, as a Latina, I thought that should not have been the case. So, I joined the organization."

That was more than 20 years ago. Last October Simms was named to a two-year term as chair of Prospanica's national board of directors. The organization has a reach of more than 30,000 members in 50 chapters nationwide and Puerto Rico and has advocated for Hispanic business professionals for 30 years.

Simms had worked her way up through the organization's ranks, first as a member in New York and then as a founder and officer of the New Jersey chapter. Then in 2020, she made the leap to become part of Prospanica's national board of directors, assuming a seat on its board as vice chair and as chair of the Prospanica Foundation before taking the helm of the organization last fall.

Her appointment coincided with an announcement that Rider and Prospanica had partnered to provide a 20% tuition reduction for participating members for undergraduate, graduate and continuing education programs, as well as eligible immediate family members who are under 24.

Simms is leading Prospanica at a pivotal time for Hispanic professionals. The organization's 2021 report on workplace inclusion and equity found obstacles for them at work particularly difficult. Among the findings is that 50% of Hispanic professionals have personally witnessed or experienced discrimination or bias on the job.

"One of the obstacles for Hispanic professionals today is access," says Simms, who earned a bachelor's in accounting from Rider and a master's in business administration from Rutgers. "I have seen this a number of times in my own career. Oftentimes I will be one of the few, if not only, Latinos in the room."

A resident of Union, N.J., Simms has more than 25 years of experience in the financial services and insurance industries. Last fall she became the senior director of Internal Audit at Green Dot Corporation, a provider of prepaid debit cards and banking services to low- and moderate-income families.

"When I speak about diversity, it is a myriad of things," she says. "In addition to people of color, it is a diversity of thought, getting more women into leadership roles and onto corporation boards. It is one of the things that drives me to bring attention to the challenges we have."



The late Journalism Professor Willard E. Lally gave much to the Rider community. He was a teacher, a mentor, a counselor and a friend to his students. His giving continued after he passed thanks to a planned gift he made through his estate in support of the Willard Lally Endowed Scholarship. His generosity will support future generations of students in the years ahead.

Planned giving is a powerful way to transform the lives of Rider students.

rider.myplannedgift.org



bachelor's degree in business administration from Rider.

Craig Venokur '93 joined Mazars as its newest partner on the Accounting & Advisory (A&A) team, the accounting audit, tax and advisory firm announced in January. Venokur has nearly 30 years of experience focusing on services for privately owned businesses and business owners. He received a bachelor's degree in accounting from Rider and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, New Jersey Society of Public Accountants and New York Society of Public Accountants.

Timothy J. Cunningham '94, '96 was named the new business administrator of Camden, New Jersey, in January. Cunningham earned a law degree from Rutgers-Camden School of Law after he received a master's in business administration and a bachelor's in accounting from Rider. He has previously served as director of the New Jersey Division of Local Government Services and assistant commissioner for the state Department of Community Affairs during the administration of New Jersey's former governor Chris Christie.

Kelly Neiman '98 is currently working toward completion of a Doctorate in Education from Holy Family University. The research she is conducting for her dissertation involves collecting original lessons from K-12 teachers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania to examine the use and alignment of English language arts standards in lesson plans. Neiman received a master's in educational administration from Rider, as well as a bachelor's from La Salle University.

Laura Boss '99 was selected as the principal of Kirkwood Middle School in Tennessee beginning

January 2022. She has been the principal of Northeast Middle School since 2016 and, prior to that, was the assistant principal of Richview Middle School. Boss earned a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies and Elementary Education from Rider and a Master of Arts in Education from the University of Phoenix.

Laquita Mitchell '99 was named Artist of the Week by OperaWire in January. She performed the title role in New Orleans Opera's performance of *An Homage to Josephine Baker*. Mitchell received a bachelor's in music education from Westminster Choir College.

'00s

Larry Steenvoorden '00 was named chief financial officer of Chembio Diagnostics, Inc., a point-of-care diagnostics company focused on infectious diseases. A certified public accountant, he received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from the University of Delaware and a Master of Business Administration from Rider. In previous roles, he served as senior director at Accordion Partners, chief accounting and financial officer at Onyx Renewable Partners and global controller and vice president, business planning and controlling at Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics.

