

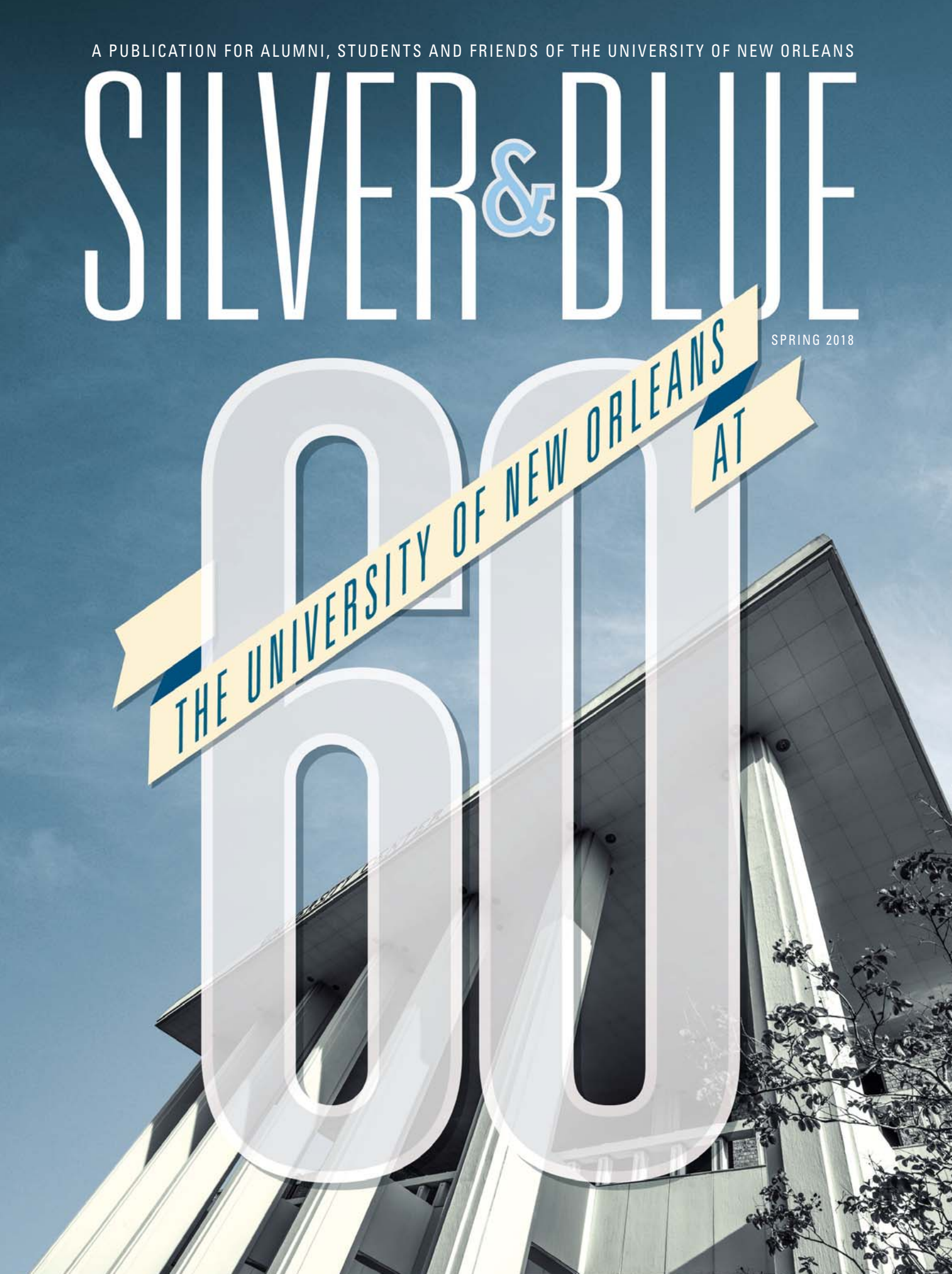
A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI, STUDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

SILVER & BLUE

SPRING 2018

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS
AT

UNIVERSITY



FIRST
LOOK





DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS:

As a university, our location is inextricably connected to our identity. There are many estimable institutions of higher learning in New Orleans but only one is *the* University of New Orleans. The Privateers are the only major college athletes whose uniforms bear the words “New Orleans.” We take great pride in these distinctions. We consider the successes of our hometown to be our own, which is why the past year has been such an exciting time to be a New Orleanian.

Have you been paying attention to recent New Orleans rankings? Here are just a few that piqued my interest:

#1 Brain magnet in America

#1 Most economical city by KPMG

#1 Business climate by *Business Facilities*

#3 City winning the IT jobs battle

#2 Women’s share of technology jobs by the Brookings Institution

#8 City for women in technology by SmartAsset

#3 City to which millennial are flocking in droves by *Business Insider*

#4 Coolest city in America by *Forbes*

#1 Healthcare job growth by STAT

#2 Favorite city in America by *Travel + Leisure*

#8 Happiest employees in the USA by *Forbes*

Not to mention that *The New York Times* named New Orleans the No. 1 place to go in the world in 2018. Okay, so that is more than a few, and there are many more not listed here. Greater New Orleans, Inc., a leading regional economic development alliance and a terrific partner of the University of New Orleans, does a fantastic job of touting the rankings of a city that is the new standard for reinvention.

The message is clear: while New Orleans remains a cultural mecca, it is also transforming into a hotspot for technology, entrepreneurship and social innovation. With more than 45,000 alumni in the greater New Orleans region alone, the University of New Orleans prides itself on playing an instrumental role in this renaissance. We are a platform for economic activity and growth. We work hard each day to ensure that we are training the talent that business and industry of the region demand. For our students, the city becomes their very own learning laboratory, and they have exclusive opportunities like our GE Software Engineering Apprenticeship Program and internships in major tourism initiatives. For our business partners, our collaborations mean connecting with the professors who are generating knowledge and identifying opportunities to recruit the best emerging talent.

There are examples throughout the country demonstrating that business—and the technology sector in particular—is drawn to areas around universities because of the talent supply line. The resulting partnerships boost productivity and stimulate the economy and wages for all people in the region. These cases make me incredibly excited and optimistic about our university and our region’s future economic growth. Others are excited too; the University is experiencing a surge that amounts to roughly a 30 percent increase in freshmen applications for the fall 2018 semester, and 35 percent more students attended our spring open house when compared to 2017. These students know that tomorrow really does begin here, in our city, at our university—the University of New Orleans.

Sincerely,

John Nicklow
PRESIDENT

 @UNOPresidentJN

 @unopresident

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CONTENTS

FEATURES



p. **36**

60 YEARS OF UNO BY THE NUMBERS

On the anniversary of its 1958 founding, the University of New Orleans examines some numbers that tell our story.

UNO 25

The University announces its inaugural class of 25 Privateer-led businesses that are having an impact.



p. **24**

p. **28**



NOVEL COURTSHIP

The University of New Orleans Publishing Lab gives grad students a crash course in birthing books.

p. **32**



MORE THAN A LIBRARY

Newly named Library Dean Ray Wang discovered a home among the stacks.

DEPARTMENTS

4 CAMPUS SCENE

New Student Lounge, Exploring UNO, Krewe of UNO, Bela Fleck, National Engineers Week, International Night

10 NEWS & EVENTS

Nicklow Highlights Progress in State of University; \$1M Anonymous Gift Modernizes Chemistry Labs; DXC Partners with UNO; \$1M NSF Grant Provides STEM Scholarships; Treva Brown Wins National Student Award; New Endowment Honors Physics Professor

18 FACULTY FOCUS

Jovanovich Honored for Community Work; Mattei Named Interim Engineering Dean; Hembree Wins Excellence in Teaching Prize; Hassan Awarded Research Fellowship; Faculty, Students Awarded Nearly \$300K; Georgiou Seeks Answers About Hurricanes and Marshes

39 THE UNO TRAVELER

Amy Nguyen Explores Japan

40 ATHLETICS

The Unlikely Captain: Matthew Jiles' journey from student-manager to team captain.

45 DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Alumnus Chris Maurer gives back by becoming a Legacy donor.

46 ALUMNOTES

News from UNO's accomplished graduates.

50 IN MEMORIAM

52 THEN AND NOW

CAMPUS SCENE

HEADLINES AND HAPPENINGS



JAMMING WITH A MASTER

Sixteen-time Grammy Award-winning banjoist and composer Béla Fleck taught a master class at the University of New Orleans on March 16. Fleck was in town to debut his Banjo Concerto No. 3, “Louisiana Concerto” with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra in celebration of New Orleans’ tricentennial. At UNO,

the New York-born Fleck shared thoughts on composing, improvisation and his journey to the banjo. Fleck also jammed with graduate music students Tevarri Huff-Boone (saxophone), Oscar Rossignoli (piano), Martin Masakowski (bass) and Joey van Leeuwen (drums) as part of the class.



A PLACE TO RELAX

The Captain's Quarters Student Lounge opened March 1 at the University Center to instant popularity. The space features three gaming systems; a full sized pool table; six seated charging stations for laptops, tablets and phones; 24 lockers; dedicated Wi-Fi; and a game table with board games. Joy Ballard, coordinator for student governance, says student response has been tremendous: "Clearly this was a student need that we have met."



EXPLORING UNO

Nearly 400 future students visited campus Feb. 17 for a chance to learn more about New Orleans' only public research university and, in some cases, to compete for scholarship dollars. Explore UNO, the University's annual spring open house, drew more families than ever before, with an estimated 868 visitors participating, including 67 incoming freshmen who interviewed in person for the prestigious Homer Hitt Scholarship and 24 President's Scholarship winners who competed on-site for additional scholarship dollars.



SIXTY YEARS OF CELEBRATION

Beads flew. Capes swished. Horns blared. The 6th Annual Krewe of UNO Mardi Gras parade wound through the University of New Orleans campus Feb. 6, with President John Nicklow and Stacy Nicklow leading the procession aboard a rolling pirate ship fully stocked with Privateer-blue cups and beads. Under the theme, "Six Decades of Celebration," a salute to the University's 60 years, 37 campus organizations and departments participated in the parade and seemed undeterred by the intermittent rain that started to fall midway through the route. The Sophie B. Wright Charter School marching band joined the krewe, providing tunes to fuel the celebration.





ENGINEERING NEW ORLEANS' FUTURE

Could you build a bridge using paper and scotch tape? What would you do if an alarm on your spacecraft sounded? How would you precisely measure out four ounces of liquid using nothing but two cups – one that holds three ounces and one that holds five ounces? About 1,300 middle and high school students from 23 New Orleans-area schools took on these challenges and more during the University of New Orleans' celebration of National Engineers Week in February. UNO's College of Engineering partnered with Core Element and the American Society of Civil Engineers on the event, which included a planetarium visit and a screening of "Dream Big," a film that explores the human ingenuity behind engineering marvels big and small.



SHARING THE WORLD

International Night continues to be the biggest student organized event on campus. On March 24, the community gathered again to enjoy food, live performances, exhibitions and conversation about the diversity of cultures that help make the University of New Orleans a place where everyone can come together to share, learn and collaborate.



DIGGING DEEP FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The Student Government Association collaborated with NOLA Tree Project in March to plant 65 trees in the area of the mathematics and computer science buildings. Volunteer help came from 34 students who were conducting service projects with Campus Crusade while on break from St. Louis-area universities. The trees included 15-gallon live oaks, red maples, Savannah hollies and about eight to 10 fruit trees. Nigel Watkins, UNO student body president, below, said the \$5,000 project was paid for with SGA funds and is part of an ongoing student effort to make the campus greener. "One day we'll come back in 20 years and there will be a big canopy covering UNO," Watkins says.



NEWS & EVENTS

NICKLOW HIGHLIGHTS GAINS IN ENROLLMENT, RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans is making significant progress toward increasing enrollment, bolstering research and improving community and business partnerships.

That's the report University of New Orleans President John Nicklow gave during his biannual State of the University address before UNO faculty and staff on March 15.

Year over year since 2017, he said, freshmen applications to the University of New Orleans were up 26 percent as of March while freshman admits have risen 53 percent by 700 students. When graduate school applications are factored in, total applications have risen by 17 percent and admits are up by 51 percent, he said.

"So how are we finding success in reaching prospective students?" Nicklow asked. "We are not introducing ourselves to students for the first time in the fall of their senior year. We are engaging much earlier and more regularly with them."

Recruitment efforts start 18 to 36 months prior to a prospective student's graduation. The University has made it a priority to strengthen its relationships with high school guidance counselors. Expanded digital and print marketing efforts are doing a better job targeting students, especially

in areas where recruiters are traveling at any given time.

"With your help, we are on track to meet our goal of 8,500 students," Nicklow said. "But what happens between now and August is critically important."

Nicklow encouraged employees to be brazen about sharing their pride for the university: "That kind of individual recruitment is a tremendous force multiplier," he said.

There is much to boast about.

Within one month's time, the University of New Orleans announced two \$1 million grants, including one from an anonymous donor that will modernize and upgrade three chemistry labs.

Student retention efforts are bearing fruit. In fall 2017, 81 percent of full-time freshmen taking their first math class had a grade of C or higher, up 10 percentage points from the year prior. In addition, average freshmen class GPA is higher than the year before, from 2.58 in 2016 to 2.76 in fall 2017.

"At the end of the day, enrollment isn't just about numbers," Nicklow said. "It is about the lives we change, the students we serve. Each of us plays a role in that effort."

Grants for sponsored research have increased



increased 37 percent in the second quarter, he said, from \$1.6 million in 2017 to \$2.2 million in 2018, with the number of proposal submissions up 11 percent.

Also growing is the University Foundation's endowment, which has risen more than \$8 million in a year to \$74.9 million as of December. Much of the funds raised last year went exclusively to student scholarships and support.

"It was not very long ago when the University raised only between a half-million and a million dollars a year," Nicklow said. "Those days are over."

By this time next year, Nicklow said, UNO will be engaged in its first comprehensive fundraising campaign.

Alumni engagement is also getting stronger with successful events like UNO 25, which recognized 25 high-impact businesses owned or led by UNO alumni, and an upcoming UNO Hall of Distinction that will seek to recognize those who have been influential leaders throughout the University's 60 years.

Nicklow, who was named UNO's president in March 2016, also touched on some of

The University is growing in its efforts to recruit and retain successful students.

exciting external partnerships that have developed, including that with DXC Technology, an IT services firm and \$25-billion company that is bringing 2,000 new high-quality jobs to New Orleans. UNO is one of the universities partnering with the company to increase the numbers of degrees awarded in areas DXC needs.

Wayward Owl Brewing Company last year began brewing Privateer Pale Ale, a craft beer sold in bars, restaurants and grocery stores including Rouse's Supermarkets.

"My theme this year has been pride," Nicklow said. Employees and students will see a number of improvements that include the launch of a new University website redesign, extended library and dining hours, resurfaced streets and power-washed buildings and walkways.

Nicklow ended his address by thanking employees. "All that we are able to accomplish is only because of your determination and devotion to serving our students."

\$1 MILLION GIFT WILL MODERNIZE CHEMISTRY LABS

A \$1 MILLION GIFT FROM AN anonymous donor will transform three University of New Orleans chemistry laboratories. The donation will drastically improve the labs in order to meet the 21st century learning needs of students. The gift funds upgrades in the introductory chemistry lab, the quantitative analysis and instrumental analysis lab, and the organic lab.

The renovations and purchase of new equipment will meet the best practice standards recommended by the American Chemical Society. Improvements include ergonomically designed work areas as well as new lighting, washing stations, and chemically resistant benchtops

and flooring. Students can take advantage of new storage areas and safety equipment with easy access to eye washes and safety showers. A lab prep and stockroom will also be renovated with new storage capability and improved workspace.

Steve Johnson, dean of the College of Sciences, says that the new labs will have a transformative effect on students: “Substantial laboratory work is essential to develop the skills necessary to successfully enter the chemistry workforce. These laboratory experiences reinforce concepts taught in the classroom and include hands-on use of modern instrumentation to solve chemical problems.”

GRADUATE WINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH ON AUTISM

PANAGIOTIS MARKOPOULOS, a fall 2017 graduate of the Ph.D. counselor education program at the University of New Orleans, received the Graduate Student Research Award from the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors during its world conference in February.

