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Fall 2024

## Illinois State Magazine, Fall 2024

University Marketing and Communications

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THE MAGAZINE OF ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

# STATE

IllinoisState.edu

FALL 2024



## Slice of college

Pizza has shaped the Illinois State experience for generations of Redbirds.

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# FirstWord

Summer on campus provides time to pause and rejuvenate. It is also an opportunity to reflect, close out the fiscal year, and prepare for the next academic year. I am pleased to report that while many of us, me included, took some time away this summer, much work was done to advance Illinois State University's priorities.

At its May meeting, the Illinois State Board of Trustees approved our new strategic plan, *Excellence by Design: 2024-2029*. This new strategic plan is bold, innovative, and designed with a view to help Illinois State navigate the emerging turbulent landscape of higher education while achieving new levels of excellence.



Also in May, Dr. Ani Yazedjian was named vice president for Academic Affairs and provost. Having worked closely with her for four years, I am confident she is the right individual to serve as the University's chief academic officer. I look forward to working with Dr. Yazedjian and the rest of our cabinet colleagues on the many transformative projects the University has embarked upon.

Speaking of projects, summer is also renovation and construction season. Our Facilities team continued work on phase two of the DeGarmo Plaza renovation, planning the facilities for the new College of Engineering, and renovating a dozen or more classrooms and lecture halls.

Meanwhile, the Mennonite College of Nursing Simulation Center is coming along nicely, and I am looking forward to the ribbon cutting ceremony this semester.

While I remain excited and confident, I am mindful of gathering clouds on the horizon that Illinois State, like all universities, is paying attention to. For example, the much-anticipated enrollment cliff, when the number of high school graduates is expected to sharply fall, will be upon us in fall 2026. And despite all evidence to the contrary, public skepticism, and pessimism about the value of a college degree continues to grow. Additionally, inflationary pressures combined with the cost of deferred maintenance have strained the finances of many universities, including flagships. Illinois State is in a strong position to weather these challenges, but we must act proactively and strategically. Therefore, I spent the summer huddled with my cabinet colleagues and the Board of Trustees and have developed several strategies to help us thrive and remain resilient.

While we celebrated our 4,220 graduating students at commencement in the spring, the fall semester brings the excitement of move-in as we welcome yet another strong cohort of students eager to begin their academic journeys. Along with students, our dedicated faculty and staff and supportive alumni all play vital roles in keeping our Illinois State refreshed, invigorated, and a thriving center of learning.

I invite you to learn more about what is happening on our campus and the work being done by the Redbird community in these pages of *State* magazine. I hope it puts a smile on your face and a glow of pride in your heart. Go Birds!

Dr. Aondover Tarhule  
President, Illinois State University



ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
*Illinois' first public university*

# STATE

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## Yazedjian named VP of Academic Affairs, provost

**D**r. Ani Yazedjian was named vice president of Academic Affairs and provost after serving in the position in an acting role since February 2023. She received a five-year contract.

“Dr. Yazedjian is a highly regarded, confident leader with a strong dedication to our strategic priorities concerning teaching, learning, and research at Illinois State,” said President Aondover Tarhule. “The experience she brings as the University’s chief academic officer provides the stability and valuable insight needed to help guide Illinois State on its trajectory toward excellence.”

Yazedjian previously served as associate provost at Illinois State from 2019-23. The former chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences was named a University Professor in 2013.

“It is an honor to continue to serve Illinois State in this capacity,” Yazedjian said. “I look forward to continuing to strengthen partnerships across the campus and local community as we relentlessly pursue our mission to prepare students to become engaged and informed citizens.”

As acting provost, Yazedjian established and revived pro-

fessional development opportunities for academic leaders, implemented initiatives to support faculty research and creative activity, and led the development of a framework for online learning and microcredentials. She convened the interdivisional Committee on Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence, shepherded new program development processes, allocated additional funding for student support services, and oversaw the completion of the self-study for the accreditation process of the Higher Learning Commission that is currently underway.

Yazedjian additionally launched a provost fellows program for tenured faculty, reinvigorated a professional development series for academic administrators, conceptualized the campuswide Women as Transformational Leaders event, secured Illinois Board of Higher Education approval for several new academic programs, and implemented the advancing research and creative scholarship program.

“My guiding framework over the last 15 months has been focused on people, programs, and processes grounded in equity and driven by a deep sense of purpose about who we are as an institution and why we do what we do,” Yazedjian said upon her promotion. “This focus will not change.”