Kathie Foster '01 was named interim assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction of Princeton Public Schools in New Jersey last winter. A former superintendent of schools, assistant superintendent of schools and principal in the Robbinsville Public School District, she earned a bachelor's degree from Hope College in Holland, Michigan, a master's degree in

Patricia A. Kendall '44
 Marilyn Capes Nagle '44
 Helen Beaver Dzurinko '45
 Carolyn L. Wells '45
 Patricia Witherell Matchette '47
 Rita Swope '47
 Renee Dolinsky Lashman '48
 Angela Scarano Valentino '48
 Joseph G. Devaney '49
 Paul W. Gilmore '49
 Kelsey J. Stone Jr. '49
 John E. Florick '50
 John B. Hillman '50
 Catherine Moriarity Douress '51
 Sanford H. Hersh '51
 Marilyn Mooney Cook '52
 Parke W. Cooley '52
 Lennia Kunkel Kutz '52
 Thomas W. Vogel '52
 John M. Deleo '53
 E. Louise Dilliplane Dougherty '53
 John Franssen '53
 Joan Nevin Lambert '53
 Froso Collins Papadopoulos '54
 Herbert M. Ross '54
 George E. Roth Jr. '54
 John B. Spinelli '54
 Richard I. Wilson Jr. '54
 Joseph R. LaRocca '55
 Richard Lenzsch '55
 Frank D. Lorimer Jr. '55
 Alanson W. Short Jr. '55
 John R. Cipriano '56
 Ralph DeMarco '56

James S. Puliti Jr. '56
 Florence Hertz Kissel '57
 Richard A. Krol '57
 Donald N. Munson '57
 Barbara Whiteman Steinfeld '57
 Richard J. Strebel '59
 Rosemarie Torto '59
 Ernest L. Stoetznier III '60
 Nancy Oyler Barnes '61
 Judith Rhoades LaGrange '61
 Richard A. Nice '61
 Jane Diefenderfer Smith '61
 Sandra Posnock Stern '61
 William T. Bozarth '62
 Joseph D. Gray '62
 Thomas P. Hoey '62
 Sam H. Yespy '62
 Benedict Battagliano '63
 William J. Keaton '63
 Dale A. Ledden '63
 Carol Lippincott '63
 Lynn Donnelly Thomas '63
 James R. Bailie '65
 Ronald L. Blackburn Sr. '65
 Andris Mergins '65
 Alfred T. Stokley '65
 Alexander Bober Jr. '66
 Barbara Horner Harris '66
 Charles O. Marte Jr. '67
 Jay P. Vasell '67
 Thomas W. Vincenz '67
 Richard E. Williams '67
 William J. Heard II '68
 James W. Loney '69

Corrado M. Caterina Sr. '70
 Warren Goode '70
 John K. Gottschall '70
 Marie A. Jantos '70
 Martin Olszak '70
 Angelo J. Romanello '70
 William C. Wingardner Sr. '70
 Dale Y. Corl '71
 Ronald W. Exner '71
 Wayne W. Novitch '71
 David V. Wechtaluk '71
 Dennis M. Moore '72, '80
 Tristan Rhodes '72
 Alan M. Feinsilber '75
 Susan H. Hall '76
 Gerald P. Sellner '76
 Joseph A. Skiba '76
 David L. Miller '77
 Melissa McClintick Ramsdell '77
 Katharine B. Aldridge '79
 Walter T. Dowling '79
 Dawn N. Miller '79
 Jodi Wexler Marcou '80
 Marilyn J. Roessler '80
 Nicholas Coratti '81
 Michael J. Hennessy '82
 William T. Hicks II '83
 Brian-Paul Thomas '83
 Virginia Riegel Trotman '83
 Milton R. Warner '83
 Duane D. Young '84
 Nancy A. Stoudt '89
 Melanie Knepper Liller '91
 Abigail C. Ford '93

Ruth Devlin Kasprzak '93, '96
 Lisa Teyssier Kulan '93
 Patricia Rosta Riggi '93
 Gertrude Shaw Wright '93
 Martin J. Donahue '94
 Judith Asnin Glazer '94
 Xinmin Ma '96
 Heliana Pelaez Liscandra '99
 Keith J. Springer '00
 Robert W. Allen '03
 Siobhan C. Harloff '08
 Gary Morris Jr. '08
 Lauren H. Cho '13
 Maeve L. Lynskey '16

Faculty / Staff

Kathleen A. Capuano
 Domenick Civale
 Richard L. Fennimore
 Bernice H. Liput
 Karl O. Mann
 Alan L. McLeod
 Ruth E. Simpkins
 Patricia Ann Venable

Friends

Carolyn S. Duckett
 Saverio G. Greco
 Jacqueline E. Spink
 Charles A. Sullivan

Honorary Degree Recipients

Frank J. Hoenemeyer
 Colin L. Powell

This list represents individuals who passed away from September 2021-January 2022.