Markopoulos was recognized for his dissertation work, which explores the use of virtual reality technology in the treatment of children with autism—and area of research that arises out of his personal



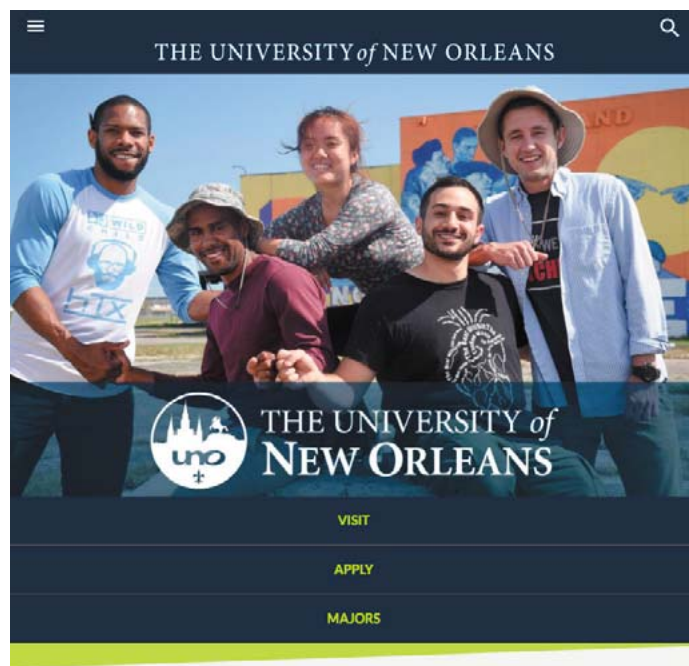
Panagiotis Markopoulos

experience. Markopoulos was diagnosed with autism himself as a child. As a doctoral student, Markopoulos saw the potential

in using virtual reality to advance treatment. His thesis aimed to demonstrate the value of virtual reality to counseling peers.

“The ultimate goal is that children will be able to work with the practitioner on their social and communication skills development in a safe

clinical setting,” Markopoulos says. “The technology can provide high levels of immersion and also a fun experience to keep the child engaged during therapy.”



The University of New Orleans' redesigned website is both vibrant and responsive on mobile devices.

UNIVERSITY WEBSITE REDESIGNED WITH FUTURE STUDENTS IN MIND

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans in March launched a redesigned website that is as vibrant as the community it serves.

Using images and information that authentically convey the experience of being a part of UNO, the new website includes a number of features that will make it easier for future students and other key constituents to explore their potential at New Orleans' only public research university.

The site, which utilizes Drupal 8 content management system—a widely used open source platform—is responsive on mobile devices. Navigation more easily leads visitors through the informational, research and application process while better sharing the

messages that the University has already been sending those who are looking to advance themselves and their degrees: “Tomorrow Begins Here.”

President John Nicklow prioritized the University's website redesign shortly after taking the helm as UNO's seventh leader in 2016. The website underwent its last redesign in 2012. “The redesigned site presents the University of New Orleans brand—its messages and visual identity—in a more consistent manner,” Nicklow says. “We will depend on our website to help us tell our story more effectively and persuasively.”

View the website at uno.edu.

UNIVERSITY TO PLAY CENTRAL ROLE IN PRODUCING GRADUATES FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY SERVICES COMPANY

IN ORDER TO MEET THE workforce demand created by the arrival of DXC Technology, the University of New Orleans will serve as one of the lead universities in the effort to increase the number of degrees awarded in key areas.

Virginia-based DXC Technology in November announced its plan to create a 2,000-job Digital Transformation Center in downtown New Orleans. The project is expected to create more permanent direct jobs at one site than any other prior economic development deal in Louisiana.

To meet that workforce demand, the State of Louisiana will fund a \$25 million higher education initiative to expand the number of degrees awarded annually in computer science, management, and science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM-related studies. The initiative will be led through four lead campuses, including the University of New Orleans.

“The University of New Orleans is committed to forging a close relationship with DXC Technology in order to provide it with the prepared and highly



skilled graduates that it needs to flourish in New Orleans,” UNO President John Nicklow says. “The state’s education initiative will fund additional faculty and new technology and facilities to support our students and their success.”

The arrival of DXC Technology, formed in April 2017 by the merger of CSC and the Enterprise Services Division of Hewlett Packard Enterprise, cements Louisiana’s position as one of the fastest-growing software and IT destinations in the U.S.

The new Digital Transfor-

mation Center in New Orleans expects to hire 300 IT and business enterprise professionals during 2018, then ramp up to 2,000 jobs over five years and an annual payroll exceeding \$133 million by 2025.

UNO plans to partner with DXC Technology to supply graduates for full-time employment as well as students for internships. On average, 97 percent of University of New Orleans graduates remain in Louisiana, which makes the University well positioned to

The University of New Orleans is partnering with DXC Technology to supply graduates for full-time employment as well as students for internships.

help meet the hiring needs for the Digital Transformation Center, according to Celyn Boykin, director of the Office of Career Services.

The DXC Technology project represents the state’s largest single higher-education investment in a private-sector workforce partnership.

FRATERNITY CHAPTER DONATES \$112,000 FOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

THE HOUSING CORPORATION for a former University of New Orleans fraternity chapter has donated \$112,000—originally raised to buy a fraternity house—for a student scholarship at the University. With the gift, the Phi Kappa Theta New Orleans Building Association will establish the Phi

Kappa Theta Legacy Endowed Scholarship, which will support the educational needs of UNO students.

Phi Kappa Theta, which operated as a chapter at the University of New Orleans from 1964 until 2008, originally raised money in order to acquire a fraternity house.

When the chapter disbanded, the Phi Kappa Theta New Orleans Building Association and the alumni of the chapter elected to use the funds to endow a scholarship at the University. The endowment is likely to provide an annual scholarship of approximately \$4,000, and the amount will

increase as the endowment grows.

The scholarship will be available to full-time UNO students. It can be renewed for up to four years if the recipient maintains a minimum 2.5 grade point average. Students pursuing a degree in any academic discipline are eligible.

UNO STUDENTS WIN LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH PLANS SCHOLARSHIP

THE LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION of Health Plans has awarded its annual Gil Dupré Graduate Student Scholarship to two University of New Orleans students seeking careers in the health care field. Chelsea Ardoin and Jasmine Perkins Pate each received \$5,000 toward the final semester of their degree programs in New Orleans.

Ardoin is pursuing an Executive MBA and works for

Healthy Blue, one of Louisiana's five Healthy Louisiana Medicaid managed care plans. She previously worked as special assistant to the secretary at the Louisiana Department of Health.

Perkins Pate is pursuing an MBA with a concentration in healthcare management. She is an accountant for the City of New Orleans as well as the founder and director of DO IT FOR ME, a Christian organization that works to create

awareness of HIV/AIDS in New Orleans.

The Gil Dupré scholarship was established by LAHP as a community service to promote careers in the health insurance and health benefits industry. The award is named for LAHP's founder and long-time chief executive officer who retired in 2012 after a 41-year career in the health benefits industry. Ardoin and Perkins Pate were the year's only recipients.



Jasmine Perkins Pate



Chelsea Ardoin

FUNDING SUPPORT GROWS FOR MASSIVE SLAVE ADS DIGITIZATION DATABASE

THE UNIVERSITY OF New Orleans has been awarded a \$201,000 grant from the National Historic Preservation and Records Commission, a division of the National Archives, to support Freedom on the Move, a collaborative digital database of fugitive slave advertisements currently under development.

The project's goal is the creation of a database containing as many as 100,000 fugitive slave advertisements printed in North American newspapers before the Civil War. Freedom on the Move will make these sources available for statistical, geographical, textual and other forms of analysis.

Mary Niall Mitchell, who holds the Ethel & Herman L. Midlo Chair in New Orleans Studies and the Joseph Tregle Professorship in Early American History at UNO, is one of three historians leading Freedom on the Move, along with Joshua Rothman of the University

of Alabama and Edward E. Baptist of Cornell University. The project includes a crowdsourcing component that will enable the general public to take part in creating the database.

"Our research team is excited to see growing support for Freedom on the Move," Mitchell says.

The National Endowment for the Humanities awarded \$325,000 to the Freedom on the Move project last year. This latest grant from the will fund the collection of thousands of ads and the development of additional features by programmers at Cornell's CISER Institute for Social and Economic Research, including a museum kiosk, a portal specifically for educators and the incorporation of GIS data.

The museum kiosk and the educator portal, in particular, Mitchell says, "will make thousands of individual stories of resistance to slavery available



as instructional tools for both museum and classroom educators."

More than 100,000 runaway ads are estimated to have survived from the colonial or pre-Civil War United States. They provide significant quantities of individual and collective information about the economic, demographic,

Mary Niall Mitchell is one of three historians leading Freedom on the Move.

social and cultural history of slavery and the thousands of people who resisted it, but they have never been systematically collected into one digital database.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS GETS \$1M NSF GRANT FOR STEM SCHOLARSHIPS

NEARLY \$1 MILLION awarded by the National Science Foundation will go to support University of New Orleans students who have financial need and show academic promise in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math.

The grant will fund at least 18 scholarships over five years for students who are pursuing bachelor's degrees in computer science, chemistry and biological sciences. The aim of the NSF's "Early Engagement for Entering Freshman Science Majors" project is to increase the persistence and graduation rates of STEM majors at highly diverse institutions.

Wendy Schluchter, professor and chair of biological sciences is the grant's principal investigator. She says the project will enable



the University to build on its existing focus on retention in STEM fields while also allowing it to leverage partnerships with local companies who provide training and internship programs for students.

"The University of New

Orleans has many academically talented students who are the first in their families to attend college," Schluchter says. "Pairing the scholarships with these training opportunities integrated into their educational experience will be truly a game-changer for

A \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation builds on existing efforts by the University to support students entering the STEM fields.

these students."

The goal of the project is to improve academic outcomes for STEM students by providing a network of comprehensive support, engagement activities, and internships and research opportunities. It also seeks to enhance career and graduate school success through mentoring and career training, as well as increasing student confidence and preparedness to pursue a career in a scientific field.

WAYWARD OWL BREWING PRESENTS PRIVATEER PALE ALE

WAYWARD OWL BREWING Co. and the University of New Orleans have teamed up to create Privateer Pale Ale. The Belgian-style pale ale is the newest offering from the locally-owned craft brewery located in the Broadmoor neighborhood, in the heart of New Orleans. It is UNO's first officially licensed beer.

Justin Boswell, founder and head brewer of Wayward Owl Brewing Co, says he was excited to be chosen to represent the Privateers. "We believe that local partnerships like this push us to be more innovative in how we support our community," Boswell says. "We hope alumni and friends of the University



enjoy the beer?"

Privateer Pale Ale is available at Wayward Owl's taproom, 3940 Thalia St. in New Orleans and, of course, the Sandbar, the renowned jazz venue located inside The Cove on UNO's campus. It is also on

tap at a variety of other bars in New Orleans, Metairie, Baton Rouge and Lafayette and is sold at Rouses Supermarkets, 504 Craft Beer Reserve, Breaux Mart, Whole Foods and more.

University of New Orleans President John Nicklow says

An automatic labeler at Wayward Owl Brewing Co. in New Orleans displays the Privateer Pale Ale logo.

the beer has already generated additional Privateer pride among alumni and members of the community. "This is another example of the University engaging in mutually beneficial partnerships, and we could not be any happier with the final product."

Boswell describes Privateer Pale Ale as having a malty but slightly dry and spicy fruit aroma.



While a doctoral student at the University of New Orleans, Treva Brown received the Winifred Burks-Houck Graduate Leadership Award from the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers.

Treva Brown: Engineering Her Future BY MALLORY MOORE

FOR TREVA BROWN, things are coming full circle.

Just before graduating with a Ph.D. in chemistry in December, the University of New Orleans student received the prestigious Winifred Burks-Houck Graduate Leadership Award from the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCCChE).

The award, which Brown received at the organization's conference in November, recognizes her for demonstrating leadership, scientific achievements and community service while pursuing a career in science.

The Winifred Burks-Houck Graduate Leadership Award is named for the organization's first female president, who also happens to be the great, great, great granddaughter of Harriet Tubman. Burks-Houck was an environmental organic chemist with a bachelor's degree from

Dillard University and a master's degree from Atlanta University. She died in 2004.

Brown had attended the conference regularly since her days as an undergraduate at LSU. She credits her early interest in the STEM disciplines—science, technology, engineering and math—to a high school physics teacher. In college, mentor relationships became increasingly important. With guidance from a female professor, Brown became the first freshman to engage in research in the instructor's chemistry lab.

Brown says she was inspired by the scholars she saw receiving awards and recognition at conferences. She collected business cards and took photos with professionals she admired. At the most recent NOBCCChE meeting, she found herself being sought after for workshop appearances and photos.

"That kind of attention is very rewarding," Brown

says. Mentorship was key to launching her academic career, she says, and so she is grateful for the opportunity to inspire others.

Brown's ability to connect with others through her love of science is likely one of the reasons she was chosen to receive the Burks-Houck award. At the University of New Orleans, she served as president of the Graduate Chemical Society. She organized events to promote awareness of STEM education among students young and old, recruiting both graduate and undergraduate students to participate. Brown is also a founding member of the UNO chapter of Alpha Chi Sigma chemistry fraternity, where she implemented volunteer outreach activities.

Brown completed her graduate studies under John Wiley, a research professor and director of UNO's Advanced Materials Research Institute,

who calls her an "excellent scientist." Brown defended her dissertation on atomic force microscopy last fall and received her Ph.D. in chemistry at UNO's fall 2017 commencement.

On Sept. 25, the same day she learned that she would receive the Burks-Houck award, Brown received a job offer from NASA at Stennis Space Center. Brown now uses her knowledge of microscopy to help build partnerships relevant to NASA's mission.

She remains a fan of those who have paved the way for others. When former NASA astronaut Joan Higginbotham, one of only three African-American women to have traveled to space, was tapped to give the commencement address during the ceremony where Brown received her doctorate, Brown made it her goal to meet Higginbotham in person.

And, of course, she did. 🍀

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS TO PLAY KEY ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT OF COASTAL GEOHAZARDS ATLAS

MARK KULP, ASSOCIATE professor of earth and environmental sciences at the University of New Orleans, is part of a team working to produce a map of geological features affecting the landscape of coastal Louisiana.



Mark Kulp

Described as a “geohazards atlas,” this project will compile maps and reports describing the geologic and structural framework of coastal

Louisiana, including the impact of subsidence, faulting and flooding to landscape, land use and infrastructure.

The group’s goal is to create a unified, peer-reviewed portrayal of the entire Mississippi River delta plain to better inform planning and mitigation efforts at the federal, state and local levels. A complete draft of the atlas is expected by the end of 2018 with final digital and

hardcopy versions to follow next year.

Leading the effort to produce the atlas are the New Orleans Geological Society, a group led by energy industry professionals, and the Louisiana Geological Survey, the state’s chief resource for geological information. Other team members include faculty from LSU, Tulane and the University of Louisiana-Lafayette, a representative from the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation and representa-

tives from two environmental consulting firms.

Kulp’s work focuses on the identification of faults within the Pontchartrain Basin and the impact they have on the coastal landscape. Kulp is working with John Lopez, coastal sustainability program manager at the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, to examine fault effects on the New Orleans Land Bridge, the Causeway Bridge infrastructure, the Highway 11 Bridge, and the I-10 Bridge Twin Spans.

UNO-CHART AND PARTNERS RECEIVE \$1 MILLION GRANT FROM ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans Center for Hazards Assessment, Response and Technology (UNO-CHART) and a coalition of local partners have been awarded \$1 million from the Rockefeller Foundation.

The funding comes in the form of two grants that will go toward the creation of a three-part series of roundtable discussions designed to build a portfolio of best practices that address global climate change.

UNO-CHART shares the grant with the Foundation for Louisiana and Concordia LLC. The Global Transformation Roundtable Series will bring together international experts, state leaders and community organizers to share strategies and lay a blueprint to combat growing threats from climate induced coastal erosion, rising sea levels and extreme flooding.

UNO-CHART’s applied



social science hazards research center collaborates with Louisiana communities and surrounding parishes in the development of best practices for reducing risks to achieve comprehensive community resilience.

“We know we are going to face a higher degree of flood risk and land loss over the decades and generations yet to come,”

says Monica Farris, director of UNO-CHART. “Every person and every community needs to have a basic literacy on this challenge and its solutions, and that’s what this three-part series aims to provide.”

All events will be facilitated by Concordia LLC, a longtime partner in design, planning, and community engagement.

The grant comes on top of nearly \$300,000 UNO-CHART received as part of a team for a project that aims to help Louisiana’s coastal communities develop resiliency plans before disaster strikes. That work is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through the Baton Rouge-based Center for Planning Excellence.

