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Illinois State Magazine

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Summer 2022

Illinois State Magazine, Summer 2022

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University Marketing and Communications, "Illinois State Magazine, Summer 2022" (2022). *Illinois State Magazine*. 50.

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THE MAGAZINE OF ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

STATE

IllinoisState.edu SUMMER 2022

Engineering the future

Illinois State's new College of Engineering will offer degrees in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and general engineering.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Susan Marquardt Blystone '84, M.S. '03

ALUMNI EDITOR
Rachel Kobus '09, M.S. '11

LEAD DESIGNERS
Dave Jorgensen, M.S. '03
Michael Mahle

DESIGNERS
Jeff Higgerson '92
Lawrence Lair
Sean Thornton '00, M.S. '17
Evan Wallis '06

WEB EDITOR
Kevin Bersett, MBA '17

PHOTOGRAPHER
Lyndsie Schlink '04, M.S. '21

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Tracy Wiedergren '03, M.S. '15

WRITERS
Kate Arthur
Kevin Bersett, MBA '17
John Twork, M.S. '12

Illinois State (USPS 019606) is published four times annually for donors and members of the Illinois State University Alumni Association at Alumni Center, 1101 N. Main Street, Normal, Illinois 61790-3100. Periodicals postage paid at Normal, Illinois, and at additional mailing offices.

Magazine editorial offices are located at 1101 N. Main Street, Normal, Illinois 61790-3100; telephone (309) 438-2586; facsimile (309) 438-8057; email Alumni@IllinoisState.edu; Website IllinoisState.edu/Magazine. Postmaster: Send address changes to Illinois State, Illinois State University, Campus Box 8000, Normal, IL 61790-8000.

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FirstWord

As we approach the start of an academic year, this is a great time for reflection. There is value in pausing to consider all we have accomplished and envision new goals. The exercise is equally significant for an institution. After my first year as president of Illinois State, it's clear we stand firm on our foundation while also expanding to keep pace with our evolving world.

How ISU can do both is exemplified in this issue of *State*. The University's legacy and reputation as the teacher of teachers is strengthened with a statewide program coordinated through the College of Education. The Illinois Tutoring Initiative will

create partnerships with school districts and educators across the state to help students rebound in their learning after the interruptions created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Illinois State's effort to meet professional needs is simultaneously expanding with creation of a College of Engineering that has been approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education and Illinois State's Board of Trustees. We will create an academic program that prepares electrical, mechanical, and general engineers to enter fields facing a shortage of workers and needing increased employee diversity. Our college will grow and diversify the STEM pipeline by providing opportunities for historically underrepresented and underserved individuals. This equity lens makes the



program that is expected to launch in 2025 unique and essential.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion is the focus of another story in this issue, with the work of alumnus Robert Shorty highlighted. As director of the global DEI team at Nike Inc., he is involved in transitional work to bring equal opportunities throughout the corporation that reaches around the world.

You can also meet two new head coaches. Ryan Pedon is leading the men's basketball team, while Allie Matters is at the helm of volleyball. Their dedication to their sport as student-athletes and while rising to the role of head coach is inspiring. Fans will agree with me that the future is bright for both teams.

Readers who are ready to leave the work routine and begin retirement will find inspiration and ideas from the feature about alumna Patti (Sarles) Hart. A corporate executive for decades, she shares her advice on how to not only manage this important stage of life but rethink the concept of retiring.

The programs and people presented in this issue make it clear that Redbirds excel as they rise to every challenge. Take a moment to reflect on your own journey and the ways Illinois State prepared you for where you are today and are going tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terri Goss Kinzy".

Terri Goss Kinzy, Ph.D.
President, Illinois State University



**ILLINOIS STATE
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Illinois' first public university

STATE

Volume 23, Number 2, Summer 2022



14 Mission expanded

Illinois State is offering three new majors in the College of Engineering, which was approved during the spring and is expected to launch in 2025. The college will help fill a void of women and underrepresented individuals in the profession.

17 From acronym to action

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is increasingly discussed as efforts to encourage representation of all individuals intensify across the country. Robert Shorty '08 goes beyond talk to implementation as he leads DEI initiatives at Nike Inc.

20 Closing the gap

Children whose learning was disrupted by the pandemic are receiving assistance through a state program coordinated by ISU's College of Education. The Illinois Tutoring Initiative will reach students across the state.

24 Rewriting retirement

After a career as a corporate executive in the technology industry, Patti (Sarles) Hart '78 knows the adjustment to retirement can be difficult. She challenges the thinking of how to navigate that season of life as co-author of *The Resolutionist: Welcome to the Anti-Retirement Movement*.

27 Called to coach

Ryan Pedon and Allie Matters stayed with their sport after days of playing as college athletes. Both worked up to their current positions as ISU's two new head coaches. Pedon leads the men's basketball team and Matters is at the helm for volleyball.

2 University News

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34 Alumni Report

On the cover: Amelia Korveziroska is a junior from North Macedonia who is studying physics engineering. Options for engineering students will increase exponentially when ISU's seventh college is established.





Campus initiative will enrich faculty diversity

Illinois State is launching the Faculty Diversity Enhancement Program (FDEP) to support the recruitment, retention, and success of faculty members who promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.

“This new program is one means to promote Illinois State’s core value of diversity and inclusion,” ISU President Terri Goss Kinzy said. “FDEP will assist the University in enriching the student experience by hiring faculty members whose knowledge and understanding represent the diversity of our state and nation.”

The program will be a \$4.5 million collaborative effort supported through university general revenue funds; funds from the Office of the Provost; and matching funds from departments, schools, and colleges. New faculty recruitment will take place during the first five years of the seven-year program, which will include components for mentoring and additional support.

“FDEP is aimed at recruiting and retaining outstanding new faculty to enhance the diversity efforts in fields in which populations have been, and remain, underrepresented,” said Provost Aondover Tarhule, *above*, who announced the program during the spring semester.

Tarhule explained that it will “help ensure the University community includes faculty who promote equity, diversity, and inclusion through their research, teaching, service, and mentoring.”

Faculty members in FDEP will be eligible to receive a maximum of \$20,000 per year for a total of three years through the initiative. They will advance teaching, scholarly, and creative productivity in numerous areas.

“FDEP will complement, rather than replace, traditional department and school sources of faculty funding and support,” said Tarhule, who noted that more details will be shared as the program is implemented during the upcoming academic year.

Production crew captures ISU, Redbird experience

A television production crew with experience working on reality shows such as *Survivor* and *Undercover Boss* filmed on campus during the spring. The crew focused on 10 students for a 30-minute episode of *The College Tour*, which will air on Amazon Prime Video this fall. It can be viewed free without membership.

Alex Boylan, an Emmy-nominated producer who won a season of *The Amazing Race*, is host and executive producer of the college show that allows students to explore schools they cannot afford to visit.

“Illinois State has a unique and compelling story to tell, and *The College Tour* provides an opportunity to tell that story to a wide audience,” Admissions Director Jeff Mavros said. “This is a special place, and there are no better brand ambassadors than our students themselves.”

Senior acting major Joshua Thomas was chosen from a pool of more than 70 students. He focused on his experience making friends and getting involved in the School of Theatre and Dance and WZND.

Boylan left with a positive impression of ISU. “This campus is really special,” he said. “The friendliness and the spirit since we stepped foot on campus is second to none.”

Accreditation puts COB among top U.S. programs

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) has continued its accreditation of the business and accounting degree programs within the College of Business through 2027.

AACSB accreditation recognizes the commitment to high academic quality, measurable student success, relevance of the programs to the needs of the workforce, and positive societal impact in the college. It is the gold standard for college business programs in the nation.

“There are more than 10,000 business colleges in the country, among whom only 738 are accredited by AACSB for business degree programs and only 188



Senior acting major Joshua Thomas shares highlights of his college experience with a television production crew backstage at Braden Auditorium for Illinois State’s episode of *The College Tour*, scheduled to stream on Amazon Prime Video this fall.

are accredited for both business and accounting degree programs,” College of Business Dean Ajay Samant said. “It is a matter of pride that Illinois State’s College of Business is among the elite group of colleges in the nation accredited by AACSB in both business and accounting.”

Achieving accreditation is a rigorous process. The standards require excellence in areas relating to strategic management and innovation; active participation by students, faculty, and staff; learning and teaching; and academic and professional engagement.

Federal grant used to purchase microscope

The National Science Foundation awarded Illinois State a \$403,900 grant to purchase a state-of-the-art electron microscope that will aid in research and teaching across campus and the area.

“This is an amazing resource for ISU and nearby institutions in Central Illinois,” said the grant’s principal investigator, Assistant Professor of Physics Mahua Biswas. “It will move our already cutting-edge research in different levels and open up avenues and hands-on experience for students.”

The field emission scanning electron microscope can take images of nano-sized objects, enabling users to detect intimate details and properties. Research possibilities reach across fields.

“This grant would change the long-term future of research on campus across departments,” said Biswas, whose lab creates inorganic nanostructures that could be used for emerging devices such as in solar cells, LEDs, and high-speed memory chips.

Other co-principal investigators of the grant are Assistant Professor of Physics Uttam Manna, Associate Professor of Geology Tenley Banik, Professor of Chemistry Jun-Hyun Kim, and Assistant Professor of Microbiology Jan Dahl.

Program rank improves for ISU graduate study

Illinois State moved up in the 2023 *U.S. News & World Report*’s rankings of the Best Graduate Schools. Programs in the College of Business and the College of Education were elevated, while a new program in the Mennonite College of Nursing debuted in the top 100.

The College of Education graduate program ranked at 71, compared to 80 in the 2022 listing. The College of Business

program ranked at 126, moving up from 140 in 2022. The Mennonite College of Nursing's Doctor of Nursing Practice ranked 91 of nursing graduate programs in the nation.

U.S. News rankings are based on expert opinions about program excellence and statistical indicators that measure the quality of a school's faculty, research, and students. The data for the rankings comes from statistical surveys of more than 2,150 programs and from reputation surveys sent to more than 23,200 academics and professionals.

Faculty honored with award for life's work

The Illinois State Historical Society named ISU Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History Mark Wyman as its 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. A professor in the Department of History for 35 years, Wyman is a respected scholar.

His research focused on labor, cultural, and social history. He also assisted with the Bloomington-Normal Black Project regarding the history of de facto segregation in the area. Wyman authored eight books, including one documenting ISU's history, and numerous essays and articles. His topics ranged from transnational studies of return migration and displaced persons to the history of the Parklands Foundation.

Wyman engaged students in the classroom across decades. His commitment to students continues through the Mark Wyman Scholarship established to help a student majoring in history.

Science student earns national recognition

Ian Freeman, a junior majoring in physics, computational physics, and mathematics, has been named a 2022-2023 Barry Goldwater Scholar. The award is one of the most prestigious national scholarships in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.



Ian Freeman

From Plainfield, Freeman is one of 417 chosen from more than 1,200 national applicants. He will spend this summer working with the Northwestern University's Center for Interdisciplinary Exploration and Research in Astrophysics under a National Science Foundation-funded research program for undergraduates.

Freeman has presented at multiple national conferences and co-authored three papers for academic journals. He completed an intensive research experience with ISU Assistant Professor of Physics Matt Caplan.

Freeman hopes to earn a Ph.D. in astrophysics and teach at the collegiate level while conducting computational research on the structures of stars. He is in ISU's Honors Program, is a teaching assistant in the Department of Physics, a resident assistant for the math living and learning community, and a section leader in the Big Red Marching Machine.

English teachers offered new graduate program

Certified secondary English language arts (ELA) teachers are the target for a new graduate English education master's program that began during the summer. The online program supports licensed teachers as they design and conduct research in their own secondary ELA classrooms, increasing their effectiveness to advocate for the strengths and needs of all learners.

It is more difficult than ever for teachers to feel supported in their efforts to positively influence student learning. Dr. Danielle Lillege, graduate coordinator for the English education master's program, is confident this program will offer support and community to practicing teachers as they increase their ELA knowledge.

"The future of ELA rests in the hands of those teacher scholars who through their everyday instruction and interactions with students, colleagues, and others in their school communities, are imagining and enacting more equitable instruction responsive to the diverse learners and classroom cultures they seek to support," Lillege said.

Legacy lives on with student scholarship

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology lost one of its most influential faculty with the death of Professor Edward B. Jelks in December. He dedicated 15 years to the department that he started in 1968.

Prior to retiring in 1984, Jelks established the Midwestern Archaeological Research Center (MARC). He also initiated the first field school for ISU students in Texas during 1970. Students were drawn to his classes and the opportunity to work in archaeological field schools and at MARC.

A fund has been created to honor the work he and his wife, Juliet, did to advance the field and build ISU's program. The Edward and Juliet Jelks Scholarship will support a new generation of students to carry on the legacy of Jelks.

Support the scholarship and College of Arts and Sciences by calling Kate Childs at (309) 438-7682 or sending an email to kachild@IllinoisState.edu.

Directors chosen for Alumni Association

There is new leadership within the Alumni Association following the annual meeting held in June.

Three alumni were elected to three-year terms on the board of directors.

Jenna Goldsmith '08, M.S. '10, is the assistant director and advisor for ISU's Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She resides in Bloomington. Susan Grant '95, M.S. '17, is a retired assistant professor and adjunct instructor at ISU and IWU. She resides in Towanda. Toni Wells '16 is an HR consultant for Allstate. She resides in Chicago.

Leah Walton '88, M.S. '92, is president. Tim Griffin '93 is vice president/president-elect. Susan Nelson-Brown '78 is secretary, with Dave Horstein '08 serving as past president.

Individuals interested in serving on the Alumni Association board of directors are sought each year with a deadline set in February. For more information on the Illinois State Alumni Association and how to get involved, visit Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/Association.