## Irelan named Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts dean

Dr. Scott R. Irelan was named dean of the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts. He succeeded Jean Miller, who retired in June.

“Dr. Irelan brings years of experience as a faculty member, department chair, associate dean, and administrator to his new role as dean of the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts,” said Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Ani Yazedjian. “He also brings a strong record of accomplishments related to program development; strategic planning; and faculty, staff, and student success using an equity-focused approach.”

Irelan previously served as an associate dean at Western Michigan University. He began his career as a faculty member in Illinois State’s College of Fine Arts. “Returning to a place that shaped the trajectory of my academic career feels like a fitting continuation of that journey,” Irelan said. “The Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts has an outstanding reputation, and the momentum behind its current initiatives is truly impressive. It is both an honor and a privilege to be chosen to serve as the next dean, and I look forward to our collective future.”

## Illinois State recognized in *U.S. News & World Report* rankings

Illinois State University continued to rank among the top 100 “Best Value Schools” and “Best Online Bachelor’s Programs” in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2024 “Best Colleges” rankings. Illinois State also ranked among the top public universities and top national universities in the United States.

Illinois State ranked 65th in “Best Value Schools” and 32nd in “Best Online Bachelor’s Programs.” Illinois State also ranked among the nation’s best in “Top Public Schools” (112th), “Top National Universities” (209th), “Best College for Veterans” (147th), “Top Performer on

Social Mobility” (198th), and “Best Undergraduate Nursing Programs” (112th).

## Committee formed to explore responsible AI use

The Committee on the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) was formed to create a strategic plan concerning the ethical usage of AI and collaboratively address its increasing prevalence and adoption. The 30-member group composed of faculty, staff, and students met for the first time in April. Chairs Charles Edamala, vice president of Technology Solutions and chief technology officer, and Dr. J. Cooper Cutting, assistant vice president for Academic Planning, outlined the committee’s goals.

“Ideally, what we would like ISU to do is at least come out with a draft of a statement of, ‘This is our stance on AI and the responsible use of AI at the University,’” said Cutting.

President Aondover Tarhule provided opening remarks at the inaugural meeting. “My hope is that we’ll tread this

frontier confidently,” Dr. Tarhule said. “Illinois State will serve as a model for harnessing the benefits and managing the potential risk of AI for the benefit of the campus community, and I am filled with anticipation for all we can accomplish in shaping the trajectory of AI at Illinois State.”

## Redbird Esports wins three titles at inaugural MVC Championships

Illinois State University swept the Missouri Valley Conference Esports Championships, securing wins in all three titles at the inaugural league championships hosted on campus in April. The Redbirds emerged victorious in both *Overwatch* and *Rocket League* to remain undefeated throughout the entire regular season and playoff run. Redbird Esports also earned a win in *Super Smash Bros*.

“I’m thrilled Illinois State was able to showcase our gaming facilities to support and host the inaugural MVC Esports Championships,” said Redbird



Illinois State University and President Aondover Tarhule, left, celebrated more than 4,220 graduates during spring commencement.

# Where are they now?



Dr. Nancy Lind wasn't expecting a homecoming, but when her parents fell ill at the beginning of 2020 and her classes shifted online due to the pandemic, she returned to the childhood home her father built using quarried stones in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, for what she thought would be a temporary stay.

Four years later, the professor emeritus of Politics and Government remains in Stevens Point, spending her days with her shih tzu, Snoopy, and her mother; making friends; and finding historical landmarks in the hometown she'd left 40 years before.

"I love walking my dog and visiting cemeteries to find the oldest stone, and then going onto Newspapers.com to read about that person," said Lind.

She enjoys her new life, but Illinois State wasn't easy to leave behind.

"I really loved working at Illinois State University. It was a large department with a hometown feel," said Lind, who retired in 2021. "The faculty took interest in their students and worked hard to see them all succeed."

Lind misses her students the most.

"I still miss teaching and interacting with students, though the transition was a bit easier since COVID had me teaching online for a year-and-a-half before retiring," she said. "I keep track of my former students. You know you made an impact when they're your friends 30 years later.

"One of the most remarkable things was, when I moved, children of alumni packed my house and drove vanloads of furniture, books—the entire contents of a three-bedroom house—to me."