MASTER'S DEGREE IN FINANCE GIVES STUDENTS PROFESSIONAL EDGE

STARTING IN THE FALL 2018 semester, the University of New Orleans will offer a master of science degree in finance. This is a professional degree for students who want to specialize in finance. A 30-credit hour program, it can be completed in 15 months by full-time students or 18 months by part-time students.

"Students in this program will receive broad and deep exposure to finance and financial markets," says Walter Lane, chair and associate professor of

finance and economics. "We will focus on skills that are valued by employers in areas such as quantitative methods, corporate finance, financial reporting and analysis, derivatives, investments and portfolio management."

The demand for financial analysts is expected to grow 16 percent faster than average from now through 2022, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The curriculum of the program is tailored to prepare students who want to obtain the Chartered Financial Analyst



Walter Lane, chair and associate professor of finance and economics, leads a class at the University of New Orleans.

(CFA) designation. A student must pass three exams in order to obtain the CFA charter. The combination of the prestigious CFA designation and the

master's degree in finance will give graduates an edge in the job market, Lane says.

The first class will enroll in August 2018.

NEW ENDOWMENT HONORS MEMORY OF DISTINGUISHED PHYSICS PROFESSOR GEORGE E. IOUP

A NEW \$50,000 ENDOWMENT has been established to honor the memory of George Ioup, who spent more than 45 years as a researcher and professor of physics at the University of New Orleans.

The endowment is funded by a gift from Ioup's widow, Juliette Ioup, who is also a UNO physics professor. The Dr. George E. Ioup Endowed Award in Physics will provide awards of \$1,000 to one undergraduate and one graduate student each year.

Physics department faculty will evaluate applications and select awardees. The endowment sets forth qualifications for the award, including full-time enrollment in a physics degree program and a cumulative 3.0 grade point average.

Additionally, awardees should share some of the qualities George Ioup was

known to possess: passion, motivation and dedication in the study of physics, intellectual curiosity, generosity, helpfulness, determination and hard work.

George Ioup was a prolific researcher, a dedicated teacher and an academic innovator. He earned an undergraduate degree in physics from MIT and a doctorate in physics from the University of Florida. In 1969, he joined the physics department at the University of New Orleans, marking the beginning of a long and distinguished career that would continue for the rest of his life. During his tenure, he directed dissertation research for doctoral students, thesis research for master's students and research for non-thesis master's students. In 1976, he was awarded the Amoco LSU System Distinguished Under-

graduate Educator Award. Ioup was also instrumental in developing the Ph.D. in Engineering and Applied Science, one of the most successful doctoral programs at the University.

Ioup's research specialty was signal and image processing, which he applied in areas such as underwater acoustics. He studied how whales could be identified in the Gulf of Mexico from their underwater clicks. In 2000, he co-founded the Littoral Acoustic Demonstration Center at UNO, which produced high-quality research on the effects of human behavior on the Gulf of Mexico and its animals.

His unflagging commitment to the University is illustrated by the fact that he retired in 2012 at the age of 73, yet continued to perform all of his teaching, graduate student mentoring and research duties on a gratis appointment until his death in



Physicists George and Juliette Ioup, taught together at the University of New Orleans for more than three decades until George's death in 2012. Juliette, who remains on faculty as a professor of physics, now honors her husband by establishing an endowment in his name.

January 2016.

"He never stopped," Steve Johnson, dean of the College of Sciences, says. "He lived and breathed UNO." 🍷

FACULTY FOCUS

KIM JOVANOVICH: LIVING A LIFE OF DEVOTION TO ENGINEERING AND COMMUNITY



Kim Jovanovich

TO SAY KIM JOVANOVICH stays busy doesn't exactly capture his momentum.

As the interim associate dean of the College of Engineering, professor of practice and the Chevron USA Endowed Professor of Electrical Engineering, Jovanovich has become a passionate go-to spokesperson for all things engineering at the University of New Orleans.

"I tell students how important science and engineering are because they must depend on one another," he says. "Science empowers the creativity and imagination of engineers who then take new and exciting scientific discoveries and apply them to creating new products and technologies. This is how civilization technically matures into an advancing society capable of space exploration, electric vehicles, autonomous robots, new materials and diagnostic tools."

The list of his activities is

dizzying, but here are a few highlights:

He teaches two to three courses each semester, advises the Eta Kappa Nu engineering society and the Dean's Leadership Council on campus, and helps coordinate National Engineer's Week events and other events that seek to involve students from the community. He has taught at UNO in some capacity since 1980. And since joining the UNO faculty full-time in 2012, he has traveled to countless high schools, middle schools and elementary schools as a lecturer and visitor in hopes of spreading the gospel of engineering, math, science and technology—and the good news of UNO's programs. He works with the Pelicans, the New Orleans Babycakes and the Saints on STEM outreach programs. And he's always up for a turn at the mic to share his passion for engineering as a career.

While science and

engineering pursuits are clearly central to his message, Jovanovich says he always hopes to convey something broader about what it means to learn: "Education is important regardless of what career path you follow. Knowledge is one of the few things that can never be taken away from a young person."

When Jovanovich is not involved in UNO-related pursuits, he invests his time and interests in improving New Orleans, the city where he was born and raised, and beyond.

He is an organist, an organ restorer and a civic volunteer.

Now, his contributions have been recognized by the Louisiana Engineering Society, which has named Jovanovich the recipient of the 2018 Andrew M. Lockett Medal for Civic Activity. Given annually if merited, the award aims to recognize a Louisiana engineer who has exhibited distinguished service in the interest

of public service and without compensation.

His peers say he is deserving. "When you envision a cheerleader, chances are you wouldn't conjure up Kim Jovanovich—but that is exactly what Kim is," says Norma Jean Mattei, interim dean of the College of Engineering. "He is a fabulous cheerleader for STEM education, engineering as a career, and for UNO's College of Engineering and the University as a whole—promoting all of this with enthusiasm and personal conviction."

Mattei says students learn so much from Jovanovich as he is a seasoned lecturer and educator as well as researcher, entrepreneur and past engineering business owner.

Jovanovich serves on many boards, including boards of directors for the Greater New Orleans Science and Engineering Fair, FIRST Louisiana-Mississippi, Inc. and Recovery Associates, Inc. (RAI),

an organization that seeks to facilitate rebuilding efforts following catastrophes such as Hurricane Katrina and flooding in South Louisiana.

RAI established a program called Camp Restore at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, where Jovanovich served as senior organist, choirmaster and a music minister for 25 years. When the school associated with the church was damaged following Katrina, the group converted the space into dormitories to house, feed and deploy volunteers who came to New Orleans to help rebuild homes, churches and communities. In the last three years alone, 8,000 volunteers have come through the facility, with more than

27,000 using the space as a base of operations since 2006.

In his role as the only engineer on the RAI board, Jovanovich, whose business and home were destroyed during Katrina, often voluntarily advises the group when it comes to more technical operations and projects. He has also assisted with the establishment of a Camp Restore site at Trinity Lutheran Church in Baton Rouge following the 2016 floods as well as another at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Detroit, a city that has long struggled with population loss and resulting blight. He says the concept of the project is simple, but the effects have been humbling and profound.

Karen Thomas, associate dean in the College of Sciences, is responsible for STEM outreach and recruitment at the University of New Orleans. Thomas and Jovanovich often work together to coordinate events that draw young people together in celebration of STEM exploration at the University.

“Kim is always willing to help UNO students and the broader community,” Thomas said. “His commitment and passion for engineering comes through in everything he does and he is a true inspiration to budding engineers.”

Jovanovich holds a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Tulane University, and a master’s

degree in telecommunications from the University of Southern Mississippi. He is a lifetime member of Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, as well as a member of the Louisiana Engineering Society, IEEE Lightwave Society, Tau Beta Pi, Eta Kappa Nu and the Illumination Society of North America. He received the Louisiana Engineering Society’s Faculty Professionalism Award in 2015 and he advises numerous graduate students theses as well as non-thesis research.

Jovanovich has been married to Janet Meynier Jovanovich for 43 years. They have three sons and six grandchildren.

MATTEI NAMED INTERIM DEAN OF ENGINEERING

UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans civil engineering professor Norma Jean Mattei has been appointed interim dean of the College of Engineering.

Mattei has been a faculty member in the department of civil and environmental engineering since 1995. She has held a number of leadership positions in the college and with national organizations. Mattei is the immediate past president of the American Society of Civil Engineers. When she became president in 2017, she was only the third woman in the 163-year history of the organization to hold the prestigious post. Last year Mattei was the first woman selected as a national honor member of Chi Epsilon, an honor society for civil engineering students and professionals. Of the more than

114,000 Chi Epsilon members nationwide, Mattei is the 64th to have been elevated to national honor member status.

Mattei is also serving a nine-year term as one of three civilian engineers on the Mississippi River Commission. In that role, she advises Congress and the executive branch on matters related to the Mississippi River watershed, from its headwaters in Minnesota to the Louisiana delta. She has served the state of Louisiana as a member of its licensing board for professional engineers and land surveyors and currently sits on the nominating committee for the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority, the entity charged with maintaining the physical and operational integrity of the regional flood control and risk reduction



Norma Jean Mattei

system. She held multiple positions within the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying and is now an emeritus member, and she has been active in the American Society for Engineering Education as well on the boards of several STEM-related educational organizations.

Mattei previously served as both department chair and interim dean of the College of

Engineering. She was a design and project engineer in the New Orleans area before entering academia. Her technical research interests include large watershed management, material and structural testing, sustainable reuse of spent construction/fabrication materials, and residual stress measurement. She took over the dean position in January, replacing Emir Macari, who stepped down after three years.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NAMES HEMBREE WINNER OF 2017 EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

POET CAROLYN HEMBREE, assistant professor of English, in December was named the 2016-17 recipient of the University of New Orleans Alumni Association Excellence in Teaching Award.

Since she began teaching at the University of New Orleans 15 years ago, Hembree has earned a reputation among students and colleagues as a high-energy, devoted instructor who helps students at all levels find their voice, connect with literature and immerse themselves in rigorous critical exercises that improve their reading and sharpen their writing.

“This teacher changed the way I feel about school,” wrote one student in an evaluation of Hembree’s instruction.

Hembree began teaching at the University of New Orleans in 2001 and was named assistant professor in 2012. She has taught courses in English composition, poetry writing, creative writing and reading drama. In the last five years at UNO, she has directed 23 MFA theses while reading another 15.

Peter Schock, professor and chair of English, says students seek Hembree’s services as a mentor, adviser and reader because she routinely exhibits extraordinary care and concern for her students and their academic growth. She is meticulously prepared for her classes, exhibits thorough mastery of the subject and employs great humor in her multi-pronged

instructional methods, all of which Schock says result in an “unparalleled ability to get all of her students to participate.”

“Faculty members in our department who have closely observed Ms. Hembree’s teaching agree that her dynamic teaching style clearly succeeds,” Schock wrote in a letter nominating Hembree for the award. “Her students rise to the challenges she sets before them instead of being intimidated by her persona.”

Hembree’s instruction has received exceptional ratings and feedback from students as well. In evaluations and letters written to the selection committee by students and alumni, students describe Hembree’s approach as “charismatic,” “thoughtful” and, in several cases, life-altering.

Jessica A. Morey-Collins, a 2016 graduate of the MFA program in poetry, wrote that one of the first assignments Hembree gave her class—to spend 10 days meditating, dream journaling or eavesdropping and then reflecting on the impact of that experience on their poetry—“shook the confines of my poetic practice, encouraging me to reconsider arbitrary boundaries I’d created for what was and was not part of my poetry.”

Alumna Kia Groom (MFA, ’15) said Hembree was instrumental in recruiting her move to New Orleans from Australia and remained the primary reason her experience at UNO was so



rewarding. “I can’t speak highly enough of her as a teacher, scholar, poet and human being,” Groom wrote to the selection committee.

In addition to her outstanding instruction, Hembree’s creative work has been recognized with several awards, including the \$35,015 Award to Louisiana Artists and Scholars prize from the Louisiana Board of Regents to complete her forthcoming project, *O Pony of South Derbigny O Leaping Yellow*. Hembree’s full-length collection of poetry, *Rigging a Chevy into a Time Machine & Other Ways to Escape a Plague*, published by Trio House Press, has been honored with the Trio Award

and the Marsh Hawk Press Rochelle Ratner Prize.

Hembree holds a bachelor’s degree in English and theatre from Birmingham-Southern College and received her MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Arizona. The Excellence in Teaching recognition comes with a \$2,500 award.

ACADEMY OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCE AWARDS RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP TO UNO PROFESSOR

UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans professor M. Kabir Hassan has been named the 2018 Academy of Economics and Finance Research Fellow. He is the Hibernia Professor of Economics and Finance and Bank One Professor of Business at UNO.

Each year, the academy membership votes to select one fellow whose sustained contributions toward research merit recognition. As the honoree, Hassan received a cash prize as well as a plaque acknowledging his “extraordinary accomplishments” in the field.

Hassan also won the Best Paper Award for a treatise he co-authored entitled “Corporate Lobbying and Financial Institution Firm Performance: Evidence from security class-action litigation.” His collaborators on the paper were Omer Unsal and William Hippler, both graduates of UNO’s financial economics doctoral program.

In 2016, the academy honored Hassan with a Teaching Fellow Award for his exemplary achievements as a teacher.

Hassan is a researcher, educator, mentor and advocate for empirical research in economics and finance. His areas of expertise include financial institutions and markets, emerging markets and financial development, international finance, corporate finance and Islamic finance. He is currently the chief editor of two scholarly journals focused on Islamic and Middle Eastern finance and guest editor for several other publications. He has presented more than 350 research papers at professional conferences around the world and has had more than 200 papers published in academic journals.

As an educator, Hassan encourages and supervises student engagement in scholarly research. He participates in the



University’s Privateer Undergraduate Research and Scholarly UNO Experience program, in which undergraduate students conduct studies and make presentations at an annual juried showcase of campus-wide research, scholarly and creative activity.

In addition to his work mentoring Ph.D. students and supervising more than 50

M. Kabir Hassan is the Hibernia Professor of Economics and Finance and the Bank One Professor of Business.

doctoral theses, Hassan has also worked on several industry research studies with local and regional financial institutions, including Gulf Coast Community Bank, Jefferson Credit Union and Whitney Bank.

MALAY GHOSE HAJRA HONORED FOR PROFESSIONALISM IN ENGINEERING

UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans engineering professor Malay Ghose Hajra received the 2018 Faculty Professionalism Award from the Louisiana Engineering Society.

The award is presented annually to one engineering faculty member from each university in Louisiana with accredited engineering programs. The recognition aims to highlight and encourage professional licensure among engineering faculty at each campus.

Ghose Hajra, an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering, earned his doctorate from Kansas State University. His research interests include soil mechanics, geo-environmental engineering and coastal restoration. He serves as graduate coordinator for UNO’s graduate certificate program in coastal engineering.

Among his current applied research endeavors is a project funded by the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and managed by the



Malay Ghose Hajra, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering, speaks to a packed engineering class in March.

Water Institute of the Gulf to study the strengths of different coastal soils, which could lead to better understanding of how different marsh types withstand

erosion.

In December, he was elected to be president of the Louisiana Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

FACULTY AND STUDENTS AWARDED NEARLY \$300K IN RESEARCH PRIZES AND GRANTS DURING CELEBRATION OF RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PURSUITS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW Orleans has awarded nearly \$300,000 in research grants and awards to 21 faculty members and 20 undergraduate students.

During a Jan. 24 awards presentation hosted by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs that underscored the power of research and the opportunities that exist for UNO scholars at all levels, leaders highlighted the interesting work and accomplishments that are happening on all areas of campus.

“We really are a determined community of scholars and researchers,” President John Nicklow said before the winners were named. “We’re innovating every day, creating new knowledge and outcomes in service of a better world.”

Matt Tarr, vice president for research and economic development, told those gathered that simply being nominated for these awards is an honor that places those in the running among the University’s top researchers. Representatives from the University of New Orleans Research Council, which reviews nominees, presented the

following prizes.

Ryan Gray, assistant professor of anthropology, won the Early Career Research & Scholarship Award. The one-year \$7,500 prize is open to assistant professors who have passed their third-year review and who have distinguished themselves in their creative and scholarly activities.

Gray has secured several grants to fund his research and has acquired external funding to update a lab. He consistently publishes and presents at conferences and is under contract for his second book in addition to having several other book-length works in progress. Gray recently worked on a collaborative effort with The National WWII Museum, the Department of Defense and the University of Innsbruck that resulted in the excavation of a crashed plane from World War II and the hunt for the remains of its Tuskegee Airman pilot.

Gunter Bischof, professor of history and philosophy and director of Center Austria, won the \$10,000 Creativity, Research & Scholarship Award. The prize is available to a faculty member who has achieved the rank of

associate professor or professor and who has distinguished themselves in their creative and scholarly activities.