Half Century Club reunion plans set

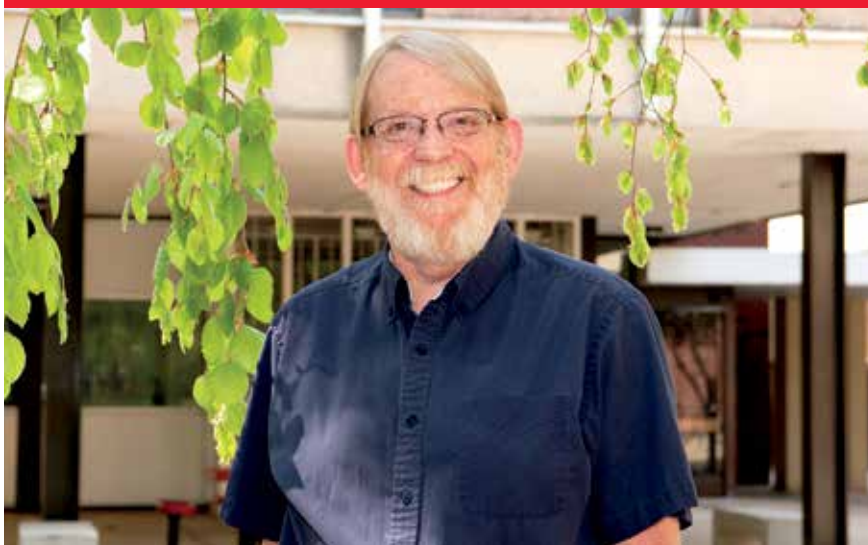
Graduates from the Class of 1972 will celebrate their 50th class reunion on October 14 and 15 during the annual Half Century Club event held Homecoming weekend. A variety of campus activities will take place, including dinner, tours, the Homecoming parade, breakfast, and more. The Class of 1972 will be inducted into the Half Century Club on Friday evening.

Members of the classes of 1967, 1962, 1957, 1952, and 1947 who will be celebrating their 55th, 60th, 65th, 70th, and 75th reunions will be honored that evening and receive a special recognition gift.

The annual Redbird Prime program allows alumni to catch up with classmates, make new acquaintances, participate in exclusive behind-the-scenes tours, and learn what's new at Illinois State. The events are not exclusive to graduates of the honored years. Any alumnus or friend of the University is invited.

For additional information, contact Alumni Engagement at (309) 438-2586 or email saduque@IllinoisState.edu.

Where are they now?



After graduating with a degree in theatre from Cornell College, Pete Guither spent a few years traveling as a lounge musician. He later found himself achieving some success working in management jobs in the private sector and government while spending his weekends volunteering in community theatre.

"If only I could combine what I love with what I was good at and get paid for it," Guither thought. This led to moving to New York, getting an MFA in arts management from Brooklyn College, and working on Broadway.

In 1988, Guither came to Illinois State University as general manager of the theatre department's production program and the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. He taught theatre management and computer courses, did theatre photography, and was occasionally the musical director for mainstage productions.

For 25 years, he was the faculty advisor for Theatre of Ted—a late-night, underground, open-mic-style performance venue with the motto "Dare to Suck" where students could try new artistic ideas without being graded.

"I loved that risk-taking creativity," Guither said, "and the positive support from their fellow students. It has been incredibly rewarding to see so many of those students go out and make something truly new in films, teaching, art, television, comedy, music, theatre, dance, and other areas."

The Pete Guither Endowed Theatrical Experimentation Fund will aid future students looking to create new performance approaches.

Guither retired as assistant dean of the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts in 2015. On behalf of the college, he continues to lead theatre trips to New York City, something he has done for more than 20 years. "I love that city and enjoy introducing it to students and community friends."

In retirement, Guither is busy with theatrical photography along with traveling, playing the piano, biking, cooking, and playing Dungeons & Dragons with friends. He has written a book of stories called *Improbable Anecdotes* to be published this summer.

He can be reached at guither@gmail.com.



Freshman gymnast rises to NCAA tournament

by Susan Marquardt Blystone

Ninety seconds is all it took for Jaye Mack to earn the opportunity to compete in this year's NCAA Women's Gymnastics Championship. That was the length of the floor routine she performed with near perfection in April to secure a trip to Texas, where as a freshman she went up against the best in her sport from colleges across the nation.

Mastering the leaps and flips built into the routine took months multiplied by years—15 to be exact—as Mack started on her journey as a gymnast when she was four years old. “My mom was a cheerleader so she encouraged me to do cheerleading or gymnastics,” said Mack, who remembers her first day in the gym because she was required to take off a favorite bracelet. That didn’t dampen her enthusiasm. “I loved

it,” she said, “and I’ve never stopped.”

A native of Kansas City, Missouri, Mack had the encouragement of both parents, her two older brothers, and nieces and nephews. Her father, who owns the restaurant Unk’s Burgers in the Kansas City metro area, took her to practices. Her mother, a pharmaceutical representative, picked her up. They supported Mack’s journey, which started with mastering the fundamentals.

“Initially you learn the basics, things like balancing on one leg with your eyes shut. Then you learn handstands and cartwheels and just keep working your way up,” Mack explained. She did just that as a member of the club team at Xtreme Gymnastics in Lee’s Summit, Missouri. There was no gymnastics program at Lee’s Summit West High School, where she earned her diploma while maintaining an intense schedule.

“It was a lot to juggle, but it prepared me for being a student-athlete now. I had to manage my time well. I left school early so my day was six hours instead of seven. I took a class before school started in the mornings or during the summer to keep up,” Mack said.

When not focused on academics, she put all of her energy into gymnastics. As part of the elite club team, practices consumed roughly 23 hours each week. The time was spent learning new skills, perfecting routines, and conditioning

expectations.

Mack was the 2022 Midwest Independent Conference co-champion on floor. She posted scores of 9.0 or higher six times during competition throughout the season. Her score of 9.925 at the regional competition earned an automatic berth to the NCAA as the highest result for an individual on floor who was not advancing with a team. Mack and her coaches agree it was the best performance of her career.

“I think Jaye proved to herself that

credits her coaches and teammates for helping build her confidence and skills.

She honed both through the ISU team’s routine of three-hour workouts and another hour of lifting weights on the same day. Practices were held Monday and Tuesday, then again on Thursday and Friday, with some weekend sessions as well. The conditioning cycle is continuous and still, Mack often gets so sore she endures an ice bath to help relax her muscles.

“Gymnastics is a year-round sport,

“I surprised myself so much. I didn’t know that nationals would be a possibility for me.”

to stay strong. She was coached on each of the four events: bar, beam, floor, and vault.

“The beam is my least favorite,” Mack said, saying she found floor routines less nerve-racking. “You don’t have an apparatus to fall off of and you get to showcase your personality, so it’s fun.”

As a teen, Mack missed out on some dances and parties because of competitions that ran from January through May. The sacrifice was rewarded when a coach from Illinois State saw her compete and expressed an interest in her becoming a Redbird.

“When I was little, I dreamed of the Olympics. By the time I reached middle school, I changed directions and knew that college gymnastics was my goal,” said Mack, who is majoring in interior design. One visit to campus and she was ready to commit to ISU. “I remember I cried with my mom. A weight was lifted off my shoulders. I reached my goal.”

Mack could not wait to experience gymnastics at the collegiate level. She was expecting positive team support and growth through the coaching, which is what she found at Illinois State. She was not anticipating such a stellar first year, even though she arrived with high

she can perform at a high level, even when every set of eyes in the arena were on her,” ISU head coach Bob Conkling said. “She was the very last routine of the entire meet at regionals. I think that pressure just made her want to do better, and it resulted in a tremendous routine. I think we both learned she can rise to any occasion no matter the pressure.”

“I surprised myself so much. I didn’t know that nationals would be a possibility for me,” said Mack, who is only the second gymnast in ISU history to make the NCAA competition. She ended with a score of 9.750 for the performance that was aired on ESPN2.

“Even though it may not have been the routine I wanted to showcase at nationals, I am still beyond proud of myself and extremely grateful for the opportunity. Having this experience under my belt, I can’t wait to see what the future has in store,” said Mack, who was incredibly nervous as she experienced one of the greatest moments of her life.

She handles pressure and anxiety inherent in gymnastics by journaling. It helps her overcome the mental hurdles of participating in a sport that can be dangerous. Beyond her family, she

which sets us apart from other sports.

We are always working and always training,” Mack said. This summer she will return to her local club to continue honing her skills so she is ready for her second season as a Redbird. She hopes to repeat her successes as a freshman and do more. “My goal for next season is to compete at some point on all four—bar, vault, beam, and floor.”

Mack’s coaches have an equal amount of anticipation for what’s ahead. “Her consistency throughout her freshman year will set her up to have future success for her next three seasons,” Conkling said.

“Her work ethic and dedication toward improvement every day in the gym will push her forward toward even more success, not only on floor but also the other three events. We could not be more proud of her and can’t wait to see what the future holds for her and the rest of our program.”

Mack also intends to continue having fun with the sport that remains her passion. “I still love it,” she said. “Flipping through the air is the best feeling ever.”

Practice facility pledge honors administrator

An anonymous pair of donors made a \$1.5 million gift commitment to the Indoor Practice Facility and to honor the legacy of former Deputy Director of Athletics Aaron Leetch.

A gifted administrator, Leetch was a driving force behind the fundraising for the Hancock Stadium renovation and construction of the club space, which has been named Aaron Leetch Stadium Club.



Aaron Leetch with his wife, Lindsay

Leetch began serving as deputy director of Athletics in 2013. He was one of seven men who lost their lives in an airplane crash when returning from

the NCAA Final Four championship game on April 7, 2015.

“We are truly grateful for the generosity shown by these donors for their commitment to honoring Aaron and helping us build the Indoor Practice Facility,” Athletics Director Kyle Brennan said of Leetch, who died at 37.

“Aaron had a vision for this indoor facility that he shared with donors, and these gifts help ensure his plans for Illinois State come to fruition,” Brennan said. “Aaron’s legacy here is very important, and the fact that these donors know that and understand it is meaningful to everyone associated with Redbird Athletics.”

Ground was broken for the \$11.5 million Indoor Practice Facility on April 10. Those attending included Dee Miller, his wife Sheila Marshall-Miller '94, and former Illinois State student-athlete and professional football player Amin Babjide (B.J.) Bello. They pledged \$3 million through their company The Linq Up for the facility that is expected to be completed in spring of 2023.

Women’s teams take Valley championships

The women’s tennis and golf teams celebrated successful seasons during which they both won the Missouri Valley Conference tournament championship to advance to the NCAA Tournament.

The golf team captured the conference by one stroke over Missouri State University, winning the championship for the first time since the 2013 season. They traveled to Stillwater, Oklahoma, for NCAA tournament play.

Head coach Breanne Hall was named the MVC Coach of the Year, while junior Ali Schrock was named the MVC Golfer of the Year. She placed second in the field. Schrock, Kehler Koss, and Avalon Woodward were named to the All-Conference squad.

The tennis team made its fifth tournament appearance with a 17-6 season record. The Redbirds defeated Drake University, the No. 1 seed, to win the MVC title. Their first opponent in the NCAA Tournament was Ohio State. The last time the team played in the national competition was in 2019.

Top accolades for two lady student-athletes

Basketball player Mary Crompton '21 and golfer Ali Schrock ended their season on a high note as their teams advanced to NCAA play and they each garnered high honors for their success as student-athletes.

Sharpshooter Crompton is one of 16 women’s basketball student-athletes to be named a College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) Academic All-American for the 2021-2022 season. A redshirt junior from Iowa City, Iowa, she is the second

Redbird Trivia

On April 27, junior track and field athlete Rachel Hickey clocked the second fastest women’s 1,500-meter time in school history when she crossed the line in 4 minutes, 21.65 seconds at the Indiana Invitational. Who is No. 1 on the list?

Answer: In 2012, future Jamaican Olympian Aisha Praught-Leer '12 clocked in at 4:16.06 while racing in Ninove, Belgium.



Redbird in program history to earn the honor. She was named the Missouri Valley Conference Scholar-Athlete of the Year. A Robert G. Bone Scholar, she earned a degree in three years and is completing her master's degree in biology.

Schrock is a junior from Pontiac on the golf team studying insurance, finance and law. She also was named a MVC Scholar-Athlete of the Year. She was a MVC Elite-17 Award winner as the top GPA among the golfers in the top-15 at the conference championships. Schrock led the Redbirds in scoring average at 74.8 strokes per round, which is the third-lowest scoring average in program history and the 10th lowest in MVC history.

Alumnus joins College Football Hall of Fame

Illinois State football legend Boomer Grigsby '07 has earned a spot among college football's all-time great. He has been named a member of the 2022 College Football Hall of Fame, becoming the first Redbird player to earn the honor.



Boomer Grigsby '07

Grigsby is one of the most celebrated players in Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) history as a three-time first-team All-American and the FCS career leader in total (550) and solo (325) tackles.

Where are they now?



Owen Miller made his first opening day big league roster when he started the season with the Cleveland Guardians. The former Redbird star, who became the 17th player in program history to make it to the big leagues when he debuted last June, started off the 2022 season hitting .409 with two home runs before winding up on the injured list.

Originally drafted by the San Diego Padres in the third round of the 2018 MLB Amateur Draft, Miller worked his way up the minor league system. He spent time with the Padre's minor league system in A and AA in 2018 and 2019. He was traded in 2020 to Cleveland as part of a package to send Mike Clevinger to San Diego.

During his time at Illinois State, Miller earned All-Missouri Valley Conference first team and was named first-team All-Region and third-team All-American by ABCA/Rawlings. In 2018, he slashed .384/.433/.537 with the team's top batting average and a team-leading 88 hits, which is the most in any season for a Redbird.

A native of Canton, Grigsby was the only player in the history of the Missouri Valley Football Conference (MVFC) to be named the Defensive Player of the Year three times. He was also a three-time finalist in the Buck Buchanan Award voting as the nation's top FCS defensive player. He is the only player in the history of the award to finish in the top-three for three-consecutive years.

Grigsby has been inducted into the Canton High School and Illinois State Athletics Percy Family halls of fame and was selected as a member of the MVFC All-Select NFL Team and

Silver Anniversary Team announced in 2009.