SUPPORT THE Rider Arena Project

IGNITE THEIR SPIRIT

and help bring a modern
NCAA Division I arena home
to Lawrenceville and a new
generation of Broncos.

**NAMING OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE STARTING AT \$500:**

INDIVIDUAL LOCKERS | ARENA SEATS | DONOR WALL



RIDER.EDU/SUPPORTARENAPROJECT

Your future is calling

Learn on your terms with 100% online graduate programs including:

- » Arts Management and Executive Leadership, M.A.
- » Athletic Leadership, M.A.
- » Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- » Business Communication, M.A.
- » Cybersecurity, M.S.
- » Master of Accountancy (MAcc)
- » Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- » Organizational Leadership, M.A.

Use the alumni fee
waiver code:

RiderPride

RIDER.EDU/YOUR-FUTURE

KNOW A HIGH SCHOOLER WHO'S APPLYING FOR COLLEGE?

HELP THEM GET STARTED AT RIDER BY SHARING AN

Application Fee Waiver (\$50 value).

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT **RIDER.EDU/REFER**

educational administration from Rider, and an Ed.D. from the University of Pennsylvania.

Leonard Harris '03 was named executive vice president of the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce, one of the largest business associations in the New York/Northern New Jersey region. Harris earned a Bachelor of Science in Management from Rider.

Harold Laudien '03 recently completed two long-distance running challenges. One was an 81-mile desert run in an area of California called Salton Sea, where two runners partner and cannot be separated as they climb 9,000 feet. The second was a 135-mile continuous ultra marathon called the Brazil 135, which features an ascent of 30,000 feet. Laudien finished in 57 hours. At Rider, Laudien earned a bachelor's in organizational behavior and management, with a second major in business administration and a minor in entrepreneurial studies. In 2010, he founded Mercer Wealth Management, a firm dedicated to serving those who have traditionally been undervalued or underserved in personal finance.

Jerry Johnson '05 was elected to the Lancaster County Sports Hall of Fame. On the men's basketball team at Rider, he was a three-time team MVP and a three-time All-MAAC First-Team selection. He was inducted into the Rider University Athletics Hall of Fame in 2013.

James Hooven '08 was named president of the engraving segment of Standex International Corporation, the company announced in August 2021. He received a Bachelor of Science in International Business from Johnson & Wales University and a Master of Business Administration from Rider.

'10s

Rhodalynn Jones '10 was selected as the new human services director for Princeton Township. She received a bachelor's degree from Rider and a master's from Liberty University.

Petra Gaskins '15 was named the next director of the New Leaders Council – New Jersey (NLC-NJ), the local chapter of the nation's largest organization that recruits, trains and promotes a rising generation of progressive leaders. Chief of staff to Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker, she was a New Leaders Council Fellow in 2016.

'20s

Elieza Bague '20, '21 is a social media producer for Advertising Specialty Institute. She earned her bachelor's in marketing and her master's in business administration from Rider.

Rhea Fryer '21 is a staff assistant for Sen. Cory Booker. At Rider, she was a political science major.

Trinity Holland '21 is an associate marketing manager at MJH Life Sciences. She previously worked as a marketing coordinator at the organization. She also interned at MJH Life Sciences while earning her bachelor's in marketing from Rider.

Kate Nash '22 has accepted a full-time position with Johnson & Johnson as a Global Operations Leadership Development (GOLD) Program Associate. For the next 2 1/2 years, she will rotate through three different operational roles within the company, starting in the medical devices sector in Irvine, California. Nash was a double major in business analytics and global supply chain management at Rider.



Quite a trip

Kanisha Feliciano '17 makes her Broadway debut with *'Flying Over Sunset'*

By Adam Grybowski

When Kanisha Feliciano '17, who is beginning a career as an opera singer, was auditioning for a part in the new musical *Flying Over Sunset*, she had much to fret over. The role represented a transition into musical theatre. It would mark her joint Broadway and Lincoln Center debut. The production was to be directed by a Pulitzer Prize winner.

