



# UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

MAGAZINE

Volume 32 · Number 1

## THE BEAT GOES ON

Celebrating the proud tradition  
of the UD Marching Band and the  
legacy of its leader, Heidi Sarver

# IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME.

But can you guess  
what “it” is?

Hint:

It happens every  
spring at UD  
and attracts  
Blue Hens from all  
over the world.

Turn the page to  
check your guess.

Drone photo by  
Evan Krape



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UDMB - Cover photo by Kevin Tucker - taken in 2007.

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**Hats off if you guessed Commencement.** Of UD's many exciting events, graduation remains a perennial favorite, a celebration of Blue Hen perseverance, dedication and boundless potential. The University-wide ceremony for the Class of 2024 will take place at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, May 25, in Delaware Stadium. Additional college and club festivities will run from Tuesday, May 21, through Saturday, May 25. More information can be found at [udel.edu/students/commencement](https://udel.edu/students/commencement).

*Photo by Evan Krape*

## UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE MAGAZINE

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# PRESIDENT

## POWERED BY CURIOSITY, FOCUSED ON PURPOSE

Why? How? What if ...?

These are the questions that drive us at the University of Delaware. An insatiable curiosity and a bold spirit of exploration are at the heart of our long legacy of creativity, research and innovation. Indeed, some of our earliest pioneers helped invent a new form of government nearly 250 years ago, while today our researchers are discovering microbes that break down non-recyclable plastics, designing state-of-the-art medical robotics, harnessing technology to make our world safer, cleaner and more equitable, and so much more. We are tackling the most compelling and important challenges of our time – climate change, social justice, water quality, energy resources, sustainable agriculture, among others – and our work will affect life as we know it for decades to come.

UD now ranks among the top 8% of research universities nationwide, according to the National Science Foundation. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our faculty, staff and students, who spend countless hours in the lab or in the field in search of knowledge and truth. Often, there are breakthroughs, other times simply dead ends, yet every answer prompts a dozen more questions.

This is why a robust research enterprise is such an essential component of the University of Delaware. Through exploration, discovery and innovation, we not only advance human understanding of the world, but we develop the skills of creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration that our students need throughout their lives. Working alongside researchers and faculty who are top experts in their fields inspires students to ask their own bold questions and equips them with the tools to find the answers.

And there are countless avenues for our exploration. UD is one of only 24 institutions in the United States with land-, sea- and space-grant missions, which compels us to pursue research in virtually every area that touches our lives. This is such an exciting time: Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing all industries, new frontiers in science are emerging every day, a revived sense of wonder surrounds space exploration, and artistic and humanistic endeavors are reaching more people in more ways than ever before.

As always, Blue Hens are at the forefront of this work. Here at the University of Delaware, we are all explorers.

  
Dennis Assanis, President

# ON THE GREEN

News  
from campus  
and beyond

## A (FUL)BRIGHT FUTURE

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs recognized the University of Delaware as one of the colleges and universities with the highest number of students selected for the renowned Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Fulbright Top Producing Institutions like the University of Delaware value global connections and support members of their campus communities in pursuing international opportunities.

Eleven students from UD were selected for Fulbright awards for academic year 2023–24. This marks the first time UD has been designated as a Fulbright Top Producer, though UD has had 100 Fulbright U.S. Student Program recipients to date.

The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government's flagship international academic exchange program. Since 1946, it has provided over 400,000 accomplished students, scholars, teachers, artists and professionals of all backgrounds with the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research abroad. Fulbrighters exchange ideas, build people-to-people connections and work to address complex global challenges.

UD provides Fulbright advisement to graduating seniors, graduate students and alumni. Faculty and staff, many of

whom received Fulbrights, are paired with applicants to offer mentorship.

U.S. Army Capt. Sara Sajer, AS17, received the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Kosovo for 2017–2018. There, she taught English to more than 200 students at the University of Mitrovica and led activities for nongovernmental organizations that focused on inter-ethnic dialogue between Albanians and Serbs.

Sajer says her Fulbright opportunity was a “golden ticket” for her future. Now, she helps others achieve that same opportunity. After returning to the U.S., Sajer became a Fulbright Alumni Ambassador charged with mentoring the next generation of global leaders and, ultimately, making the world a better place.

“Not only does a Fulbright experience prepare recipients for global careers, but it also provides cultural understanding that can be used in internationally connected U.S.-based jobs,” says Kristin Bennighoff, UD Fulbright Program adviser.

The application process, she adds, is a UD community effort: “The Honors College, Center for Global Programs and Services, faculty and staff have worked together for years leading up to this year's success.” 🐦

—Katy O'Connell, ANROO



## RISE UP

The results are in: UD continues its rise to the top of national rankings.

In *The Princeton Review's* Top 50 Undergraduate Entrepreneurship Programs list for 2024, UD rose two spots—to a ranking of 31—placing the University higher than some competitor institutions. The list considers a wide range of factors, including courses offered, enrollment, faculty resources, mentoring and the success of alumni ventures.

Horn Entrepreneurship, housed in the Lerner College, serves as the University's creative engine for entrepreneurship and includes an undergraduate major, several minors and cross-disciplinary certificates. Last year, more than 1,700 students from 100 different majors participated in Horn's programs.

UD has also received accolades for its sustainability efforts. The internationally recognized higher-education analysis company, QS Quacquarelli Symonds, released the 2024 edition of the *QS World University Rankings: Sustainability*, with UD placing 33rd in the U.S. and 240th globally out of nearly 1,400 institutions. This represents a jump of nearly 200 places.

The University's reputation as a research powerhouse received a big boost in 2024. In the latest National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics *Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey*, released by the National Science Foundation, UD ranks 47th out of 626 academic institutions across the U.S. when comparing nonmedical school R&D expenditures. This represents a jump of 27 spots, and for good reason. At press time, not even halfway through the fiscal year, 520 research proposals had been awarded to UD by various agencies. Every college at the University is part of the action, with topics ranging from high-interval training to recovery after a stroke, to recycled textile and apparel manufacturing.

Additionally, six UD online graduate programs are counted among the best in the nation, according to *U.S. News and World Report*. These include master's in education programs (19 out of 303); online MBA programs (29 out of 345); master's in business programs, excluding MBA (85 out of 213); master's in information technology programs (50 out of 92); master's in engineering programs (65 out of 109); and master's in nursing programs (133 out of 186). 🐦

# #31

*THE PRINCETON REVIEW'S*  
TOP 50 ENTREPRENEUR LIST

# +200

*QS WORLD UNIVERSITY*  
RANKINGS: SUSTAINABILITY

**#33 IN U.S.**  
**#240 GLOBALLY**

# +27

*NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION*  
HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH  
AND DEVELOPMENT SURVEY  
**#47 OUT OF 626**

# 6

*ONLINE GRADUATE PROGRAMS*  
AMONG THE BEST IN THE NATION:  
*U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT*

## ALUMNUS NAMED NEW DEAN



Brian E. Farkas, ANR85, an industry leader, researcher and professor in food science, has been appointed dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, effective April 1.

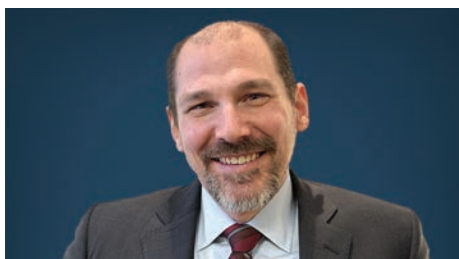
He will lead the college's development, operation and sustained excellence across four academic departments: animal and food sciences; applied economics and statistics; entomology and wildlife ecology; and plant and soil sciences.

"I'm thrilled and honored to be

returning to my alma mater," Farkas says. "I know firsthand about the possibilities that a UD education can unlock, and I'm excited to lead and collaborate with stakeholders across the campus community and beyond to support the academic and professional goals of our students... [and] elevate UD's reputation as a land-grant institution."

A renowned food scientist, process engineer, teacher and researcher, Farkas brings to UD nearly three decades of professional experience across academic and corporate sectors. He most recently served as chief science officer for McCormick and Company. His areas of expertise include food process engineering and the thermodynamics of phase-change heat transfer associated with moving boundary problems. 🐦

## NEW VICE PRESIDENT NAMED



Miguel Garcia-Diaz, an accomplished administrator, researcher and educator, has been named vice president for research, scholarship and innovation at UD, effective May 1.

A member of Stony Brook University's faculty in pharmacological sciences since 2007, Garcia-Diaz has served as interim vice president for research, operations manager for the SUNY Research Foundation, associate dean of the Graduate School, and director of the doctoral program in molecular and cellular pharmacology.

In his new role, Garcia-Diaz will be responsible for supporting and advancing UD's research enterprise, which currently exceeds \$237 million annually in externally funded projects. The position oversees several multidisciplinary initiatives, University-wide research institutes and centers and core facilities; enhances the reputation and value of UD's innovation portfolio, including patent licensing, technology transfer and entrepreneurship; sustains growth of the Science, Technology and Advanced Research (STAR) Campus; and promotes academic and research excellence.

"This role presents an extraordinary opportunity to create meaningful impact while supporting the UD community's culture of entrepreneurship and excellence in research and scholarship," says Garcia-Diaz. 🐦



## A NEW HOME FOR NCBS

For nearly 50 years, the National Council for Black Studies, or NCBS, has worked to strengthen the Africana studies discipline. Now, the renowned organization is taking a major step in its promotion of academic excellence and programming—NCBS has moved its headquarters to UD.

Assistant Professor Alicia Fontnette is the organization's new executive director, and one of her first initiatives is to expand the NCBS Honor Society to organize chapters. Recognized this year as qualifying charter members are 10 UD students.

"Having NCBS here further elevates UD and puts us at the center of Africana scholarship," says Fontnette, a scholar-activist dedicated to the freedom and liberation of Black and Brown people throughout the diaspora. "And it benefits NCBS to be in partnership with an R1 research university."

According to Valerie Grim, NCBS president, the organization's move presents an "opportunity to continue its important disciplinary and pedagogical commitments, while working with a first-rate department whose commitment to the study of African descended peoples is invigorating and engaging. We are fortunate to be relocated to a space where tremendous support exists for the next phases of NCBS's work in the academy and the community." 🐦



# ICEBREAKER

Sports just got a little cooler. UD will add women's ice hockey as a varsity sport and join College Hockey America (CHA), effective July 1, 2025.

A national search for a varsity women's ice hockey head coach has begun, and prominent collaborations are already underway, including one with the Philadelphia Flyers that will provide new activations on the UD campus, such as a Rink Takeover with a Flyers gameday experience, co-hosted clinics, internship opportunities, coaching mentorship and a community event with music, games and more. The Flyers launched a girls-only Learn to Play program, hosted the Professional Women's Hockey Player Association



MIKEY REEVES/UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE ATHLETICS

(PWHPA) Dream Gap Tour, and created a female-focused front office mentorship program, Next Shift.

UD has offered women's ice hockey as a club sport since 2003, with the club earning a top-10 national ranking in each of the last 10 seasons. The University will continue offering women's ice hockey as a club sport in 2024–25 and beyond. 🐓

*Michelle Morgan (left), commissioner of College Hockey America, joins YoUDee, President and First Lady Assanis, and Athletic Director Chrissi Rawak in celebrating women's ice hockey as a varsity sport at UD. With the new addition, UD Athletics will now sponsor 22 varsity intercollegiate programs.*

# WE GOT THE SPIRIT—AGAIN!

The University of Delaware spirit program captured a pair of national titles at the 2024 Universal Cheerleaders Association and Universal Dance Association National Championships. Cheer won its sixth-straight small coed gameday national title, and dance claimed its third

consecutive division I hip hop national championship.

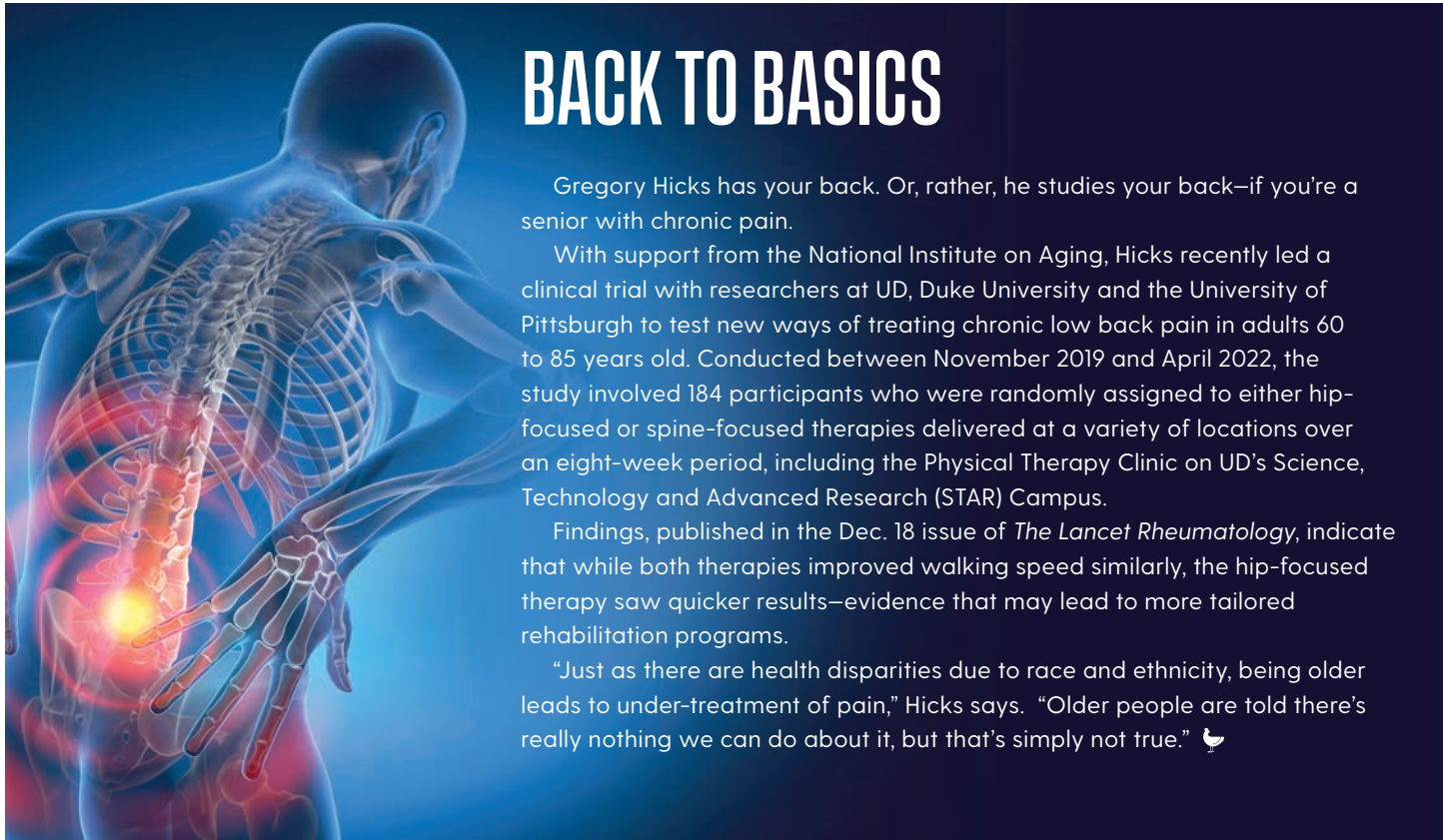
The championships mark the 28th and 29th in program history and mark the 18th year in a row that Delaware has won at least one national title.