Grigsby was drafted by the Kansas City Chiefs in the 2005 NFL Draft. He played three seasons before finishing his career with the Miami Dolphins and Houston Texans. He was the color analyst for Redbird football broadcasts on NBC Sports Chicago for three seasons and a television analyst for Illinois High School Association football playoff broadcasts. He works for Stryker Instruments and resides with his wife, Jacqueline, and their children in Henderson, Nevada.



Then *and* Now

Efforts to welcome incoming students has been an ISU tradition for decades. What's changed is the type of activities that get students connected before classes begin in the fall. The *Index* yearbook documents that freshmen in 1955 had a convocation and box lunch, campus tours, a watermelon picnic, and church receptions. The highlight was an all-school mixer, *top*, where new students mingled with upperclassmen. Welcome Week activities today are organized through the Division of Student Affairs. Events range from take-and-make activities and transfer student socials to live band karaoke on the Quad, video gaming, movies, live entertainment, an ISU spirit picnic, and glow-in-the-dark black light fun.

Pause *for* Applause



Acting on success

Before **LaRoyce Hawkins** starred on the NBC police drama *Chicago P.D.*, he studied acting at Illinois State. The native of the Chicago suburb Harvey became a word artist, musician, and stand-up comic appearing on Comedy Central's *South Side*. He is also an actor who plays the role of police officer Kevin Atwater on the hit series. Hawkins sees the show as helping viewers reimagine police work. When not on stage or set, Hawkins works as a community activist. His charity work for the Salvation Army earned him an Emmy. He also led Hood Development, a creative campaign to heal underserved communities.



Serving those who serve

Christina (Teetsov) Etchberger '11 is the founder and CEO of It's a Military Life (IML) Corporation. The network advances resiliency and community involvement while building relationships. Etchberger is an Army spouse and mother of two little boys currently living in South Korea. IML began as a lifestyle blog to bring the military community together and has evolved into a nonprofit organization. Etchberger provides educational and resourceful programs for the military community as a whole. Professional volunteers consist of military spouses, veterans, service members, and fellow patriots who do outreach work that engages all ages from children to grandparents.



Beyond the bench

Political science alumnus **Michael McCuskey '70** retired from a judicial career in 2020. He was elected a circuit judge in 1988, served in the 3rd District Appellate Court, and later became a U.S. District Court judge upon nomination by President Bill Clinton. He is now legislative inspector general in Illinois. The position extends his commitment to serve. He was on ISU's Board of Trustees and is a past chair. A member of ISU's College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame, McCuskey served on the University's Alumni Association Board and Attorneys Advisory Council. He has numerous accolades, including an honorary degree from ISU.



Looking for love

Chassidy Mickale '09 participated in the hit series *Love is Blind*, which aired in February. The program pairs eligible singles who get to know each other without meeting in person to determine if love is truly blind. Mickale of Chicago did not leave with an engagement, but she has no regrets. The fashion design and merchandising graduate considers the reality show experience an opportunity to become a better communicator and more vulnerable in a relationship. She continues to operate the beauty concierge service she owns, Your Image Matters LLC, and advises others to "take a leap and bet on yourself."

A Day in the Life



Jon Fulton enjoys interacting with visitors to ISU while giving them a walking campus tour.

Students play vital role in recruiting Redbirds

by Susan Blystone

Enrolling the next class is a year-round process. Admissions leads the effort, with Theresa Wiese an integral part of that office's team. She has coordinated ISU's tour guide program for nearly 18 years.

Wiese hires, trains, and manages students who lead tours for prospective students and their families. "They are our strongest recruiting tool," said Wiese, who has had more than 400 students under her through the years.

There are typically 40 to 60 students on the team. It is not uncommon to have 150 applicants for a dozen openings. The flexible work that averages four to six hours a week is perfect for students who endure an intense interview process.

"Our guides have to be articulate, have good judgment,

think on their feet, be able to deal with difficult questions, and be well-rounded," Wiese said. They represent a mix of majors and life experiences to reflect ISU's diversity. Each hones critical life skills such as confidence in public speaking while on the job.

Jon Fulton, a senior early childhood education major, was hired his freshman year. Now a student manager, he will miss interacting with campus visitors when he student teaches this fall.

"I always get such a great feeling when I give a tour," said Fulton, who sees advantages to having students lead visitors. "They want to know our authentic perspective that comes from us going to classes and living on campus. They want to know what it is like to be an ISU student."



Kalilah Howard completes stuffing folders with information for incoming students, which is one of many jobs team members handle.

He can share his experiences performing as a clown in ISU's Gamma Phi Circus, while Kalilah Howard easily relates to transfer students. She enrolled after attending a community college and completed a degree in history education this spring.

"I like talking to people, and I wanted to learn the campus quickly," Howard said in explaining her interest in the job. She appreciated the rigorous training that covered everything from ISU's history to what to do if a thunderstorm rolls in while with a group on the Quad.



Andrew Pietraszewski helps direct campus visitors while working at the welcome desk in the Bone Student Center.

"You just never know what is going to happen," said Howard, who enjoys engaging visitors in simple conversation. She sees the work as a chance to make a positive impact on future Redbirds, noting "We are the face of the campus."

Allie Beam agrees. "I think the work we do is invaluable for our recruitment process. We can relate to the experience of students who are trying to assess if Illinois State is a good fit for them," said Beam, who is also a student manager.

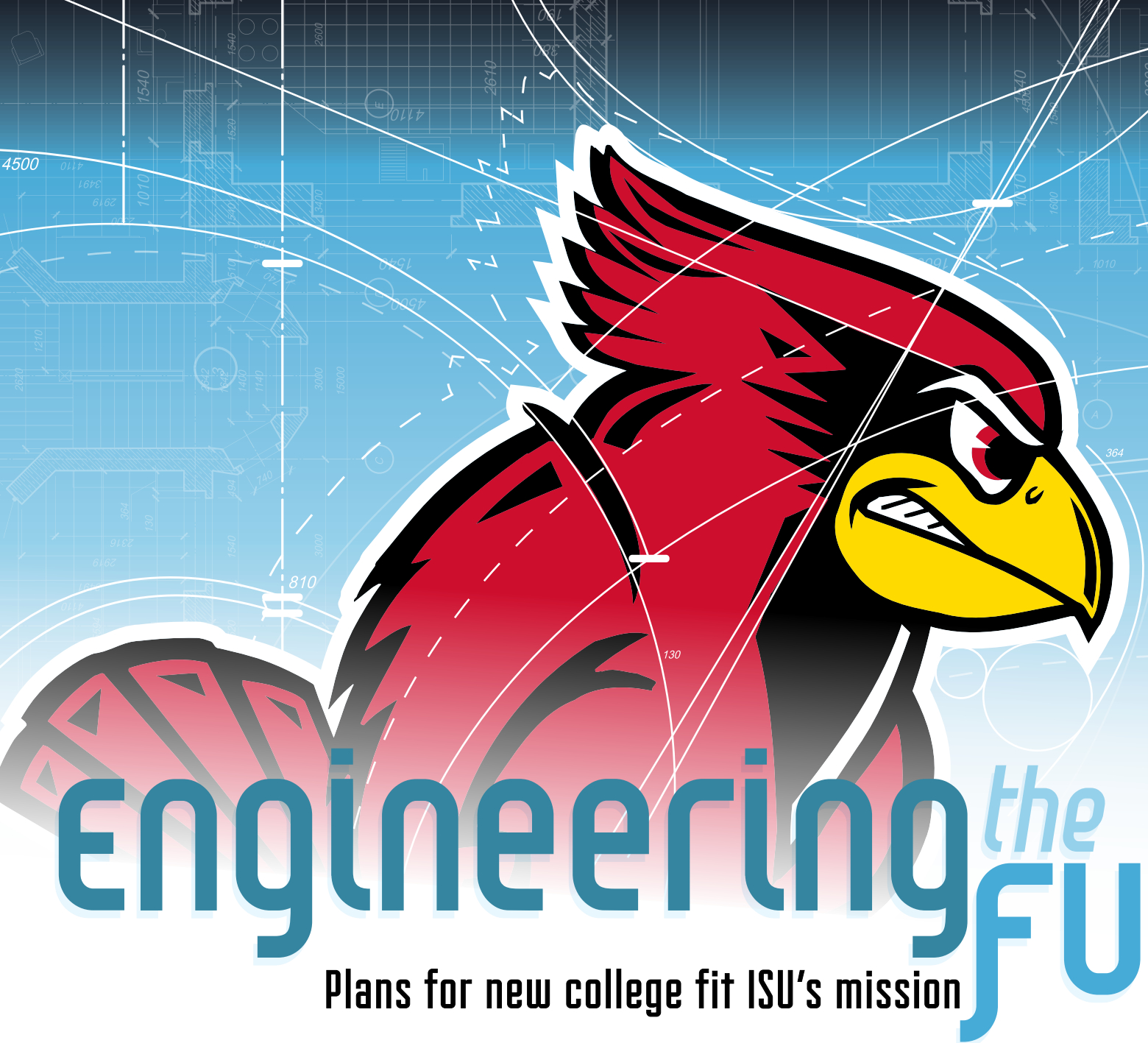


Allie Beam shared ISU's history while showing the campus to international educators.

A Presidential Scholar who graduated in May after completing her communication sciences and disorders degree in three years, Beam found the work rewarding. "I love meeting students and families and talking about the University."

That interaction is exactly what motivates Andrew Pietraszewski to continue on the job. A junior communications major, he became good friends with the student who was his tour guide. Filling that role himself has been energizing.

"Having a student as the face and voice for the University is so important because it gives the high school students a glimpse of what their future can look like. They can see that they can come to campus and succeed," he said. "I help connect the next generation of Redbirds."



Plans for new college fit ISU's mission

History is being repeated at Illinois State University as creation of a College of Engineering advances following approval in the spring by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and ISU's Board of Trustees (BOT).

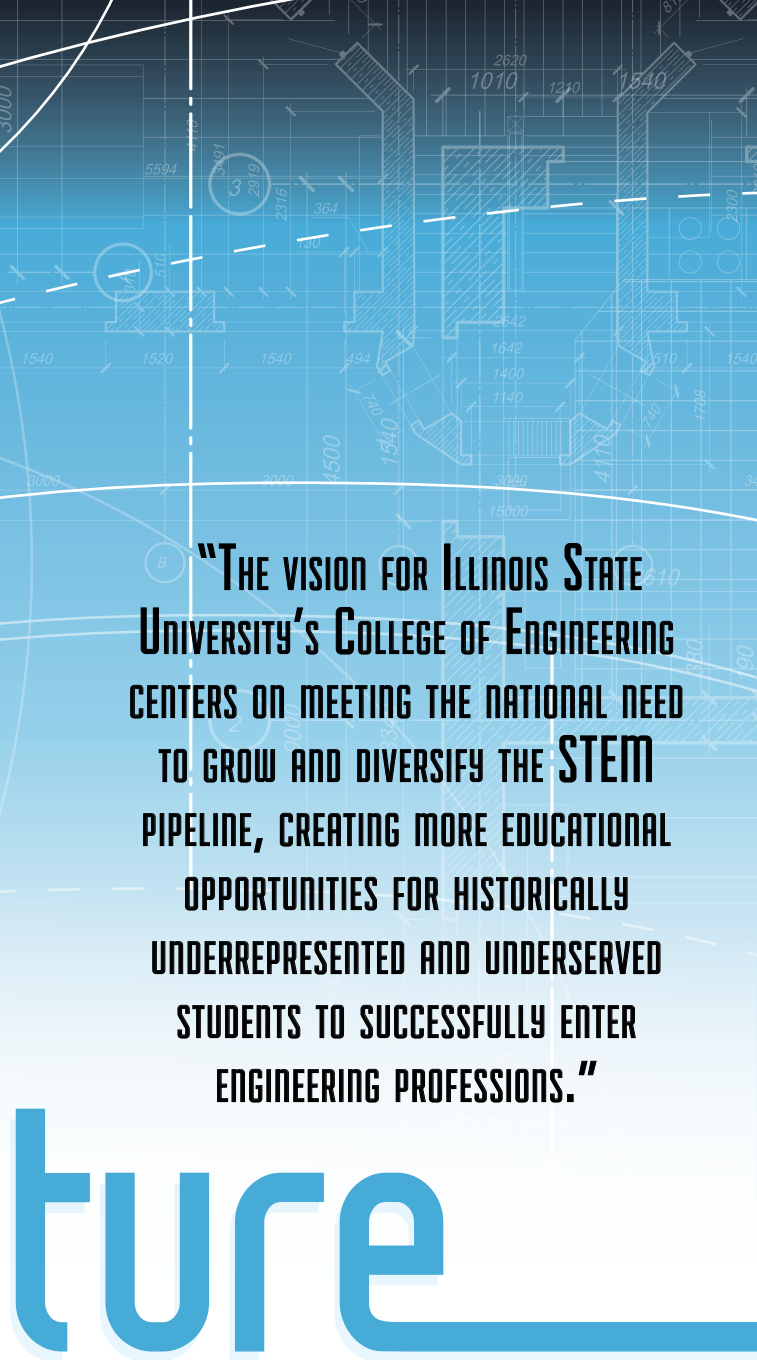
The effort and energy invested by administrators in establishing what will be ISU's seventh college mirror the motivation that drove the University's founders in the 1800s—to help fill a professional void.

The University evolved when the need for teachers was overwhelming. "It was estimated in 1840 that there were at least 100,000 children in Illinois who were not in school and over 28,000 adults who were illiterate," historian Helen

Marshall wrote in the *Grandest of Enterprises: Illinois State Normal University 1857-1957*.

Marshall further documented that rapid population growth from 1840 to 1850 created "a dearth of teachers." The University was consequently built with the mission of preparing educators. Today the need is for more engineers, and specifically individuals from diverse backgrounds to join the field that is growing in demand.