But one anxiety-producing fact loomed larger than all of that: The audition would take place over Zoom. "My skill set is not technology," Feliciano says. "I can mess up an email."

In the end, technology did not harm her chances. She landed the role of Clare Boothe Luce's daughter, Ann, in the production, which is set in 1950s Hollywood and brings together Cary Grant, Aldous Huxley and Luce — each of them high on LSD. *Flying Over Sunset*, with book and direction by James Lapine, had been set to debut on March 12, 2020, but the pandemic forced the production to pause for 19 months.

Although she was not part of the original cast, Feliciano was coming out of her own hiatus when she flew to New York to begin rehearsals. For most of her life, singing with other people had been as routine as eating breakfast, but the pandemic forced her into isolation.

"It was devastating and terrifying," says Feliciano, who first realized she was capable of singing classically through the help of her high school choir director, Westminster Choir College alumnus Jonathan Lechner '88. But when it came time to pick a major at Westminster, where she had enrolled as an undergraduate, she chose music education. That changed when she began to study with Nova Thomas, who at the time was a member of Westminster's voice faculty.

"She gave me the tools that I needed in order to shape my love of music into a career," Feliciano says. "I had the enthusiasm for it and raw energy, but she was showing me I could be more than I even knew and that I could sound better and better."

Immersed in a new world of discovery and possibility, she switched majors to voice performance. After graduating from Westminster, Feliciano went on to earn a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston. She is currently pursuing an artist diploma in opera performance from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music.

On any stage, Feliciano loves working with other people, everyone channeling their energy into a larger goal. While at Lincoln Center, that scenario played out in ways she had never experienced before. The cast and crew were masked backstage. They didn't share dressing rooms and were tested regularly. The Omicron variant eventually spoiled all of the precautions, ending *Flying Over Sunset's* limited run a few weeks ahead of schedule, but even so, the experience was so invigorating, Feliciano says, "I didn't have one day where I was in a bad mood."

Lifting Barriers Scholarship Fund

BECAUSE NOTHING SHOULD STAND IN
THE WAY OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.

Job losses, health concerns, family needs, academic challenges. Rider is committed to eliminating the hurdles to student success.

RIDER.EDU/LIFTINGBARRIERSSCHOLARSHIP



Unforgettable

There are certain events that students just can't forget. Some traditions have become essential to the Rider experience, such as welcoming the fall semester with Cranberry Fest. Others were special because of the fellow Broncs in attendance. And some, well, if there was a free T-shirt and free food, our Broncs were there.

We asked alumni to tell us about their favorite Rider event or tradition. Here's what they said.

Want your answer to appear in the next issue of *Rider* magazine? We want to know who was the most influential professor you had at Rider — and why? Send your response to magazine@rider.edu for consideration.



Illustration by Megan Rosanova

"Favorite events were Spring Fling, Bid Days, Sweetheart Nights and Greek Week! The year Delta Phi Epsilon and Zeta Beta Tau Greek Week after an epic lip sync to Bohemian Rhapsody was the best!"

Tricia Reed Carlin '93, management and organizational behavior major

"MAACness!!! Hands down! There was food, the dance team always had a slamming routine and the Broncs Zoo energy was through the roof!"

Tyneisha Gibbs '97 (née Jones), psychology major

"For several years, Professor Fred Yeager conducted a 'Hands Across the Campus' song fest among his political science classes that filled the Pub. Classes learned folk songs in different languages from various nations. All drinking-type songs, but conducted in good taste. Foreign language faculty were the judges. Fun times!"

Peter Manetas '77, '84, journalism major, master's graduate in counseling services

"Prime rib night in Daly Dining Hall. They would give you special tickets ahead of time. It was always the single best meal of the whole year."

Ron Panarotti '93, '18, journalism major, master's graduate in business communication





Looking back

Dennis DiSanti '72 deejays on the student-run radio station, WWRC 640 AM, in its relatively new location in the photo above from 1972. The year prior, the station moved from the basement of Hill dormitory to the Student Center, now the Bart Luedeke Center. Half a century later, the station — now WWRC 107.7 The Bronc FM — is outfitted in brand-new, state-of-the-art, digital equipment in its latest home, the Fine Arts Center.

The Class of 1972 is celebrating its 50th reunion at Homecoming this fall. Mark your calendars for November 4-6.
Visit rider.edu/homecoming for more information.