“Every year we talk about building upon the foundation that has been laid

by our alumni,” says Ryan Blanford, spirit program coordinator and head coed cheer coach. “This year our spirit program student-athletes continued to do just that. Winning two more national titles brings a feeling of Blue Hen pride that is hard to describe.” 🐓



KIA ANDERSON/UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE ATHLETICS



## BACK TO BASICS

Gregory Hicks has your back. Or, rather, he studies your back—if you’re a senior with chronic pain.

With support from the National Institute on Aging, Hicks recently led a clinical trial with researchers at UD, Duke University and the University of Pittsburgh to test new ways of treating chronic low back pain in adults 60 to 85 years old. Conducted between November 2019 and April 2022, the study involved 184 participants who were randomly assigned to either hip-focused or spine-focused therapies delivered at a variety of locations over an eight-week period, including the Physical Therapy Clinic on UD’s Science, Technology and Advanced Research (STAR) Campus.

Findings, published in the Dec. 18 issue of *The Lancet Rheumatology*, indicate that while both therapies improved walking speed similarly, the hip-focused therapy saw quicker results—evidence that may lead to more tailored rehabilitation programs.

“Just as there are health disparities due to race and ethnicity, being older leads to under-treatment of pain,” Hicks says. “Older people are told there’s really nothing we can do about it, but that’s simply not true.” 🐦

## LIFE-SAVING TECH

Emergency healthcare requires quick access to medicine and supplies, access that is difficult in hard-to-reach or remote areas. Zipline International addresses this problem by using autonomous drones to deliver needed materials to rural hospitals in Rwanda, Ghana and other countries. Instead of requiring several hours of ground transit over rough terrain, drones can deliver blood supplies in under an hour.

During a recent internship, doctoral student Olga Lebed, AS25PhD, assessed the impact of Zipline’s work and co-authored a paper in *Science Robotics* on the health impact of drone delivery systems. Among her findings: In Rwanda, this technology has reduced in-hospital maternal deaths from postpartum hemorrhage by more than half, and its reduced blood product waste—because of expiration—by 67%.

“The pursuit of these solutions is not merely a technical endeavor, but also an ethical imperative,” wrote Lebed and her co-authors, employees of Zipline, in their report.

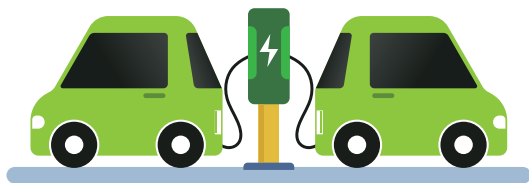
During her internship, Lebed helped design research to assess the impact of multiple projects. Many of her team



members had backgrounds in epidemiology and public health, while she contributed social science expertise, particularly in the areas of surveys and qualitative data analysis.

Her focus on health assessment continues with the Elton John AIDS Foundation, where Lebed is participating in data collection for a project on HIV/AIDS medication delivery in Kenya.

“Access to health care is something I personally care about,” she says, “and I am really grateful that I got the opportunity to use my research skills to help the cause.” 🐦



## IT'S ELECTRIC!

America's roadways would be a wild west if we didn't have automotive standards—massive documents that determine how your car operates, its safety features, how it fuels or recharges, and more.

The enactment of a new standard can usher in major improvements for drivers. This is the case for two new standards for electric vehicles (EVs), which UD experts had a major hand in developing. Rodney McGee, director of UD's Center for Transportation Electrification, was chairman of the two SAE International (formerly the Society of Automotive Engineers) committees that approved the standards, while postdoctoral researcher Garrett Ejzak, Prof. Willett Kempton and administrative assistant Becky Cox played key roles in the engineering, research and policy work undergirding them.

The first is the "V2G standard," which provides the missing link for widespread use of vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology, invented at UD more than two decades ago. V2G allows a driver to plug an EV into an electrical outlet and send power from the car battery back to the local energy utility, making some income while helping the nation's power grid. Additionally, with SAE J3400 now approved, the connector system Tesla developed for EV charging will now be standardized. This means Tesla charging stations—which constitute more than half of on-road charging stations—will now be available for use by anyone.

Says Kempton: "These developments are likely to spur even greater adoption of EVs for clean, affordable transportation." 🐦

## MOLECULE MECHANICS

Medications such as Ozempic and Mounjaro are key in the treatment of diabetes and—with slight modification—obesity. But making these drugs isn't easy. The molecules don't always behave the way scientists would like and, until recently, these scientists have been stumped as to why. Now, a team of Blue Hen researchers is shedding light.




The molecules in question are acylated peptides, responsible for regulating a patient's insulin. Typically, when the molecules contact surfaces designed to repel water—surfaces common in the drug-manufacturing industry—they become unstable. In other words, the solution becomes cloudy, and a medication is rendered unusable. It's a phenomenon called ouzo formation, named after a Greek liquor that becomes cloudy when mixed with water.

Together with partners at the global pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly, UD Prof. Norman Wagner and his team of researchers studied ouzo formation. Using light, X-ray scattering and other techniques, they investigated how the molecules interact with each other as well as different surface types. Next, they'll use neutron scattering to take a deeper look inside the molecules themselves.

The group's findings have been published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* journal, and they offer valuable insights for guiding the formulation, manufacture and storage of these molecules. 🐦

## TRANSLATING RESEARCH



From the touchscreen technology on our smartphones to carbon nanotube-based sensors that can track changes in our movement, UD produces world-class ideas.

But to bring great ideas to life, researchers also need institutional infrastructure, support staff and entrepreneurial skills—all of which will grow as UD joins an inaugural cohort of 18 institutions in the U.S. National Science Foundation's (NSF) Accelerating Research Translation (ART) program.

The ART program identifies and champions institutions "positioned to expand their research translation capacity by investing in activities essential to move results to practice,"

according to NSF Director Sethuraman Panchanathan.

UD's efforts will be led by Mechanical Engineering Prof. Jill Higginson, along with Julius Korley, associate vice president of UD's Office of Economic Innovation and Partnerships; Tracy Shickel, associate vice president of corporate engagement; and Dan Freeman, associate marketing professor and director of Horn Entrepreneurship.

Through this ART cooperative agreement, UD will receive \$6 million over four years to further develop its academic offerings and administrative infrastructure while continuing to foster innovation and entrepreneurship." 🐦



# ON THE MOVE

PHOTO BY MARK CAMPBELL

**B**y now, you've probably already cheered the news: Delaware Athletics has accepted an invitation to join Conference USA beginning July 1, 2025. As a result, UD will transition from the Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) to the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), the sport's highest level of competition in the NCAA.

In other words, this move, funded by the generosity of Blue Hen donors, takes Delaware out of the Northeast and across the country in unprecedented ways. For more on what this means for the future of the University, the athletics program and the broader Blue Hen community, read on.

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT UD'S TRANSITION TO CONFERENCE USA

## **A bigger stage, on the scale of 3,000%.**

With this move, Delaware Football will appear on national outlets, including ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU, ESPN+ and CBS Sports Network, multiple times per year, growing current streaming from between 5,000 to 10,000 viewers to more than 300,000...per game. This means more opportunities to share—with literal and figurative fanfare—the non-athletic aspects of UD strength: academic programs ranked among the nation's best, a research classification in the top 3% of all national universities and colleges, one of the most beautiful college campuses in the world, a proud tradition of excellence both on and off the field—and the Blue Hens that make it happen.

## **A chance to recruit and reconnect.**

As a crown jewel in the mid-Atlantic, UD remains a popular destination for students in the Northeast. Competing in states like Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Tennessee and Kentucky exposes students and families in those regions to the Blue Hen spirit and story. And it helps UD reconnect with alumni and friends in those regions, too.

**A bigger crowd in our stands.** Not only will Delaware be on the road, but those roads will lead back to Newark. Expect home games to bring passionate fan bases to campus, spurring the local economy and increasing exposure to visitors far and wide.

**A bet on ourselves.** Athletic Director Chrissi Rawak minces no words.

"We believe in our coaching staff, our University, our infrastructure and resources," she says, adding, "There's risk in staying where we are. Moving up a level provides us with more challenging competition, but it allows us to recruit stronger athletes and keep fans engaged, both of which will help us win at a higher level. We see the move as a self-fulfilling destiny."

**A chance to play new opponents—and renew old rivalries.** In 2025, Delaware Football will play four non-conference games: two home games against Delaware State and UConn, and two away games at Colorado and Wake Forest. Future non-conference matchups have begun to take shape as well. Delaware will welcome JMU back to Newark in 2027 and 2031, while heading to Harrisonburg in 2028 and 2032. University at Buffalo will come to Newark in 2029, with a return trip to Buffalo set for 2030. In 2026, the Blue Hens will head to the University of Virginia.

**A higher level of competition for all.** Conference USA has had significant national success for all 14 teams competing at this new level: baseball, men's and women's basketball, cross country, football, men's and women's golf, women's soccer, softball, men's and women's tennis, track and field (indoor and outdoor), and volleyball.

## **A continued level of excellence.**

The seven sports not sponsored by Conference USA (field hockey, men's and women's lacrosse, men's soccer, men's and women's swimming and diving, and rowing) will become affiliates in new conferences, where they will continue to compete against top national teams.

**A chance to play Bowl games.** UD's Conference USA affiliation opens the door to events like the Bahamas Bowl, New Orleans Bowl and other such places and destinations where UD hopes to compete, and where alumni can potentially fill the stands.

**A welcome addition.** While other schools have eliminated certain sports when transitioning to new conferences, UD has worked to add opportunities, launching women's ice hockey as a varsity sport, and becoming the 45<sup>th</sup> university in the nation to sponsor a Division I women's ice hockey program. (See page 7 for more.)

**A change.** The move to Conference USA marks the most recent divisional change since 2001, when UD joined the CAA. The move is part of a rapidly changing national landscape in college sports, which has seen 70 institutions (out of more than 300) that have changed conferences at the Division I level in the past two years. 🐓

—Artika Rangan Casini, AS05

# The Creamery of the Crop

## THE SCOOP ON UDAIRY

By Diane Stopyra

It's only dessert. An emulsion of milk and fat and sugar that's as old as time. (Or at least as old as the Tang Dynasty, where prescient emperors whipped up frozen concoctions circa 600 AD). We've all had it—scooped, sprinkled, taken for granted on a warm spring day.

But ice cream from UDairy Creamery is also, somehow, so much more.

Beyond a sweet fix of chocolate, vanilla or bacon (yes, they've done that flavor), a scoop from UDairy is an irresistible serving of nostalgia. It's collective memory in cone form—your sensory connection to a beloved place of exploration, to a formative period of burgeoning independence, and to thousands of fellow Blue Hens who've spread their wings across the globe. "Ice cream is happiness," says Creamery Director Jennifer Rodammer, ASI3, ANR13. "I've seen it bring people together."

In 2008, Prof. Carl Toensmeyer and four innovative agribusiness students looked at the 300-acre farm that doubles as a campus learning laboratory, and they brainstormed a sweet idea. With much administrative support, \$400,000 raised in private donations, plus a Unidel Foundation grant for the same amount, that plan became, in 2011, the framework for UDairy's flagship location on South College Avenue. UD's herd of 80 Holstein cows provided the milk.

Until recently, that milk was sent off-site for processing into a creamy mix that then came back to UD for flavoring, freezing and... festooning. Brownie bits!

Marshmallows! Ranch dressing! (The latter was part of a short-lived barbeque flavor.) Today, thanks to a state-of-the-art facility inside UD's Genuardi Food Innovation Lab, the entire ice cream-making process—cow to cone—happens on campus.

But the mission remains unchanged. UDairy is a nonprofit where Blue Hen undergraduates—80 per semester—learn the finer points of food science and production. (That July weekend when the freezer broke, and everyone got a sticky lesson in the importance of affixing warning alarms to equipment? Better than any textbook explainer.) "The passion of the students inspires people to invest and keep this place growing," Rodammer says. "UDairy is a labor of love."

That love is palpable for myriad groups: kids who chase butterflies through UD's Botanic Gardens with a cone of "the blue one" in hand. High school students who visit UDairy on their first campus tour, the world at their feet. Members of the wider community who appreciate sustainable agriculture. Young couples. Senior citizens. The occasional dog. People in Seneca, Illinois; Rockledge, Florida; or Portola Valley, California—all places UDairy has shipped—who could use a little sweetness. "It's treasured," Rodammer says.

Outsiders won't get it. The uninitiated may cry overstatement. Ice cream is a simple blend: milk, fat, sugar.

But those with the inside scoop know: UDairy's appeal runs deeper than dessert. 🐣



Creamery food science intern Sydney Tankard, ANR23, calls the job "as fun as it sounds."