Bischof has led Center Austria since its inception 20 years ago. Since 2013 alone, he has produced seven refereed edited books, four edited volumes that are non-refereed and a dozen book chapters. He has been awarded numerous research grants and helped raise funding for an endowed professorship and an endowed chair. He has earned honors from numerous institutions, including the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, and serves on many boards.

Uttam Chakravarty, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, won the \$7,500 Creativity, Research & Scholarship Award with a Research Focus, which is available to associate professors who have passed their third-year review and have distinguished themselves in their creative and scholarly activities.

Chakravarty joined UNO in 2012 and has been successful in securing external research funding, receiving more than \$1 million dollars as a principal

investigator and co-investigator. He has published 16 referred journal articles and 25 conference papers and currently supervises four Ph.D. students and three master’s students. At the time of his nomination, his work had been cited 287 times according to Google Scholar.

Twenty students—10 undergradmen and 10 upperclassmen—were named winners of the Privateer Undergraduate Research and Scholarly UNO Experience prize, a \$1,500 award that seeks to employ undergraduates in research related to their fields of study under the mentorship of faculty.

BOTTOM, LEFT: Richard Goodman, professor of English, describes the role that the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs played in helping him and a graduate student secure funding to buy books needed to compile an anthology on environmental writing.

BOTTOM, RIGHT: D. Ryan Gray, assistant professor of anthropology, receives applause as he walks to the front of the room to accept the Early Career Research & Scholarship Award.





RESEARCHERS SEEK ANSWERS ABOUT HOW HURRICANES IMPACT MARSHES

THERE'S A DEBATE RAGING among environmental scientists: Do hurricanes help or hurt wetlands?

As hard as it may be for residents of storm-ravaged communities like New Orleans to believe, hurricanes can provide some benefits for coastal wetlands by delivering rich sedimentation during storm surge inundation. At the same time, such large storm surges also erode the marsh edges and result in the surface excavation of marsh plants.

So what is the net impact of hurricanes on wetlands?

In December, Ioannis Georgiou, chair of earth and environmental sciences at the University of New Orleans and the Olga Braunstein Professor in Sedimentary Geology,

teamed with UNO colleagues and collaborators from Boston University and the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences to investigate sedimentation in coastal marshes stretching from Florida to South Carolina.

Hurricane Irma made landfall in the Florida Keys on Sept. 10 as a Category 4 storm. While the hurricane tracked over the west coast of Florida, its wind patterns and size created strong onshore winds along the southeast coast, producing storm surges of up to seven feet from northern Florida into South Carolina, according to some estimates.

Supported by a Rapid Response Research grant from the National Science Foundation, the team piled into the R/V Mudlump, a 22-foot

aluminum boat, and traveled to backbarrier marsh sites, collecting shallow auger cores, accretion cores and surface sediment samples. Collaborating scientists included Mark Kulp from UNO, Duncan FitzGerald and Zoe Hughes from Boston University, Chris Hein from Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, and Mike Brown and Tara Yocum from UNO's Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences.

The team conducted marsh elevation surveys along 2- to 3-km-wide marsh transects in Amelia Island, Fla., Sapelo Island, Ga., Hilton Head Island, SC, and Cape Romain, SC. Georgiou says the team selected these locations because of the varying physical settings and conditions during Irma. They

Ioannis Georgiou, chair of earth and environmental sciences at the University of New Orleans and the Olga Braunstein Professor in Sedimentary Geology, climbs the marsh at low tide at Hilton Head, SC, during data collection in December.

also had baseline data in two of these locations.

"We wanted to find out where the sediment is coming from—from the nearby bays or the near-shore ocean, for example—and to learn about the process by which sediment is deposited onto the marsh platform," Georgiou says. "This research will help us better understand how hurricane events contribute to the long-term resiliency of the marsh."

UNO 25

Celebrating the Best of Privateer-led Businesses

BY ADAM NORRIS ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRACIE MORRIS SCHAEFER

THREE HUNDRED PEOPLE AND INFINITE alumni pride packed the elegant Waldorf Astoria Ballroom at The Roosevelt New Orleans in January as the University of New Orleans celebrated its inaugural class of UNO 25.

The event, presented by Hancock Whitney, honored 25 high-impact businesses owned or led by graduates of the University of New Orleans.

“I am fond of saying that greater New Orleans doesn’t really work without the University of New Orleans,” said President John Nicklow, who served as the master of ceremonies during the Jan. 23 event. “I hope you will leave today with an even greater appreciation for the truth of that statement.”

The members of the inaugural class of UNO 25 represented diverse fields including engineering, accounting, media, real estate,

“The Privateer influence in this region is pervasive and profound,” University of New Orleans President John Nicklow told those gathered.

banking, healthcare, technology, fitness, economic development and more.

The program included brief videos from each company displayed on large screens in the ballroom, giving the honorees an opportunity to discuss their business and their gratitude for their UNO education. On the stage, bathed in Privateer-blue lights, President Nicklow congratulated representatives from each company and presented them with their UNO 25 award.

Reactions from the audience ranged from the subdued to the boisterous, with the announcement of Katie’s Restaurant drawing the liveliest response. As the ebullient chef and Privateer super-fan Scot Craig took the stage, his table of family and co-workers bellowed with delight.

“We have more than 45,000 alumni in the metro area alone,” Nicklow said. “Our graduates are leaders and innovators in every corner of the economy. The Privateer influence in this region is pervasive and profound.” 





THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

UNO 25



2018
Honoree

Ed White & Associates



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

UNO 25



2018
Honoree

Footprints to the Future

After handing out the awards to all 25 companies, Nicklow also made a surprise announcement, bestowing the President's Medallion for Distinguished Service on Bobby Savoie, the CEO of Metairie-based Geocent, who earned a doctorate in engineering and applied science from UNO in 2009. The award is given to an individual from outside the direct employment of the University

who performs extraordinary service to the University. Savoie is the chair of the University of New Orleans Foundation Board, and he has taken a significant leadership role in fundraising for the University. In 2014, he was named the University of New Orleans Homer L. Hitt Distinguished Alumnus.

Here is a glimpse of a few of the other honorees.



Akorbi in Plano, Texas

Akorbi began in 2003 as a translation business geared toward providing linguistic services to clients such as Southwest Airlines, Aetna Insurance and 3M. Today, it employs more than 900 people worldwide. President Azam Mirza (M.S., '99), helped co-found the company with wife and CEO Claudia Mirza. Together, they have overseen the company's expansion in services to include providing staffing services, translation, interpretation and multi-lingual call center support. Their clients have included the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as health insurance and internet services companies. "Our belief was to give a voice to those who can't be heard," Azam Mirza says.

Azam Mirza (M.S.' 99), president and co-founder of Texas-based Akorbi, accepts the recognition.

Carr Riggs & Ingram CPAs & Advisors, in Metairie, La.

This national firm is ranked No. 19 in the country in 2018 by *Accounting Today* magazine. It employs more than 1,800 people and brought in revenues of \$286 million in 2017. The Metairie office, which is one of 30 offices nationwide, is led by 14 partners, five of whom are all graduates of the University of New Orleans. Kathleen Zuniga (B.S., '92), describes the company as "a national firm with national strength and Southern roots." The university has played a key role in enabling Carr Riggs & Ingram to stay on top in the New Orleans metro area, Zuniga says. "UNO has been able to deliver top talent in our profession, which has been a key driver in our success as a firm."

Kathleen Zuniga (B.S., '92), partner at Carr Riggs & Ingram CPAs, accepts the UNO 25 award from Nicklow.



Bayou Title in Gretna, La.

Bayou Title, Inc. was founded in 1999, by Brent Laliberte (B.A., '87) and wife Kathy Laliberte. It has grown into the largest title insurance company in Louisiana with 18 offices and more than 100 employees. The firm has handled in excess of 70,000 real estate closings, as well as examining over 90,000 titles. "None of that would have been possible without my education at UNO," Brent Laliberte says.

Brent Laliberte (B.A., '87), left, accepts the UNO 25 recognition from Nicklow.



Alumni Chad Poché (M.S., '98), left, and Rodney Greenup (B.S., '95, M.S., '97) accept the recognition from Nicklow on behalf of their firm, Gulf South Engineering & Testing in Kenner.

Gulf South Engineering & Testing, Inc. in Kenner, La

Founded in 2011, Gulf South Engineering & Testing is led by two alumni of the UNO College of Engineering. President and founder Rodney Greenup holds a bachelor's in mechanical engineering and a master's in engineering management from UNO. Chad Poché, partner and vice president, holds a master's in civil engineering from UNO. Gulf South is a geotechnical engineering firm that provides a broad range of geotechnical related services including include geotechnical engineering analyses, laboratory testing, field investigation oversight and construction materials testing. This small, minority-owned business is currently working on the new Louis Armstrong International Airport. Greenup says that his experience at UNO set the stage: "UNO definitely prepared me for life, for my career and I'm very proud to have that degree."

Footprints to Fitness in New Orleans, La.

April Dupre founded Footprints to Fitness in an effort to help New Orleanians live more balanced lives. Through a series of programs that include fitness classes, corporate wellness activities, CPR training and community service events, Dupre strives to make fitness fun. She holds a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology her work has been recognized in numerous publications, including landing her a spot as one of *Gambit's* "40 under 40" in 2016.

April Dupre of Footprints to Fitness receives an inaugural UNO 25 award



HIGH IMPACT LEADERS

Members of the inaugural class of UNO 25

- Akorbi, Plano, Texas
- Ampirical, Mandeville, La.
- Bayou Title, Gretna, La.
- Bourgeois Bennett CPAs & Consultants, Metairie, La.
- Carr Riggs & Ingram CPAs & Advisors, Metairie, La.
- Carubba Engineering, Metairie, La.
- CommCare Corporation, Mandeville, La.
- Computrols, Gretna, La.
- Crescent Bank, New Orleans, La.
- Ed White & Associates, Metairie, La.
- Engineering & Inspection Service, LLC, Metairie, La.
- Ericksen Krentel CPAs and Consultants, New Orleans, La.
- Footprints to Fitness, New Orleans, La.

- Gallo Mechanical, LLC, New Orleans, La.
- Gambit Communications, Inc., New Orleans, La.
- Geocent, Metairie, La.
- Gulf South Engineering & Testing, Inc., Kenner, La.
- JEDCO, Avondale, La.
- Katie's Restaurant, New Orleans, La.
- Latter & Blum, Inc., New Orleans, La.
- Market Dynamic Research Group, New Orleans, La.
- MMI Culinary Services, Kenner, La.
- Muriel's Restaurant, New Orleans, La.
- OffBeat Media, New Orleans, La.
- Renaissance Publishing, Metairie, La. 🍷

NOVEL COURTSHIP



The University of New Orleans Publishing Lab gives grad students a crash course in birthing books

BY REBECCA CATALANELLO



FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS, UNO PRESS Editor-in-Chief Abram Himmelstein has led a class of graduate students on a journey to fall in love.

Relationship terms like “emotional investment” and “shotgun marriage” pepper his instruction as he works with UNO Press Managing Editor GK Darby and about 14 Creative Writing Workshop and English master’s degree students to select a manuscript they believe in and then work to make it a compelling—and hopefully successful—work of published literature.

So far, their University of New Orleans Publishing Lab course has been prolific, producing two books with a third in process. As of Jan. 1, the lab also started accepting submissions for a fourth book through its 2018 University of New Orleans Publishing Lab Prize contest—a fiction contest with an \$18 submission fee that has grown exponentially in popularity, from 75 submissions its first two years to a whopping 577 in 2017.

The results to-date have been exciting. Margo Orlando Littell’s “Each Vagabond by Name,” was a gold-medal winner in the 2017 Independent Publisher Book Awards and was long-listed in the 2017 Tournament of Books. UNO Press has sold more than 3,000 copies of the paperback and e-book, and has nearly sold through the first print edition. Since the September release of Melanie McCabe’s “His Other Life: Searching for My Father, His First Wife, and Tennessee Williams,” the 2016 UNO Lab Prize winner has been featured in *The Washington Post* and garnered favorable reviews.

Much like love and courtship, however, the process of finding the right manuscript takes time and working through issues that arise while building something meaningful doesn’t come without its challenges. That’s part of the reason Himmelstein and Darby created the class. They wanted to give University of New Orleans writing students a first-hand look at what it means to be a publisher.

“GK and I realized a lot of MFA students were learning how to be writers but didn’t understand much about the world they would be working in,” says Himmelstein, who has led UNO Press since 2013. The tiny university outfit typically publishes about 12 books per year out of a small office on the first floor of the Liberal Arts Building, not far from the classrooms where students in the Creative Writing Workshop, UNO’s MFA program in creative writing, assemble daily.

Himself a product of the Creative Writing Workshop, Himmelstein felt the press was well-positioned to offer a course that delves beyond the craft of story into the business of selling the story. In addition to leading UNO Press, Himmelstein is also founder of the Neighborhood Story Project, on faculty in the Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education and is himself a published author who 13 years ago took an unconventional route to marketing his first novel: He sold it out of his car trunk. ☒

UNO Press Editor-in-Chief Abram Himmelstein, far right, and graduate students speak with author Meghan L. Dowling (inset) by Skype after selecting her manuscript “A Catalogue of Small Pains” as the winner of the 2017 University of New Orleans Publishing Lab Prize.



“We felt there was a large amount of professional knowledge that our students could gain while they were still in university that would make them better equipped for the world—and hopefully more successful as writers,” Himelstein says.

The result has been popular. The class immediately filled the first two years it was offered and, by the third year in the fall of 2017, some students had to be turned away.

A TONE-SETTING FIRST ‘DATE’

Fourteen students gathered around a desktop computer screen in the offices of the UNO Press. They were quiet, fidgety and a seemingly a little nervous as the Skype screen finally opened to a smiling, bespectacled woman.

Until this moment, Meghan L. Dowling was a name on a page to these students. She was one of the 577 authors who sent in manuscripts for consideration.

For months, the students had been working to whittle the finalists down to one. Just two days before, after considerable discussion, several hand votes and the unexpected withdrawal of one of the finalists, the students agreed that Dowling’s novel, “A Catalogue of Small Things,” would be their winner.

The work tells the story of three generations of women by weaving together a tapestry of their memories that eventually reveal a web of family secrets. Like other UNO Lab Contest winners, Dowling would get a \$1,000 advance on royalties.

The students agreed that they liked the work. Yet unknown as they Skyped with her for the first time was whether Dowling herself would be an affable partner on the journey to making this a book. Her online presence suggested she had a sense of humor as well as a level of comfort with the digital space. That was promising.

But would she be open to editing and suggestions from graduate students?

ABOVE: Graduate students look through the manuscript “A Catalogue of Small Things.”
FACING PAGE TOP: “Each Vagabond by Name,” was a gold-medal winner in the 2017 Independent Publisher Book Award.
FACING PAGE BOTTOM: “His Other Life: Searching for My Father, His First Wife, and Tennessee Williams,” the 2016 UNO Lab Prize winner has captured favorable reviews.

The students said hi and waved toward the computer screen. Then they took turns introducing themselves and telling her their hometowns.

“It’s really great to meet all of you,” Dowling replied from her home in Bangor, Maine, where she teaches writing and literature at Husson University. “I want to say I’m deeply honored that you chose this. But also I really love the project that you’re doing. It’s just so exciting to me to be a part of it.”

The students went on to ask Dowling some of their burning questions—or, at least, the ones that seemed appropriate for a first-time conversation.

How did you come up with this story? What was your inspiration? How did you go about organizing the book? And, because the manuscript included a

series of illustrations that some of the students liked and others were not so sure about, *What’s your relationship with the illustrator?*

The conversation seemed to be going great. Then Himelstein asked Dowling if she had any questions of them.

The author looked out of the screen toward the many students, all of whom would be presumably editing her and smiled.

“How does this work?” she asked.

UNCONVENTIONAL PATH TO PUBLICATION

Margo Littell remembers when she first got an email from Himelstein in 2015 notifying her that her manuscript had been selected as a winner.

“It was one of those emails that you always hope for,” she says. “You hoped it would happen but never believed it would.”

Littell had been looking for a publishing home for “Each Vagabond by Name” for a long time. For a while, she had an agent for it. She shopped it around to larger publishing houses and had started entering contests, hoping something would emerge. She’d been a finalist several times. Then she heard about the UNO Publishing Lab contest through an online community for women.

"Luck was on my side this time," she says. "It was really exciting." Littell was thrilled. But she was also slightly anxious about how the editing process would go with so many different people touching her manuscript.