"The vision for Illinois State University's College of Engineering centers on meeting the national need to grow and diversify the STEM pipeline, creating more educational opportunities for historically underrepresented and underserved students to successfully enter engineering professions," ISU President Terri Goss Kinzy said.



"THE VISION FOR ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY'S COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING CENTERS ON MEETING THE NATIONAL NEED TO GROW AND DIVERSIFY THE STEM PIPELINE, CREATING MORE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED AND UNDERSERVED STUDENTS TO SUCCESSFULLY ENTER ENGINEERING PROFESSIONS."

BY SUSAN MARQUARDT BLYSTONE

An internationally respected scholar for her research in biochemistry and microbiology, Kinzy knows personally and professionally of the need for expansion and inclusion in the STEM fields: science, technology, engineering, and math.

There are an estimated 192,000 engineers in the United States. Of that number, approximately 14 percent are female and 70 percent are white. Shifting the paradigm will be difficult given the future engineers in training still demonstrate disproportionately low percentages of women and underserved persons nationally.

These statistics explain why Kinzy and Provost Aondover Tarhule are excited to create a college that will be built with a unique mission. "Illinois State University will be the first

institution to develop a College of Engineering that from the outset is designed to achieve equity in the recruitment, retention, and completion of historically underrepresented and underserved students," Tarhule said, explaining the college will be built through "an equity lens."

The college will house a Department of Electrical Engineering and a Department of Mechanical Engineering. A general engineering major will also be offered to students who will enroll at the earliest in the fall of 2025. ISU is expecting the start-up costs for the next two years prior to enrollment to be approximately \$1.2 million, which will be covered by reserve funds. Student enrollment of an estimated 130 initially with more than 500 total by the fourth year will bring in revenue to cover ongoing expenses.

The IBHE put its support behind the initiative that fits with the state board's higher education strategic plan titled "A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability and Growth." ISU's Board of Trustees gave permission for planning to continue during a May 2021 meeting and voted full approval this spring for the college that will be housed in the John Green Building.

An estimated \$44 million will be borrowed to fund renovations and equipment purchases needed for the college that has three foundational goals. Beyond the pledge to increase diversity in the field, ISU is committing to make certain graduates are workforce ready and that the student graduation rate exceeds the current national average of approximately 50 percent.

"Illinois State's College of Engineering will offer an innovative, experiential, and industry-informed curriculum," Kinzy said. "The curriculum will be designed specifically so that students will take introductory engineering courses in their first year on campus. That's important because we want first-year students in those programs to think of themselves as engineers right from the start."

"It's a high bar," Tarhule said, but one he is confident will be reached. He envisions students from across the country and globe enrolling in the college that will elevate the University's prestige. Other disciplines will be enriched as research collaborations flourish with faculty and students in mathematics, physics, industrial technology, business, and even creative technology in the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts.

"The College of Engineering will bring in resources we do not have," Tarhule said, noting the addition of a new academic option expands student enrollment opportunities as well. That is particularly critical given the high school demographic continues to shrink.

Strong job demand is one reason for confidence students will enroll. "The State of Illinois is not producing enough engineers. There are approximately 400 jobs that go unfilled annually, so we know there is a market," Tarhule said. Consultation with corporations including Caterpillar Inc., Deere and Company, and Archer-Daniels-Midland Company as part



The John Green Building will be renovated and become home to the College of Engineering.

of a workforce analysis confirmed there is a void, with the greatest need for electrical and mechanical engineers.

Illinois State is making a financial commitment of approximately \$500,000 annually to provide scholarships that will total more than \$2 million by the college's fourth year. The support will empower students from low-income families to attend.

Students will also be appreciative of ISU's plan that makes it easy for transfers to enter the program, as well as enriched study opportunities. The college will offer faculty research partnerships to students, internships, living and learning

administrators, and students," Kinzy said. Tarhule also credits those whose work before him led to the college becoming a reality.

When he arrived in 2020, the idea was to add an engineering program under existing departments within the College of Arts and Sciences. He encouraged establishing a College of Engineering instead and has been heavily involved in advancing the proposal through myriad steps.

"We still have a long way to go," Tarhule said, noting the search for a dean has begun. That person will lead the hiring of departmental chairs, who will partner to build a faculty

"THE CURRICULUM WILL BE DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY SO THAT STUDENTS WILL TAKE INTRODUCTORY ENGINEERING COURSES IN THEIR FIRST YEAR ON CAMPUS. THAT'S IMPORTANT BECAUSE WE WANT FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS IN THOSE PROGRAMS TO THINK OF THEMSELVES AS ENGINEERS RIGHT FROM THE START."

communities, pre-professional mentorships, and networking through organizations such as the Society of Black Engineers, the Society of Professional Hispanic Engineers, and the Society of Women Engineers.

Putting the plan into action will require the work that began under President Larry Dietz in 2016 to continue. It was then an initial feasibility study was undertaken and the Academic Senate engaged.

"The College of Engineering has been years in the making and is the result of the vision and hard work of many faculty,

team that will develop the curriculum. The approval process for the courses will be lengthy, going through the Academic Senate, BOT, and IBHE.

Patience will not be a problem for Tarhule or Kinzy, both of whom are energized by the reality that they are involved in an academic expansion that will empower individuals to pursue their passion, bring needed change to a vital profession, and bolster the future of the University as it further evolves from the days when it was driven by the singular mission to train teachers.



CHANGE *From* THE **INSIDE** **OUT**

HELPING HUMANITY GOAL OF ALUM'S CORPORATE WORK

BY SUSAN MARQUARDT BLYSTONE

Consumers around the world know the Nike Inc. slogan of “Just Do It.” Dr. Robert Shorty has a slight variation of the phrase as his personal mantra: Just do the right thing. This foundational commitment has empowered him throughout life and guides his daily work as a leader in the \$30.4 billion company known for its athletic attire.

Shorty '08 is director of Nike's global diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) team supporting its Global Supply Chain and Sustainability. The unit represents more than 20,000 team members in 20-plus countries.

The first person to hold the position, he has spearheaded development of the vision and strategy needed for the Global Supply Chain and Sustainability to create positive change. His priority is for DEI to be proactively embraced as a standard performance metric versus an emergency response.

“We have to change making DEI an event. A lot of conversations in the space of DEI have been sparked by trauma or crisis, and we must get out of that place. My role at Nike is to make sure that we keep that urgency and that flame over DEI strategy,” Shorty said, explaining that the goal is to create within the company a framework “where diversity, equity, and inclusion is built into the fabric of everything we do.”

The complex task is made more complicated by the fact Shorty is working within an international paradigm. His work ranges from creating a pipeline for women to lead future manufacturing and distribution initiatives to the immediate need of helping corporate leaders and their employees around the world understand microaggressions that vary based on culture.

“So much of the work is about learning, but unlearning is equally important,” said Shorty, a Chicagoan who joined Nike in 2019 and has been in the DEI position since March of 2021. “My job is not to convince someone of something, but rather to inspire and help individuals reset how they know the world.”

doctorate in organizational development at Benedictine University. His research culminated in a dissertation titled “Managing Whiteness for Inclusion: A Proposed Theoretical Framework Using Contact Theory and Critical Race Theory in Reducing Racial Bias.”

He has put his learning into practice beginning at Target when he was hired in 2008 as an executive team leader. Shorty was chosen to manage an urban Chicago store that had an employee base of Latinx and Black individuals who were led by a white team. He coached management and implemented strategies that resulted in the store becoming one of the best improved among all 1,500 nationwide.



“I HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR EQUITY MY WHOLE LIFE, LEARNING AT AN EARLY AGE THAT RESOURCES ARE UNEVEN BASED ON YOUR ZIP CODE.”

He gives as an example the need to analyze the inherent “what about me” mentality that surfaces when programs are introduced to elevate a cohort. “So many feel that giving to others is giving up something for themselves. My goal is to help reset the thinking to be about how we create a fair and equitable organization,” Shorty said.

“Our company should mirror our society, but we must also recognize that not everybody has gotten the same opportunities to thrive and grow.” He is motivated and determined to help Nike create a work strategy and space where employees have the same starting line and find equity in opportunities.

Shorty is convinced the business world can and should lead such transitional work, which he hopes will then be embraced through politics and policies to bring more universal change. The evolution will not be immediate or easy, for Shorty knows all too well that “DEI work is not how we get a marginalized group to behave, but rather how we get those with power and privilege to behave.”

The concept is one that Shorty has explored as a student and human resources employee for national corporations since finishing his degree in sociology at Illinois State. He completed a master’s degree in human resources management at Keller Graduate School before earning a

Two years later, Shorty transitioned to a human resources consultant role at McDonald’s Corporation. He rose to the position of human resources manager and helped create business strategies as well as people solutions to increase customer counts and profits. He partnered with management of 115 restaurants that delivered a revenue of more than \$240 million annually.

Shorty’s next job was serving as a regional human resources manager with Starbucks, which he joined in 2016. Not long after, he was offered a position at Nike. He initially declined but ultimately couldn’t resist the unique opportunity that awaited.

“I met with the management team and heard more about the project they wanted me to lead. It involves designing a whole new organizational development program where people and teams are empowered,” Shorty said. “I would be able to put into action what I had learned as a scholar and build from the ground up.”

Shorty is quick to share that his corporate rise was neither planned nor anticipated. “I did not think I would be where I am today,” he said, reflecting on rough times while growing up on the west side of Chicago. He lived in a community with a large amount of gang activity and crime.

“I had a colorful background,” said Shorty, who lived in a group home for troubled youth while a teen. He skipped classes and ignored his grades, making it impossible to enroll at Illinois State. Denied admission more than once, he opted to attend a community college and take an ISU summer class. He credits former academic advisor Teri Farr ’93, M.S. ’95, with getting him admitted to the University and on track within the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Shorty flourished as a Redbird. He joined the Interdenominational Youth Choir (IYC) as a tenor and served as president while an upperclassman. He credits the experience with instilling the importance of hard work, honing his leadership skills, and making him realize the impact he could have within a community.

He worked at The Baby Fold, a local nonprofit agency in Normal that provides services to struggling families and children, which further fueled his desire to be a change agent. Following his ISU graduation, Shorty participated in a missions trip to Kenya with the Philadelphia Women Crisis Centre. He spent six months working with victims of domestic violence and orphans.

The totality of his experiences cemented his passion for DEI work, which was recognized with his selection for a 2022 HR Impact Award and 40 Under 40 honoree by the *Memphis Business Journal*.

“I have been fighting for equity my whole life, learning at an early age that resources are uneven based on your zip code. It truly is my life’s work,” said Shorty, who maintains strong ties to Illinois State.

He has partnered with Dr. Peter Kaufman, a marketing professor who co-founded the Innovation Consulting Community in the College of Business. The program is an interdisciplinary professional development opportunity that connects students in any major to an organization with a specific need.

Shorty has also been supportive of the Multicultural Center that opened last year. He is helping to formulate plans for an IYC fundraising effort to further its work. He enjoys interacting with students and participated in this year’s Com Week activities in the School of Communication. He gladly shares his expertise and his passion for DEI that is unshaken despite constant reminders in daily headlines that racism continues and equity has not been realized.

“It is tough to stay positive, but I have come to understand that two things can be true at the same time. We can be making progress and losing ground,” Shorty said. “The work does become exhausting, but I celebrate progress where it is happening.”

Shorty continues to push forward as a humanitarian who envisions a better tomorrow, knowing deep within his soul that his work is indeed the right thing to do.

ISU AND ALUMNI *Committed* TO CORE VALUE

Illinois State’s pledge to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion is grounded in the University’s core values and put into action through various initiatives. These range from registered student organizations, programming, the opening of the Multicultural Center, and a recently created wordmark that represents ISU’s commitment across campus. The Alumni Association Board of Directors has also taken action.



In January 2021, board members held listening sessions for fellow alumni to better understand diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as it relates to the University and their role. The sessions reiterated the passion many Redbirds have for Illinois State, their willingness to give back to the University, and a consensus for improved outreach and promotion of activities.

Participants expressed a desire to be better informed about current DEI initiatives, a willingness to engage, and suggestions on how to carry out this important work. Board members saw a common goal to increase DEI work and consequently created in January 2022 the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

“To align with the University’s core values, our board wanted to spearhead this initiative,” said Nikita Richards ’06, M.S. ’15, who co-chairs the board’s DEI committee. “We recognized the necessity of this work and started the groundwork. This is a partnership that requires active listening, unlearning, and then applying what we’ve recently learned. Our committee members are invested in and dedicated to the Redbird community.”

The committee’s focus is to increase DEI initiatives as it relates to the Alumni Association. This includes working with members of the campus community and alumni organizations to create greater understanding of DEI; continuing to gather input regarding past and current experiences from alumni, including DEI messaging and support in the student to alumni transition; and partnering in efforts with the Office of Alumni Engagement to ensure DEI is interwoven into association strategies and board of director practices.

Closing the gap

ISU leads tutoring program aimed at helping students impacted by COVID learning disruptions

by Kevin Bersett



Eighth-grader Fischer Killian sat in a Bloomington Junior High School classroom last spring and offered a blunt assessment of remote learning during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

“It was terrible,” Killian said.

He took his courses online from home the previous year. Speaking through a Spider-Man-branded face covering, he talked about the haphazard nature of the lessons and how easily he could duck out of class.

“First of all, nothing was really planned because it was their first time doing this. And the lessons just weren’t good. It was pretty boring.”

The pandemic has upended education across the United States. Schools have switched from in-person instruction to remote learning and back again as the number of coronavirus cases have waxed and waned. Many parents held their children out of in-person classes for the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year due to understandable concerns about placing unvaccinated students together in close quarters. These disruptions have left a noticeable mark, statistically and anecdotally, on students.

Last fall the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) reported drops of nearly 17 and 18 percent, respectively, in the number of students meeting grade-level standards in English language arts and math between 2019 and 2021. The *Chicago Tribune* noted that one in five Illinois students were chronically absent during the 2020–2021 school year, a 21 percent increase from 2019.



chasm by offering high-impact tutoring at schools across the state. Gallucci coordinates the tutoring effort at her school where students such as Killian meet with university-provided tutors three times a week for small-group and one-on-one sessions in math.