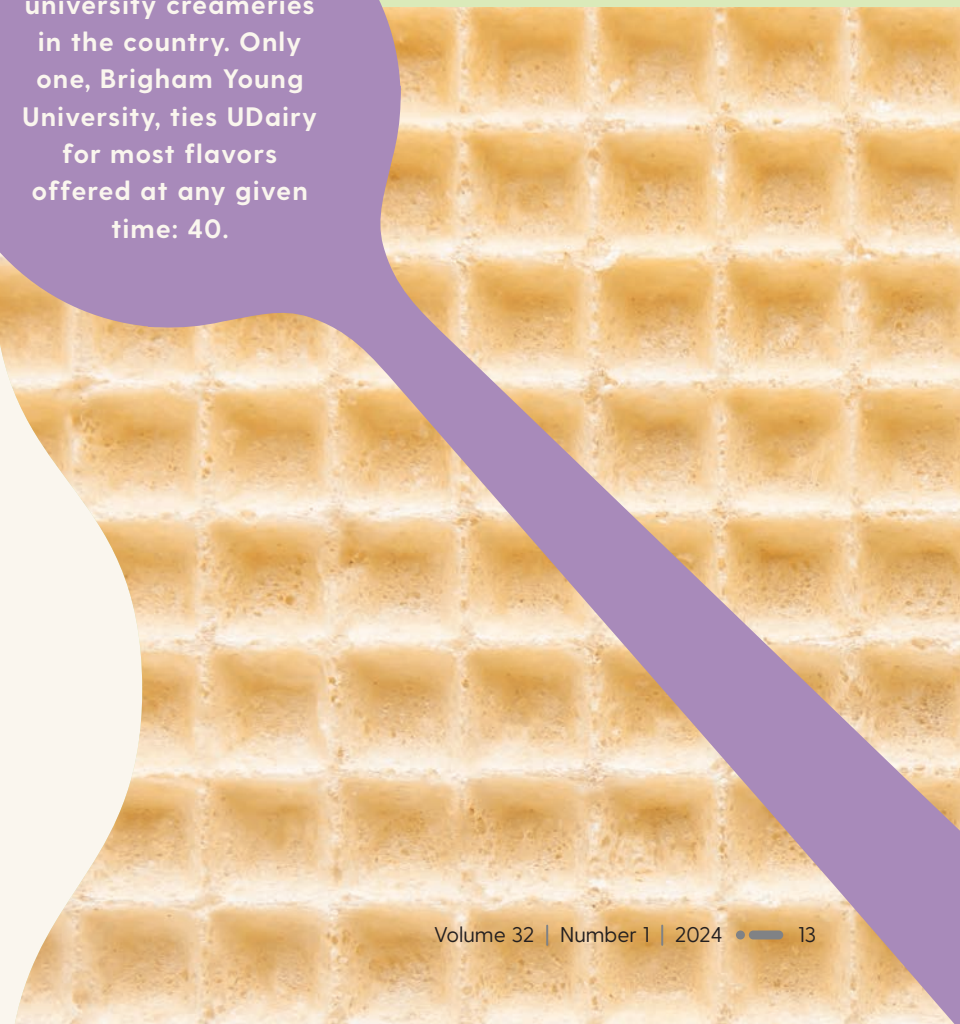
## Taste Maker

Ice cream made with crab meat and Old Bay Seasoning? UDairy has done it. A chicken-and-waffles flavor? That, too. The Creamery—with a recipe book 350 entries strong—has a reputation for inventive offerings. Inspiration stems partly from one food science intern per year tasked with conceiving new ideas. In this role, Sydney Tankard, ANR23, dreamed up an homage to the Philadelphia Phillies (*Phanatic Food*, made with red velvet cake, cream cheese frosting). "The job is definitely as fun as it sounds," says Tankard, now studying ice cream for her sensory science master's program at Penn State. Other ideas are born from campus collaborations (*Botanic Berry*, inspired by the UD Botanic Gardens), student contests (*All Nighter*, a coffee flavor that beat out 300 entries) and serendipity (*Delaware River Mud Pie*, an initial attempt at cookies and cream gone awry, proving that—in ice cream—even the mistakes are happy).

There are 29 university creameries in the country. Only one, Brigham Young University, ties UDairy for most flavors offered at any given time: 40.

## Savory Science

Sure, it's tasty. But can ice cream from UDairy actually increase short-term happiness? "That's fair to say," says neuroscientist and UD Prof. Philip Gable, a cookie-dough devotee who makes a point of bringing all out-of-town visitors to the Creamery. "It starts with chemistry—the way the milk fat, ice and sugar are blended enhances the taste perception. Then, your brain does a lot with this flavor profile." According to Gable, a spoonful of *Dirty Flirty Chai* or *Blissful Bing Cherry* activates brain regions associated with reward, increasing neural activity in the orbitofrontal cortex. The result is warm feelings from your frozen dessert. Sprinkle in the fond memories that a cone can spark—hazy summer days spent chasing a musical truck through your childhood neighborhood—and ice cream is a prime elicitor of food-evoked nostalgia, a phenomenon linked to greater feelings of social connectedness. "There are so many cool things about ice cream," Gable says. "Pun intended."



# Cow to Cone

There's high demand for UDairy Creamery. (Try to contain your shock...) Now, thanks to a new, more automated facility in UD's Genuardi Food Innovation Lab—follow the scent of cocoa—production capacity has recently increased from 30 to 150 gallons per hour. Want to make ice cream like UDairy? Here's your step-by-step guide in one fell scoop.

## 1. GOT MILK

Once to twice per week, pump 250 gallons of milk (hat tip to the cow herd) from a storage tank on UD's farm into a stainless steel tote on the back of a delivery truck. Drive to UD's processing facility.

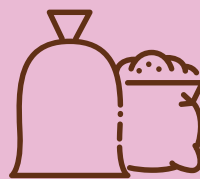


PHOTO BY WENBO FAN



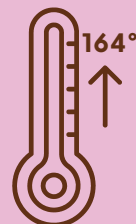
## 2. BLEND IT UP

Add cream to your milk to reach 14% butterfat (you only need 10% to make ice cream, but this is what gives UDairy that delectable texture). Mix in stabilizers, emulsifiers and sugar (be prepared to lift 25–50 pound bags) using a high shear blender for uniform consistency. Pump into a 500-gallon batch tank.



## 3. PASTEURIZE, PLEASE

Using a six-foot tall HTST (high temperature, short time) machine, bring mix to 164 degrees for 15 seconds to kill any bacteria.



## Milk & Honey

If you've only enjoyed UDairy's ice cream, you've only scratched (scooped?) the surface. The Creamery also sells a variety of American-style cheeses and curds, produced and aged in-house (up to two years, so far) thanks to milk from UD's Holstein cow herd. First State Cheddar, anyone? (While you're in, ask UDairy director and certified cheese expert, Jennifer Rodammar, about her recent, government-sponsored trip to Peru, where she taught rural cheese makers her safe food-handling practices, their pet llamas looking on.) The honey on UDairy shelves? It comes from UD's research apiary, home to approximately 4 million bees.



#### 4. AGE, GRACEFULLY

Move mix into three, 150-gallon aging tanks, where any remaining ingredients are absorbed and any clumps disappear. Wait approximately 20 hours.



#### 7. FILL 'ER UP

Using two filler machines—large funnels—at the end of the system, load up pints, cups and 2.5 gallon containers with—ta da!—finished ice cream. This ranges from 20 minutes to one hour, depending on the size of the batch.



#### 5. KEEP IT COOL

Pump your blend—a few gallons at a time—into a continuous freezer, where it's scraped off the sides of a rotating barrel by a series of mechanical blades, in order to incorporate air into the ice cream and ensure a smooth texture. This is what's known as dynamic—or “in motion”—freezing.



#### 8. FINISH IT OFF

Move product into a hardening freezer—may take overnight. Transport to the flagship location or UDairy Creamery Café at the Barnes and Noble UD Bookstore. Get ready to scoop!



#### 6. FLAVOR UP

Through an ingredient filler (read: hopper), add mix-ins, like cookie bits. Through a ripple pump (a vat plus discharge pump), add tasty swirls, like caramel or raspberry.

And, on select summer days, the Creamery offers produce harvested by students on UD's Farm, which connects the wider community to sustainable growing practices. If it's a blanket or ball of yarn you're after, UDairy can provide that, too, thanks to the University's flock of 40 Dorset sheep. The animals, cared for by students, are shorn once per year—a process that yields 400 pounds of wool. That wool is then shipped to a small mill in South Carolina where it's washed and made into usable products. Lanolin, a natural oil found in the fleece, is saved for later use by the beauty industry, meaning your favorite drugstore moisturizer might come courtesy of UD sheep. “We give the animals the best life we can, and they give us things we need,” says Larry Armstrong, manager of UD's Webb Farm. “There's mutual adoration there.”

During its busiest periods, UDairy sells 1,200 gallons of ice cream per week.

View UDairy's products at [canr.udel.edu/udairy-creamery](http://canr.udel.edu/udairy-creamery)

# Legendairy Alumni

MORE THAN 500 BLUE HENS HAVE PARLAYED THEIR UDAIRY EXPERIENCE INTO SCRUMPTUOUS CAREERS IN ICE CREAM

MEET A FEW...



## MILK MAN

There are no cows at the 100-year-old Hy-Point Dairy Farm in Wilmington, Del. Instead, **Dan Meany, ANR09**—one of the former students responsible for the founding of UDairy—and his family of Blue Hen alumni pick up milk produced by cows on farms throughout Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and they process it to make it safe—35,000 gallons per day, 24 hours per day. They also turn this milk into an ice cream mix used by dozens of regional creameries—including, for many years, UDairy.



## SISTER ACT

**Liz Vacchiano, ANR15**, a seeing-eye dog instructor, and **Josephine Vacchiano, EHD17**, a middle school science teacher, worked at UDairy Creamery together while on campus. Now, the sisters are taking their ice cream-making skills to a store on their family's eponymous New Jersey farm. On the weekends, they make ice cream cakes, sandwiches and popsicles using ingredients grown on their land. When do they sleep? "We get that question a lot," Liz laughs, adding that ice cream is "the best reward for hard work."

UDairy was the first university Creamery in the nation to operate its own ice cream truck: the Moo Mobile, which frequents corporate events, campus locations, alumni weddings and more.



## TALK TURKEY TO ME

Are your fudge swirls evenly distributed? Is the texture swoonworthy? And, most importantly, does your ice cream taste great? If so, you may have **Melissa Ollerenshaw, ANR20**, to thank. A quality assurance specialist for Turkey Hill, the UDairy veteran ensures production and safety standards are met in the company's Conestoga, Pa., plant. This involves microbiology and, yes, taste testing—up to 80 samples a week. "It's pretty awesome," Ollerenshaw says. "I still geek out over my job."



### COOL TEACH

As the founding manager turned director of UDairy, **Melinda Shaw, BE23M**, trained hundreds of students in the fine art of ice cream making—and she found fulfillment in the process. Now, she’s bringing her tasty tutelage to a wider audience. In the studio of her recently opened Hangry Bear Creamery in Kennett Square, Pa., customers sign up for two-hour ice cream-making sessions—boozy milkshakes optional. It’s part fun; part food-science lesson, Shaw says, adding: “Ice cream is magic.”

## ...AND A FEW MORE WHO WENT BEYOND THE (MILK) PAIL

### CONDIMENT KING

His days regularly begin with a taste of mayo. As principal scientist with Kraft Heinz, **Chris Carroll, ANR15**, brings sauces from concept to commercialization. His UDairy mentors? “Recognized my creative spark before I did.”



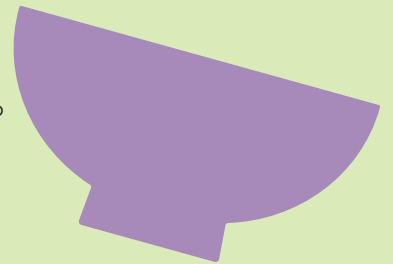
### CRUNCH TIME

How do leading snack brands get the perfect flavor for their chips? **Alyssa Chircus, ANR13**. A senior food scientist with Fuchs North America, she cooks up options, like a custom barbecue.



### SOUP’S ON

His career path wasn’t written in the stars, but in the Spaghettios. A brand manager for Campbell Soup Company, **Keith Medwid, ANR17**, works on new product innovation. His teamwork skills? Honed at UDairy: “We were a family.”



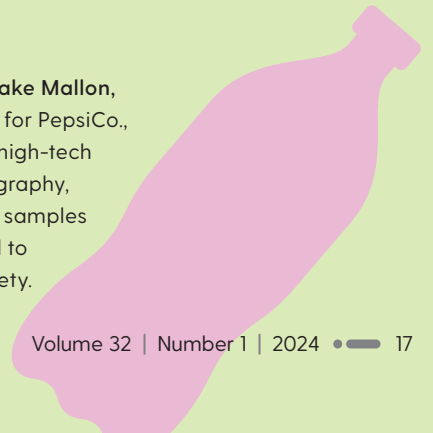
### SECRET AGENT WOMAN

A supervisory investigator with the FDA, **Myra Gemmill, ANR09**, works on smuggling investigations and ensures food products coming into Baltimore Harbor from around the globe are tested for microbiological hazards and other threats.



### POP SCIENCE

It’s like CSI for soda. **Jake Mallon, ANR20**, does forensics for PepsiCo., meaning he conducts high-tech testing (gas chromatography, anyone?) on beverage samples from around the world to ensure quality and safety.



### OUT OF THIS WORLD

As a student, he invented UDairy’s *Grandma’s Gone Coco-nuts* flavor. Now, he does that same work on a global level. A senior product development scientist for Mars Inc., **Luke Gargiso, ANR16**, conceives of treats, creates prototypes and then scales them. He’s brought to life some of your favorite frozen indulgences (hello, SNICKERS Brownie Bar). “People warned me I’d get sick of eating this stuff, but not yet,” he says. “I’m in the right place.”

# THE LIFE AQUATIC

with

MICHAEL BIRNS

*"In the end, we will conserve only what we love,  
we will love only what we understand, and we  
will understand only what we are taught."*

—JACQUES-YVES COUSTEAU

Michael Birns thinks of this quote often. As UD's diving safety officer and scuba instructor, Birns wants to create a "world of ocean advocates." Finance majors. Engineers. Fashion students who may someday design new wetsuits.

"Why would an investment banker in New York tell their congressperson to vote for reef preservation in Hawaii?" Birns asks. "Constituents need to see that it's worthwhile."

To fully appreciate the awe and wonder of the ocean, he knows, is to observe it from within,

to breathe in its depths, to see, with your own two eyes, the majesty of the life around you.

“It’s like entering a whole different realm,” says Cecily Duggan, EOE25, a marine science major who discovered her love for scuba while still in high school. Now, she works alongside Birns as certified divemaster, maintaining UD’s extensive equipment and dive locker and helping Blue Hens like Kelly Logan, EOE25, embark on their underwater journey.

A fellow marine science major, Logan took her first scuba class at UD and recently joined Birns, Duggan and a dozen other students on a Winter Session course in Florida. There, the group participated in multiple dives each day (even a few at night), exploring the crystal-clear waters of Blue Grotto Springs, the state’s largest accessible underwater cavern.