"The worry, I think, for any writer is that you are going to have an abundance of voices trying to give feedback," she says. "And trying to get feedback from a group of disparate voices is a daunting idea because inevitably critiques will contradict each other."

Some might want to change sentences and others might want to alter the plot.

"It was a relief when things didn't go that way at all," she says. "One of the great things about the lab is how smoothly Abram was able to work with them and their criticism and feedback before he even communicated that to me. So by the time I got the editorial letter, everything was very clear and very streamlined without 15 contradictory voices requesting or suggesting different things."

The edits made sense, she said, big and small.

Small: One student in the class was a deer hunter and pointed out that the gun she had one of her hunters using would never be used in the context she had described.

Big: The editors encouraged her to draw out a character who, until then, played a smaller role in the story.

Biggest: The students suggested she rewrite her ending.

"I'd given my main character this wildly happy ending that was completely improbable," she says. "And I knew that. I knew it was. So I revised the ending. It didn't change it in a way that undercut what I was trying to do ... But it brought it back down to earth, which was a good ending ... It had to be done."

Other contributions that Littell loved: Cover design and art produced by one of the students; the chance to present her work at The Tennessee Williams Literary Festival in New Orleans; and the lab's tight publishing timeline—less than a year turnaround compared with the one- to two-year process common with traditional publishing houses. From the time she got the editorial letter outlining suggested changes in fall 2015, she had a month and a half to two months to make the changes. The book was published by the spring of 2016.

"Once I found out it was going to be published. I just wanted it to be out there in the world," she says.

Littell is currently shopping her second book while working on another project set in the same area of Pennsylvania as "Each Vagabond by Name." She said she is pleased to hear the word is getting out about the UNO Publishing Lab contest and said she encourages other writers to enter.

"I feel like they truly loved the book and supported it and that was a great experience," she said. "They did such a good job of it."

'WHAT I WANT TO END UP DOING'

Himmelstein, Darby and the students filed back into the workshop classroom after their Skype conversation with Dowling had ended.

"That went so much better than I could have hoped for," Himmelstein said.

"She's awesome," a student said.

Student Ellie Lindner, 25, smiled broadly.

Lindner had liked "A Catalogue of Small Pains" from the beginning, but in the midst of the class's first face-to-face conversation with its author, she learned Dowling and she had a mentor in common. Both had studied under Selah Saterstrom at the University of Denver.

"I could definitely see DU's influence on her writing because DU tends to be a bit more experimental—genres are blurred quite a bit," she said.

"I think it's crazy we have someone in here who has had the same mentor," Darby said. "It's great."

"I'm delighted," Himmelstein said, standing before the class as they gathered around a conference table. "We had this book and now we enter into a shotgun marriage with a writer. We know we're going to consummate this book with the writer but we don't know what he or she is going to be like. And it was great. So we can move on to editing. Some of you have already begun."

Immediately, the class started discussing next steps. *It's not a typical novel*, one student said. *Should we start at content? Grammar? Organization?* another asked.

"I think we start with organization," Lindner responded.

Dowling had said in the Skype conversation that she had experimented with various organizational structures in an effort to bring clarity to the storyline, so Lindner felt signs were good that she would be amenable to continuing that work.

Lindner was excited to work with the poetry-infused prose for many reasons. She is a Sacramento, Calif., native who expects to graduate with her MFA in May. "Publishing is really what I want to end up doing," she says. "I like identifying the weaknesses in somebody else's work and trying to figure out different options—I like to think about it as a big puzzle and try to explore how the pieces can best fit

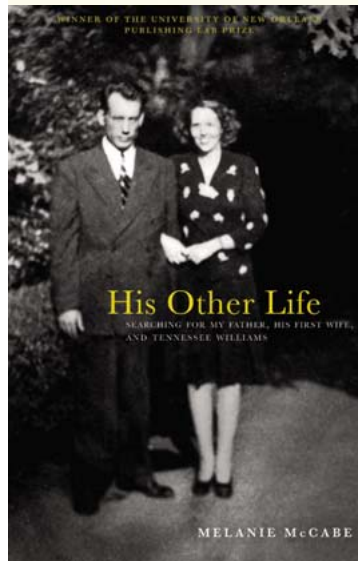
together."

Enrolling in the publishing lab class was a no-brainer, she says. She is an editor for *Bayou Magazine*, UNO's literary magazine, and self-publishes zines, in addition to working as a writing coach in the UNO Writing Center.

She was looking forward to dipping her toe in the business side of the publishing business and helping to devise a marketing plan for the book, an area that felt more foreign to her. So far, so good, she thought: "It was so great having that conversation. What really helps is meeting the book on its own terms instead of trying to push your own perspective on it."

Dowling's book is expected to be published in the fall of 2018. And while the students and UNO Press are working on that, the publishing lab is accepting manuscripts for the 2018 contest through Aug. 15.

For more information, visit <http://unopress.org/lab>.



RAY WANG SPENT HOUR UPON HOUR IN THE LIBRARY when he was in graduate school.

As a Chinese-born international student pursuing his master's and doctoral degrees at Northern Illinois University in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Wang came to view the university's library as a home base of sorts.

When other students packed up and headed home for the holidays, Wang would zip up his book bag and find retreat in the stacks and study spaces of the campus bibliotheca.

"I really formed this affinity for libraries," says Wang, newly named University of New Orleans dean of the library and information services. "They helped me to write papers, find information."

Wang comes to UNO from California State Polytechnic University, where he led its library for nine years. While he began his academic studies in the United States with an intention of returning to China to teach English, Wang's fondness for academic libraries and their unique ability to serve students at all levels quickly began to drive his career.


Wang got a master's in library science even before he received his doctorate in education in 1993. He was hired as a student to be a documents librarian at Northwestern University in Illinois. A year later, he landed a job leading the government document department at Binghamton University in New York before eventually joining Humboldt State University in northern California. Over the course of a decade at Humboldt, Wang rose from overseeing government documents to serving as library dean.

University libraries have changed a lot over the decades, but Wang says he's always viewed them as a place where students are likely to do most of their learning. "So as librarians," he says, "the most important thing we can ask ourselves is how can we make libraries better?"

To understand Wang's passion for this field, you also have to understand that, in Wang's world, access to information was not always possible.

As a child growing up in Mao Zedong's communist China in the 1960s and 1970s, Wang was 10 when the nation's Cultural Revolution broke out. Schools on all levels were closed for academic work for the next 10 years. He began devouring the English-language books that his parents had collected in their home.

Wang's father was an educated man who had learned English as a child while attending a school led by American missionaries. He passed the language on to his son—lessons that came naturally to the young Wang—before the red guards, the China's version of Hitler's youth, removed him and his wife from Wang and his two younger brothers. Parents like Wang's were sent into confinement as part of the Cultural Revolution, an effort by Mao's regime to disrupt society of what it viewed as corrupting, "revisionist" capitalist influences.

From age 10 until he was 18 or 19, Wang struggled to reconcile what he knew of his father with the pervasive rhetoric circulating that cast his father and others in his class in poor light. While Wang's mother was reunited with her children after two years, his father did not return until after Mao died in 1976 and universities began 

NEWLY NAMED

LIBRARY DEAN

RAY WANG DISCOVERED

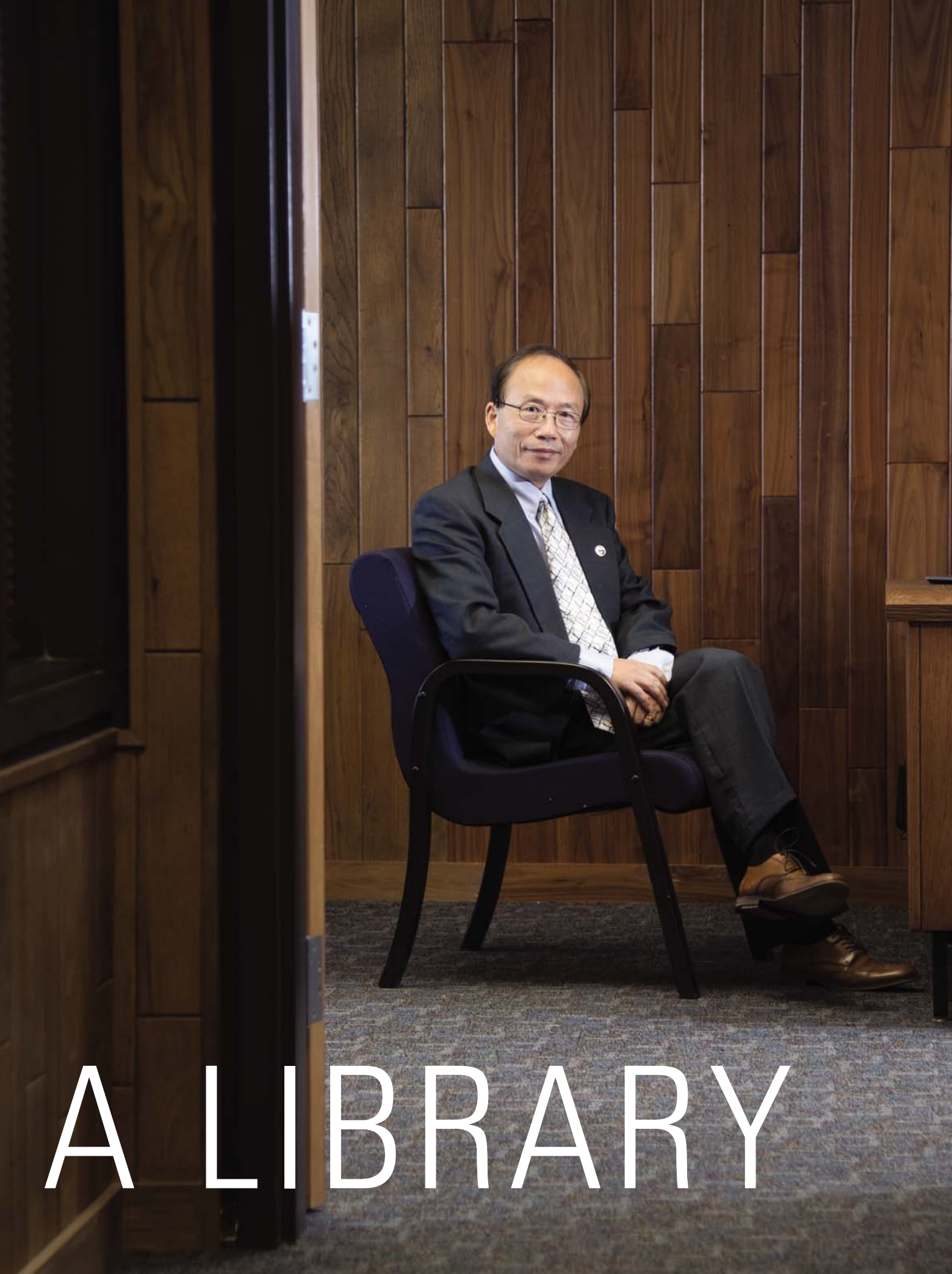
HOME AMONG THE STACKS

BY REBECCA CATALANELLO

PHOTOS BY TRACIE MORRIS SCHAEFER

MORE

THAN



A LIBRARY

reopening. That long period of separation continues to be a source of pain for Wang, but the gift of English language that his father imparted to him at an early age would become Wang's ticket to higher education and, eventually, to the United States.

Wang remembers scoring 99 out of 100 on the English language test that was required for admittance to Xi'an International Studies University's English program in his hometown.

"I don't know how I missed that one," he says with a smile.

A year after obtaining his bachelor's degree in English from Xi'an, Wang sat for a highly competitive test to become a translator for the United Nations. He was one of 10 chosen and went on to spend two years in training before working as a UN translator in Geneva, Switzerland. He was subsequently transferred to the UN headquarters in New York.

Being in the room to help facilitate key conversations between the world's leaders, including President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, was exciting. But Wang quickly detected in himself a desire to further his education and to take a more participatory role in his community than the job of translator would allow.

"I wanted to explore," Wang says.

Some of the professors Wang had studied under in Xi'an were now working at Northern Illinois University and encouraged him to apply to the graduate school. He was accepted on full scholarship and he obtained his doctorate within five years.

Over the past 25 years, Wang has been intimately involved in facilitating the kinds of changes that keep institutional libraries relevant. At Cal Poly, he took over a modernizing renovation that included the construction of a \$58-million addition. He was instrumental in collaborating with the Kellogg Foundation to build an Arabian horse library at the institution. He led an affordable learning initiative to provide open source textbooks and other free educational resources to students and faculty. And he did all these things amid a financial recession without, he said, reducing services or cutting back on the library collection.

At the University of New Orleans, Wang says he has been moved by the warmth with which he has been welcomed. Even the unhesitating offer by a stranger on a flight to New Orleans resonated with him as something he'd not experienced elsewhere. When the woman seated next to him heard his wife was in a different row, she immediately told him she'd change seats with her. Wang said he hadn't even thought to request the favor.

"People are just very, very nice," Wang says.

Wang's tidy, new office on the fourth floor of Earl K. Long Library overlooks the quad and Lake Pontchartrain. This library, he says, is, without question, the heart of the University of New Orleans campus—and it already behaves as such.

Wang has long advocated for libraries to collaborate with other university departments to help better serve students. So, he loved that those collaborations already exist at UNO: In addition to its special collections, the library houses the Privateer Enrollment Center, the Veterans Center, the Innovation Lab, the Women's Center and the Center for Teaching Innovation.

"It really helps the University by providing a one-stop service for



Wang has many interests – writing, film and strengthening libraries. He is also a professionally trained ping-pong player.

the students," he says. "They're already doing that here."

Now, Wang is spearheading a move to enable students to use the library round-the-clock as soon as this spring.

Wang places a lot of value on building camaraderie among employees and in helping them feel they are on the same team. He said he was moved by the passion he encountered meeting with the volunteer leaders of Friends of the Library.

In addition to overseeing additional renovations on the library's first floor, Wang says his priorities include helping to build a strong information literacy program that will help students understand how to navigate the many databases available to them while also equipping them to sort fact from fiction, avoiding so-called "fake news" at all costs.

When Wang isn't doing the work of overseeing library staff, budgets and more, he maintains an active intellectual and creative life of his own.

From 2003 to 2008, he wrote monthly columns for the *Global Times* as well as, for a time, *Phoenix Weekly*. He wrote and produced a feature-length film, "The Sound of Pearls" (2013) and created another, "The Colorful Cobblestones" (2012), which received a best new films nomination at the Beijing Film Festival. Wang said he learned a great deal about filmmaking during the projects, but said he's not eager to make another any time soon. He is working on a book about Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist who died in 1913 and is credited with laying the foundation for much of what developed in the 20th century with respect to linguistic understanding.

Now that he is in New Orleans, Wang said he is very interested in diving into the history of Chinese in and around New Orleans as he has done elsewhere. "That will be my next project," he said.