Though she never anticipated a full-time return to her hometown, Lind enjoys learning about her heritage through Portage County Historical Society programs, going on bike rides with her friends, and traveling to her summer cottage to watch the glowing sky of "Sunset Valley" fade into night.

"I love to kayak on Green Bay and walk along the shoreline to find beach glass," she said.

With her mom, Snoopy, and friends for company, she is at home.

Lind can be reached at [nslind@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:nslind@IllinoisState.edu).

Esports Director David Kirk, M.S. '16. "The energy we saw from the students and teams who traveled to Normal was electric and an experience I have no doubt will stick with them the rest of their lives."

Illinois State's *Overwatch* team also captured four national tournament titles during the spring semester.

## College of Engineering welcomes inaugural administrators

Illinois State University's College of Engineering named Dr. Matthew Aldeman its founding associate dean of engineering and Branden Delk its first director of equity, diversity, inclusion, and student success.

Aldeman previously served as an associate professor in Illinois State's Department of Technology. He is a U.S. Navy veteran, having served as a reactor electrical division officer on the USS John C. Stennis, and as a gunnery officer and legal officer on the USS O'Bannon. "I am thrilled to join the team in the new College of Engineering, where we will prepare students for rewarding careers in mechanical, electrical, and general engineering," Aldeman said.

Delk has served as coordinator of equity, diversity, and inclusion in Illinois State's Admissions Office since 2021. "I'm excited to start promoting the College of Engineering to middle schools, high schools, community-based organizations, community colleges, and other potential student pipeline sources," Delk said.

## Donors recognized at Gratitude Gala

The second annual Gratitude Gala honored donors from several of Illinois State's giving societies, recognizing the generosity and philanthropic commitment of some of the University's greatest ambassadors.

Wonsook Kim '75, M.A. '76, M.F.A. '78, and Thomas Clement were presented the Redbird Philanthropist Award, State

Farm received the Investor in Excellence Award, the Wheeler Foundation earned the Innovation in Philanthropy Award, and Nancy Ridenour received the Above and Beyond Philanthropist Award.

“You are investing in students’ futures in immediate ways, such as in the case of scholarships, but some of your philanthropy may not be quite evident for years, or even decades,” Illinois State President Aondover Tarhule told event guests. “What’s even more exciting is seeing this commitment only growing stronger over the years.”

## Birds Give Back surpasses goals

Illinois State University’s sixth annual Birds Give Back on February 22 surpassed goals with over 4,200 total gifts and \$1.6 million raised in challenges, pledges, and gifts. Over 50 challenges were issued by Redbird alumni across various colleges and departments to celebrate the annual day of giving.

“This is more than teamwork; it’s the spirit of Redbirds in action,” said Vice President for University Advancement Pat Vickerman. “Our collective enthusiasm and philanthropy continue to energize our future, reaffirming the incredible power and impact of our united efforts for Illinois State.”

## Parsi wins Diverse Voices Playwriting Initiative

The Crossroads Project selected Novid Parsi’s *The Life You Gave Me* as winner of the 2024 Diverse Voices Playwriting Initiative, a new play development program for BIPOC playwrights. The Crossroads Project is an advocacy committee comprising faculty, staff, and students that promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Parsi’s play about an Iranian American man’s relationship with his mother was selected from over 100 submissions. He provided a workshop and a staged reading on campus in April. “*The Life You Gave Me* is partly about

the perceptions that writers of color must face in order to be heard, and how those perceptions ultimately shape the narrative,” Parsi said.

## Illinois State, State Farm develop VR-based driving platform

A partnership between Illinois State University and State Farm Insurance has produced a virtual reality (VR) platform for teen drivers, placing them in scenarios they may encounter on the road like heavy traffic, unexpected deer crossings, and rolling fog.

The immersive VR platform allows a driving coach to configure different hazardous scenarios and highlight students’ deficiencies and successes in a post-session debriefing. “The goal is to create a scenario-based learning environment where teen drivers can experience various road driving situations without being exposed to physical dangers,” said Dr. Isaac Chang, associate professor in Illinois State’s Department of Technology.



Wonsook Kim ’75, M.A. ’76, M.F.A. ’78, and Thomas Clement, center, were presented the Redbird Philanthropist Award at the second annual Gratitude Gala by President Aondover Tarhule, left, and Vice President for University Advancement Pat Vickerman, right.