“Aquariums are one thing,” says Logan. “But to have a softshell turtle stare at you through your mask 60 feet below the surface is a whole different world.”

It’s a world that Birns wants to share with as many people as possible. He has opened his Winter Session courses to young women in the Black Girls Dive Foundation, a national nonprofit that uses scuba diving to encourage underrepresented students to pursue STEM careers. Working with UD’s Office of Institutional Equity, Birns hopes this partnership will help diversify the pipeline of highly trained marine science students.

He also wants to use the calming, weightless nature of scuba to support those with brain trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. He envisions starting a disabled diving program for people who have lost the use of limbs, as well as their able-bodied underwater buddy.

Meanwhile, Birns is working with Prof. Art Trembanis to develop an undergraduate class on Advanced Technologies and Robotics in Scientific Diving, which would teach the fundamentals of underwater data collection.

And someday he dreams, perhaps, of starting a scuba-based space exploration program at UD. “Neutral buoyancy is as close to being in outer space as you can get without leaving the atmosphere,” Birns explains. “That’s why astronauts train underwater before they go out in space.”

Some of these are admittedly lofty goals, but Birns (or Uncle Mike, as his students affectionately call him) has a contagious zeal for all things aquatic.

“It’s rare to find someone so passionate about what they do,” says Logan, who hopes to work in shark conservation after graduation. “Capt. Birns has a story for every single thing we learn.”

Take, for instance, the vision for space training. Prior to joining UD in 2021, Birns served as a dive boat captain and assistant dive safety officer for the National Undersea Research Center in Key Largo. There, he worked with government agencies and academic researchers, including UD Profs. Mark Warner and Trembanis, who examined coral



PHOTOS BY EVAN KRAPE

OPPOSITE PAGE: Students develop advanced navigation skills on a Winter Session trip to Florida. ABOVE: Capt. Birns briefs students from the Black Girls Dive Foundation during their visit to campus.

populations and studied underwater robotics, respectively.

But it was the astronauts conducting underwater experiments, in depths and durations that required 16-plus hours of decompression, that opened Birns’ mind to the possibility of space training. “How do you turn a wrench in neutral buoyancy or zero gravity? How do you do something as simple as changing a hinge on a door? Diving can help test that out.”

Diving can also provide an education far more grounded.

“The ocean speaks to me,” says Birns. “I get underwater, and all of the noise goes away. You become singularly focused on your movement, your breath. You can hear your own heartbeat. You’re weightless and floating. There’s always something interesting under the next rock or around the next corner, something you haven’t seen or are seeing in a new way.”

The last time he dove off West Palm Beach, a sea turtle swam beside him. On the Gulf Stream, an eight-foot bull shark swam above him and kept on cruising. In Cozumel, Mexico, an eagle ray spread its fins and glided on the same current just an arm length away.

These are the experiences that create ocean advocates and stoke a collective passion for life under the sea. A passion that is, thanks to Capt. Birns, rising with the tide. 🐠

—Artika Rangan Casini, AS05

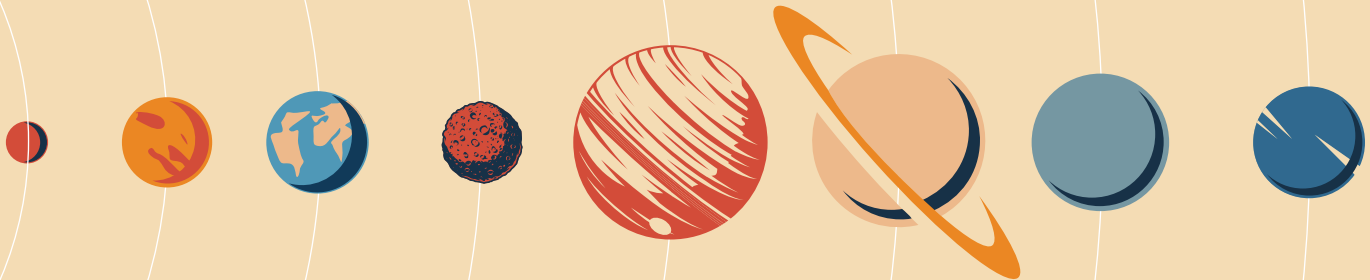


# WATCH THIS SPACE

BLUE HENS OVER THE MOON FOR EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN

BY BETH MILLER

UD RESEARCHERS ARE WORKING TO UNCOVER MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE, FROM THE HUNT FOR HABITABLE EXOPLANETS TO DARK MATTER DETECTION TO THE ORIGINS OF COSMIC RAYS AND MORE.



If we really are stardust—as Joni Mitchell sang and much research suggests—it seems only natural that we would wonder about this carbon-based substance and the faraway dimensions from which it arrives on our planet.

DNA testing can only explain the thinnest slice of human origins. And none of us was there when the universe was born some 13 billion years ago.

But perhaps we're hardwired to try to make sense of it all. *When, exactly, did it all start—and where and how and why? How do galaxies work, anyway? How do planets and stars and moons affect each other? How long does a star live and why does it die? What was in the moondust of Neil Armstrong's boot? What's happening in the darkest corners of the universe? Are we alone or is there anyone else out there?*

UD researchers work to uncover these mysteries—and many more—from multiple angles. As the lead institution in the Delaware Space Grant Consortium—one of 52 NASA-funded consortia in the nation—UD also works to recruit, train and support the development of future explorers, scholars and aerospace job seekers.

Theoretical physicist William Matthaeus directs Delaware Space Grant. His research has been foundational to numerous NASA missions and projects, and he is an expert in heliophysics—the study of the sun, with its turbulent, magnetic atmosphere, and the properties of the powerful solar wind that shoots out from its surface.

Heliophysics is a big deal for UD and NASA, the latter of which has dubbed a 15-month period, including all of 2024, as “Heliophysics Big Year” for multiple reasons: Two solar eclipses crisscross the United States, drawing much public attention, and the Parker Solar Probe makes its closest approach to the sun later this year.

Matthaeus, one of the experts affiliated with the Parker Solar Probe, is also an expert in connections, fostering partnerships, fellowships, scholarships and other linkages for students and researchers across the region.

“It’s fun to make unanticipated connections,” he says. “And it’s important to teach students that you shouldn’t assume you know all the connections you need to make.”

Those networks help everyone navigate the extraordinary breadth of space exploration, which spans astrophysics, condensed matter, planet formation, data science, plasma physics, turbulence theory, magnetic fields, nuclear physics, cosmology, space weather, spectroscopy, cosmic ray physics, computer science, elementary particle theory, space communications and gravitational waves.

You need access to national laboratories, state-of-the-art instruments, high-performance computers and expert guides—the kind of ecosystem UD has.

You need experimental physicists like John Clem to study cosmic rays, solar events, magnetic fields and cosmic neutrinos, high-energy particles that offer clues to phenomena far beyond our solar system.

You need astronomers like Sally Dodson-Robinson, an expert in giant planets (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune), planet formation and the study of exoplanets (those beyond our solar system).

You need engineers like Tingyi Gu to develop semiconductors for ultra-fast (terabyte per second) space communications. Indeed, several of her experiments have flown on the International Space Station.

Frankly, you need a lot of Blue Hen brainpower.

The fingerprints of hundreds of UD researchers, students and alumni are on telescopes around the world, space crafts flying in formation as you read this, launching pads of various dimensions, neutrino detectors at the South Pole and, virtually at least, the distant reaches of the known universe.

If Joni Mitchell is right and “We are stardust. We are golden”—we might suggest a small tweak to her lyrics.

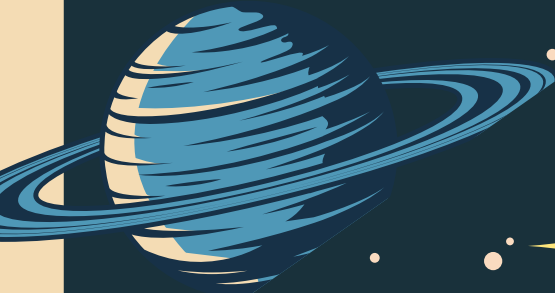
We are stardust. We are Blue and Golden. 🐔

# BLUE HEN SPACE

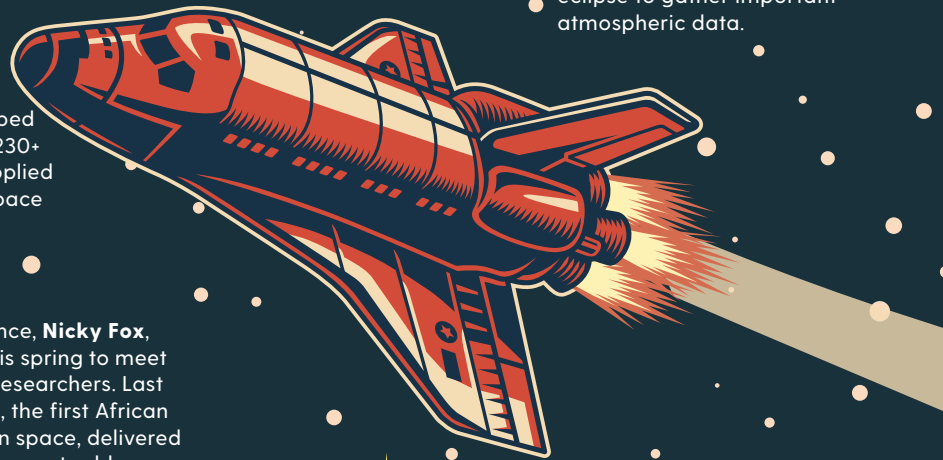
## TOUR A WHIMSICAL LOOK AT UD'S ACTIVITY IN THE OUTER LIMITS



UD's "Eclipse Chasers" team, led by **Prof. Edmund Nowak**, will participate in NASA's Nationwide Eclipse Ballooning Project this April, launching a helium-filled weather balloon during the April 8 eclipse to gather important atmospheric data.



Student **Cameron Emmett, EG24**, helped ready the Antares 230+ rocket, which resupplied the International Space Station in August.



NASA Head of Science, **Nicky Fox**, will visit campus this spring to meet with students and researchers. Last year, **Mae Jemison**, the first African American woman in space, delivered the 2023 Commencement address.

**Sonny Reihm, EG60**, helped design Neil Armstrong's spacesuit. Today, UD's Center for Composite Materials is working to develop the next-generation, Z-2 spacesuit for Mars and the moon. And UD **Prof. Norman Wagner**—along with STF Technologies, the company he co-founded with **Richard Dombrowski, EG03**—has created a protective textile that can help prevent intergalactic puncture.

**Erin Rezich, EG19**, designs and tests lunar rovers and other equipment critical to space missions, including the Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover (VIPER), a mobile robot that will go to the moon's south pole in November 2024 to survey water ice samples.

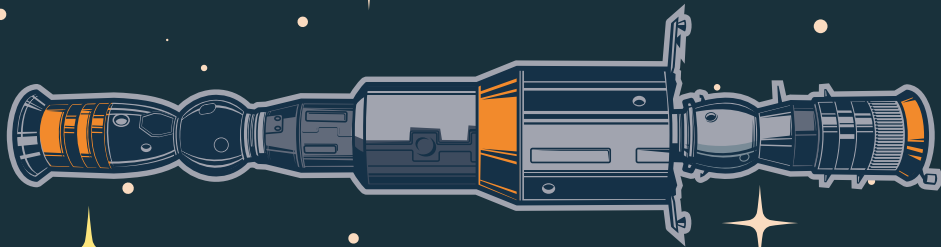
UD **Prof. Mark Blenner** has turned astronaut waste into nutrients, like omega-3s, needed for extended space travel.



UD **Prof. Federica Bianco** is part of a NASA panel exploring Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena, otherwise known as UFOs.

A UD team is working to find alien life using the telescopes at a gamma-ray observatory in Arizona that are capable of detecting laser signals from an extraterrestrial civilization.



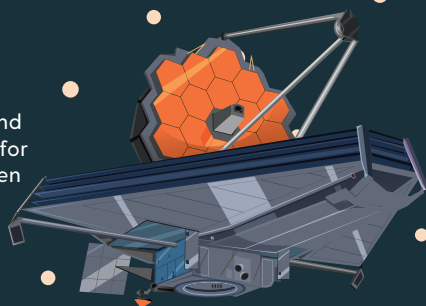


UD is one of five universities selected to receive \$100,000 in grant funding through NASA's Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). Translation: With NASA funding, undergrads developed a device for collecting information on the ways turbulence affects particles in a zero-gravity environment, and that device is now slated for travel to the International Space Station.

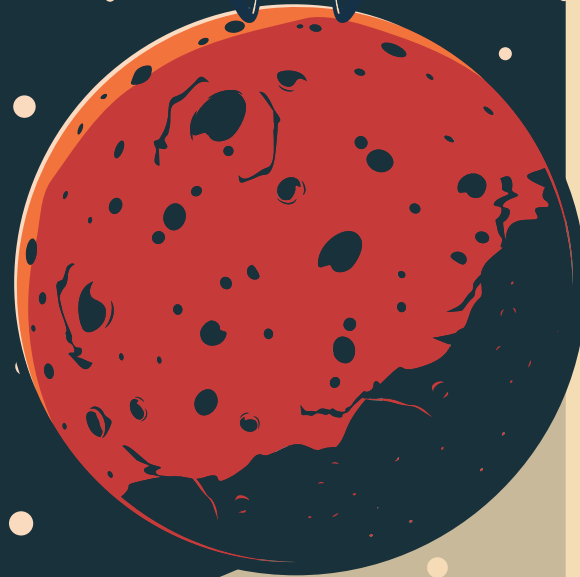
**Prof. Eric Furst's** zero-gravity colloid work on the International Space Station may lead to next-generation electronics on Earth.

With a grant from NASA, **Prof. Qingwu Meng** is studying the best lighting for growing food—specifically lettuce—on the International Space Station.

**Elaine Stewart, EG19,** helped build and prepare the James Webb Telescope for launch, allowing for never-before-seen views of the universe.



When she was an undergraduate, **Allysa Tuano, EG21,** helped NASA build Ingenuity, a four-pound helicopter collecting data on Mars that will help humans land on the Red Planet in the near future.



UD **Prof. Norm Wagner** is simulating outer space soil in a Newark lab to figure out how to build infrastructure on the moon and Mars, where there is no Home Depot.



While Blue Hens extend our knowledge of the final frontier, the Delaware Space Observatory Center (DSpOC)—a collaborative effort between UD and Delaware State University—is bringing new instruments, connections and operational rocket fuel to power research and ignite the intellectual spark of future space scientists in the First State.