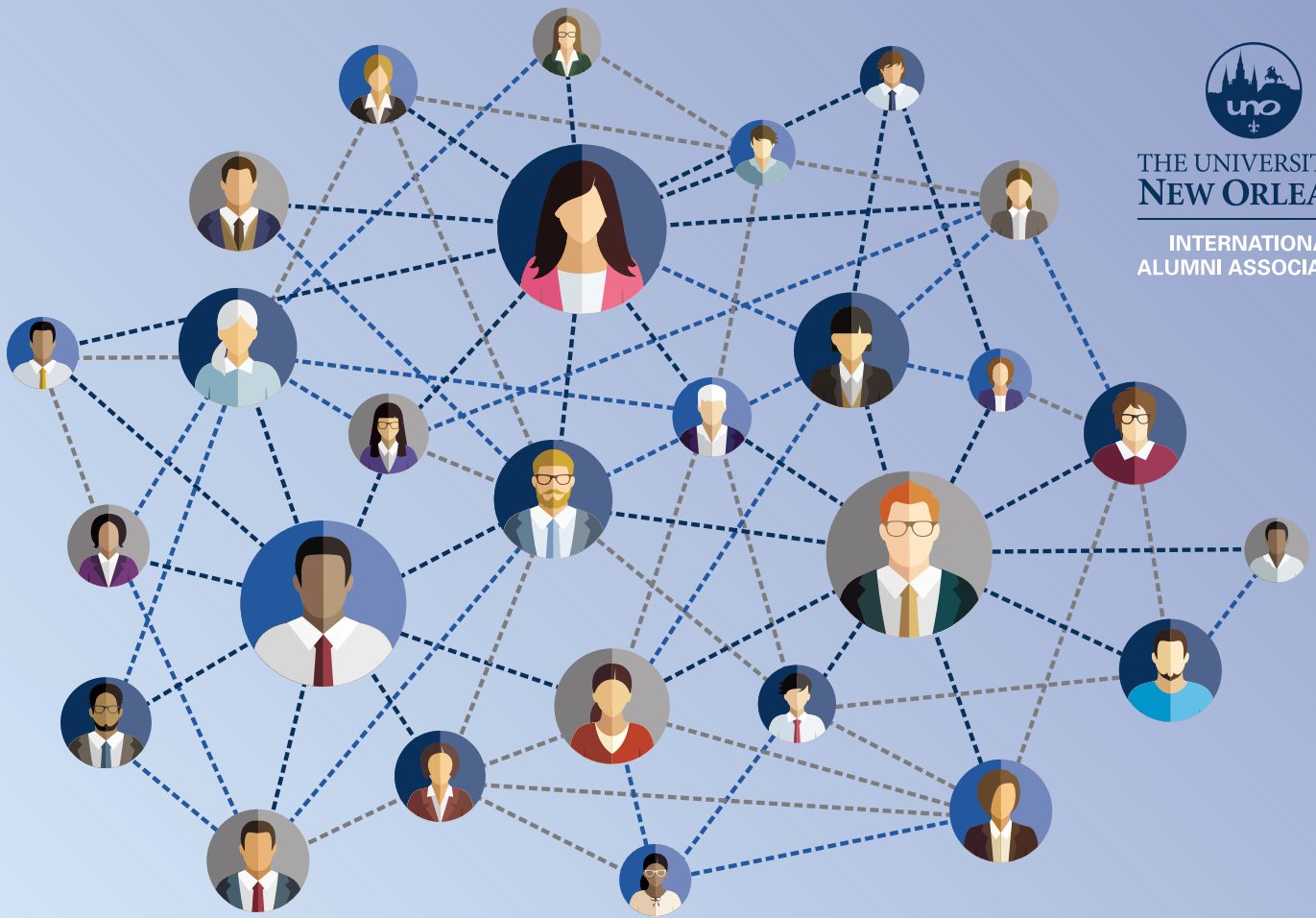
In the meantime, students, staff and faculty may catch a glimpses of Wang playing a mean ping-pong game at the UNO Recreation and Fitness Center—and giving lessons to others. That's because, in addition to all his other talents, Wang was trained as a child in China to become a professional ping-pong player.

Wang and his wife, Dr. Jean Wang, a cardiac specialist, have two adult children, a daughter and a son. They have purchased a home in Lakeview and will likely become frequent flyers back to California, where their first grandchild, Eleanor, was born this winter. 🍵



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60 YEARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

by the numbers

A university is nothing without its people. But as the University of New Orleans celebrates the 60th anniversary of its opening at the former site of a Naval Air Station, we thought we'd take a look at some of the numbers that tell a bit of the story of this diverse, historic and beautiful campus.

10 No. of African-Americans who filed suit in federal court in 1958 demanding admission to the new university prior to its opening

noon

The time at which Chancellor Hitt announced on Sept. 9, 1958, the first day of registration, that the University would at once begin enrolling African-Americans

59 No. of African-Americans who began the term at UNO when it opened for classes on Sept. 12, 1958

44

Percent of University of New Orleans students in 2018 who identify themselves as persons of color

8

Months that passed between when Homer T. Hitt was formally appointed to lead a new LSU campus in New Orleans and the time that campus, then called Louisiana State University in New Orleans, held its first classes



6

Percent of University of New Orleans students in 2018 who are enrolled as international students

\$13,000

Salary awarded to Hitt in 1957 for his new gig

22

Years Hitt oversaw the University

6

No. of leaders appointed to oversee the University since Hitt's 1980 retirement



80ft.

Height of smoke stack, the last remnant of the Naval Air Station that served as the University's original campus





7¢

Bus fare in 1958

\$1.25

Bus fare today

13

Margin of victory in the Privateers Men's Basketball team's first-ever win in 1959



5

No. of NCAA national championship events that the Privateers have hosted



\$942.6 million

Annual economic impact of the University of New Orleans and the UNO Research & Technology Park upon the region

11,000

Annual number of jobs supported by the University of New Orleans and the UNO Research & Technology Park



178

Acres belonging to the University in 1969

63

No. of faculty in 1958

330

Acres belonging to the University in 2018

271

No. of faculty in 2018





0

No. of student organizations at UNO in 1958

109

No. of student organizations at UNO in 2018



77

Age Dalai Lama XIV was when he visited UNO Lakefront Arena in 2013



155,000

Square footage of Kirschman Hall, completed in 2005



15,000

Volumes in library collection in 1958



9

No. of floors in the Engineering Building, constructed in 1987 as the highest building on campus



10,000

Seating capacity at UNO Lakefront Arena

1.6 million

No. representing all materials—digital, physical, media, journals and more—available in the library in 2018

116

Graduates receiving degrees at UNO's first commencement in 1962



Total degrees awarded in the history of UNO



Amy Nguyen started to fall in love with Japan when she was in high school. UNO's Division of International Education made it possible for her to finally visit and study there.

Age: 22

Hometown: Kenner, La.

Major/degree program: Fine Arts

Languages you speak: English, Vietnamese, Japanese

Where did you go and when? Kyoto, Japan in 2017 with UNO-Japan

Why did you decide to go? While in high school, I was introduced to UNO-Japan during Japan Fest, an annual event at the New Orleans Museum of Art. This event inspired me to apply to The University of New Orleans. I've attended UNO since Fall 2014, but I had always put off doing the program. I always reassured myself saying, "I'll do it next year." In the fall of 2016, I became friends with some of the students who'd participated in UNO-Japan. They told me all about their adventures, and I found myself asking more questions. I finally applied for the 2017 program. Even though I attended a separate year, I feel connected to those who were in the 2016 group, as well as

those who came before! UNO-Japan is definitely a family.

What did you study while you were there? I studied the reflection of Japanese culture within their animations—anime for short—and visual novels, known as manga. My other class taught me positive psychology that is integrated into meditation.

Most memorable experience? One of them was attending Yoiyoiyama, one of the festival days of Gion Matsuri. Gion Matsuri is one of the three largest festivals in Japan. I was invited to attend by Ayame, a student from Doshisha University who was at UNO on a two-week exchange program in 2016. We wore rented "yukata"—casual kimonos worn especially during the summer—while we walked through Kyoto. I enjoyed spending time with Ayame's sister and mother, eating delicious food from street vendors, viewing floats, and squeezing through streets teeming with people.

Where do you want to go next? Costa Rica. I have read about and learned of its unique biodiversity from my friends who are alumni of the UNO-Costa Rica program. I would love to experience its wildlife and beauty first-hand.

STATISTICALLY, MATTHEW Jiles did not have a notable college basketball career. In fact, during four years of competition, he averaged 0.7 points a game. The Braithwaite, La. native started only three games and scored a total of 50 points while playing for the University of New Orleans. But to measure Jiles' value as a player based strictly on the numbers would be to miss the myriad ways he helped lead his teammates and elevate the men's basketball program.

While his contributions may have been imperceptible to most outsiders, Jiles is one of the reasons the Privateers made postseason tournaments in back-to-back seasons, according to his coaches and teammates. In 2017, New Orleans won the Southland Conference regular season and tournament championships, earning the program's first NCAA Tournament bid in 21 years. In 2018, the Privateers capped off their season with an invitation to play in the College Basketball Invitational.

Jiles served as team captain—a remarkable accomplishment for a student-athlete who used to be the Privateers' student-manager. Jiles' journey with the program actually began with him collecting sweaty uniforms and towels for the laundry and concluded with him gathering the team together for pre-game pep talks.

"Leadership is hard to describe sometimes," says head basketball coach Mark Slessinger. "But Matthew has an incredible personality and a leadership quality that not a lot

of people have. He has a special gift. People engage with him. They follow him and they trust him."

At Phoenix High School in Plaquemines Parish, Jiles was a star. He averaged 25 points a game during his senior season. Although he was one of the leading scorers among New Orleans area high school players, it did not translate into any Division I scholarship offers.

"I really recruited UNO instead of UNO recruiting me," Jiles says. "After writing and calling, I had a tryout. They told me I could come as a student-manager and see what happens."

What happened was a unique arrangement. Jiles worked out on his own before and after the team's practice sessions. While the team practiced, he tended to his student-manager duties. On the first official day of practice in 2014, he discovered a jersey bearing number 32 in his locker.

"I asked one of the assistant coaches whose jersey was in my locker and he told me it was mine because I made the team," recalls the secondary education major. "It was the happiest day of my life."

Immediately after getting the news about his unexpected promotion, he called his parents, Michael and Pam Jiles, who have served as his own models for leadership.

"We pushed our three boys to strive for excellence and to not settle for less but to always push for more," Pam Jiles says. "And wherever God leads them is where they're going to land."

When Jiles was in high

The Unlikely Captain

Matthew Jiles' journey from student-manager to team's captain

BY RO BROWN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLEM BARBAZON AND RON O'ROURKE



school, his parents became accustomed to seeing their son play the role of the star player. In college, Jiles was a rarely-used reserve, which forced the entire family to adjust their expectations, at least in terms of playing time.

“I appreciate Coach Slessinger giving him the opportunity to play and be part of the team,” Michael Jiles says. “We’ve always taught our boys to be leaders and not followers no matter what.”

Conventional wisdom holds that the leaders of teams are typically the best players. Jiles punctures that premise. As a competitor, he wanted as much playing time as possible but he did not let the absence of it affect his desire to lead.

“I’m the guy who sends text messages to the guys early in the morning, getting them ready for the day or just getting ready for practice or a game,” he grins. “I know I’m not as good as many of my teammates, but I think I’ve helped to make them better. If they succeed, we all succeed.”

Jiles considered his proximity to the Privateers coaching staff to be a gift. He scrutinized how Mark Slessinger and his assistants instructed, motivated and challenged players, in practices, in games or on the team bus. Jiles, who aspires to become a coach, viewed it as on-the-job training.

“I want to showcase what I’ve learned from other people,” Jiles says. “When you think about it, I’ve been like a player-coach here. I feel like I have a high basketball IQ and I know I can get things going.”

Jiles registered career-highs with 8 points in 23 minutes against Memphis on Nov. 21, 2017. But he says winning the Southland Conference Champi-



onship and the automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament during the 2016-17 season are what he considers the highlights of his time as a Privateer. He will also cherish every minute he spent with his teammates. For someone who started as a student-manager, the fact that he had teammates at all represents an accomplishment. Above all else, he says he will remember his time at the University of New Orleans with gratitude.

“I found out the people at UNO really care about you. The teachers and everyone, they want to see you succeed. Everyone helps you through things. This is a great place to further your education.

“In the end, it’s really not about basketball, it’s about education and I feel I got a good

education here.”

A comprehensive reading of the New Orleans Privateers record book will not reveal a single mention of Matthew Jiles in categories such as most points, rebounds, steals or assists. He was, however, a worthy team captain whose influence, while not obvious, was significant.

“Matthew won us a lot of games because of how he practiced—his mentality and his drive in practice,” Slessinger says. “He’s contributed greatly to the culture of our program. He’s contributed to what the expectation is, what’s acceptable—how guys should act on and off the

Matthew Jiles, a senior from Braithwaite, La., worked his way onto the court, demonstrating stand-out leadership in unexpected ways.

floor, and how they should treat people. Matthew has worked very, very hard to set the standard. He is what leadership is all about.”



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Cheryl and Leo Pierre Champagne, Jr	Margot C LaPointe, PhD and Roger Zauel
Christopher Maurer, BS '92 & MBA '00	Marilyn Schof Gover
Debbie Mabile Settoon, P.E.	Ms. Francine Foreman
Dorothy Doose Strickland	Skip Miller
Dr. Caryn Cossé Bell, Professor Emeritus and Dennis G. Bell	Susan Rowland

If you have included the University of New Orleans in your estate plans, and are not listed above, please call Eric Balukonis in the Planned Giving office at 504.280.6159



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

Dedicated to Home and Family

Alumnus Chris Maurer expresses gratitude with a lasting gift. *BY REBECCA CATALANELLO*

CHRIS MAURER IS THE kind of New Orleanian who never wanted to leave home. He's the kind who loves his city and his family so much that when he graduated from Brother Martin High School, he ended up picking between four universities—three in New Orleans and one just an hour north.

The choice was easy, but not just because the University of New Orleans was only a few blocks north of his high school on Elysian Fields Avenue. At UNO, Maurer received a full, four-year scholarship.

"I graduated with almost no debt," says Maurer (B.S., '92, M.B.A., '00), now chief executive officer of the UNO Federal Credit Union, also based here on the University's campus. "I graduated in four and a half years and my parents only had to pay one semester. That's a really good feeling to get out of school and not owe a penny."

Now, Maurer is paying it forward.

Though he is only 47, Maurer is also a planner. As someone who holds a bachelor's degree in finance and an MBA—and especially as someone who works in the financial sector—the idea of planning his estate now seemed like a smart idea.

"In my line of work, we see this a lot: People die unexpectedly and, by not having a will, it creates a lot of hardship on families," he says.



Maurer had always intended to give part of his estate to the University of New Orleans. But when he learned about the University's Legacy Donor Society, he decided to make it official, dedicating part of his estate to the establishment of a student scholarship in the name of two people very special to his life: his parents.

Emile T. Maurer, Jr., and Josie B. Maurer, both 87, instilled in their children an understanding of the importance and value of a good education, Maurer says: "They

always taught us that education was key to a successful future."

Over decades of working on the same campus where he once took classes, Maurer says, the University of New Orleans has become much more than an alma mater. Becoming a Legacy donor made the most sense in the world.

"This is home for me," Maurer says. "This is like my second family."

For more information about the Legacy Society and how to become a Legacy donor, contact Eric Balukonis, 504-280-6159 or ebalukonis@unofoundation.org. 📧

Chris Maurer, chief executive officer of the UNO Federal Credit Union since 2006, became a Legacy donor to honor his parents and his alma mater.

ALUM NOTES

Corrado A. Giacona II (B.A., '65)

Corrado Giacona II, president of Giacona Container Company Corp., is credited with originating the first plastic cup Mardi Gras throw in 1980 when his cups first appeared in Krewe of Alla. His company remains the major producer of Mardi Gras cups and also supplies signature drinkware to bars, nightclubs, seafood companies, delis, convenience stores, movie theaters, zoos, amusement parks, museums, stadiums and arenas.

James "Jim" P. LeBlanc (B.S., '72)

Jim LeBlanc is vice president

of the New Orleans Chapter of Infragard, a nonprofit organization serving as a public-private partnership between United States businesses and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. LeBlanc owns Contingency Planning Consultants in Abita Springs, La., and retired in 2011 from Gaylord Chemical Company, where he was the chief financial officer and controller for 23 years. LeBlanc, who has also been a commercial banker and a reserve deputy, served for two years as director of the Slidell Chamber of Commerce. He holds a bachelor's degree in geology from the University of New Orleans and an M.B.A. from Pepperdine University.

Fred H. Rodriguez (B.S., '72)

Fred Rodriguez has been awarded the American Society for Clinical Pathology's 2017 Ward Burdick Award for Distinguished Service to Pathology. The honor recognizes members who have made significant contributions to pathology through sustained service to the profession and to the organization. Rodriguez is the Emma Sadler Moss Professor of Pathology at LSU. He has served as president of the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences, national director of pathology and laboratory medicine for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and director of pathology and laboratory medicine service at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System in New Orleans. He received his undergraduate degree in biology from the University of New Orleans.

Thomas R. Warner (E.D.D., '75)

Thomas "Tommy" Warner is retired as chancellor of Nunez Community College, which he

Robert K. Faust (B.S., '74)

Rob Faust, a New Orleans native, is a mask maker, actor, dancer and comic who created Faustwork Mask Theatre in 1978. The company tours annually and has performed in venues that include The Sydney Opera House in Australia, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Kennedy Center. Faust hosts workshops, arts residencies, and provides opportunities for collaboration with other artists and companies in ways that celebrate the art of the mask. He holds a bachelor's degree in education from the University of New Orleans.



had led since 2000. Warner is a graduate of Redemptorist High School who played football and baseball at Tulane University. He started his career as a teacher and coach at Holy Cross School before moving to Chalmette High School. He holds a master's degree in education from Tulane and a doctorate in education from the University of New Orleans. Over six decades, he has variously served as an assistant principal, assistant school superintendent, professor, college dean and state legislator. As chancellor at Nunez following Hurricane Katrina, Warner vocally opposed efforts to close the campus. Under his leadership, enrollment there grew from about 500 after Katrina to about 2,500 today. He has seven children and 18 grandchildren.