## Directors chosen for Alumni Association

Three alumni were elected to three-year terms on the Alumni Association Board of Directors (AABD). They include Breana Brown ’17, of Normal, an academic advisor for Illinois State University’s University College; Matt Coates ’11, of Normal, a board member for the Illinois Prison Review Board; and Dr. Marcos Fernandez ’80, of Lafayette, Indiana, a professor of animal science at Purdue University.

Susan Nelson-Brown ’78 is president. Karyn L. Aguirre ’86 is vice president/president-elect. Julia Durnell ’19, M.S. ’22, is secretary. Stan Shingles ’82, M.S. ’88, is treasurer. Tim Griffin ’93 serves as past president.

Interest for the AABD is sought each year. For more information on how to get involved, visit [Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/Association](http://Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/Association).



# Redbird Athletics



Six countries were represented by Illinois State University's 2023-24 women's tennis team.

## Tennis players serve teammates a taste of home

By John Twork

**W**hen women's tennis player Silvia Pomarolli returns to campus, she often brings a taste of Italy with her.

"My suitcase is usually pretty heavy," said the native of Cecina, Italy.

Packed alongside Pomarolli's clothes and other belongings are bottles of olive oil and tomato sauce, a block of parmesan cheese, and a bag of noodles. After unpacking, she invites her teammates over to her apartment for a simple, yet authentically delicious offering of perfectly cooked pasta—not too soft—tossed in fresh, flavorful sauce.

"It's amazing," said teammate Tijana Zlatanovic '24, who often contributes a dessert of handcrafted Mozart chocolates from her home in Salzburg, Austria.

"When I share a part of my culture with my teammates, I feel at home," Pomarolli said. "It just feels good that I'm sharing my identity with them."

Pomarolli and Zlatanovic were two of seven players on the 2023-24 Illinois State University women's tennis team composed of student-athletes representing six countries: Austria, Croatia, Italy, Serbia, Spain, and the United States. Zlatanovic is now a graduate assistant coach after earning a bachelor's degree in exercise science.

Scouring the globe for high-caliber tennis players has led 11th-year Redbird head coach Maja Kovacek to establish a predominantly international roster. The results of her recruiting efforts speak for themselves.

After an initial winless conference season in 2014-15, Kovacek and the Redbirds improved consistently over the next four years, culminating in Missouri Valley Conference (MVC)

**“Tennis is so international. There are a ton of players in Europe who are very competitive, and they’re looking for opportunities here because they don’t have them at home. So, being able to tap into that resource has been really good for us.”**

**—Maja Kovacek**

regular season and tournament titles in 2018-19 and Illinois State’s first NCAA Tournament appearance in 14 years.

Over the past five seasons, the Redbirds have a 29-2 regular-season conference record and three MVC championships.

“My philosophy is to recruit the best player and the best fit for our team,” said Kovacek, a three-time MVC Coach of the Year. “Tennis is so international. There are a ton of players in Europe who are very competitive, and they’re looking for opportunities here because they don’t have them at home. So, being able to tap into that resource has been really good for us.”

A native of Croatia, Kovacek has a personal understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing international student-athletes. She first arrived in the U.S. to play tennis for the University of New Mexico.

“It’s in the desert, and I lived on the coast of Croatia by the water, so it couldn’t have been more different,” Kovacek said. “But it was a different kind of beautiful.”

Since European colleges don’t have sports programs like in the U.S., Kovacek said talented high school players who aren’t ready to pursue professional tennis careers are naturally drawn to playing for American universities.

Kovacek often discovers prospects by watching their highlight videos on YouTube. She and her assistant coaches schedule video calls, and Kovacek occasionally travels overseas for recruiting visits. Even during her annual trip home to visit family in Croatia, Kovacek will hop in a car, with her dad at the wheel,



Women’s tennis coaches, from left, Othilia Brodin ’24, Maja Kovacek, and Tara Damjanovic ’22 represent Sweden, Croatia, and Serbia, respectively.

to watch prospect tournaments and visit recruits and their families.

Zlatanovic, the Redbirds’ top singles and doubles player last spring, was recruited by 10 schools. But Kovacek was the only head coach who traveled to Austria to watch her play and speak to her family in their native Serbian language.

“That made Illinois State stand out,” Zlatanovic said. “Being able to meet the coach in person definitely played a huge role.”

Despite having to quarantine for her first two weeks on campus in fall 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, Zlatanovic said it didn’t take long for Illinois State to feel like a home away from home.

“I love it here,” Zlatanovic said. “We have a great campus, we have a great

team every year, and we have great coaches.