The University is the central office for the Illinois Tutoring Initiative in partnership with the Governor’s Office, the ISBE, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Community College Board. ISU is one of six regional hiring institutions, along with Governor’s State University, Illinois Central College, Northern Illinois University, Southeastern Illinois Community College, and Southern Illinois University.



“What we learned through COVID is that face-to-face, personal contact with students really impacts their ability to gain new content. And so we call it learning disruption rather than learning loss, because part of that is thinking about, ‘Well, did they really move backward or was their learning paused?’”

Tutoring Initiative Director Dr. Christy Borders

“There is a gap, and I think it’s just exactly what the students were reporting,” said Diane Gallucci ’96, M.S.E. ’01, an eighth-grade teacher at Bloomington Junior High School. “Even though many students did show themselves online and did come to school in our Zoom sessions, they didn’t have the focus as if they were here in person. I feel like some students are just getting back into that mode of learning this year.”

Illinois State’s College of Education (COE) is leading a \$25 million federally funded initiative to help close this learning

Tutoring Initiative Director Dr. Christy Borders is at the epicenter of this daunting two-year endeavor. The former director of ISU’s Cecilia J. Lauby Teacher Education Center and her colleague Kim Champion were tasked with creating the novel tutoring program, with an initial goal to provide math and reading tutors to thousands of students in grades three through eight. This effort is requiring the University and its partners to screen, hire, train, and place tutors in schools most impacted by the pandemic.

“COVID impacted every single classroom, impacted every single kid, whether they were online or face-to-face,” Borders said. “What we learned through COVID is that face-to-face, personal contact with students really impacts their ability to gain new content. And so we call it learning disruption rather than learning loss, because part of that is thinking about, ‘Well, did they really move backward or was their learning paused?’ What we want to do with high-impact tutoring is take them from where they’re at and get them moving forward again.”

Champion, the program’s Institutional Partner Office coordinator, hopes the Tutoring Initiative will benefit students and teachers alike. “The COVID outbreak has revealed and widened existing educational disparities. High-impact tutoring is evidence-based in responding to students’ individual needs and proven to accelerate learning.”

Illinois State was chosen as the lead agency because of a plan put forward in summer 2021 by then COE Dean Dr. Jim Wolfinger, which was based in part on the Cecilia J. Lauby Teacher Education Center’s creation of an e-tutoring program during the pandemic. That smaller-scale program placed Illinois State teacher candidates as online tutors for families and students across the state.

Funding for the Tutoring Initiative was released in fall 2021, and tutors began working in some schools the following March. In those few short months, Borders worked with colleagues across the University to develop an evidence-based approach known as high-impact tutoring. The program is designed for tutors to meet one-one-one or with groups of no more than three students for one hour, three times a week for eight to 14 weeks. Lessons are tied to what students are learning in the classroom.

“High-impact tutoring is one of the only research-based interventions that has shown impacts in both reading and math across multiple grade levels,” Borders said. Eight Illinois State faculty members from units across campus served as research fellows to design the tutoring program, create the online training modules, and develop processes that allow tutors to receive feedback.



“Our most at-risk families are the ones who were greatly impacted by the pandemic. This is not only good for my students. This is great for my economy, and for my labor workforce.”

Paris School District
Superintendent Jeremy Larson

Some research fellows will assess the overall effectiveness of the tutoring programs. Others like Mathematics Education Professor Dr. Jeffrey Barrett focus on narrower questions. He is examining how to guide, support, and develop math tutors.

“It’s a challenge to get the workforce in place,” Barrett said. “Let’s assume we get the workforce in place and we have the tutors engaged. Our challenge in terms of research is to learn from this situation and do better with what we understand about tutoring. There’s a hole in the research literature in my opinion.”



“The COVID outbreak has revealed and widened existing educational disparities. High-impact tutoring is evidence-based in responding to students’ individual needs and proven to accelerate learning.”

Institutional Partner Office Coordinator Kim Champion

The tutoring program serves a very practical purpose: providing economic stimulus and decent-paying jobs in towns and cities that need them. Tutors are paid \$20 per hour for one-on-one and \$30 per hour for small-group sessions. They are also compensated for their training, travel, and prep work. Successful candidates just need a clean background check and a high school diploma or the equivalent.

“We’re trying to remove the barriers that would prevent someone from taking a high-intensity position,” Borders said. “Some people may think that anybody can tutor—just go to meet a kid at the library and go through their homework. This isn’t that, and so we want to be able to pay well for the hard work involved in high-impact tutoring.”

The program is already having an impact in Paris, a town of about 8,000 near the Illinois-Indiana border that has its share of poverty and unemployment, according to Paris School District Superintendent Jeremy Larson. He has recruited 35 individuals from the community to tutor more than 100 students. The tutoring pool includes student-teachers, local parents, college students, and community members looking for an organized way to mentor children.

“Our most at-risk families are the ones who were greatly impacted by the pandemic. This is not only good for my students. This is great for my economy, and for my labor workforce,” said Larson, who hopes students will be helped in a couple of ways.

“Number one, I want these kids to have healthy, responsible relationships with a good, quality adult. It’s so important for kids to get attention and to get time and have conversations and to build relationships and to be inspired by healthy adults. The other thing I hope to get is quality instruction to help them recover in reading and math. I think those two things go hand in hand.”

Gallucci wants the same outcomes in her school. “I think our staff does a fantastic job of teaching and trying to bridge those gaps that are there. The tutoring is just a fantastic added piece of support. It can build that relationship with that adult. The students can ask questions that maybe they don’t feel comfortable in class asking, and can get clarification, understanding, and confidence to get back in the classroom and feel on par with the rest of their peers.”





What's next?

Alumna answers how to revel in retirement *by Kate Arthur*

Patti (Sarles) Hart was getting her nails done on the day she was leaving for Africa. She started a conversation with a woman who said she donated fruits and vegetables from her garden every week to those in need. Hart offered lemons from her loaded tree, picking 300 and delivering them on her way to the airport.

“I never would have done something like that when I was working,” said Hart, a 1978 business administration graduate. “Going the extra mile to make a difference is what I’m really loving about this stage of life.”

After three decades in technology industry leadership positions, Hart retired as chief executive officer of International Game Technology, a global leader in gaming. She made *Fortune Magazine*’s inaugural list of “Most Powerful Women,” and served as an executive at the Sprint Corporation.

Hart retired at 49 because she thought she had done enough, had enough, and sacrificed enough. But rather than feeling a sense of freedom, she felt unmoored, invisible, lonely. She failed retirement.

“You walk around with this business card for 35 years and the first time you meet anyone, it’s ‘What do you do.’ I had become my job, and I had really lost the sense of who Patti was.”

Corporate life was more comfortable. Everyone in her circle was still working so she served on corporate boards and managed a portfolio of projects, trying to find the identity that had disappeared.

“I did everything wrong,” she said. “I kept working. It was pretty lonely. Everyone else I knew was going to an office every day. I didn’t have a plan. I didn’t have a community. I didn’t have a story.”

Four years later, she was back at work.

“I just got anxious like I think many people do and boomeranged right back in,” Hart said. “One of the biggest surprises for me was how much my professional life defined me. You walk around with this business card for 35 years and the first time you meet anyone, it’s ‘What do you do.’ I had become my job, and I had really lost the sense of who Patti was.”

Eight years later, she retired again, but this time was different. She had prepared by prioritizing her needs, not that it was easy either. “Getting over the guilt of doing that was really hard,” she said. “I worked 35 years to have the right to have an empty calendar, but then I have guilt because I have an empty calendar.”

Hart is sharing what she learned in a book she wrote with her husband, Milledge Hart, who retired with her in 2017. *The Resolutionist: Welcome to the Anti-Retirement Movement* is a guide on how to stay curious and engaged in life.

Hart isn’t fond of the word “retirement” because of the images that come to mind—old, bored, tired, and lonely. The generation retiring today has worked the past 30 to 40 years to challenge norms in the workplace, from the role of women to the dress code, and they’re not stopping now.

“Retirement is no longer a story of old age,” she writes in her book. “It’s a story of long life.”

And lives are getting longer. Between 1960 and 2015, life expectancy for the total population in the U.S. increased from 69.7 to 79.4 years. From 2016 to 2060, we’re expected to reach an all-time high of 85.6 years.

You may be retired as long as you worked, and that’s why Hart believes everybody needs a plan beyond the send-off party. Even if you’re years away from cutting the cake, start thinking about what gives you purpose and how you’ll replace the structure of work and community.

Retirees she interviewed for the book said the one thing they wished they’d done differently was to have the courage to prioritize themselves.

“This discomfort associated with putting yourself first carries over into the early part of retirement,” she writes. “We look for validation that we’re still relevant. If someone says they need us, we don’t want to disappoint. But every opportunity is not the right opportunity.”

Before she and her spouse make a commitment, they ask if their participation will make a difference, if they have the time to do it well, and if it’s something they want to do.

“If it’s not meaningful, why are you even looking at it? There is no reason at this stage to do anything you don’t choose to do. Don’t let someone guilt you into something you don’t want to do. Your time is still a limited resource.”

But there’s also the pull to be there for others, including aging parents, children, and grandchildren. One of the greatest gifts of Hart’s retirement was being able to spend the last year of her mother’s life with her.

Hart keeps hearing that she’s a better person now, and she knows that’s true. She’s no longer distracted by texts and emails and is not only more present for family and friends, but for herself.

Of the 12 resolutions in her book, her favorite is the one she admits she still hasn’t mastered—letting go of the fear of missing out. She recalled the day she attended an industry luncheon and realized she was missing a gorgeous day. She finished her salad, went home, and took a walk.

Now 66, Hart lives in Northern California, far from where she grew up in the Illinois river town of Marseilles. The only one of five children to go to college, she found Illinois State on her own. ISU is where she learned how diverse the world is and found her identity.

“I grew up in a life of great sameness. Everyone’s skin was the same color, people all went to church, everybody celebrated Christmas. What became so obvious to me so quickly was the diversity of the campus. When I think back on what was the most profound impact on my life, that was it,” Hart said.

“I loved that I was learning that there were all of these different ways to live and no right or wrong way. I could have



Even if you’re years away from cutting the cake, start thinking about what gives you purpose and how you’ll replace the structure of work and community.



Patti Hart, *left*, is a proud College of Business graduate who enjoyed interacting with students during a return visit as the keynote speaker for Business Week in 2014. She and her husband, Milledge, encourage others to rethink what it means to retire.

very easily chosen a university that continued my narrow way of living. I'm really glad I didn't."

Hart planned to pursue accounting but loved the creative side of business she discovered in a marketing class. She excelled at ISU and beyond, becoming a member of the College of Business Hall of Fame and later receiving the University's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2015.

As she and Milledge prepared for retirement, they started a bucket list of dreams—from riding a rollercoaster on the Santa Cruz boardwalk to tracking the great apes in Rwanda. Some were more spontaneous, like the time they wrote messages, rolled them into a bottle, and drove them to the Pacific Ocean.

But she didn't have to go far to find something that's im-

portant to her now, namely being a good neighbor. And that circles back to the lemon tree. Neighbors who want lemons get a "lemon drop." She learned to make limoncello last summer and delivered jars of the sweet liqueur. Neighbors started texting her photos of what they made, from martinis to a cake.

"I think people were shocked," she said. "They were wondering, 'Is this the same Patti Hart I lived next to for 23 years?'"

The answer is no, and she couldn't be happier about that. "I'm a much better person," she said. "This is really what I worked so hard to earn."

Advice from the authors

In their book, *The Resolutionist: Welcome to the Anti-Retirement Movement*, Patti and Milledge Hart offer a guide on how to make the most of post-career life. Here are some of their ideas:



- **Rip the Band-Aid off.** Are you doing things that tie you to your previous life? Those who make the easiest transition make a clean break. Change your life in a way that will create new patterns, behaviors, circles of friends, and stimulate your brain.
- **Prioritize yourself.** Put your physical and mental health first. Make a list of things you want to see, learn or do. Remember, it's a "to try" list, not a "to do" list. Don't censor it. It might include something as simple as perfecting a recipe.

- **Step out of your comfort zone.** Keep learning. It'll boost your confidence and remind you that you are capable and resilient. Patti challenged herself to use chopsticks throughout an entire meal.
- **Develop an "elevator pitch,"** two or three sentences about what's important to you or what you're doing this week. It doesn't have to be impressive. The Harts say they're watching the James Bond movies in order.
- **Surround yourself with kindred spirits.** When you retire, you lose about half of your social circle. Get involved in activities that connect you to others who are engaged in and curious about life and have different perspectives.

More information on the anti-retirement movement can be found on Patti's and Milledge Hart's website: antiretirement.com/about.

TOP
OF
THEIR



Ryan Pedon
Illinois State Men's Basketball
Head Coach



Allie Matters
Illinois State Women's Volleyball
Head Coach



NEW HEAD COACHES AIM TO ELEVATE REDBIRDS

BY JOHN TWORK

Still running on adrenaline from coaching Ohio State in the NCAA Tournament two days prior while simultaneously beginning his new role as Illinois State's head men's basketball coach, Ryan Pedon paused to chat with a new colleague who was on a similarly chaotic ride—newly hired head volleyball coach Allie Matters.

Standing on the Redbird Arena concourse during Pedon's first day in the office, the two “new kids on the block,” as Matters puts it, reflected on what had been and undoubtedly would continue to be a whirlwind for the two coaches hired in early March.

“We had a really great conversation about everything—What's going on in practice and our rosters and, ‘How do you like the area? Have you bought a house yet?’” Matters said. “Our conversation was really down to earth. You could tell that we were both going through a time where everything's kind of wild.”