Beverly P. Randazzo (B.A., '64, M.Ed., '77)

Beverly Paulina Randazzo, a retired New Orleans public school teacher and assistant principal, has been named a "lifetime achiever" by Marquis Who's Who. A New Orleans native, Randazzo received her bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in educational administration

from the University of New Orleans. She has been involved with the Lutheran Women's Missionaries League, East Jefferson General Hospital, the New Orleans Retired Teachers Association, the East Jefferson Hospital Auxiliary, the Wellwisher's Club, the Metairie Women's Club, and AARP. The Republican Women's Club of Jefferson Parish awarded Randazzo the 2005 and 2007 Betty Heitman Award. Her other awards have included the Outstanding Service and Leadership Award from the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association, the Outstanding Woman Award from the AARP Chapter 4417, and being honored as a "Great Lady" by East Jefferson General Hospital Auxiliary.

Rand Carmichael (B.F.A., '73, M.S., '80)

Rand Carmichael was the featured artist in a solo exhibition at the Slidell Cultural Center that ran through March. Titled "Building the Wall," the exhibit featured 16 abstract paintings that use architectural elements to explore the theme of barriers. Carmichael is a U.S. Marine veteran who served a tour in Vietnam. He holds two degrees from the University of New Orleans,

R. Chris Atkinson (M.B.A., '94)

Robert "Chris" Atkinson has been named vice president of human resources at Lakeview Regional Medical Center, a campus of Tulane Medical Center. Atkinson brings 19 years of human resources experience within the healthcare environment. He has been with Ochsner Health System since 1998, leading human resources teams in Baton Rouge, the North Shore and New Orleans. Atkinson played an integral role in the integration of two Louisiana hospitals acquired by the Ochsner Health System. He led employee support and advocacy programs at Ochsner in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, helping stabilize the workforce and providing personal and financial resources to employees and their families suffering severe losses from the storm.



including a master's degree in urban studies. He worked for 31 years as a civil engineer for Burk-Kleinpeter architects, where he worked on coastal zone management, economic development and transportation planning. Carmichael retired in 2011 to pursue his ambition of being a full-time studio artist.

Melonie D. Johnson (B.S., '83)

Melonie Johnson has been named president and chief operations officer of MGM National Harbor, a Maryland casino. She comes to the position after serving in the same role at MGM's Gold Strike Casino Resort in Tunica, Miss. Before joining MGM in 2015, she was assistant general manager at Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races in West Virginia. In her new role,

Johnson oversees operations of the 308-room hotel, the food, entertainment and convention business, the gaming floor and the 4,000-person workforce.

Jack E. Saux (B.A., '86)

Jack Saux is an oncologist who has become known in Covington, La., as the "The Pirate Oncologist." Saux often dresses in full pirate regalia to try to lighten the mood among patients who are often trying to cope with difficult medical prognoses. For several years, he has celebrated his birthday by hosting a public fundraiser in coordination with Columbia Street Taproom to benefit the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Saux is a graduate of Jesuit High, the University of New Orleans and LSU medical school. Saux joined Northshore

Oncology Associates at the Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center in Covington in 1998.

Kathleen Robertson (B.S., '88)

Kathleen Robertson is an orthopedic surgeon with 26 years of experience. She is based in El Paso, Texas. She graduated from Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans in 1992.

Richard S. Neider (B.S., '89)

Richard Neider has been named principal of Christian Brothers School's Canal Street campus in New Orleans. Neider has been at Christian Brothers since 2012 as a math, history and study skills teacher and a basketball coach. He started teaching in 1992 at Holy Cross School, his alma mater. He also has held teaching and coaching positions at Crescent City Baptist School and De La Salle High School. He holds a master's degree in educational leadership from the University of Holy Cross in New Orleans and a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of New Orleans.

David S. Morgan (B.A., '92)

David Morgan is a musician, producer, musical director and educator who runs The Music Shed in Redding, Conn., where he coaches middle and high school musicians in the art of being a part of a band. A pianist, he has toured with Jane Lynch, Neshama Carlebach, and his own jazz trio. He has also performed and recorded with Wynton Marsalis, Wes Anderson and Peter Himmelman. He writes music for CBS Sports, Discovery, A&E, MTV, and TV shows including "Pawn Stars," "Little Women" and "Catfish." He holds a B.A. in jazz studies from the University of New Orleans.

James R. Garvin IV (M.Ed., '92, Ph.D., '94)

James Garvin IV has been named president of medical technology company Skyline Medical. Skyline, the maker of a waste fluid disposal system, recently merged with CytoBioscience, where Garvin had served as chief executive officer since

Jasen Weaver (B.A., '12)

Jasen Weaver, a bassist and composer, released his debut album, "The Voscoville" in March, and will be performing at the 2018 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. He leads the Jasen Weaver Band and has also played



with a number of accomplished musicians including Dee Dee Bridgewater, Herlin Riley, Donald Harrison, Ellis Marsalis, Jason Marsalis and Adonis Rose. Weaver has recorded with Dr. John, the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, Jason Marsalis, The Session, Cliff Hines, Sasha Masakowski and saxophonist Stephen Richard. He has performed internationally in Europe, Australia, Japan, Russia, Honduras, Barbados, Israel, South Africa and New Zealand. Weaver is also a graduate of the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts.

Joan M. Coffman (M.B.A., '02)

Joan Coffman in 2017 was named president and CEO of Hospital Sisters Health System St. Mary's Hospital in Decatur, Ill. She assumed the new role after serving for seven years as president and CEO of St. Mary's



sister hospital, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital in Chippewa Falls, Wisc. Under her direction, St. Joseph's was recognized as a top performer by The Joint Commission, Press Ganey, Leap Frog and Wisconsin Forward, according to her employer, and received the American Hospital Association's 2017 Grassroots Champion award for her health care advocacy work. Originally from New Orleans, Coffman worked with Tenet Healthcare Corporation as assistant administrator of Lindy Boggs Medical Center in New Orleans until 2005 when it closed due to flood damage sustained in Hurricane Katrina. She is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

2015. Garvin's prior positions include managing director in investment banking for Divine Capital Markets, chief operating officer for the Leedom Group and chief executive officer of Obed Corporation. Garvin holds a Ph.D. in urban studies and economic systems and a master's of administration from the University of New Orleans.

Deborah E. Bordelon (B.A., '86, M.Ed., '90, Ph.D., '96)

Deborah Bordelon has been named provost and executive vice president at Columbus State University. She comes to the position from Governors State University in Illinois, where she was the provost and vice president for academic affairs. Bordelon joined Governors State in 2008, first serving as dean of their College of Education before being appointed provost in 2013. She has held teaching and administrative posts at Nicholls State University and Xavier 

University of Louisiana. She earned a doctorate in special education, a master's degree in education and a bachelor's degree in elementary education, all from the University of New Orleans.

John Guzzardo (B.S., '97)

John Guzzardo has been named president and chief executive officer of the Special Olympics Louisiana, effective Aug. 1. Guzzardo, who resides in New Orleans, has more than 18 years of nonprofit experience. He is currently executive director of the American Diabetes Association for Louisiana and Mississippi. He holds a degree in recreational therapy and psychology from the University of New Orleans. The Special Olympics serves more than 15,000 Louisiana athletes and oversees 18,000 volunteers.

Jason F. Kirksey (Ph.D., '97)

Jason Kirksey has been appointed to the Oklahoma Policy Institute board of directors. He is vice president for institutional diversity and the chief diversity officer at Oklahoma State University, where he is also an associate professor of political science. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from OSU and a Ph.D. in political science from the University of New Orleans.

Brice J. Howard (B.S., '98)

Brice Howard is senior vice president and chief lending officer at American Bank and Trust. He has been a community banker since 1992, starting as a part-time drive-up teller, and holding positions in credit analysis and business development. He now manages all business development and commercial lending staff. Howard has also been involved in a number of charitable causes, including mentoring and tutoring in an afterschool program through Missionary Baptist Church and serving on the boards of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation and New Orleans area-based Got Our Troops Foundation. He is a member of the Commercial Investment Division of New Orleans Metropolitan Association of Realtors. He is a graduate of Archbishop

Rummel High School and received his bachelor's in business management degree from the University of New Orleans.

Lee M. LaFleur (B.S., '00)

Lee LaFleur helps run Mike's Hardware & Supply in the Gentilly neighborhood of New Orleans, with his brother, Robert. The business was founded by LaFleur's father, a veteran police officer. LaFleur, who holds a business degree from the University of New Orleans, participated in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business program. The LaFleurs are active in many community charity events. In addition to being the two-time champion of the Down Syndrome Association of Greater New Orleans Buddy Walk Jambalaya Cook Off, they also donate to Hogs for the Cause, Each One Save One, Brother Martin High School, Hynes Charter School and Riverdale High School.

Scott Krieger (M.B.A., '01)

Scott Krieger has been named Investar Bank's commercial relationship manager and vice president in the greater New Orleans market based in Mandeville. Krieger was with First American Bank and Trust Co. and has 23 years of experience in banking, with 19 of those in commercial lending. He also has experience in compliance and underwriting. A native of New Orleans, Krieger has a bachelor's in economics from LSU and a master's of business administration from the University of New Orleans.

William L. Boasberg (M.B.A., '02)

Bill Boasberg has been named president and chief operating officer of Beau Rivage Resort & Casino in Biloxi, a property of MGM Resorts International. He began his career in hospitality and gaming in New Orleans, his hometown, and has served as the top executive at MGM National Harbor in Maryland, which he helped open. Boasberg has been instrumental in directing complex financial strategies at resorts including The Mirage, New York-New York, Luxor and Excalibur. He began his career in hospitality and gaming at Bally's in New Orleans.

Sheba Turk, (B.A., '11)

Sheba Turk in March published her first book, "Off Air: My Journey to the Anchor Desk," a memoir that chronicles her sometimes bumpy path to attain educational and early career success. Turk is a co-anchor for WWL-TV's Eyewitness Morning News in New Orleans. Her book includes a forward by mentor Soledad O'Brien and details the success she found after enrolling as a transfer student at the University of New Orleans after experiencing financial hardship while enrolled elsewhere. She joined WWL-TV as an associate producer for the morning news in 2011, shortly after graduating from UNO.



Brian S. Mouton (B.S., '01)

Brian Mouton presided as king of the seventh annual Grande Court Mardi Gras Ball, a fundraiser for the Rayne Chamber of Commerce in Rayne, La. Mouton is senior division manager of trade marketing for RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company. He holds a business degree from the University of New Orleans.

Kirk Coco (M.B.A., '02)

Kirk Coco is founder and CEO of NOLA Distilling Company, which in 2016 began producing NOLA Vodka, a vodka made from Louisiana grown sweet potatoes. Before that, he was instrumental in bringing brewing back to New Orleans by founding NOLA Brewing Company in 2008. A New Orleans native, Coco served 11 years in the U.S. Navy.

Bernadette Lucas (M.B.A., '02)

Bernadette Lucas has been named chief finance officer of Liberty's Kitchen in New Orleans. Lucas comes to the position from New School for New Orleans, where she was accounting director. A New

Orleans native, Lucas holds a bachelor's in accounting from Dillard University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of New Orleans. She has been working in accounting and business professionally since 1994.

Robert J. Lafleur (B.S., '03)

Robert Lafleur helps run Mike's Hardware & Supply in the Gentilly neighborhood of New Orleans, with his brother, Lee. The business was founded by LaFleur's father, a veteran police officer. LaFleur, who holds a business degree from the University of New Orleans, is active in many community charity events. In addition to being the two-time champion of the Down Syndrome Association of Greater New Orleans Buddy Walk Jambalaya Cook Off, the LaFleurs also donate to Hogs for the Cause, Each One Save One, Brother Martin High School, Hynes Charter School and Riverdale High School.

Karen A. Celestan (B.A., '06)

Karen Celestan is co-author

of "Freedom's Dance," a new book that explores the social, aid and pleasure club culture in New Orleans. The book pairs the images of noted photographer Eric Waters with essays by preeminent authors and cultural leaders, providing a photographic and textual overview of the second line that tracks its origins in African traditions to subsequent development in local culture. Celestan is executive writer and editor in *University Advancement* and an adjunct professor of English at Texas Southern University in Houston. She was senior program manager for Music Rising at Tulane in the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South at Tulane University and an adjunct instructor of English at Southern University at New Orleans.

Jacqueline J. Montgomery (M.B.A., '06)

Jacqueline "Jackie" Montgomery was recently named general manager for Hilton Garden Inn Indiana, a 128-room hotel located in Indiana, Penn., her hometown. Montgomery joined Hilton in 2016 as director of sales. Prior to that, she was director of marketing and group sales for Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex, also in Pennsylvania. She is the daughter of former Saints assistant coach Jack Henry. It was while her father was in New Orleans that Montgomery enrolled at the University of New Orleans. She went on to become director of marketing and promotion for Entercom radio stations, which included WWL-870AM.

Daniel L. Saavedra (M.B.A., '07)

Daniel Saavedra has been named eastern regional sales manager at Acumen Wines, an Atlas Peak winery in Napa County, Calif. Saavedra worked the seven years prior in the national sales division for Ladera Vineyards in St. Helena, Calif., most recently as vice president of sales. He earned a master's degree in business administration from the University of New Orleans before relocating to California for a career in the wine industry, working for E & J Gallo Winery.

Jiarra R. Jackson (B.S., '08)

Jiarra Jackson has been named director of sales for New Orleans' dual-branded SpringHill and TownePlace Suites at 1600 Canal St. in New Orleans. Jackson was central northwest regional sales manager in Chicago, representing 166 combinations of full-service and select-service Marriott brand hotels within the Midwest. She has also worked in hospitality markets around the country, including Denver, Colo.; St. Louis, Mo.; Oakland, Calif.; and Rockford, NJ. She has a dual bachelor's degree in business management and business administration from the University of New Orleans and a master's degree in hospitality, tourism and business management from Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Guy D. Choate (M.F.A., '13)

Guy Choate is a writer as well as founder and director of the Argenta Reading Series in North Little Rock, where he lives with his wife and son. His recent essays have appeared in *Cream City Review*, *Tupelo Quarterly* and *Cobalt Review*.

Christopher M. Dier (M.A. Ed., '13)

Chris Dier is an author, historian and teacher whose new book, "The 1868 St. Bernard Parish Massacre: Blood in the Cane Field" details a horrific period in the history of Louisiana's St. Bernard Parish. In 1868, between 35 to 135 recently freed African-American men of color were dragged from their homes and killed in an attempt to keep them from exercising their newly granted right to vote. This is the first book from Dier, who teaches at Chalmette High School and resides in St. Bernard Parish. He is currently seeking a second master's degree—this one in educational administration—at the University of New Orleans.

Nicole A. Sekinger (M.S., '13)

Nicole Sekinger, a CPA and senior accountant at Ericksen Krentel, has been appointed to the board of directors for Luke's House Clinic in New Orleans, which provides medical, women's and vision health services as well as immunizations and prescription assistance to un-

derprivileged populations. Sekinger specializes in audits, reviews, compilations, preparations and bookkeeping for non-public, not-for-profit and governmental entities. She holds a master's in accounting from the University of New Orleans and a bachelor's in accounting from Southeastern Louisiana University.

Kristofer J. Tokarski (M.M., '13)

Kristofer "Kris" Tokarski is a jazz pianist in New Orleans, where he moved in 2011 to complete a master's degree at the University of New Orleans. Originally from East Rutherford, NJ, he was raised in a Hungarian-American household, where classical music and Hungarian folk music were regularly played. He holds a bachelor's degree from Berklee College of Music in Boston. Tokarski has performed at notable jazz festivals and venues including the Umbria Winter Jazz Festival, The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, the French Quarter Fest, Snug Harbor, The Jazz Corner and The Green Mill.

Rhett G. Breerwood (B.A., '97, B.A., '05, M.A., '15)

Rhett Breerwood has been a historian for the Louisiana National Guard Museums in New Orleans and Pineville since 2010. He collects, researches and organizes information pertaining to Louisiana National Guard and the legacy of the organization. He holds undergraduate degrees in history and communications from the University of New Orleans as well as a master's degree in military history. Before that, he worked for Louisiana's State Military Department in support of Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts at Jackson Barracks.

Regina S. Scully (M.F.A., '15)

Regina Scully, a New Orleans based artist, recently held a solo show titled "Mindscapes" at C24 Gallery in New York. Scully's work has been on view across the country including a recent solo exhibition at the New Orleans Museum of Art in October. She is the recipient of the 2017 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant Award. Her work can be found in private and public collections including NOMA, Microsoft Art

Collection, Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation Collection, Capital One Art Collection. She holds a bachelor's degree in painting from Rhode Island School of Design as well as an M.F.A. in painting from the University of New Orleans.