“As a European tennis player, just having this experience of playing an individual sport in a team setting—that’s something that’s just unimaginable at home. And we get to do so many things together, like travel together, practice every day together, and spend so much time together in such an international setting.”

Along with introducing their teammates to authentic foods and cultural customs, players also share music—often blasting it in the van while traveling to matches—and words and phrases from their native languages.

Last summer, Pomarolli and Zlatanovic met up in Milan to watch The Weeknd in concert.

“We’re looking at each other like, ‘Oh my God, we’re in Europe and we’re together!’” Poma-

rolli said. “Now we have this memory. So, we always play his music, and we kind of cherish that time.”

The team’s lone American, Zoe Limparis, also traveled from her home in Hinsdale to visit Pomarolli in Italy.

“Meeting people from different countries and learning about new cultures, it just opens your mind,” Pomarolli said. “It makes you think about the world out there and people differently.”

Kovacek said she appreciates the power of tennis to bring players from diverse backgrounds together to become teammates and friends as they work toward winning championships and earning degrees.

“I fell in love with college tennis right away,” Kovacek said. “Having this opportunity—I’m just really grateful for it.”



## Collins earns Hall of Fame induction

Illinois State men's basketball great Doug Collins '73 was enshrined into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in August during festivities in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Collins was joined in the 2024 Hall of Fame class by 12 others including Chauncey Billups, Vince Carter, Seimone Augustus, Bo Ryan, Michael Cooper, Walter Davis, Charles Smith, Dick

Barnett, Harley Redin, Michele Timms, Jerry West, and Herb Simon.

Inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame as a coach/broadcaster, Collins also received the Curt Gowdy Media Award from the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2009 and was inducted into the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame in 2016. He remains the most decorated athlete in Illinois State history.

## Hilbrandt named swimming and diving head coach

Riley Hilbrandt is the new head coach of the Illinois State women's swimming and diving program.

"I am beyond grateful for all the members of the Athletics Department for putting their trust in me to lead Redbird swim and dive," Hilbrandt said. "This program has had decades of success and been one of the top teams in the Missouri Valley Conference. To be a part of that tradition and community is something I will not take lightly. I promise to bring enthusiasm, grit, and the utmost dedication to assist these student-athletes to compete at an elite level both in the pool and classroom."

Hilbrandt arrived at Illinois State after spending the past three seasons at East Carolina as an assistant coach. A former Division I swimmer at the University of Nevada, Hilbrandt previously coached at Clarion University and the College of Wooster.

## 'When Women Win' initiative announced

Interim Director of Athletics Jeri Beggs announced the launch of the "When Women Win" campaign. The focus of "When Women Win" will be to lead, empower, and advance. The group will not only publicize women's sports in the community but also highlight women leaders in Bloomington-Normal and the impact of women supporting

## Redbird Trivia

Redbird women's golf graduate student Jinyoung Yun carded a program-low NCAA Regional round score of 69 during day two of the 2024 NCAA East Lansing Regional. Whose record did she break?

**Answer:** Illinois State's previous NCAA Regional single-round record score was 71 set by Stacey Miller '11 at the 2009 NCAA Regional hosted by Ohio State University.



women. Corporate partners COUNTRY Financial and CEFUCU have already signed on to support the initiative.

“Since I took this position, I have been inspired by the women I’ve met including student-athletes, coaches, staff, alumni, and community leaders,” Dr. Beggs said. “I am amazed at the ways I’ve seen women supporting women, and I want to find out what else is possible. I can only imagine what our community, our country, and our world could look like if females, young and old, were encouraged to reach their full potential.”

## Women’s golf wins MVC Championship

For the second time in the past three years, the Illinois State women’s golf team took home the Missouri Valley Conference Championship, topping the field of a dozen schools at the tournament hosted at Annbriar Golf Course. The Redbirds never trailed the field in capturing the program’s 15th MVC Championship, the most in league history.

Ali Schrock ’23 tied for first in the field with a three-round 216, while Jinyoung Yun finished third with a 218. Illinois State advanced to the NCAA Regional in East Lansing, Michigan, where the Redbirds carded their lowest NCAA Regional team score in program history (918). Yun’s three-round 221 marked the lowest score by an Illinois State golfer in an NCAA Regional.