Matters spent the previous four seasons as the head coach at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. She led the Raider volleyball program to two NCAA Tournament appearances, two Horizon League regular season championships and a

Horizon League Tournament title. She replaced Leah Johnson who left Illinois State after five seasons to become head coach at Michigan State University.

Pedon is a longtime standout assistant with two decades of coaching experience. He spent the past five seasons at Ohio State University where he helped guide the Buckeyes to five NCAA Tournament appearances. He replaced Dan Muller '98, who was head coach for 10 seasons.

As a first-time head coach, Pedon queried Matters about her experience overseeing a program. “I was asking her some philosophy questions and about things that she's focused on early as she takes over a head coaching position. She's done this before,” Pedon said.

Pedon's and Matters' engaging and collaborative personalities struck second-year Director of Athletics Kyle Brennan as he oversaw simultaneous head coaching searches that generated quality candidates—60 for men's basketball and 30 for volleyball.

“There were some really good candidates in both pools, and it was tough to make a decision,” Brennan said, adding that search committee members “just had this feeling that these are the two people who fit Illinois State.”



“My message today to Redbird nation is simply this: It's time to get our swagger back.”

—RYAN PEDON

Ryan Pedon

Basketball has been part of Pedon's fabric since as far back as he can remember. Growing up in Columbus, Ohio, he recalls coming home to see his father putting the finishing touches on a newly installed basketball hoop.

“I'd play in the driveway with my dad, and that's where I learned the game. Ever since, it's been one speed for me in this sport,” said Pedon, who became a three-year letterwinner at the College of Wooster where he helped the Fighting Scots to three NCAA Division III Basketball Tournaments. As a sophomore, Pedon determined that he would pursue a career in coaching.

He started as a graduate assistant at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where he taught basketball and golf classes and volunteered in the men's basketball office. After paying rent and utilities, he was left with a couple hundred dollars a month. He remembers leaving a supermarket empty handed after realizing he had already exhausted his small monthly stipend.

From there, Pedon was hired as the director of basketball operations at Kent State University, a job that required long hours and involved assisting with nearly everything from managing team travel to coordinating the practice schedule. To make ends meet during his three-year stint, he worked study tables for \$20 a night and sold home security systems.

“Looking back, I think that was beneficial,” Pedon said. “It's the same thing we preach to our players—going through tough stuff reveals your character and what's inside of you. I was appreciative for those experiences.”



Ryan Pedon, an assistant coach at Ohio State for the past five seasons, *left*, was introduced as Illinois State's new head men's basketball coach during a public event at Redbird Arena March 7, 2022, *right*. He was joined on stage by Deputy Director of Athletics Mark Muhlhauser, President Terri Goss Kinzy, and Director of Athletics Kyle Brennan.

Pedon returned to Miami for his first assistant coaching position (2005-2010). From there, he served as an assistant at the University of Toledo (2010-2013), as an assistant to the head coach at the University of Illinois (2013-2015), as an assistant at Butler (2015-2017), and most recently as an assistant at Ohio State (2017-2022). When Pedon learned about Illinois State's head coaching vacancy, he knew it was a job he would love.

“I've always said I wanted to coach at a place where I can coach to my convictions and where I can recruit and attract the kinds of players that I want to be around and build my program with on a daily basis,” Pedon said. “For me, this was a real fit.”

It became apparent to Brennan early in the search process that Pedon would indeed be the best fit.

“There's something about Ryan that's genuine, and his value system that we talked about extensively really mirrors mine,” Brennan said. “He believes in recruiting the right student-athletes, recruiting locally, having discipline on his team, but also having the ability to really build strong relationships with his players.”

“We’ll be gritty, we’ll be passionate, and we’re going to be competitive as hell.”

—ALLIE MATTERS

Brennan offered Pedon the head coaching position in a Columbus hotel conference room.

“It was a rush,” Pedon said. “It felt like a culmination of 21 years all into one moment, and I got a little choked up.” He called his wife, Stephanie, and 9-year-old son, Maddox, who hurried over to hear the news in person. “It was a moment that I’ll never forget, sharing that with my family and watching their reactions.”

For 16 days, Pedon balanced his assistant coaching duties with his new head coaching job. Two days after Ohio State bowed out of the NCAA Tournament, Pedon arrived in Normal ready to begin working toward the 2022-2023 Redbird season.

“I want this program to be the standard of excellence on this campus and in our conference,” Pedon said. “I came here to win championships. My goal is to build a program for sustained success, and this is a place that you can do that. It all starts with the players you have in that locker room and what they’re made of.”

During his introductory press conference, Pedon said he and his staff will prioritize recruiting players from Illinois and the Midwest, which he called a “breadbasket” of rich talent within a 200-mile radius of Normal.

“I have strong beliefs that there is nothing more important in recruiting than finding talented players who fit our system, our culture, and our values,” said Pedon, who wants the Redbirds to play a fast-paced attacking offensive style that emphasizes ball and player movement and values efficiency.

Defensively, Pedon said his team will be tough and physical. They will protect the paint and force opponents to shoot over them, not around them. They will also play with a sense of pride.

“I want guys who play here to be a part of something bigger than themselves,” Pedon said. “I want to attract guys that the name on the front of their jersey—Illinois State—means something to them. That’s the kind of stuff that builds a championship level program.”



Allie Matters, the head coach at Wright State for the past four seasons, left, was introduced as Illinois State’s new head volleyball coach during a public event in the Aaron Leetch Stadium Club, March 14, 2022, right. Director of Athletics Kyle Brennan presented Matters with a Redbird jersey bearing the number she wore as a college player.



Allie Matters

Standing at mid-court holding her framed Seton Hall jersey, surrounded by family on Senior Night, Matters felt empty.

“It’s so definite. You’re just done,” Matters said. As the starting libero, she racked up numerous records and led the Pirates to their first Big East Championship appearance in 15 years while studying in New Jersey.

A business marketing major who had considered a career in pharmaceutical sales, Matters decided in that moment that her collegiate playing career may be over but she wasn’t done with volleyball.

A few months later, she became a graduate assistant coach for the Canisius College volleyball program in Buffalo, New York. To supplement her small stipend, Matters worked full-time in the athletics laundry room across the street from her apartment.

“I remember my alarm going off at like five in the morning. I’m like, ‘Oh, I gotta put the baseball pants in,’” Matters said. “I would run over there, switch the laundry, and then go back to bed. So the graduate assistantship wasn’t all great, but it was a really good experience for me.” It solidified her decision to pursue the profession.

“We’re really excited for Allie to build on the success we’ve had in volleyball, and for Ryan to bring us to where we should be in men’s basketball.”

—KYLE BRENNAN

everything. When the Redbirds traveled to spring scrimmages, Matters made the travel itinerary, booked the bus, packed snacks, and coordinated food—on top of coaching duties.

“I wanted my team to see that I can do this,” Matters said. “I don’t want to do this by myself, but I can run things solo for a little bit to make sure I find staff who are a good fit for the program.”

Shortly thereafter, Matters hired two assistant coaches and a director of volleyball operations. With her staff in place and her team’s roster set, Matters is eager for first serve of the 2022 season.

“We’re going to do the little things that make us extraordinary,” Matters said during her introductory press conference. “Fans will leave a match, like they already do, saying that this team looks like they’re having so much fun and they genuinely love each other. We’ll be gritty, we’ll be passionate, and we’re going to be competitive as hell.”

The future of Redbird Athletics

As Brennan made his first head coaching hires, he sought guidance from two Redbird legends: hall of fame men’s basketball player Doug Collins ’73 and hall of fame volleyball coach and longtime administrator Dr. Linda Herman, M.S. ’72, Ed.D. ’83.

“I learned a lot from them about their view historically of what we are as a department, what we’ve been, and where we can go,” said Brennan, who credits President Terri Goss Kinzy for being “engaged in, trusting, and supportive of” the hiring process.

With Matters and Pedon in place, Brennan said he feels confident about the future of Redbird Athletics.

“It’s never easy to hire new head coaches but at the same time, it’s an opportunity to get better,” Brennan said. “We’re really excited for Allie to build on the success we’ve had in volleyball, and for Ryan to bring us to where we should be in men’s basketball and where we’ve been before.”





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AlumniReport



State editor ready to write next chapter

Susan Marquardt Blystone '84, M.S. '03, could not have predicted that her decision in middle school to be a journalist would result in a 27-year editorial career at Illinois State University. For the past quarter century, she served as editor of *State*, ISU's alumni magazine.

Blystone retired in June after working more than 30 years in higher education and nearly a decade as a newspaper reporter. She covered Illinois State as part of the higher education beat that she developed at *The Pantagraph*, Bloomington-Normal's local newspaper.

She left that position to serve as the first public relations and marketing employee at Heartland Community College in Normal shortly after it was founded. In 1995, she joined a new office established at ISU by then President Thomas Wallace to create quality publications with a consistent message. The unit evolved into University Marketing and Communications, with Blystone playing a leadership role as the office fulfilled its mission to help ISU reach external audiences.

"The range of work has been challenging and rewarding," said Blystone, who completed her undergraduate degree in

communications and a master's in English studies. "It has been such a privilege to promote my alma mater, making others aware of Illinois State's excellence and needs."

Blystone has tackled projects ranging from annual reports, corporate asks, the Admissions viewbook, and materials for two capital campaigns. She has served under seven presidents and authored two books while at ISU. *Where are all the Redbirds?* is a children's book done in partnership with ISU graphic designer Mike Mahle. Blystone also wrote *The Keepers of the Flame* to commemorate Mennonite College of Nursing's centennial celebration.

She dedicated most of her energy to feature writing and the alumni magazine, which she guided as it developed from a tabloid to a full-color publication. Each issue reaches approximately 160,000 alumni.

"Telling the stories of our fascinating alumni, faculty initiatives, and stellar students has been the best part of my work," Blystone said. "I have been blessed by the opportunities and will forever remain a proud Redbird."

40s

Alice (Markiewicz) Kiesewettrrer '42, M.A. '48, is a retired teacher who celebrated her 101st birthday this year; widowed and resides in Springfield, Pennsylvania.

Frances (Durham) Henderson '45 taught school for 20 years; enjoys playing bridge, reading, and puzzles; resides in Hot Springs Village, Arkansas.

50s

Kay (Ashdown) Drake '59 retired from teaching career that began in 1962; taught home economics at Washington Community High School for 30 years; resides in Arizona and Washington.

60s

Gerald Hug '60, M.S. '61, is a retired educator who started his career at Normal Community High School; his wife, **Brenda (Larson) '60, M.S. '61**, retired as a library assistant from the Park Ridge Public Library; couple resides in Des Plaines.

Dennis Kleidon, M.S. '67, emeritus professor of art who taught at University of Illinois and University of Akron; co-founded Kleidon & Associates, a marketing communications firm; art is represented by galleries in New York City, Scottsdale, and Italy; authored *Unleash Your Imagination: Transform Your Life*; resides in Akron, Ohio.

Bruce Boehm '68 is retired from Deere and Company; resides with his wife, Mary, in Naples, Florida.

Kathy (Jones) Cahill '69, M.S. '77, teaches at the Judah Preparatory Academy; resides in Stanford.

Donald Davis '69 is an ISU history professor emeritus who taught Russian history from 1964 to 2004; directed History Department's master's degree program; resides with his wife, Mary, in Bloomington.

Fred Landbeck '69 received a Special Recognition Award from the Grey Eagles, a national organization for senior and retired pilots of American Airlines; he and his wife, Carolyn, enjoy time with their three children and one granddaughter; resides in Bull Valley.

Keith McCall '69 is semi-retired from Pureline Treatment Systems, where he is vice president of agricultural sales; introduces chlorine dioxide biocide to the livestock, fruit, and vegetable world; resides with his wife, Linda, in North Richland Hills, Texas.

Kathryn (Child) Whitely '69 retired from teaching in District 150; resides with her husband, Joe, in Granville.

70s

Rosemary (Layendecker) Buffington '70 taught art 37 years at New Berlin High School; chair of the Scholastic Art Awards Mid-Central Illinois Region; superintendent of the professional, amateur, and junior art exhibitions at the Illinois State Fair; resides with her husband, Rod, in Springfield.

John Curry '70 is retired from Athens Community School District 213; he and his wife, **Francene (Anderson) '70**, met on a Sunday after church; married 51 years and reside in Athens.

Edward "Terry" Dunn '70, '03, retired after teaching in the Lee County School District in Florida; resides with his wife, Jan, in their hometown of Pontiac.

Jean (Stulajter) Garner '70, M.A. '73, is retired from teaching; resides with her husband, Richard, in Hinsdale.

Vivian (Sanders) Sallee '70, M.S. '91, retired from Peoria Public School District 150 after teaching special education for 35 years; resides in Houston, Texas.

Ron Novak '71, M.S. '77, and his wife, **Patricia (Okrie-Ellen) '71, M.S. '77**, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary; both retired from teaching; parents to three adult children and grandparents to five; reside in Rock Falls.

Carol Wickstrom '71 retired as a distinguished teaching professor from the University of North Texas; taught pre-service teachers in the college of education; taught 25 years before working in higher education; resides in Denton, Texas.

Earl Woods '72, M.S. '80, retired as a software quality engineer with Aerospace; resides with his wife, Elba, in Harbor City, California.

Larry Livingston '73, M.S. '78, is a senior measurement and standards/process improvement analyst with Irving Burton Associates; resides with his wife, Susan, in Chesapeake, Virginia.



A friendship above par

It's been 38 years since four young men graduated from Illinois State. They met in Walker Hall as freshmen, moved to Whitten Hall, and spent their last two undergraduate years living together off campus. The group continues to plan an annual golf outing. They are, *from left*, Dave Fogal of Bloomington, Mark Lawless of Mt. Prospect, Jim Fornaciari of La Grange, and Rick Regula of Elk Grove Village. All are College of Business graduates except for Fornaciari, who earned a teaching degree in social sciences.