Ashwin S. Vilku (M.S., '15)

Ashwin Vilku is general manager and director of marketing at Saffron NOLA restaurant in New Orleans. After getting his master's degree in hospitality, restaurant and tourism administration at the University of New Orleans, he started his career in wine and spirits marketing and distribution. He helped open Saffron NOLA with his immediate family and the venture has since been named a James Beard Foundation semi-finalist for "best new restaurant" in 2018.

Pranita Vilku (M.B.A., '15)

Pranita Vilku is operations manager at Saffron NOLA restaurant in New Orleans, where she manages accounting and finance and is also lead

floor manager. The restaurant, which she helped open with her immediate family, was named a James Beard Foundation semi-finalist for "best new restaurant" in 2018. It is the Vilku family's first full-time restaurant venture, stemming from their pop-up restaurant of 6 years and their 26-year catering business.

Nathaniel T. Frye (B.S., '17)

Nate Frye, a four-year letter winner for the University of New Orleans men's basketball program, signed a one-year deal in August to begin his professional career with the Niagara River Lions in the National Basketball League based in Canada. A 6-foot guard, Frye averaged 10.6 points in 24 games in his last season at UNO as part of the team that earned the Southland Conference regular season and conference tournament titles, advancing to the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Tournament for the first time in 21 seasons. Frye is a graduate of a Houma Christian, where he helped build a Class 1A Warriors athletic program. 🏀

Kelvin R. Adams (Ph.D., '05)

Kelvin Adams, superintendent of the 22,000-student St. Louis Public School District, was honored by the St. Louis American Foundation with the 2017 Stellar Performer in Education Award. Adams has lead Missouri's largest



school district since 2008, during which time the district has earned full accreditation and regained its financial footing after finding itself \$40 million in debt in 2007. The district has also launched a pilot program to develop trauma-informed teaching and discipline practices within its classrooms. Before going to Missouri, Adams held positions in New Orleans as a middle and high school principal as well as chief of staff for the Recovery School District.

PROFESSOR ARNOLD R. HIRSCH'S SCHOLARSHIP LEAVES ENDURING LEGACY

ARNOLD R. HIRSCH, A University of New Orleans history professor for 31 years whose work on Chicago public housing became a part of the literary canon on the history of race in the U.S., died March 18. He was 69.



Arnold R. Hirsch

Born and raised in Chicago, Hirsch earned a bachelor's degree and doctorate at the University of Illinois and joined UNO in 1979. Before his 2010 retirement, Hirsch's roles at the University included serving as the Ethel & Herman L. Midlo Endowed Chair and director of the Midlo Center for New Orleans Studies.

Known as "Arnie" to colleagues, Hirsch leaves a legacy at the University of steadfast commitment to making history accessible to the masses.

His groundbreaking book "Making the Second Ghetto," catalogs the myriad societal and institutional forces at work ensuring racial segregation in Chicago housing during the decades following World War II. His research for the book began in the aftermath of Chicago riots

that followed the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

At the time of its publishing in 1983, the book made big waves in academia. Thomas J. Sugrue, professor of social and cultural analysis and history at New York University, says the reason was Hirsch's willingness to challenge recent history, the post-World War II era in particular. Sugrue says the approach was unusual among most historians at the time.

"Over his too-short career, Arnold Hirsch made inestimable contributions to the study of cities, race, urban politics, and policy, not to mention setting the agenda for a whole generation of cutting-edge work on postwar American history," wrote Sugrue in a memorial for *National Book Review*.

Hirsch's work resonates just as powerfully today. The significance of Hirsch's most famous volume has been noted by best-selling author Ta-Nehisi Coates.

"If you want to understand modern Chicago, you can't do without Hirsch's work," Coates

wrote in 2014 in *The Atlantic*. "Every time I hear someone speak about 'black on black crime' in Chicago, I want to hurl a hardcover of 'Making The Second Ghetto' at them."

Mary Niall Mitchell, who currently holds the Midlo Endowed Chair and serves as co-director of the Midlo Center for New Orleans Studies, calls Hirsch "one of the most important scholars ever to teach at UNO."

"His work was foundational to the field of 20th century urban history," she says. "Even though 'Making the Second Ghetto' was about Chicago, it gave him a framework for studying the politics of race and racial discrimination that was vital to understanding the history of New Orleans. The book 'Creole New Orleans,' which he co-edited with his colleague Joe Logsdon, is still indispensable."

After gaining notoriety for his incisive knowledge about Chicago, Hirsch would embrace the role of bringing the history of New Orleans to its people just as passionately.

Under Hirsch's leadership, the Midlo Center for New Or-

leans Studies sponsored a robust lecture series covering topics in New Orleans history ranging from the state of education during the time of Thomas Jefferson to George Porter Jr. The series resulted from Hirsch's decision to open up a University of New Orleans class on New Orleans history to the public. Hirsch became aware of a spike in hunger for local history after Hurricane Katrina. He met that interest by sharing the knowledge that was in demand.

The success of the lecture series led to a partnership with the Louisiana State Museum to hold a monthly public lecture at the Cabildo. Hirsch was also involved in the collection of oral histories, including that of Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial, the first African-American mayor of New Orleans.

Years later, Hirsch's influence on defining the Midlo Center's role in democratizing history is clearly evident in projects Midlo and the University is involved in, says Connie Atkinson, co-director of the Midlo Center: "When we evaluate projects to determine whether the Midlo Center should have a role, we always have Arnie and his goals in mind."

BIOLOGIST CLELMER BARTELL BLENDED HIS PASSIONS FOR NATURE AND ART

CLELMER KAY "CLEL" Bartell, a biologist who taught University of New Orleans students for more than three decades, died Nov. 6, 2017. He was 83.

Originally from Indiantown, SC, Bartell earned a bachelor's degree from North Carolina's Davidson College in 1957 and a doctorate in zoology from Duke University in 1964. Soon after, a postdoctoral fellowship in biology



Clelmer Kay "Clel" Bartell

at Tulane University brought him to New Orleans. In 1969, he was hired onto the faculty of the University of New Orleans as an assistant professor.

Over his career, Bartell taught classes in biology and physiology. His chief research interests were comparative physiology and endocrinology, using crustaceans as a model system. From a young age, family mem-

bers say, Bartell exhibited a strong interest in nature as well as a keen intellect and artistic proclivity, all of which he was able to employ in his role as a researcher, academic and instructor.

Bartell contributed research that focused on identifying and quantifying harmful chemicals in the Mississippi River, which were accumulating in soil and aquatic organisms. He also worked closely with Michael Poirrer, then-chair of the Department of Biological Science, on research involving the

growing soft shell crab industry.

Bartell is survived by his longtime friend and companion of 45 years, Carl J. Hardy, and sister, Carrie Bartell of Colorado, as well as extended family in South Carolina. A memorial service honoring his life was held Nov. 18 at Trinity Episcopal Church in New Orleans.

Donations in Bartell's honor can be made to the William "Bill" Chandler Fund of Indiantown Church or any environmental advocacy organization.

JAMES 'JIM' MAY HELPED SHAPE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

LONGTIME RESEARCH professor James George "Jim" May, one of the earliest graduates and faculty members in the University of New Orleans Department of Psychology, died on Jan. 8. He was 77.

Trained as a physiological psychologist, May was fascinated by the relationship between brain activities and human experience and behavior.

Throughout his career, he used electrophysiological and psychophysical techniques to research visual perception, cognition and vestibular processes—how the inner ear and brain control

balance and eye movements and feelings of motion sickness and other disorders.



James George
"Jim" May

Born in Chicago and raised in New Orleans, May graduated from De La Salle High School and served four years in the U.S. Air Force. In 1965, he received a bachelor's degree in psychology from what was then the Louisiana State University in New Orleans. He continued to pursue psychology, getting a master's at the University of Southern Mississippi in 1966 and a doctorate at the University of Houston in 1969.

May joined the University

of New Orleans in 1969 as an assistant professor soon after receiving his Ph.D. Daughter Zoe May Smith says letters reveal that her father was excited to be a part of a growing program. "He really did feel like he wanted his work to make the most impact," says Smith (M.S., '97).

May was a full-time member of UNO's faculty for 32 years, rising to full professor in 1978. He held a number of visiting professorships, including at the University of Melbourne, the University of Tasmania and the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. He also conducted research at the Kresge Hearing Research Laboratory of the South. He retired from UNO in 2001 and was

named professor emeritus.

His academic awards included an LSU Distinguished Faculty Fellowship Award, Fulbright Scholar Research Fellowship, Fogarty Scholarship and the Endowed Villere Chair for Research in Neuroscience. He authored more than 250 publications and posters and received more than 30 research grants.

Among those he leaves are his daughters, Monique May Casey and Zoe May Smith, and two grandchildren, Camille and William Smith. May was remembered during a Jan. 13 memorial service at Bagnell & Son Funeral Home in Covington, La.

HRT FACULTY MEMBER DAVID NJITE RELISHED ROLE OF MENTOR

DAVID NJITE, A BELOVED faculty member who was known for making key connections with students in the Lester E. Kabacoff School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Administration, died in March following a sudden illness. He was 53.

Originally from Kenya, Njite joined the University of New Orleans in 2012 as assistant professor of hotel, restaurant and tourism administration. He held a Ph. D. in human nutrition and food management from The Ohio State University and was on faculty at Oklahoma State University before moving to New Orleans.

At UNO, Njite distinguished himself as both a researcher and advisor. His research emphasized a multi-disciplinary approach that applies several aspects of psychology to investigate and explain consumer behavior in the hospitality and tourism context.

But Kim Williams, professor and director of the Kabacoff School, says, more than anything else, it was Njite's passion for student development that stood apart. When in 2016 the University launched MoMENTum, a program designed to pair African-American male students with faculty and staff mentors, Njite enthusiastically signed up and remained a committed mentor through the program ever since.

"The students loved him," Williams says. "He cared so much and he did anything to help them."

Senior HRT major Jasmine Devonne Jackson says she was struggling, like many, with news of Njite's passing. He was funny and upbeat, she says. He told corny jokes and delightful stories.

"I know I am not the only life Dr. Njite touched," Jackson says. "He was an incredible educator, an honorable mentor and a good

friend. Dr. Njite molded futures and never failed to go out of his way to help his students become more successful. There was nothing he did half-way and that is something that will never go unnoticed."

Njite's work has appeared in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, *The Cornell Hotel Quarterly*, *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Research*, *Journal of Food Service Business Research*, *Journal of Services Research* and *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.

He was twice recipient of the "Best Paper Award" at the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (ICHRIE) and his work has been among the finalists for the Cornell Quarterly Award for the "Published Article of the Year." He has also received the prestigious W. Bradford Wiley Memorial Research Award for Research, which honors a superior publication on a

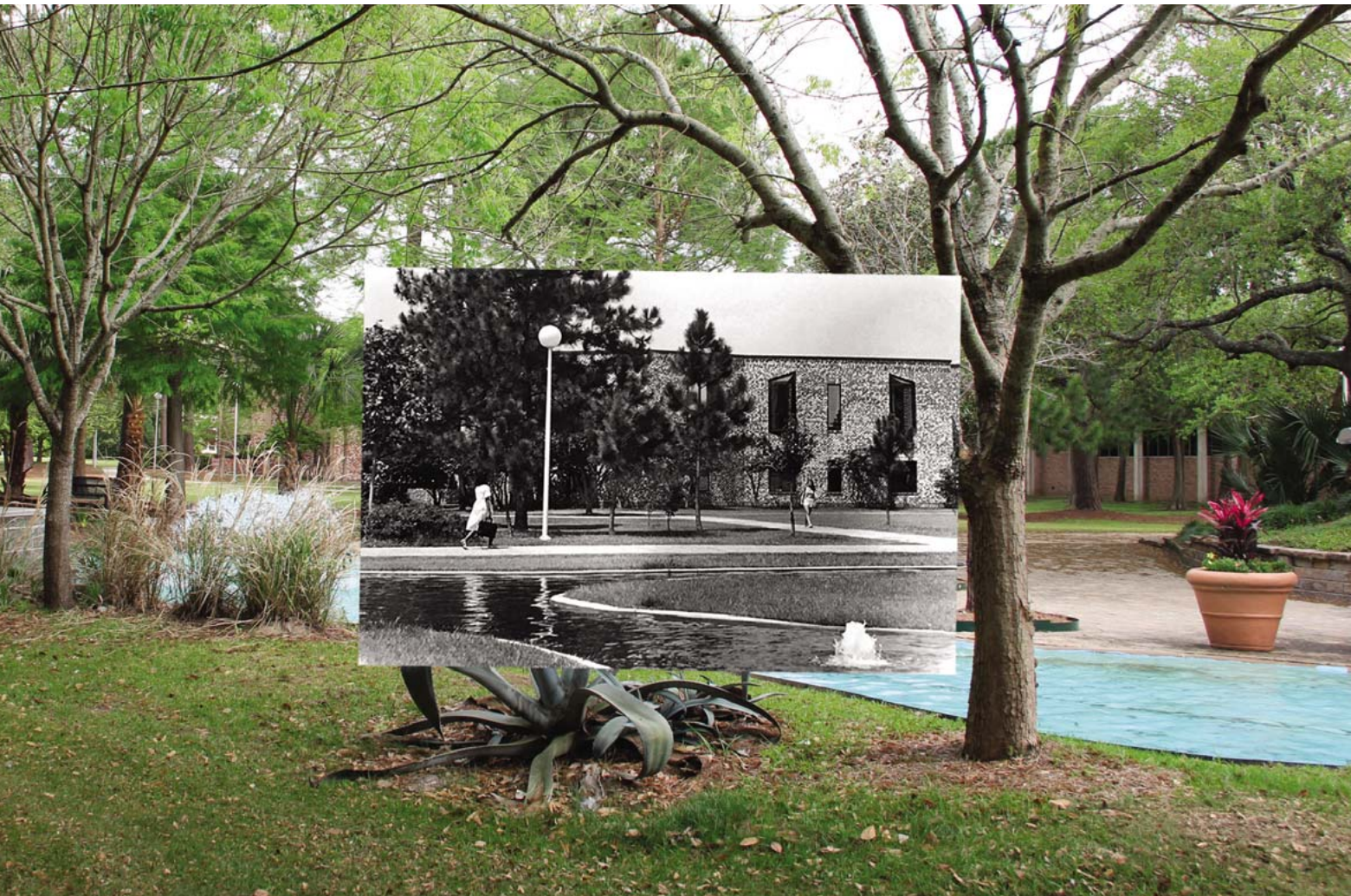
topic relevant to field of hospitality or tourism management.

Besides his scholarly work, Njite also was a jovial colleague, Williams said. When he arrived in the mornings, he often would sing out his greeting—"I'm here! Whoooo's home?" Then, he would make his rounds through the floor, asking his colleagues how they were. He usually appeared in class wearing a suit and tie, Williams said, and he was a stickler for keeping his commitments.

On the occasions when Williams traveled with Njite to academic conferences, she said, people would line up to tell him hello. The bonds he'd formed while advising doctoral students seemed to stand the test of time, she said—his former students made it clear they enjoyed reconnecting with him.

"He was a positive energy but also a huge inspiration," senior HRT major Kristyn Williams says. "He believed far more in his students, especially in me, than we ever did in ourselves." 🍷

THEN AND NOW



Enhanced Tranquility

THE WATER FEATURE ON THE WALK BETWEEN Earl K. Long Library and the Amphitheater has long contributed to the University of New Orleans' tranquil campus scenery. Today, thoughtful landscaping of the scene in front of the Administration Building includes several places to sit, study, visit and enjoy the calming sounds of water falling into water. In the fall, the University named the sitting area overlooking the fountain the Robert W. Merrick/Latter & Blum Patio in honor of one of UNO's most dedicated donors. As chairman and CEO of Latter & Blum, Merrick and his company are responsible for more than \$2 million in gifts to the city's only public research university.



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Join us on May 12, 2018 for the 7th annual Crawfish Mambo at the University of New Orleans. Spend the day sampling dozens of different crawfish boils from teams competing for cash prizes, trophies, and bragging rights. Enjoy all-you-can-eat crawfish, live music, an artists village, a kids tent, and more. Come out for a full day of fun!

Saturday, May 12 | 11am – 5pm
University of New Orleans Campus
\$25 pre-sale or \$35 at the gate

Live entertainment to include:

Robin Barnes, James Andrews & The Crescent City Swing, Phunky Monkeys and Corey Henry & Treme Funktet. Plus Peel 'N Eat, an all-you-can-eat contest!

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