## Mack, Labat wrap season at NCAA Regional

Two of Illinois State gymnastics’ best, junior Jaye Mack and senior Angelica Labat ’24, each competed in their third NCAA Regional in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

“Both Jaye and Angelica represented ISU, their team, and themselves very well,” Redbird gymnastics head coach Bob Conkling said. “It was a little bitter-sweet for Angelica with it being her last competitive routine as a Redbird. It was a great way to end the season, and I am so proud of both of them. I can’t wait to see what Jaye and the rest of the team does next year.”

## Where are they now?



Former Illinois State University men’s golfer Jeff Kellen ’11, the head professional at Northshore Country Club in Glenview, competed in the PGA Championship last May at Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, Kentucky. He carded a one-over 72 in his final round after shooting an opening round 87.

A three-time All-Missouri Valley Conference honoree during his time at Illinois State, Kellen became the first Redbird since 1998 to compete in a PGA Tour major and just the third overall, joining Tom Sipula ’92 and D.A. Weibring ’75. Kellen earned a spot in the PGA Championship by finishing inside the top 20 at the PGA Professional Championship.

A Rockford native, Kellen spent nearly five years after graduation as a professional golfer in the lower tours, including playing a handful of tournaments in the Web.com Tour (now the Korn Ferry Tour).

In 2017, he started working at Mauh-Nah-Tee-See Golf Club in Rockford. Kellen then spent four years at Butler National Golf Club in Oak Brook, and in October 2023, earned his first head professional job at Northshore Country Club.

On vault, Mack posted a score of 9.850 to tie for 14th, and her floor routine earned a score of 9.850 for a 17th-place finish. Labat posted a vault score of 9.750 to cap her illustrious career.

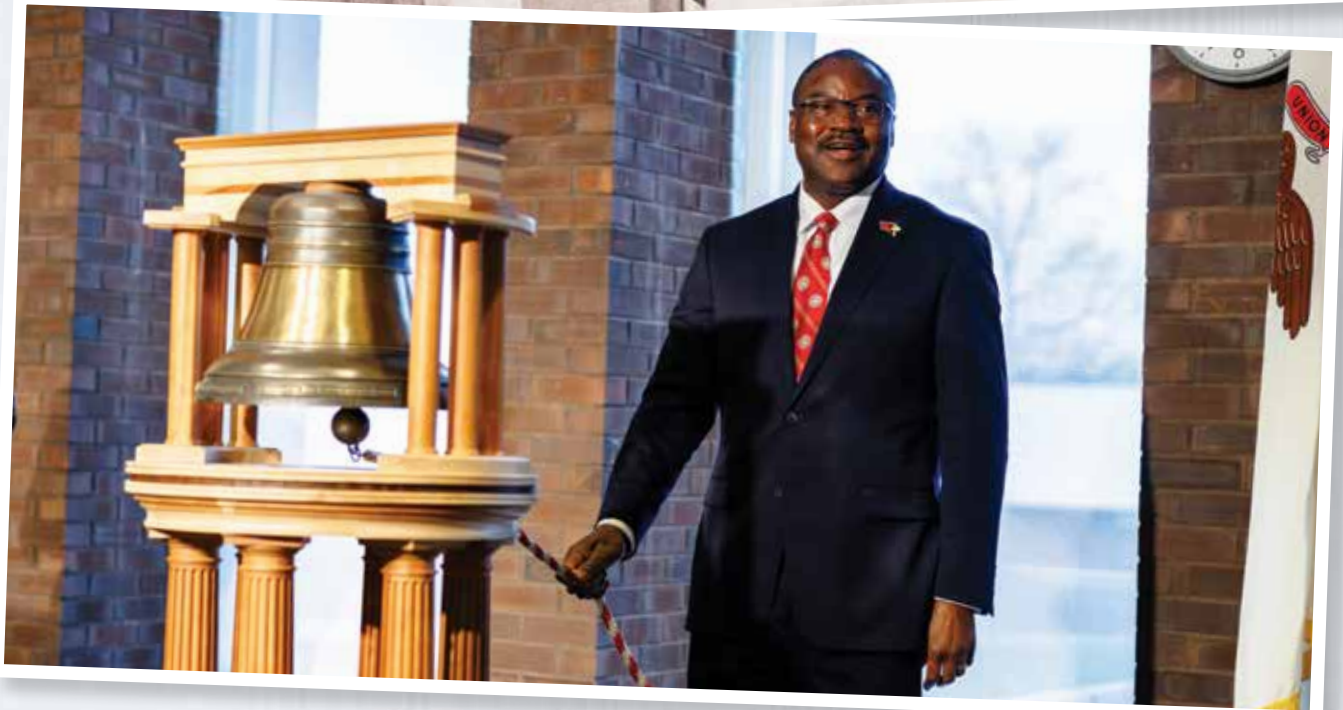
## McCulla goes low at NCAA Regional

Alex McCulla put up a low round of 69, tied for the second-lowest NCAA Regional round in Redbird men’s golf history, as he and Valentin Peugeot ’24 wrapped up play at the NCAA Regional in West Lafayette, Indiana. McCulla’s 69 was one stroke back