Launched in 2022 with funding from NASA and in partnership with the Delaware Space Grant Consortium, DSpOC provides Delaware's scientists and students unprecedented access to such features as a space simulator for testing electronics bound for space, radio-frequency testing equipment, a teaching laboratory for hands-on learning and pre-college outreach, a computer cluster to store and analyze data from NASA spacecrafts—even a robotic astronomical observatory.

The 1,200-square-foot facility in Harker ISE Lab is also the operations center for the Delaware CubeSat Ground Station, a Blue Hen built, 10-foot satellite dish located in Wilmington's Mt. Cuba Astronomical Observatory to communicate with miniature satellites (CubeSats) orbiting in space.

# BANDING TOGETHER

BY MEGAN M.F. EVERHART



PHOTO BY EVAN KRABE

# AFTER NEARLY THREE DECADES, HEIDI SARVER IS SETTING DOWN HER BATON.

*Caesura.*

In musical terms, this is the word for an interruption. A break in the song. A pause that can be dramatic and, in some cases, intensely emotional.

With Heidi Sarver leaving the University of Delaware, campus is experiencing its own caesura. After 29 years, the beloved leader of the University of Delaware Marching Band, UDMB, is setting down her baton. Her retirement signals the end of an era, a chapter defined not only by technical success, but exceptional leadership. The thousands of students who have in the last three decades walked—or, rather, marched—through her classroom have come away not only better musicians, but better humans.

“Sarver teaches people how to be people through the vehicle of music,” says UDMB drum major and senior music education major Andrew Steinberg, AS24. “Obviously, we care about the final product, but this is about working together and supporting something that’s bigger than yourself.”

Sarver, a member of the national Buglers Hall of Fame, earned her bachelor and master’s degrees (and marching stripes) at the University of Massachusetts before making a name for herself as a guest conductor and adjudicator at institutions around the Northeast. She’s also served as an educator and director with the George N. Parks Drum Major Academy, a nationwide summer workshop for high school students. In the early ’90s, when UD leadership began searching for a new marching band director, George N. Parks, Sarver’s mentor and marching band legend in his own right, was interested. But, knowing she’d be a remarkable fit, he reportedly urged UD to hire his protege instead.

“George was a force,” Sarver says. “He made every student feel as though they were the most important person in the program. I remember thinking: If I can give my students just a touch of what George gave his students, then I’ll be successful.”

UD’s president at the time, David Roselle, tasked Sarver with making UDMB the “happiest, funnest, largest” organization on campus. And she

delivered. In just three years, UDMB grew from 100 to 300 members. Participants—who’ve performed at two inaugural parades, the Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade and countless exhibitions—have gleaned more than the ability to move in rhythm across 100 yards.

“If you’re going to make a mistake, make a big one, was one of the lessons Sarv taught us,” says Danielle Jones, AS07,12. “The UDMB isn’t about band. I mean, of course it is. But it’s a safe place to grow up. It’s a safe place to learn and make mistakes. It’s a place to try. It’s a place to cry. It’s a place where we all figured out how to be human.”

Or, as Daniel Armistead, AS18, put it: “It is the most welcoming, inclusive and energetic place.”

Sarver’s impact at UD was on full display during the Oct. 14, 2023, football game against North Carolina A&T. Delaware’s early lead and driving rain caused the crowd to thin early, but more than 300 UDMB alumni stayed to participate in Sarver’s final UD Homecoming. Among them was Gene Carlisle, AS61, a member of the first alumni band in 1970, who has returned every year since.

“This is your extended family,” Carlisle says of his UDMB peers. “I know it sounds corny, but it’s just so important to be out there with the group.”

This family will look a little different come fall—the University is eagerly anticipating the arrival of Sarver’s decorated successor and fellow Blue Hen, Brooke Johnson, AS09, who returns to UD by way of Miami University. But Sarver’s impact on the University community is expected to last... *fermata* (the musical term for “longer than standard”). 🐦



# 29

## THINGS TO KNOW

In honor of the person who's spent the last 29 years teaching thousands of Blue Hens how to march to their own beat, here are 29 things to know about Heidi Sarver, UDMB and a University tradition that hits all the right notes.



### 1. Creating community

It's not just about playing for—but connecting with—an audience. After each game's halftime show, the percussion line spends time under the stands playing a mini concert for the crowd and showing children how their instruments work.



### 2. COOL TEACH

People are often perplexed to learn that "Marching Band" is a class at UD, meeting Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the fall. "What do you actually teach?" is a question Sarver fields repeatedly. Her response: "Self-value, commitment, teamwork. It's a little about music and a lot about life."



### 4. HAIL TO THEE, PROUD DELAWARE

Every member of the UDMB must learn the University song. "It's one of many, many ways the band connects us to UD," says band veteran Melissa Csengeto, AS06.

### 5. KEEP IT MOVING

A single half-time show can incorporate up to 70 pages of drill. When combined with pre-game and post-game shows, that's 100 different positions on the field for each band member to hit during 12 minutes (or so) of music—more than eight positions per minute.

### 6. A YEAR TO REMEMBER

During the Fightin' Blue Hens undefeated 1972 season, "members of the band got so bored, because we won every game, so we sometimes cheered for the other team" says Susan Eleuterio, AS74. "It was the 70s, and we were smart-ass hippies."

### 3. BAND FAM

Freshman year, Daniel Armistead, AS18, met the 20 other alto saxophone players in his section at band camp. He roomed with five of them for three years, and, in 2022, he watched two of them tie the knot. "You'll cultivate friendships in band that you'll take with you the rest of your life," he says. It's not just the saxes—Sarver gets invited to several "band weddings" every year, and UDMB alumni routinely refer to the band as their second family.



## 7. A SAFE SPACE

Like drill sergeants, marching band directors often earn a reputation for yelling. But Sarver takes a different approach: “My phrase when things aren’t going well is: ‘How many of you would like the opportunity to try that again?’ And the musicians take it up a notch.”



## 8. MATH MAVEN

Being a marching band director requires a great grasp of geometry, Sarver says. How else to determine how to fit 32 people in a perfect circle at a two-step interval?



## 9. A FIRST-RATE PERFORMANCE

Yes, during the third quarter of football games, the brass section does “run the stands,” going up and down each section to hype the crowd. But the band isn’t merely there to generate excitement. Sarver prides herself on doing justice to the notes. “Music transcends words,” she says. “It’s all emotion and life experience.”

## 10. HIJINKS ENSUE

When UDMB starts rehearsing in August, students dress for soaring, 100+ degree temperatures. As the season progresses, an unofficial contest kicks off: Who can go the longest wearing only shorts to practice?

## 11. HUNGRY MARCHERS

It takes more than 7,000 meals to feed students and staff during UDMB’s 10-day Band Camp every August.

## 12. EYES... WITH PRIDE

This call-and-response exercise began as a checklist for standing at attention; now it’s developed into a post-performance tradition and honorable reminder.

Feet - Together  
Stomach - In  
Chest - Out  
Shoulders - Back  
Elbows - Frozen  
Chin - Up  
Eyes - With Pride



## 13. Shhhh...

At the conclusion of Sarver’s first year on the job, a student said to her: “We do so well at saying goodbye to the seniors, but we really don’t do well at welcoming freshmen.” This kicked off a year-long research project on the part of Sarver: How might she make her first-year students feel more a part of the whole? With input from colleagues, she created a special welcome ceremony that sets the tone for every fulfilling UDMB career. We’d tell you more, but it’s top secret; you have to be a member of the band to know the details.



## 14. A FITTING METAPHOR

Sarver compares creating a halftime performance to building a house. First, at summer Band Camp, students learn structure—the basic steps of going from point A to point B on the field (think of it as the walls and floors). Then, in classes throughout the semester, come the “furniture and curtains,” the choreography, flourishes and applause moments that punctuate the music.

## 15. ALUMNI TO THE RESCUE

On March 18, 2022, both the UD men’s and women’s basketball teams played games in the NCAA Tournament, but it wasn’t possible to split the Pep Band into two, so Sarver took 29 band alumni to the women’s game in Maryland. “It ended up being a win-win. The team got a pep band, and the alumni got to relive the glory days.”



## 16. THE OPERA CONNECTION

You wouldn't think that marching band and opera have much in common, but Sarver is convinced that one of the world's most famous opera composers, Richard Wagner, would have loved today's marching bands. The 19th century artist sought to bring together all the elements of an opera: music, poetry, drama and visual pageantry into an immersive experience. "What held him back was the orchestra being stationary in a pit. If he could see drum corps and competitive marching bands today, I think that's what he was after."

## 17. WATCH WHERE YOU WALK

Stand at the corner of West Main Street and North College Avenue at 3:50 p.m. on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday in fall, and you're likely to see a procession of instrument-wielding students headed to practice behind the Little Bob. One year, the entire percussion bass line got jaywalking tickets because when the lead drum crossed against the light, the rest of the section followed.

## 18. Partners in Crime

Sarver's assistant director, James Ancona, was a freshman at UMass when Sarver was a graduate student. Although they didn't know each other, their respective UMass band mentors, George Parks and Thom Hannum, recognized that the pair would make a great team. Ancona came to UD with Sarver, and they have worked together ever since.

## 19. A TRIP TO REMEMBER

The band has traveled to perform numerous times (hello, inauguration of President Joe Biden, AS65, O4H). The farthest trek took them to Dublin in 2010 for the city's first New Year's Day parade. UDMB shared the experience with their sister band from UMass, and more than 500 people made the trip.



## 20. Oh, baby!

The 2023–2024 season introduced Sarver's first band "grandbaby" to UDMB. Greg, AS98, EG05, and Jenn Forte, AS95, BE00M, began bringing their toddler, Aiill Forte, to football games years ago. Now, that toddler is a current Blue Hen percussionist.



## 21. PAGEANTRY ARTS

Color guard began simply as a way to add color to the field with flags. Today, it's evolved into "pageantry arts"—props, set pieces and costume changes in addition to the standard flags, rifles, sabres and batons. Says Sarver: "Without the colorguard and the twirlers, you may as well just put on a recording and not bother with having a marching band at all—they are that important!"

## 22. SURVEY SAYS

In a survey of 4,365 alumni conducted by UD in 2023, former Blue Hens were asked to identify the person at UD who had the greatest influence on their life. Two instructors received the most mentions: the late political science professor James Soles, and Heidi Sarver. "Without Heidi and the program she created and nurtured, I probably would have transferred after the first semester/year," wrote one anonymous respondent. "Back then, programs to help new freshmen adjust were very surface level, and I found myself struggling.... Heidi understood this and knew that the UDMB would be where we found belonging."

## 23. PAYING IT FORWARD

Lauren Reynolds, UD's director of concert bands, began her Blue Hen career as a freshman in UDMB: "Heidi was the first person to single me out and suggest that I explore conducting workshops and think beyond. She opened my eyes to the possibilities in the professional world and was the catalyst for my eventual interest in pursuing a doctoral program."



## 25. THE PANDEMIC PIVOT

In 2020, when UDMB could not take to the field, Sarver and Ancona reimagined what marching band could be for more than 200 participating students—imagine guest lectures in marching band education. "It would have been a lot easier to decide, 'No marching band,'" Sarver says. "But this was a labor of love."

## 27. The write way

There are computer programs for writing drill, the term used for a band's basic position and steps on the field, and Sarver does use them—but not until she sketches by hand. The practice is so out-of-vogue, her favorite brand no longer produces the required drill paper, so Sarver has to make her own photocopies. "I have to see it in my head first—how it flows and connects," she says. "The pictures are static, but I can see how they move."

## 28. BOWL-ED OVER

Sarver has produced halftime shows for the Orange and Sugar Bowls, widely considered two of the greatest and most enduring traditions in American college football. Barry Behnhardt, director of bands at Florida International University, has worked with Sarver on these performances. "Leadership is not about being the best," he says. "It's about making other people better, and Heidi has done that."

## 24. The science factor

Trumpets, trombones and tubas are directional, meaning their sound comes right at the audience. When the players turn and face a different direction, the sound gets softer. Woodwinds like flutes and clarinets are omnidirectional, and their frequencies go everywhere in space, regardless of where the musicians are. This element—the physics of sound—is imperative for creating UDMB's musical depth and dramatic moments.



## 26. A DAY LATE AND A LETTER SHORT

Gene Carlisle, AS61, recounts that, in UDMB's early years, the band was so small (it started with 35 members) that members couldn't create the University logo at one time. Band members first formed a "U" on the field, and then changed positions to create the "D." It's a far cry from today's interlocked "UD" with marchers standing 2–3 deep.

## 29. PLACES I'LL REMEMBER

It's a drum corps tradition to have a "band song," one that reflects the organization's identity. Sarver was inspired by Bette Midler's version of the Beatles' "In My Life." "The lyrics tell the story of the band, and connect with band members present and past," she says. "It is simply about life's journey. We never really leave; we're always there in memory in some way."

***There are places I'll remember  
All my life, though some have changed  
Some forever, not for better  
Some have gone and some remain***



# ALUMNI NEWS

## THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO HENGAGE

Meaningful. Active. Lifelong. Those are the key themes of UD's newly hatched Alumni Engagement Strategic Plan.

Developed by stakeholders across UD, the five-year roadmap aims to increase programming, activities and events that strengthen Blue Hen connections. It also includes feedback from the 4,000-plus Blue Hens who completed last year's alumni survey. (You may recall reading their responses in the last issue of *UD Magazine*.)

"There's no one-size-fits-all approach to alumni engagement," says Lauren Murray Simione, BE95, associate vice president of alumni engagement. "We want to expand what we're already doing in purposeful ways to ensure we're providing quality programs for every stage of life."

The plan has several strategic goals, including strengthening the bridge between students and alumni; providing enrichment opportunities for Blue Hens in different life stages; and expanding affinity groups, such as the launch of the new Pride Network (which you can learn more about on page 34).

Over the coming years, you can expect to see more professional and lifelong learning opportunities, increased programming and travel opportunities for young alumni (those who have earned their undergraduate degrees within the past five years), and greater information on UD's diverse alumni population, including the many ways to connect with fellow Blue Hens and your alma mater.

For more on the plan, visit [udel.edu/alumni-friends/plan](http://udel.edu/alumni-friends/plan). And to learn more about some of the exciting programs underway and find the right engagement opportunity for you, read on. 🐔

FIND THE ONE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU!