Redbird Legacy



Paul Burton '73 with daughters Elisabeth Drebes '90 and Lynn Bartimus '91 and granddaughter Natalie Bartimus '22

Spring commencement held special meaning for Paul Burton '73, as his granddaughter's graduation marked the third generation of Redbirds in his family. He began the Illinois State legacy as a nontraditional student. Burton enrolled after having served in the Marines during the Vietnam War. He was honored with a Purple Heart after sustaining combat injuries.

Burton initially planned to study political science but changed his major to education. He was a member of the debate team and participated in the Model UN as an undergraduate. He earned a juris doctorate at Southern Illinois University after leaving ISU, but his connection to campus remained strong because both his daughters chose to attend.

Elisabeth (Burton) Drebes '90 earned a degree in public relations with a minor in business administration. She was a member of ISU Public Relations Student Society of America as a student and currently works in retail management in Urbana.

The younger daughter, Lynn (Burton) Bartimus '91, studied journalism with a writing minor. A copy editor and then features writer for *The Vidette*, she fondly remembers Harry Thiel as an amazing mentor and friend during her days at the student newspaper. Bartimus works as a court reporter in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

She was delighted to learn that a job she held in a coffee and sandwich shop while completing her degree was located in the same building on Beaufort Street where her dad lived when he was a student.

Lynn's daughter, Natalie Bartimus '22, graduated summa cum laude this spring with a degree in agriculture communications and leadership. She visited the University often while growing up because of the family connection and chose to attend herself when she realized the campus and community were a great fit for her college and career plans.

The family enjoys coming to campus regularly, especially when Burton returns from his home in Issaquah, Washington. He serves as a judge pro tem there and journeys back to ISU twice annually to attend meetings of the Attorney Advisory Board. As a member, he gladly supports the University's pre-law program, relishing the opportunity to maintain his Redbird roots.

Wendy (Kasten) Bocoock '74 retired from working as a specialist in network engineering at Verizon; volunteers at Carle BroMenn Hospital; resides with her husband, Philip, in Bloomington.

Marilyn Crawley '74 is a songwriter; won four awards from Tennessee Songwriters Association International; worked as professional actress and dancer in Chicago for many years; resides in Nashville, Tennessee.

Willie Dixon '74 retired from IBM Corporation; resides with his wife, Mary, in Carrollton, Texas.

Ernest Hendricks III '74 retired from Caterpillar as a planning and research manager; holds a master black belt; resides with his wife, Nancy, in Washington.

Cheryl (Wills) West '74 retired as a cancer program coordinator; resides with her husband, Dale, in Arrowsmith.

John White '74, M.S. '77, retired after 24 years of teaching and administrative work in Illinois; an additional 11 years completed in Hawaii, teaching how to teach reading to elementary students; worked two years for Houghton Mifflin publisher; continues writing; resides with his wife, Lee, in Coto de Caza, California.

Bill Anderson, M.S. '75, Ph.D. '79, is retired from a career in education; resides in Beaverton, Oregon.

Mary Molgard '75, M.S. '77, retired as an assistant professor after teaching communication courses in radio, television, and film for 36 years at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, New York; works as a disaster public affairs team lead for the American Red Cross of Northeastern New York; commissioner for the Berne Fire District in Berne, New York, where she resides.

Renda (Griebel) Rabe '75 retired as director of developmental training at Washington County Vocational Workshop; agency serves individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities; resides in Coulterville.

Sandra (Batek) Reliford '75 retired as the owner and director of ABC Daycare; resides with her husband, Roger, in Chillicothe.

Cheri (Irons) Rubin '75 retired as a litigation paralegal; resides with her husband, Howard, in Naperville.

Maggie (Fung) Santinanavat '75 completed an M.S.W. degree at the University of Illinois-Champaign; works in private practice with Psych Care Consultants; planning retirement and work with Afghanistan refugees; resides with her husband, Mike, in Chesterfield, Missouri.

Katherine (Wetzell) Ganschow '76 retired from teaching physical education; resides with

her husband, Randall, in Mendota.

Charles Hatfield '76 is the assistant producer for WSEC-TV/PBS; resides in Springfield.

Carolyn Kirksey '76 retired from the Chicago Public Schools; resides in Chicago.

James Krumholz '76 retired as senior director of manufacturing for Agropur Inc.; worked 44 years in the chemical and food industries; he and his wife, Carolyn, have two adult children; resides in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Mary (Giltz) McCarty '76 retired from nursing at Unity Point Health Methodist; resides with her husband, Doug, in Peoria.

Paul Schult '76 is pastor emeritus of King of Kings Lutheran Church; resides with his wife, Joy, in Kansas City, Missouri.

David Brinza '77, Ph.D. '84, is an engineer in the jet propulsion laboratory at the California Institute of Technology; resides with his wife, Dawn, in Sylmar, California.

David E. Casson Jr. '77 elected to serve as the 109th Potentate of the Ainaid Shriners of Southern Illinois; serves on board of directors of the Children's Dyslexia Center of Southern Illinois; worked more than 40 years as a construction boilermaker; resides with his wife, Sandy, in Collinsville.

Russell Derango '77 retired as manager of Illinois State University's farm; resides with his wife, Teri, in Lexington.

Sandra Lindberg '77, M.A. '79, retired from Illinois Wesleyan University as an associate professor in the School of Theatre Arts; resides with her husband, Samuel Galewsky, in Normal.

Pamela (Coleman) Nesmith '78 retired after teaching 43 years in Illinois, Maryland, and South Carolina; resides with her husband, Eddie, in Columbia, South Carolina.

Tom Curatolo '79 retired as chief financial officer of Hometown America Holdings in Chicago; his wife, **Dawn (Lotharius) '79**, retired as a high school teacher from the Plainfield School District; enjoys time with their children and grandchildren; resides in Sarasota, Florida.

Carol (Funke) La Bissoniere '79 retired as a music teacher and choral director for Hawthorn District 73; resides with her husband, Dennis, in Wauconda.

Holly Robinson '79 retired as a sergeant in the Chicago Police Department; resides in Chicago.

Cindy Scaruffi-Klispie '79 is a professor of music at Florida SouthWestern State College; performed this year with her all-female trumpet ensemble, Trompettes Soniques, at the International Trumpet Guild Conference and the International Women's Brass Conference; established ISU's International Trumpet Guild Chapter as student; resides in Punta Gorda, Florida.

Daniel Schreck '79 completed a doctorate in Christian counseling; executive director and owner of Connection Points Inc./Living Free Recovery counseling organization; pastor of Robinson Chapel in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he resides.

Mary Tohill, M.S. '79, is an adjunct English faculty member at University of Akron; resides with her husband, H. Arden, in Canal Fulton, Ohio.

80s

Linda (Funk) Brown '80 has completed 37 years of teaching in the Virginia CUSD 64 School District; teaches junior high math; resides with her husband, Paul, in Petersburg.

Rebecca Hines '80, MBA '95, retired as vice president of members services at the YWCA; resides in Bloomington.

Barbara (Evans) Kees '80 is an assistant vice president in dental underwriting with Aspen Insurance Group; resides in Oak Park.

Charles King '80, M.S. '82, retired from the State of Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; worked as a hazardous, special, and solid waste inspector; resides with his wife, Mary, in Springfield.

Cheryl Woods-Clendening '80 retired after a 40-year career in education; resides with her husband, Randy, in Plainfield.

Gregory Anderson '81 is the deputy chancellor for finance and operations at the University of North Texas system; resides with his wife, Janet, in Fort Worth, Texas.

David Gaynon, M.A. '81, retired from a career as an archivist, records manager, and E-discovery specialist; worked with VMS Realty Partners, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Countrywide Financial Corporation, and Yamaha Motor Corporation; resides with his wife, Trina, in Beaverton, Oregon.

Kathleen (Long) Kozlowski, M.S. '81, is a speech language pathologist and clinic supervisor at Saint Xavier University; resides with her husband, Paul, in Chicago.



Bonded as Redbirds

It has been more than four decades since six ladies developed a friendship while attending Illinois State. Their bond began when some met as freshmen in Dunn Hall in 1976, with others connecting that same year in Tri Towers. Another was a Hamilton Hall resident who became part of the group prior to them all graduating in 1980. They are, *from left*, Julie (Middleton) Chrislip of Gilbert, Arizona; Liz (Zimmer) Janssen of Flat Rock, Alabama; Juanita (Nelson) Milton of Lindenwood; Susan (Bacon) Oltman of Port Byron; Jane Rumel of Addison; and Sandy (Black) Franke of Chatham.



Exploring edible insects

With an estimated 2 billion people worldwide regularly consuming insects, Associate Professor of Anthropology Gina Louise Hunter wonders why citizens of the West do not make them a diet staple. Dr. Hunter authored the book *Edible Insects: A Global History* to examine traditional methods of insect consumption. Recipes for common insects such as beetles, butterflies, and grasshoppers are included in the book. Hunter is director of the Office of Student Research at ISU and co-directs the food studies minor affiliated with the Latin American and Latino/a Studies Program.

Anthony Oatis '81, M.S. '84, is a special investigator with the U.S. government; authored *Your History, Your Future: An Insider's Guide to Background Investigations*; resides in Slidell, Louisiana.

Dieter Oelschlaeger '81, M.S. '83, retired as a product development manager at Anchor Packaging; worked 37 years in plastics processing and product design; invented the Crispy Food container line; regrets not chasing his dream of making perfect pizza; resides in Fulshear, Texas.

Karl Moro '82 retired after more than 31 years of federal service in the area of environment, safety, and health management; served as U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science Consolidate Service Center as assistant manager for office of technical services; resides with his wife, Peggy, in Algonquin.

Joseph Sigman '82 completed an MBA degree at the University of California San Diego Rady School of Management; is an accounting and finance manager at Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center, which helps businesses thrive in

marginalized communities; resides with his partner, Dana, in San Francisco, California.

Michael Walsh '82 is managing director of public policy and research at IncubEx based in Chicago.

Paula (Hinkle) Beasley '83 celebrated 38 years with The Hartford; works as a senior risk engineering consultant; resides with her husband, Jim, in Waterloo, Iowa.

Amy Belice '83 owns Amy Belice Graphic Design; received a Silver Award in the International Anthem Awards Competition for the *Cornell Report*, Summer '21 issue; entries totaled 2,500 from 36 countries; also won Gold Award in the Educational Digital Marketing Awards competition; resides with her husband, Rick Whiteaker, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Jami Simon, M.S. '83, is an actress; plays Sideways Jane in *Riding the D with Dr. Seeds* showing on PlexTV; played Margaret in the film *The Man Behind the Camera*, which received two prizes at the 2021 Sunscreen West Film Festival; resides in New York, New York.

Doug DuBois '84 worked 32 years with IBM; works in commercial real estate; resides with his wife, Suzanne, in River Forest.

Cathy Early '84 retired from State Farm Insurance Companies after working as an agent for 32 years; resides with her husband in Macomb.

Katy (Powell) Engels '84 is the connections director at Paradise Valley United Methodist Church; resides with her husband, Steve, in Sun City West, Arizona.

Jeffrey Miller '84 is vice president and senior advisor at Merrill Lynch; resides with his wife, **Debrea (Parish) '84**, in Phoenix, Arizona.

Karen Hall '85 is an E-learning curriculum coordinator with Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where she resides.

Karyn L. Aguirre '86 is a social worker in the Chicago Public Schools; appointed to the Illinois State Board of Education Whole Child Task Force; resides in Chicago.

Donna (Prochot) Graver '86 is a hygienist with Fox River Dental; resides with her husband, Chris, in Montgometry.

Jonathan Norvell '86 is the vice president and senior farm manager with Heartland Bank and Trust Company; has worked more than 30 years in agricultural service, including the University of Illinois system and Office of Treasury Operation; serves on Tatman Village Board; he and his wife, Wendy, have two children; resides in Monticello.

Julia (Albers) Horchem '87, '93, M.S. '00, has completed 29 years in education; serves as principal of Lincoln Elementary School in

Morton CUSD 709; resides with her husband, Randy, in Morton.

Jeffrey Klepec '87 is a lieutenant with the Illinois State University Police Department; resides with his wife, Kimberly, in Bloomington.

Monica Mapel '87 retired after serving the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as a federal agent for nearly 34 years; worked in Chicago and Washington, D.C.; ended as an assistant special agent in charge of homeland security investigations in San Antonio, Texas; resides in New Braunfels, Texas.

Rick Piel '87 retired from Caterpillar Inc. after 32 years as the manager of logistics new process introduction; resides with his wife, Melanie, and family in Peoria Heights.

Craig Quinlan '87 is the senior growth and development director for Northwestern Mutual; resides with his wife, Renee, in Los Angeles, California.

Debra (Stoll) Smith '87 is the vice president of financial reporting for Citizens Inc.; resides with her husband, Tim, in Jonesboro, Texas.

Barry Auth '88 retired from the Department of Defense's National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency as a cartographer, geospatial intelligence analyst, and a geodetic surveyor; his 31-year career spanned more than 27 states and 40 countries; resides in St. Louis, Missouri.

Scott Cant '88 is a self-employed risk advisor; resides with his wife, Cynthia, in Maryland Heights, Missouri.

Jennifer (Jungk) Heidbreder '88 supervises auxiliary operations at Lincoln Memorial Hospital; resides with her husband, Mark, in Lincoln.

Terri (Schaefer) Hoss '88, MBA '90, is a marketing analyst with State Farm Insurance Companies; resides with her husband, **Eric '87, MBA '90**, in Bloomington.

Therese (Stasior) Pokryfke '88 is completing a doctorate in instructional technology and distance education; teaches as an adjunct professor at Nova Southeastern University; resides in Sunrise, Florida.

Tracy Rodenberg '88 has taught 33 years in special education at South Holland School District 151; resides in Lansing.

Daphne (Whitehead) Sligh '88 is completing a doctorate in curriculum and instruction; serves as the division director of contracting for HCA Healthcare; resides with her husband, Nate, in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Daniel Dimitroff '89, M.S. '10, is a systems analyst with Caterpillar Inc.; he and his wife, Tamme, have daughter at ISU; couple resides in East Peoria.