**IF YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL**

Join fellow alumni in Greece or Spain this summer. Visit [delaw.ahitravel.com](http://delaw.ahitravel.com) for more.



**IF YOU LOVE CHEERING ON THE FIGHTIN' HENS**

Watch them take on CU-Boulder, Wake Forest and UConn next year. For more on UD's move to Conference USA, turn to page 10.

**IF YOU'VE LEARNED A THING OR TWO IN YOUR FIELD**

Be a mentor! You can guest speak at a class, invite a student to shadow you at work, and explore formal mentorship opportunities such as UD's Career Mentoring Program and the Lerner College of Business and Economics. You can also connect with thousands of Blue Hens on LinkedIn through the University of Delaware Official Alumni Group.



**IF YOU WANT TO RELIVE YOUR COLLEGE DAYS**

Return to campus for Homecoming or Alumni Weekend. And if you can't make it back to Newark, check out the UD Bucket List ([udel.edu/bucketlist](http://udel.edu/bucketlist)) and see how many items you can cross off.



**IF YOU LOVE BRAGGING ABOUT YOUR ALMA MATER**

Don't stop! With boosted rankings and more than 30,000 applications, UD grows stronger every day. Keep being our biggest fan and sharing your UD love in ways both big and small, loud and proud. Wear the hoodie. Rock the bumper sticker. And don't forget to follow the alumni social media accounts (@UDalumni on Facebook, X and @UDeAlumni on Instagram).



**IF YOU WANT TO HELP CURRENT STUDENTS**

Make a gift to one of the 100-plus *I Heart UD Day* initiatives. Of all the ways to love UD, investing in students who are set to change the world is the most impactful. Visit [udel.edu/iheartUD](http://udel.edu/iheartUD) for more.

**IF YOU WANT TO RECONNECT WITH FORMER CLASSMATES**

Serve as a reunion ambassador for your milestone year. Email [volunteer@udel.edu](mailto:volunteer@udel.edu) to sign up.



**IF YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING**

Update your biographic data. It helps ensure you stay connected to UD through updates on campus news, alumni events and other programs that foster pride and nostalgia. Visit [udel.edu/alumni-friends/your-info](http://udel.edu/alumni-friends/your-info).



# FROM BLUE HEN TO BLUE JAY

JOHN SCHNEIDER'S JOURNEY FROM UD CATCHER  
TO MLB MANAGER WAS 16 YEARS IN THE MAKING

BY CHRISTOPHER A. VITO



Under crystal-clear Florida skies, two men grabbed their gloves for a catch. Members of the Toronto Blue Jays coaching staff, they were loosening their arms ahead of a Major League Baseball spring training workout.

One was longtime New York Yankees first baseman Don Mattingly. The other was John Schneider, a Blue Hen who spent his boyhood in Lawrenceville, N.J., idolizing the legendary player otherwise known as Donnie Baseball.

These are the “pinch yourself” moments that still astound Schneider, who begins his third year as the Blue Jays’ manager this spring. A UD-baseball-player-turned-MLB-club-manager, Schneider follows in the footsteps of Lee Elia, AS60, manager of the Chicago Cubs and Philadelphia Phillies in the 1980s, and Dallas Green, BE56, manager of the Phillies, Yankees and New York Mets between 1979 and 1996.

“One thing I always try to keep in front of me is how lucky I am to be here,” says Schneider, 44, whose UD path led him to the pinnacle of professional baseball. Indeed, he credits his time in Newark with teaching two vital skills: patience and time management.

“All the best traits rubbed off on me,” Schneider says. “Playing great competition at UD taught me to be overly prepared, always. Working with different people taught me to crave information, make the best decisions and be a good communicator. Early morning workouts taught me the value of being on time and managing my time wisely.”

Schneider arrived at Delaware at the backend of a remarkable high school career and had only logged a couple-dozen games behind home plate before developing into an all-American catcher with the Blue Hens.

He would play two seasons at UD, first under coaching legend Bob Hannah, and then under Hannah’s successor, Jim Sherman. Both seasons ended with conference championships and trips to the NCAA Regionals. In Schneider, UD had “a leader who could make the people around him better,” Hannah recalls. Sherman noticed “the ideal combination” of listening, intelligence and “being in the right place at the right time” that would lead Schneider to success.

As catcher, his greatest skill was his arm. In 2002, he threw out all 29 potential base-stealers who attempted to run against him.

Talent carried Schneider to a professional career in the sport. A 13th-round draft pick of Toronto in 2002, he spent seven seasons in the minor-league ranks and parts of four seasons at the Triple A level—the precipice of the majors.

Schneider concluded his playing career after a spring-training game in 2008. He asked his manager to add a second catcher to the roster that day; if Schneider hit a home run, he told his skipper, he would retire. Schneider then hammered a ball over the fence, circled the bases and removed his spikes when he returned to the dugout.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TORONTO BLUE JAYS



Around that time, Schneider began considering new avenues to remain in the sport. Dick Scott, then the Blue Jays’ farm-system director, recommended managing Toronto’s Gulf Coast League rookie-level club.

“John’s curiosity about the game, his appreciation for it and the players, and his way about him—they all made him a coach in the making,” says Scott. “We started him on this journey; the rest, that’s a credit to John.”

Schneider’s minor-league journey was equal parts lengthy and successful. He managed teams to championships at three competitive levels before being promoted to the Blue Jays’ coaching staff in 2018.

Having achieved a lifelong dream, he understands the grind required to reach—and remain at—the sport’s highest level. “In 10 seconds, you see how fast the manager’s name on the door can change,” he says, recalling July 13, 2022, when the Blue Jays replaced their manager with Schneider on an interim basis. Schneider guided the seemingly rudderless club to the playoffs with 46 wins in their final 74 games. He was rewarded with a three-year contract extension.

What followed was movie-script material: Schneider served as pitcher for his club’s first baseman, Vladimir Guerrero Jr., en route to Guerrero’s win at last summer’s All-Star Home Run Derby. And he led the Blue Jays, who possess one of the sport’s most talented young cores, back to the playoffs in 2023.

Although the storybook ending failed to materialize when the team exited the playoffs in the first round, Schneider remains undaunted. “You can’t please everybody,” he says, “but you stay who you are.” 🐦

**“THERE ARE 30 MLB MANAGERS. I THINK I CAN BE ONE OF THOSE 30.”**

# Blue Hen Roots Run Deep

There are small Blue Hen families and there are large—really large—Blue Hen families. The Mayhews are the latter. In 1953, Ken Mayhew launched a tradition that endures to this day, with six children, three daughters-in-law, four grandchildren and 13 additional relatives (siblings, in-laws, cousins and more) who all earned UD degrees. As a student without a car of his own, Ken would hitch a daily ride from Penns Grove, N.J. to campus. After he and wife, Kitty, became Delawareans, the college choice for their children was simple. “We said, ‘This is a great school right here, so that’s where you’re going,’” Kitty recalls. “If UD had the discipline they wanted to pursue, there was no point in looking anywhere else.”

## The Mayhew Family



**Ken Mayhew**  
EG57  
+  
**Kitty Mayhew**

*Raised six Blue Hens: Mark, Keith, Kim, Marci, Kevin and Kyle*



**Marci Sieja**  
EHD88  
+  
**Steve Sieja**

Ken played trumpet at UD, as did his son, Keith, who established the Kenneth and Catherine Mayhew Family Scholarship in his parents’ honor.

“I would meet up with my Aunts Kim and Marci as a student,” says granddaughter Jenna. “Our favorite spot was Iron Hill on Main Street.”



**Kyle Mayhew**  
BE93  
+  
**Marcia Mayhew**  
EHD93, AS94M

*Raised two Blue Hens: Ben & Tyler*

“Seeing how much my dad cared for the University was instrumental in my decision,” says Tyler. “If he loved UD, I knew I would too.”

**Benjamin Mayhew**  
AS25



**Tyler Mayhew**  
AS22

“There’s always someone wearing UD gear at a family function,” says Ginger. Adds cousin Jenna: “I wanted to continue the legacy and join the Mayhew club!”

# UD LAUNCHES PRIDE ALUMNI NETWORK

A group of alumni volunteers is fostering a sense of belonging among LGBTQ+ Blue Hens and laying the foundation for an inclusive and supportive community through the newly launched UD Pride Alumni Network. As UD Pride plans more upcoming events, such as the Alumni Weekend Drag Show (Saturday, June 1, 2024), President Elaina Hill, AS09, hopes to establish a space for alumni to connect and celebrate their queer Blue Hen stories.

Hill, who didn’t come out until after graduating from UD, credits her involvement with the group with allowing her to

connect to UD in a way that she didn’t as a student.

“It feels like a homecoming in a special way,” she says. “It is exciting to be part of a group of fellow Blue Hens who not only share pride in the Blue and Gold, but also pride as part of the LGBTQ+ community.”

Hill encourages any interested alumni to join the nascent group, which currently consists of about 30 members who graduated between the 1980s and the 2010s.

“There is no expectation beyond showing up,” says Hill. “We hold space for alumni at any point in their journey.” 🐦



KITTY

Married on a Friday (May 31, 1957), Ken and Kitty attended his Commencement ceremony that weekend—the first of many Mayhew graduations from UD.

**Gene Mayhew**

BE64, AS69M



**Carol Mayhew**

EHD64, 71M, 78M, 84EdD

“Kenny was a tremendous inspiration,” Gene says of his brother. “He was the first [family member] to go to college and did it against tremendous odds.”

**Eric Mayhew**

EG61



**Fran Mayhew**

EHD63, AS74M

*Fran was a longtime professor in fashion and apparel studies*

The scholarship supports a non-music major in the UD Marching Band. For more on UDMB, turn to page 26.

**Kim Mayhew**

HS86



KIM

**Mark Mayhew**

EG81



**Michelle Mayhew**



MARK

**Keith Mayhew**

ANR89



**Robin Mayhew**

AS86

*Raised one Blue Hen: Ginger*



KEITH

**Kevin Mayhew**

ANR89



**Lori Mayhew**

EHD89, 16M

*Raised two Blue Hens: Chad & Jenna*



KEVIN

“All my older siblings attended UD,” says Kevin. “I noticed how much they loved the University and how easily they found great jobs.”

**Ginger Mayhew**

EHD16

**Jenna Mayhew**

BSPA22, 23M



JENNA

**Chad Mayhew**

EG17



CHAD



# CLASS NOTES



Roger Glendenning, ANR87



Michael K. Chong, AS91

## 1960s

**RONAL W. SMITH, AS69**, of Lewes, Del., was inducted into the Delaware Maritime Hall of Fame on Sept. 8.

## 1970s

**WILL MORGAN, AS71PHD**, of Providence, R.I., has published *Academia: Collegiate Gothic Architecture in the United States*. Morgan is an architectural historian who has taught at Princeton University, the University of Louisville and Brown University.

## 1980s

**DONALD W. FINCH, BE81**, of Avalon, N.J., spent a portion of the pandemic

**Batter up:** Glendenning has fond memories of the Entomology Lab's softball team. "Celebrating wins (and losses) at the Deer Park was always a highlight," he says.



Team Steve aims to raise \$225,000 by 2025.

**ROGER GLENDENNING, ANR87**, of Boyds, Md., was appointed acting under secretary for the USDA Rural Development agency. He was also one of nine USDA members to receive a 2023 Presidential Rank Award for "exceptional performance over an extended period of time."

## 1990s

**MICHAEL K. CHONG, AS91**, of Hoboken, N.J., has been selected by the *New Jersey Law Journal* as a 2023 honoree and recipient of the In-House Counsel Impact award for significant accomplishments and

writing a murder mystery, *A Bad Day in Avalon*. His follow-up novel, *A Bad Day in Cape May*, is expected to be published in June.

**GALICANO INGUIITO JR., AS85, BE02M**, of Newark, Del., is the current alumni association president for Sidney Kimmel Medical College, formerly Jefferson Medical College. Inguito practices family medicine and urgent care in Newark.

**MIKE CROWE, EG86**, and **ELLEN KAWALEK CROWE, EG86**, of Mendham, N.J., have partnered with Curesearch to establish "Team Steve: The Steven Crowe Legacy Fund" in memory of their son, who succumbed to Acute Myeloid Leukemia in 2005 at the age of 9. Curesearch is a nonprofit that aims to end childhood cancer by funding innovative research on pediatric cancer cures.

## WORLD CHAMP ATHLETE

When **MARY HAGER, HS71**, races, she thinks of her late father, a lifelong athlete who played basketball, softball and wrestled before a crippling inflammatory disease confined him to a wheelchair in his mid-forties.

Last September, the Blue Hen placed second at the World Triathlon Multisport Championship in Pontevedra, Spain, in the 75–79 age group. "He would just burst with pride if he could see me now," she says of her dad, who remains the inspiration behind a later-in-life appreciation of competitive sports.

Hager ran her first marathon at 68. That qualified her to run the famous Boston Marathon, which she completed in 2017 and dedicated to her dad.

Health is important to Hager, whose UD experiences inspired her to fund undergraduate research opportunities in nutrition in the College of Health Sciences.

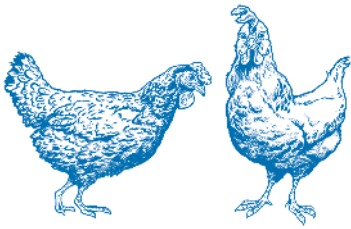
She recalls an internship at the University of Michigan School of Public Health: "They said I was the most scientifically prepared intern they ever had, and that 'they'll always take students from the University of Delaware.'"

Today, Hager proudly dons a UD jersey and bib shorts on her training rides. She has competed in six world triathlon championships since 2018, which have taken her around the world to Abu Dhabi and Australia.

"It's such a high when you finish. It's like having a baby, and you realize, 'Oh, I can do this again.' And I'll be doing it for as long as I can." 🐦

—Amy Cherry





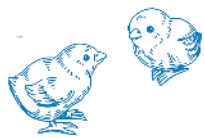
Blue Hens Ivy Cohen (left), BE95, and Jenn White, pictured on top, and daughters Jessica White (left), EHD27, and Ava Cohen, EHD27, on bottom.

general excellence. Chong serves as general counsel to multiple privately held corporations based in the United States and abroad, where he works with corporate management in handling diverse legal matters.

**STEPHEN PICK, AS94**, from Wayne, N.J., published a book in September titled *Diversity, Inclusion and Antiracism Course: A Training Curriculum to Convert Knowledge into Action and Be an Impactful Antiracist*.



**IVY COHEN, BE95**, of Lawrence Township, N.J., and Jenn White, first met as freshmen on the fourth floor of Thompson Hall. Although White transferred out of UD, the two reconnected in 2023, when daughters, **AVA COHEN, EHD27**, and **JESSICA WHITE, EHD27**,



crossed paths as incoming Blue Hens both living in Harrington.

**KIMBERLY L. GATTUSO, AS95**, of Kennett Square, Pa., is associate dean for experiential learning at Wilmington University School of Law.

**GLENN D'AMORE, BE96**, of Alexandria, Va., was appointed president of Silver Diner, a restaurant operation where he worked every management position in the company before becoming area director and, most recently, chief operation officer.

**KAREN ANNE (COLANTONIO) BUCK, HS97**, of Hatboro, Pa., earned her doctorate in nursing from Northwestern University. With 27 years of dedicated service at Jefferson Health, culminating in her position as the enterprise women's service line lead advanced practice provider, she is now transitioning into nursing leadership at the prestigious Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Karen will serve as the director of women's, newborn, and neonatal nursing.

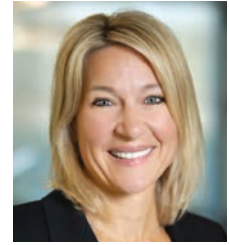
**JANA KOPELENT REHAK, AS97M**, of Baltimore, Md., has published her third book, *We Live in the Water: Climate, Aging and Socioecology* on Smith Island. Rehak is a professor at Johns Hopkins University.

**JOHN FEDENA, HS98**, of New Castle, Del., and **KATHERINE DRURY, AS00**, of Trumbull, Conn., were married in Wilmington, Del., on Nov. 6.

**CHAD STREET, BE99**, of Bear, Del., has been promoted to mobilization project director for ARAMARK's healthcare division and employee resource group chair for the company's "Rising Sun" Philadelphia hub, which supports Indigenous people in the organization. Street will focus on growing the Indigenous workforce and positively impacting Indigenous marketplaces across the country.

## 2000s

**LANE BRODY, AS02**, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., was promoted to equity shareholder at Saxton and Stump, where he works in civil litigation and commercial motor vehicle defense.



Kimberly L. Gattuso, AS95



Karen Anne (Colantonio) Buck, HS97



Lane Brody, AS02



John Fedena, TK98, and Katherine Drury, AS00

## Proud heritage:

As a member of the Nanticoke Indian Tribe in southern Delaware, Street hopes to create awareness and appreciation for Native American culture, art, history and tradition.





Bradford Winton, BE03, 10M



Ajit Nalla, ANR05M, EGO5M



Justin T. Kates, AS10

**BRADFORD WINTON, BE03, 10M**, of Wilmington, Del., has been promoted to managing director at Citi Global Wealth Law Firm Group.

**MIKE FOX, AS05**, of Crozet, Va., has been named the next Virginia chapter leader for Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. He has served as Virginia state legislative lead since 2020.

**KEEGAN MAGUIGAN, ANR07**, of Rockville, Md., is a senior auditor with the Financial Management and Assurance team of the U.S. Government Accountability Office—the audit, evaluation, and investigative arm of Congress. The team is responsible for the financial statement audit of the U.S. government and helps maintain and improve federal auditing and internal control standards.

“We all are smart and have good ideas. but IQ can only take you to a certain level. I learned from P.K. how to be emotionally connected to people.”

—Nalla on lessons gleaned from his Blue Hen mentor, Palaniappa Krishnan, associate professor of applied economics and statistics.

**AJIT NALLA, ANR05M, EGO5M**, of Frisco, Texas, has been named the chief risk officer at Wells Fargo.

**JULIA THOMPSON-CALIO, AS06**, and **BRIAN CALIO, AS05**, of Philadelphia, Pa., welcomed Josephine “Josie” Calio in June. Thompson-Calio counts at least a dozen Blue Hens within her extended family, including Double Del grandparents, **SUE (FAHEY), AS76**, and **JAY CALIO, AS76**, and two late great-grandfathers: **A. EDWARD CALIO, EG51M**, and **EDWARD FAHEY, EG51, BE64M**.

Sitting pretty as a Blue Hen



**Next-gen science:** Sullivan landed Microsoft's partnership with Adaptive Biotechnologies to map the human immune system and open new research avenues for vaccines. The deal marked a \$45 million investment from Microsoft. “To help evangelize a lot of the really incredible stuff we're doing is something I'm very proud of right now,” she says.



**KATHLEEN SULLIVAN, AS08**, of Mercer Island, Wash., was recognized in *Business Insider's* 30 Leaders Under 40 Changing Healthcare in 2023. As the senior director of strategy and operations in the health and life sciences division of Microsoft Research, she helps Microsoft decide where to place its bets in artificial intelligence, guided by the goal of directly helping patients.

**KERRI O'NEILL, AS09**, of Neptune, N.J., was married on October 6 at New Jersey's Art Factory.

**2010s**

**CHELSEA (BERDOLT) COUGHLIN, ANR10, AS10**, and **MICHAEL COUGHLIN BE10**, of West Islip, N.Y., were married among close friends and family on May 11 in Dublin, Ireland. There was a celebratory reception the following month in Long Island, N.Y.

**JUSTIN T. KATES, AS10**, of Lewes, Del., was sworn in as president of the U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers, based in Falls Church, Va. He also serves as the senior business continuity adviser for Wawa, Inc. In this role, he is responsible for developing a new business continuity program for Wawa's expanding footprint of over 1,000 stores with over 45,000 associates across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Florida, and Washington, D.C. Previously, Justin served 17 years in government, most recently as emergency management director for Somerville, Mass.

**JUAN CORREA, HS11, 17DPT**, and **SAMARA BADASH, HS15, 17DPT**, of New York, N.Y., were married in Paris, France, on Sept. 2, 2023. The Double Dels met as physical therapy students in 2015.





PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM:

Kerri O'Neill, AS09, wedding

Chelsea (Berdolt) Coughlin, ANR10, AS10, and Michael Coughlin, BE10, wedding

Juan Correa, HS11, 17DPT, and Samara Badash, HS15, 17DPT, wedding



KATHY F. ATKINSON

## STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER


This isn't the plot of a sci-fi film. Thanks to Blue Hen ingenuity, robots really are coming for your berries.

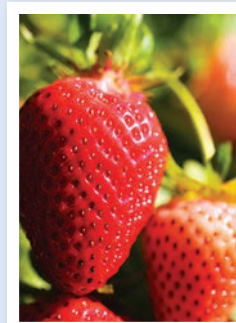
It's a long-awaited solution to a "growing" problem. The chemicals that have traditionally protected our food against mites, mold and mildew are getting weaker as crops gain resistance. And, according to the World Health Organization, these pesticides are potentially toxic to humans, making savvy consumers increasingly fearful of their fruit.

Enter **ADAM STAGER, EG11, 20PHD**, founder of TRIC Robotics, a recent finalist in the "Increasing Food Security" category of the 2023 THRIVE Global Impact Challenge. While earning his Ph.D. at UD, Stager built 3-D printed robots for SWAT teams to toss into potentially hazardous areas for reconnaissance. He called the project TRIC: throwable robots for inspection and characterization.

In 2019, through UD's Horn Entrepreneurship program, Stager learned that a certain type of UV light can effectively protect crops from pests, no chemicals necessary. This light, UV-C, is naturally produced by the sun, but filtered out by Earth's atmosphere. Scientists discovered that it can be recreated in a lamp and used to eliminate fungi and bacteria without altering plant quality. But these scientists faced a major hurdle: How to make this happen outside of the lab—where conditions are controllable—and in the actual field?

Working in his garage with two undergraduate students turned co-founders, **VISHNU SOMASUNDARAM, EG22**, and **RYAN BERARD, EG21**, Stager reconfigured his robots to hold these special light arrays. Today, he has a fleet of seven 20,000-pound machines—picture agricultural Roombas—that work in strawberry fields in California. But there's no crop the bots couldn't potentially treat, meaning there's no telling how far TRIC might expand.

"I got really lucky with the programs I found and the relationships I built at UD," Stager says. "It's an incredible community." 



## CLIMBING FOR A CAUSE



Jenny Godnick, pictured top left and below, and Barbara (top right), the woman to whom she donated a kidney.

In December, **JENNY GODNICK, EHD87**, scaled three Guatemalan volcanoes, traveling to the land of eternal spring with one mission in mind: saving lives.

"I'm spreading the word," she says. "Following a living kidney donation, you can do bigger, better, harder things."

In 2012, Godnick's brother-in-law, Steven Cohen, faced a grim reality. The 61-year old's scleroderma, a rare autoimmune condition, attacked both his kidneys. Godnick wanted to donate one of hers, but she wasn't a blood match, meaning Cohen's body would have rejected the organ. So Godnick, then 48, signed up for the National Kidney Registry, a program that facilitates kidney exchanges. In 2014, as part of a 24-person chain, she underwent surgery, donating her kidney to a stranger in New York as Cohen received one from another participant.

Years later, Godnick discovered Kidney Donor Athletes, a community that accomplishes great feats to inspire more people into living donation. Through this group, the Blue Hen signed up to climb three Guatemalan volcanoes in four days: Picaya, Atitlan and—with the highest summit of 13,000 feet—Acatenango.

Along with 17 other donors, Godnick hiked between six and 12 hours per day, navigating through intense cloud cover with limited oxygen. When things got tough, she leaned on lessons gleaned at UD: "Because I went through the Army ROTC program, I developed grit and resilience."

While Cohen died from his disease in 2017, Godnick is grateful for the three years her brother-in-law spent off dialysis, following his transplant surgery. And she feels sure he'd be her number one supporter in the volcano-climbing effort, which raised more than \$90,000 for the cause and remains "truly one of the most powerful things I've ever experienced." 🐦



Robert Spagnuolo, EG14

**ROBERT SPAGNUOLO, EG14**, of Burbank, Calif., has been named a project manager for Fuscoe Engineering, Inc. He will lead a team of engineers in providing services for projects throughout the Los Angeles area. Spagnuolo has nine years of civil engineering infrastructure experience and a strong background in public and private projects, with work on mixed-use and apartment developments, as well as medical centers, higher educational facilities and resorts.

**JORDYN LEE, AS14**, of Danville, Calif., and **NICK STACHOWSKI, AS14**, of Hockessin, Del., tied the knot in September in Santa Barbara, Calif. They had more than 20 alumni attend—from the Class of 2003 to the Class of 2017.

**BEN SOMERS, ANR14**, and Janine Linahan, of Newark, Del., were married on Sept. 9, 2023, in Pottstown, Pa. Somers hails from a long line of Blue Hens, including his mother, **LINDA COOK SOMERS, BE87**; late grandparents **MARTHA OWENS GRUWELL COOK, HS56**, and **HERMAN (HAP) WALLACE COOK JR., ANR56**; and late great-grandparents **FRANCIS ROMAINE MCCOY COOK, HS1923**, and **HERMAN WALLACE COOK, SR., ANR1923**.

**TAYLER HAMILTON, BE15**, of Wayne, Pa., is an actor who has created, written and produced his own web series, *This Time Good*. The show follows New York City roommates Sloane and Sunny as they chase their dreams of making it big. All eight episodes of the first season are available on YouTube at [youtube.com/@thistimegood](https://youtube.com/@thistimegood).



TOP PHOTO: Jordyn Lee, AS14 and Nick Stachowski, AS14, wedding

BOTTOM PHOTO: Ben Somers, ANR14, wedding



**TAYLOR BOND, BE15,** of Christiana, Pa., and **MICHAEL NOBILE, BSPA14,** of Randolph, N.J., were married at the Merion Cricket Club on June 17.

**SHANA MATTES DAVIS, AS15,** and **OWEN ROSS DAVIS, AS16,** of Newark, Del., welcomed baby girl Arianna Elyse Davis on Jan. 19, 2023.

**ALEXANDRA (ROSEN) KANEFSKY, EHD15, 19M,** and **STEPHEN KANEFSKY, EHD15, 16M,** of Point Pleasant, N.J., welcomed their first child, Lucy, on May 27, 2023.

**ANTHONY BATTLE, AS16,** of Smyrna, Del., graduated from the FBI National Academy, a prestigious honor reserved for less



Anthony Battle, AS16

than 1% of all active law enforcement officers. Battle is a lieutenant in the University of Delaware Police Department and the sixth UD Police officer in the department's history to have completed the program.

**MILO ROTHSTEIN, BE16,** and **DANA LENKOWSKY, AS17,** of Brooklyn, N.Y., married on Sept. 23, 2023, in Ridgewood, N.J.

**EMELIE GEVALT, AS17M,** recently curated "Unnamed Figures: Black Presence and Absence in the Early American North" at the American Folk Art Museum in New York, where she serves as curator of folk art. The exhibit features contributions from several UD art history students, faculty and alumni.

**MICHAEL J. WILSON, AS17,** of Lewisberry, Pa., earned his doctor of osteopathic medicine degree in 2021 from the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine. He is currently a third-year surgery resident at Guthrie Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, Pa.

Leaning in to life as a Blue Hen



Lucy Kanefsky and YoUDee



PHOTOS CLOCKWISE:

Emelie Gevalt, AS17M exhibit photo by Eva Cruz/Every Story

Shana Mattes Davis, AS15 and Owen Ross Davis, AS16 and Arianna Elyse Davis

Milo Rothstein, BE16, and Dana Lenkowsky, AS17, wedding

Taylor Bond, BE15, and Michael Nobile, BSPA14, wedding

**RACHEL LEVIN (FORMERLY MOSKOWITZ), AS17,** and **JARRETT LEVIN, BE17,** of Boston, Mass., were married on June 16 at Saltwater Farm Vineyard in Stonington, Conn.

**COOPER HURLEY, EG18, EG22M,** of Philadelphia, Pa., **NICK RUGGIERO, EG18,** of Haddonfield, N.J., and **MARK COUWENHOVEN,** alumni of Men's Crew, competed for the United States Rowing Team at the 2023 Pan American Games in San Pedro de La Paz, Chile, marking the third consecutive time that UD Men's Crew has sent alumni athletes to the continental, pre-Olympic competition.

**CHRISTOPHER ECKHOFF, BE18,** and **SASHA BYCK, BE18,** of Long Beach, N.Y. got engaged on Oct. 21, 2023, at 67 Steps in Greenport, N.Y. They plan to wed in Long Beach, N.Y.

**KRISTIE BEYER, AS19, AND CONOR DUPONT, AS19,** of Alexandria, Va., got married on May 28, 2023, in Middleburg, Va., with their favorite Blue Hens in attendance.