Lorene Kennard '89 produces and hosts The Librarian Linkover podcast; resides in Morris.

George Sullivan '89 retired from law enforcement; resides with his wife, Lisa, in Mount Prospect.

Troops

Jackie Thompson '93 has been promoted to the rank of General in the U.S. Army; resides in Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Army Lieutenant Colonel **Christopher Rozhon '00** is a Department of Defense strategic planner; stationed at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois with his wife, Lori.

Adam Binder '08 is serving with the U.S. Army; resides with his wife, Kelley, in Brandon, Florida.

Brandon Farber '12 is a medical officer with the U.S. Air Force; resides in Carol Stream.

Bianna Yeager '13 is a retired Army combat veteran; resides in Elmhurst.

Margaret Bourdon '19 is an analyst with the U.S. Navy; deployed to the Horn of Africa; resides in Withee, Wisconsin.

In memory

Faculty/Staff

Myrtle L. (McGuire) Armstrong '40; Physical Plant; 10/21

James D. Coe, College of Education; 11/21

C. Vernon Hanks, Health Sciences; 10/21

Doris E. Henderson, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; 12/21

Niles R. Holt, History; 11/21

Edward B. Jelks, Anthropology; 12/21

Betty J. Keough, M.S. '52; Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; 11/21

Marylen E. Langhart, Academic Advisor; 2/22

William R. Linneman, English; 1/22

William W. Morgan Jr., English; 1/22

Mark A. Plummer, History; 11/21

Babette "Bobby" Witt-Kannady '76, M.S. '90; College of Education; 11/21

Alumni

30s

Margaret J. (Whitacre) Volk '38, '70; 1/22

40s

Audrey M. (Weishaar) Yoder '41; 2/22

Margaret M. (Heintzman) Fruchtl '43; 6/20

M. Jane (Johnson) Kiper '47; 2/22

Corliss L. Norton '47; 11/21

Christine M. Schumacher '48; 12/21

Harold R. Hungerford '49, M.S. '53; 2/22

50s

Jeanne L. (Wilson) Jones '50; 12/21

Estella M. (Schnell) Metcalfe '50; 9/21

Hercules "Herc" A. Paloumpis '50; 11/21

Wanda M. (Hager) Johansen '51; 2/22

Betty Lee (Wilson) Knuckles '51; 2/22

Marvin D. Kleinau '52, M.S. '60; 11/21

William E. Borrer '53, M.S. '56; 9/21

Mary "Peg" M. Hoffman '53; 12/21

Barbara J. Bonde '54; 9/21

Audrey J. (Davis) De La Bruere '56; 10/21

Nancy Huggins Krug '57; 12/21

Carol J. (Fox) Begolka '58; 3/22

Ernest R. De La Bruere '58; 8/07

James W. Turner '58; 9/21

Vincent J. Wilhelmi Sr. '58, M.S. '59; 11/21

Roy E. Copenbarger '59, M.S. '70; 9/21

Janice E. (Holsclaw) Farquharson '59; 9/21

Frank W. Thompson Jr. '59; 9/21

60s

Barbara H. (Braat) Monge '60; 2/22

Delores A. (Brown) Wulf '60; 6/21

Ronald E. Freedlund '61, M.S. '73; 2/22

Phyllis K. (Conklin) Cantlin '62; 2/22

Gary A. Popel '62; 12/21

Keith D. Rieger '62, M.S. '66; 10/21

Kenneth E. Weaver '62, Ph.D. '73; 12/21

Roger M. Landon '63; 9/21

Mary "Kramp" J. Campbell '64; 8/21

Patricia A. (Halcott) Glenn '64, Ph.D. '88; 11/21

Raymond Spakowski '64, M.S. '66; 2/22

Ruth H. (Gerzetch) Williams '64; 2/22

James J. Conrad '65; 7/21

Ronald E. Geib '65; 9/21

Linda S. (Lange) Millen '65, M.S. '80; 10/21

Robertta S. Myers '65; 9/21

Ronald N. Bessemer '66, M.S. '67; 9/21

Carole A. (Metz) Knipp '66, M.S. '94; 11/21

Martha K. (Dixon) Martin '66; 8/19

Mary K. (O'Connell) Olson '66; 2/22

David M. Ryan '67; 9/21

Glenn E. Wiley, Ph.D. '67; 2/22

Mary Jo (Kramp) Campbell '68; 8/21

Allan D. Eichholz '68; 12/21

Richard D. Goken '68; 1/22

Connie J. (Marquiss) Hendrix '68; 9/21

Thomas R. Hougas '68; 3/22

Judith (Larsen) Ruehmann '68; 6/14

Bradford A. Salley '68, M.A. '71; 12/21

Edward M. Sennett '68; 1/22

Jane (Orr) Toland '68; 12/21

Thomas C. Trigg '68, M.S. '75; 3/22

Franklin R. Utech, Ed.D. '68; 11/21

Susan C. (Hill) Wilkinson '68, M.S. '73; 8/21

Judy J. (Janecke) Barons '69; 2/22

Edna F. Bazik '69; 11/21

Gordon E. Murphy '69; 1/22

Miriam K. Palmer '69; 2/22

Patricia S. (Picchioni) Swanson '69; 12/21

Paul L. Willoughby '69; 4/19

70s

Diane K. Hoeksema '70; 1/22

Wray A. Lafond '70; 9/21

Terry E. Williams '70; 12/21

Jacqueline J. (Maulson) Salome, M.S. '71; 2/22

Connie A. Scheiwe-Cook '71, M.S. '78; 1/22

Betty M. Szott '71; 11/21

William C. Dirker '72; 9/21

Larry D. Featherstone '72; 2/22

Stephen G. Kober '72, M.S. '73; 3/22

Candice J. Rockemann '72; 1/22

Michael E. Ruff '72; 11/21

Janet M. Schwarz '72; 8/21

Willie G. Brown '73; 3/22

Richard E. Burwitz '73; 12/21

Mary-Malinda (Murphey) McKinley Evans '73; 2/22

Stephen E. Horodenski Jr. '73, M.S. '74; 1/22

Maureen F. (Wipert) Shepard '73; 9/21

Tommy L. Stoller '73; 12/21

Vincent J. Trosino, M.S. '73; 1/22

Gerry L. Weaver '73; 12/21

Mary E. McManus '74; 2/22

Michael G. Vaughn '74; 2/22

Andrew P. Wissmiller '74; 9/21

Patrick J. Brady '75; 9/21

Susanne K. Liles '75; 2/22

John S. May '75; 11/21

Mark W. Olson '75; 9/21

Stephen C. Adams '77; 12/21

Cheryl R. (Bills) McIntire '77; 9/21

Martha L. Mommarito, M.S. '77; 11/21

GRADUATES SOUGHT FOR

oral history project

Marian Dean graduated from Illinois State Normal University in 1929. More than 80 years later, Matthew Rillie earned his degree in 2015. The two led vastly different lives as students of the same campus, but left with the same feeling of gratitude for how they had enjoyed their formative collegiate years.

Their experiences as Redbirds generations apart were captured through recorded oral histories that Alumni Engagement staff gathered from 50 graduates between 1979 and 1984. Digitized by staff at Milner Library and the Dr. Jo Ann Rayfield Archives, the interviews are available online at <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu>.

Milner, Alumni Engagement, and the Student Alumni Council have joined forces to continue the project that ended nearly 40 years ago. Funds from alumni and community donors make it feasible to renew the work.

Alumni from all decades are sought to preserve diverse voices and experiences far into the future. Interviews will become part of the University's permanent archives and will be accessible online via Milner Library. Those interested in sharing their memories are invited to fill out the form at https://forms.illinoisstate.edu/forms/oral_history_project.



Lola A. (Sobak) McKnight, M.S. '78; 11/21
Linda M. (Brockway) Meester '78; 12/21
Paul D. Shaw '78; 2/22
Georgina R. (Hayward) Anzlovar '79; 6/21
Deborah L. (Drabik) Buckley '79; 4/14
Denise M. (Quinn) Canavit '79; 11/21
David A. Harper '79; 9/21
Carol A. (D'Anza) Kloppmann '79; 4/22
Janice L. (Ottmann) Trummel '79; 11/21
John P. Ulstad '79, MBA '81; 2/19

We want to hear from you!

There are three ways to submit your information.

• Go online to Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/ClassNotes.

• Email your news to kdberse@illinoisstate.edu.

• Mail your news to Class Notes, Illinois State University, Campus Box 3100, Normal, IL 61790.

For additional information, contact Alumni Engagement at (309) 438-2586 or email alumni@illinoisstate.edu.

Notes extending beyond the Class of 1980 can be found online at

illinoisstate.edu/Magazine.

80s

Dean "Chris" C. Briggs '80; 12/21
James J. Carroll '80; 3/22
Ronald W. Derks '80; 9/21
Marcy J. (Grosenbach) Denslake '80; 12/21
Mary "Nelle" E. (Hanley) Smith '80; 12/21
Cliff J. Hicklen, M.S. '81; 1/22
Mark F. Wittler '81; 3/22
James F. Kaiser, M.S. '82; 3/22
Gary J. Bross '83; 9/21
Luis Martarano, M.S. '83; 9/21
Lori A. McGuire '83, M.S. '85; 2/22
Robert M. Bosnac '84; 11/21
Paul M. Isringhausen Jr. '85; 1/22
Brenda M. (Cox) McAloon '85; 9/21
Gary D. Trowbridge '85; 10/21
Brian "Ray" R. Wallace, D.A. '85; 8/21
Douglas B. Caldwell '86; 12/21
James G. Kehias Sr., M.S. '86; 8/21
Kathleen E. Allison, M.S. '87; 11/21
Marianne E. Fisher '87; 10/21
Derrick A. Phillips '87; 8/21
Robinzina Bryant-Felton '88, M.S. '90; 9/21
Thomas R. Lubeck '88; 12/21
Amy L. Lundeen '88; 9/21
Lori A. (Diddle) Tipton '88; 9/21
Melinda J. (Gibson) Cuttill '89; 9/21
Karen L. (Grim) Voo '89; 10/21

90s

James T. Ringel '90; 2/22
Christopher R. Corbert '91; 12/21
Marva E. Fitzwater-Moore '92; 11/21
Reggie R. Merrill '93; 1/22
Kathryn (Arter) Hoffman '94; 11/21
Lela E. (Bachman) Bertsche '95, M.S. '97; 2/22
Shawn C. Maier '96; 3/22
Wendy M. (Harrison) Haase '97; 9/21
Earl J. Hawley, Ph.D. '98; 2/22
Kristin M. (Bindl) Carroll '99; 9/21
Matthew A. Milach, M.S. '99; 12/21
Terri L. (Hedrick) Mitchell '99; 2/22

00s

Julie A. (Diehl) Gannaway '00; 2/22
Jason W. Hitch '01; 12/21
Tonya M. (Wall) Whitney '02; 9/21
Kimberly E. (Moore) Huisman '05; 9/21
Garrett E. Ramos '06; 12/21
Deidre N. (Graham) Silas '08; 1/22

10s

Saralyn M. (Higgins) Fagbemi '14, M.S.W. '17; 12/21
Jean C. Ramirez '16; 1/22



Alumnus Mark Dunaway and his wife, Julie



Alumnus Jon Farney



Scholarship recipients Sofia Troyer, left, and Lylac Lewis



Thanks *to* You

Mark Dunaway and Jon Farney are alumni so grateful for the support they received at Illinois State that each has created dean’s scholarships to assist students.

Dunaway ’84 learned to navigate the unknowns and financial hurdles as a first-generation college student. After high school, he worked full-time to fund his education. He completed an information technology degree within three years with support from work-study programs and scholarships.

Retired after a long career at Accenture, Dunaway’s passion for education continues. “Now I get to choose what I do, and much of what I do is about giving back,” he said. “I gained a range of skills and experience during my career. I had to figure out where I wanted to focus.”

Dunaway recognized a need within the College of Business, where 20 percent of incoming freshmen this fall are first-generation college students. He established the Dunaway Family Dean’s Scholarship for first-generation students with financial need who maintain a 3.5 GPA. The award is eligible for renewal for up to four years and includes enrollment in ISU’s Honor’s Program with the opportunity to serve as a College of Business ambassador.

“Being a first-generation college student is honestly kind of terrifying,” said freshman Sofia Troyer, who received Dunaway’s scholarship. “Earning this award really helps me to be able to put my education first.”

Farney ’93 is an accounting graduate who completed an internship at State Farm Insurance Companies. Now a State

Farm senior vice president, treasurer, and chief financial officer, he knows ISU played a part in his success.

“ISU helped prepare me well. I had parents that helped me and two brothers who went before me. I hope to give someone the opportunity to work hard and impact their lives and hopefully their future families’ lives,” said Farney.

Lylac Lewis is the inaugural recipient of the Farney Family Dean’s Scholarship for First-Generation Students. “Being a first-generation college student motivates me to push myself in order to achieve the lifestyle I’ve always longed for,” said Lewis, a freshman this fall.

“Having this assistance will take away some of my stress. I will now only have to focus on keeping up with my work and making sure I excel in every class,” she said. “I don’t know where I’d be if I hadn’t gotten awarded this scholarship, and I am very thankful for this opportunity. I know this will change my life.”

Dunaway and Farney are the first alumni to sponsor College of Business dean’s scholarships, an initiative Dean Ajay Samant aims to expand. “Such scholarships allow us to recruit strong candidates from a variety of backgrounds,” he said. “It’s my hope that more alumni will step forward to provide further support for talented business students.”

To learn more about creating a dean’s scholarship or other endowment to impact a student’s Redbird experience, please contact Senior Development Director Liz Adams at eadams2@ilstu.edu or (309) 438-2903. To make a gift online, visit IllinoisState.edu/Giving.



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Sounds of the season

The Big Red Marching Machine is a fall tradition, as performances bolster Redbird pride. Cory Tyler, a junior psychology major from Merrionette Park, plays the mellophone as part of the band that will take the field at home football games during the season that starts September 3.