**EMILY (DUNHAM) REYNOLDS, AS19,** and **NATHAN REYNOSA, BE19,** of West Chester, Pa., were married on Aug. 12 at the Inn at Grace Winery in Glen Mills, Pa.

**MATT GAUDING, BE19,** of Middletown, Del., and **JENNA THATCHER, HS20,** of New Castle, Del., were married in Elkton, Md., on Oct. 7, 2023. The bridal party included nine fellow Blue Hens.

**NICOLAS PEREIRA, EG19, AND MARISA TREZZA, BSPA19,** of Wilmington, Del., got engaged on May 19, 2023, in Bruges, Belgium. The couple plan to elope on a mountain in August 2025, followed by a reception in September.

## 2020s

**HANNAH KIRK, BSPA21, 23M,** of Reston, Va., has joined the staff of the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) as a science policy fellow for the Science and Technology Policy Institute. IDA is a nonprofit corporation that operates three federally funded research and development centers in order to answer the most challenging U.S. security and science policy questions. 🐦

**How hospitable:** The couple met as hospitality majors during their Lodging Module course at the Courtyard Marriott and were soon dubbed "LodMod Lovers" by their hospitality peers. Their first date happened at Klondike Kate's on Main Street. "We owe years of memories to UD."



TOP: Rachel Levin (formerly Moskowitz), AS17, and Jarrett Levin, BE17, wedding  
 SECOND ROW, LEFT: Matt Gauding, BE19 and Jenna Thatcher, HS20, wedding  
 SECOND ROW, RIGHT: Emily (Dunham) Reynolds, AS19, and Nathan Reynolds, BE19, attend the UD-Penn State game three weeks after their wedding  
 BOTTOM ROW, LEFT: Christopher Eckhoff, BE18, and Sasha Byck, BE18, engagement  
 BOTTOM ROW, RIGHT: Nicolas Pereira, EG19, and Marisa Trezza, BSPA19, engagement



## DIG, IF YOU WILL, THE PICTURE.

A photo as groovy as this—found in the 1974 yearbook—must have a great accompanying story. If you're pictured here, or know anyone who is, let us know what's going on. Share your memories at [magazine@udel.edu](mailto:magazine@udel.edu) with the subject "Groovy wagon."

## SHARE YOUR NEWS

*The Magazine* encourages alumni to send us news to share with your fellow Blue Hens. A new job, a promotion, a personal or professional award ... they're all accomplishments we want to announce. Email a note or a press release to [magazine@udel.edu](mailto:magazine@udel.edu). Please include your hometown, graduation year and college or major.

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# IN MEMORIAM

**ALEXANDER WHITNEY JR., EG56**, March 15, 2022  
**ELIZABETH HALLIGAN HERMAN, AS57**, Oct. 4, 2023  
**RALPH T. TILLELI, EG59**, Feb. 28, 2021  
**S. ANTHONY SURAVITCH, EG61**, Sept. 12, 2023  
**TRAVIS COSABOOM, HS62, EHD64M**, Aug. 26, 2023  
**RICHARD C. HAMMER, HS62**, Jan. 6, 2024  
**ROBERT E. LUMPKIN, EG62**, June 20, 2023  
**RUSSELL K. CORBETT JR., AS65, EHD68M**, Sept. 6, 2023  
**WALTER J. HIGGINS JR., AS65**, Sept. 17, 2023  
**LOUISE MAHRU POTTER, AS65**, Oct. 6, 2023  
**FREDRIK J. HEINEMANN, AS66M**, Dec. 21, 2023  
**JOHN C. TURNER, EG67**, Dec. 1, 2023  
**THOMAS F. CURLEY, EHD68**, June 1, 2023  
**JON D. HOEY, AS68**, June 2, 2022  
**CHARLES N. BACON IV, AS70**, Oct. 8, 2022  
**DENNIS C. PRIEVE, EG73M, 75PHD**, May 11, 2023  
**DAN E. WILLIAMS, AS73, 74**, March 4, 2021  
**CHRISTOPHER D. BRADY, EHD76**, Aug. 25, 2014  
**JOHN J. KEEGAN JR., EG78**, Sept. 13, 2023  
**THOMAS J. OGOREK, AS78**, Nov. 23, 2023  
**JAY CALLOWAY, AS81**, June 14, 2023  
**AMY L. SHAFFER, EHD84**, Sept. 18, 2022  
**ROBERT M. HARTMAN, EG88PHD**, Oct. 5, 2023  
**KIMBERLY CONTE LASALVIA, HS88**, Nov. 22, 2022  
**DAVID M. WOLFENDEN, BE88, OOM**, Feb. 21, 2023  
**EDWARD S. GOLDEN, EG95, 97M**, Jan. 1, 2022  
**CAITLYNN "CAT" MITCHELL, EOE19**, Sept. 5, 2023  
**STEPHEN DIGIOVANNI, AS24**, May 18, 2023  
**PRAISE NNAMDI EZECHIBUEZE, HS24**, May 6, 2023  
**DANIEL BACSIK, EG27**, Sept. 29, 2023  
**SABRINA A. NAVARETTA, BE27**, April 28, 2023  
**ETHAN STATHAM, EG27**, Oct. 17, 2023

## FACULTY AND STAFF

**SUSAN AMERT**, retired associate professor of foreign languages and literatures, Sept. 26, 2023  
**LEE G. ANDERSON**, professor emeritus of marine science and policy, Nov. 30, 2023  
**MYRNA BAIR**, retired associate policy scientist and assistant professor of urban affairs and former director of UD's Women's Leadership Program, Jan. 29, 2024.  
**RICHARD BENSON**, retired senior scientist for the Delaware Geological Survey, Aug. 22, 2023  
**ELAINE BOETTCHER, HS75M**, emerita associate professor of nursing, Oct. 3, 2023  
**JAMES CROUSE**, retired professor of education, July 11, 2023  
**NANCY DEPUTY**, former coordinator for transportation services, Nov. 25, 2023  
**GARY FEURER**, former program analyst for the Office of Educational Technology, Dec. 3, 2020  
**WILLIAM HACKETT**, longtime manager of dining services, Nov. 28, 2023  
**MYRTLE MATEJSKI**, retired chair of nursing science, Sept. 5, 2023  
**CLAIRE NANIS**, retired associate professor of music, Oct. 4, 2023  
**NORMAN NESS**, retired professor and director of UD's Bartol Research Institute, Dec. 4, 2023  
**JOHN M. O'DONNELL, AS68, 74M**, former alumni director, July 9, 2023  
**ESTHER SMITH, EHD72, 77M**, retired counselor for continuing education, Nov. 28, 2023  
**GEORGE M. WHITMYRE JR., ANR73**, chemical engineering lab manager, Sept. 6, 2023  
**JAMES WINGRAVE**, retired assistant professor of chemistry, Sept. 16, 2023 🐦

## DAVID MILLS

David Mills, a professor emeritus known as the "father time" of the Internet, passed away on Jan. 17, 2024. He was 85.

Dr. Mills held appointments in the College of Engineering's departments of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Computer and Information Sciences and is best known for developing the system that allows computers on a network to synchronize their time. A pioneer of the early Internet, he is remembered for his curiosity, knowledge and enthusiasm.

After earning his Ph.D. in computer and communications science from the University of Michigan, Dr. Mills taught for many years before joining the COMSAT Corporation, where he began working on the Network Time Protocol (NTP) to synchronize computer systems clocks within networks. Today, the latest version of NTP continues to ensure that millions of computers and other Internet-connected devices worldwide, from mobile phones to air traffic control centers, run "on time."



"He took a problem that few realized was a problem, synchronizing clocks, and made it his life's work," says UD Prof. Charles Boncelet, who collaborated with Dr. Mills.

Dr. Mills joined UD as a professor in 1986. He taught graduate and undergraduate courses in data communications, network protocols, computer security, electronic circuit analysis, digital systems design and computer architecture. His research program, which focused on computer networks, security, communication systems and digital radio communications, was funded by numerous federal agencies, including NASA, the U.S. Navy and Army and more. He retired from UD in 2008 but continued to teach as an emeritus professor 🐦

—Erica Brockmeier

Please share news of a loved one's passing with us at [inmemoriam.udel.edu](http://inmemoriam.udel.edu)



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## A CONVERSATION with...

What he does, in theory, is simple: **Timothy Shaffer**, a national leader in his field and UD's inaugural Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Chair of Civil Discourse and director of the SNF Ithaca Initiative, teaches people how to talk. In practice, it's a herculean task. During a time of uber-polarized politics and hostile social media, how do we disagree without hurting feelings or contributing to the—*gulp*—downfall of democracy? Here, Shaffer shares some of what he's learned as an acclaimed scholar, author and regular human just trying to get through Thanksgiving dinner like the rest of us.

**What do people get wrong about civil discourse?** Many think it's about being nice and mannerly—the Emily Post situation. But civil discourse means actively engaging with differing views to work toward a goal.

**How?** By listening to understand. It helps to focus on values versus positions. People who disagree on, say, abortion, might be motivated by the same value: family.

**What's at stake?** We can see the dysfunction in Washington, D.C., or in religious communities—for example, the United Methodist Church is not so united and is fracturing along ideological lines. We need to be able to disagree; society needs friction. I was an Eagle Scout, and I always say: You need friction to start a fire. But you have to be able to contain it, or you burn the whole thing down.

**What's your best advice for containing the fire?** You don't know everything, and you have to accept that. Have some intellectual humility. I have four kids, and I'm reminded how much of our formal education is about right or wrong—you know it or you don't. But so much of life exists in the gray area between, and we don't do a good job acknowledging that.

**But racists! Conspiracy theorists! Isn't there ever a time for UNCivil discourse?** Civil discourse is about dialogue and decorum, but it's also about confrontation and civil disobedience. Black Lives Matter is a good recent example. Sometimes, civil discourse is disruptive and loud.

**How do you know when to get loud?** There's no list of boxes to check. But, for me, a distinguishing characteristic is: To what end? Once the dramatic confrontation is over, how are you going to realize, in a collective way, your goal? The movements that can't answer that question are the ones that fizzle out.

**In a digital age, how do we balance respectful dialogue with free speech?** This is what our our SNF Ithaca National Student Dialogue, for which we're bringing university students from around the country to UD this spring, will focus on: We need to ensure people feel safe and included, and we need to ensure we hear differing viewpoints, so how do we balance those competing values? There's no secret answer, but we have to figure it out collectively.

**Do you ever feel like you're fighting an uphill battle?**  
All the time.

**What gives you hope?** I believe in the power of education—church basements, community spaces, classrooms—to make a difference. I had a powerful experience years ago. At my previous institution, we were discussing a

.....  
*"We can't mute opinions that run counter to the majority. Persuasion isn't the goal. If we hope to accomplish anything, we need to understand."*  
.....

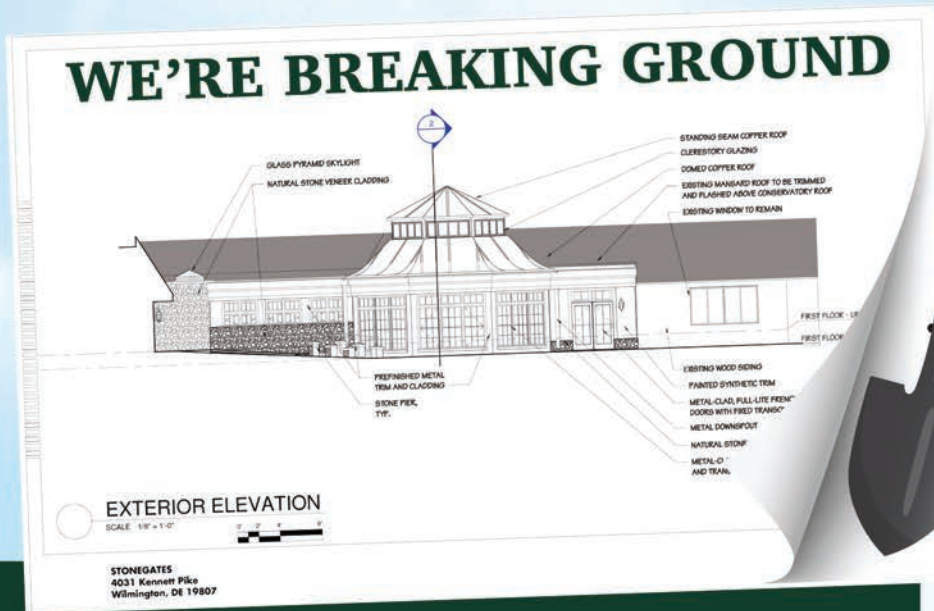
new policy that would make concealed handguns legal in the state. Most of the students were against. One, adamantly for the law, reached out after the course to say how much he appreciated that I didn't demonize his minority position. He told me he'd had a brother who'd been a school shooter, and the reason he feels so strongly about his position is that if someone else in the school had had a gun that day, they may have stopped his brother. This is a person who needs to be able to show up and enter conversations, because he has a place from which to speak. We can't mute opinions that run counter to the majority. Persuasion isn't the goal. If we hope to accomplish anything, we need to understand. 🐦



PHOTO BY KATHY F. ATKINSON

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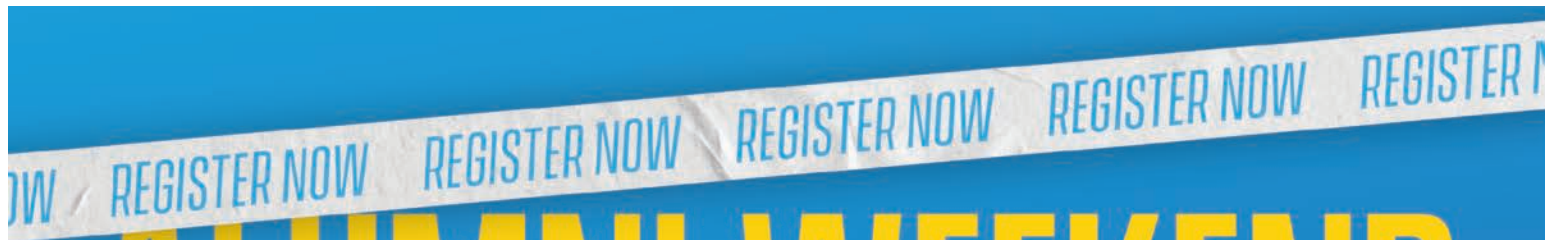
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