of the program NCAA Regional low score of 68 set by Trent Wallace ’19 in the opening round of the 2017 NCAA Regional.

## Women’s basketball advances to WNIT Super 16

The Illinois State women’s basketball team (22-12) earned a WNIT bid for the 15th time in program history and the third time under head coach Kristen Gillespie. The Redbirds earned a first-round bye, beat the College of Charleston, and lost in the Super 16 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



# Then *and* Now

## Founders Day

An annual celebration of the founding of Illinois State University began with the first Founders Day in 1909. The tradition grew in 1913 with a full slate of events to honor the University's first president, Charles Hovey. The annual event was merged with convocation during the Great Depression and World War II, but it's been a full-fledged celebration of the University's founding since the 1950s, including when President Robert G. Bone rang the historic Old Main Bell at the centennial celebration in 1957, *top*. Traditions today include a faculty and staff appreciation luncheon and awards ceremony, and ringing of both the historic Old Main Bell and a replica that accommodates indoor bell ringing, as President Aondover Tarhule did in 2024, *bottom*.

# Pause<sup>for</sup>Applause



## Good neighbor

**Jon Farney '93** was named president and CEO of State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company. The College of Business alum, who first joined State Farm as an intern, has served in various roles at the company for over 30 years; he was most recently senior vice president, treasurer, and chief financial officer. Farney owns a bachelor's degree in accounting from Illinois State University and an MBA from the University of Michigan. He was active in Beta Gamma Sigma as a student at Illinois State, and he remains engaged at the University through scholarship support and serving as a guest speaker and advisory board member.



## Supreme wisdom

**Yolanda Gibson, M.S. '06**, earned a Telly Award last year for her documentary, *Wisdom from the Brooklyn Bridge*, chronicling a 21-day weight-loss journey at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and political and social protests in New York City. The work was named for the revelations Gibson experienced on daily walks across the 1,595-foot bridge, and it earned her a Telly in the online longform category in 2023. An online entertainment writer since 2010, Gibson has written for *Medium*, *Yahoo!*, and *Examiner.com*. She's conducted red carpet interviews at the Tribeca Film Festival, BET Hip Hop Awards, and Soul Train Music Awards.



## Driven by excellence

**April Schermann '02** earned two national teaching awards and reached a coaching milestone during the 2023-24 school year. The Normal West High School teacher was named the Computer Science Teacher of the Year by Project Lead the Way and recognized in the Disney Imagination Campus 100 Teachers Celebration. Schermann also recorded her 500th career coaching win as head coach of the Normal West softball team last spring. The former Redbird softball standout has guided the Wildcats to eight regional titles, four sectional championships, seven conference titles, and a runner-up finish in the 2016 Class 4A state tournament during her 21 years as the team's coach.



## Good as gold

**Aimee (Hutchison) Legatzke '03**, a kindergarten teacher at Fox Meadow Elementary in South Elgin, received a Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching. Legatzke was one of 10 statewide recipients of the award selected from more than 600 nominated teachers. A dedicated, student-centered educator who adapts her teaching style to meet student needs, Legatzke was lauded for working with not only students, but their families, too. The award comes with a \$5,000 cash prize and a spring sabbatical provided by Northwestern University. The Golden Apple Foundation is Illinois' leading nonprofit committed to preparing, mentoring, and honoring leaders in education.

# A Day in the Life



## Students connect through sport clubs

by John Moody

Kelsey Orrill remembers what participating in club sports meant to her when she was in college. As an assistant director in Campus Recreation, a big part of Orrill's job is overseeing sport clubs. Between 800-1,000 students participate in 26 club sports at Illinois State. Two more clubs will be added in 2024-25.

"I love working with the officers and clubs because I know the important, positive impact these experiences have on their college experience," Orrill said.

Feedback from students and alumni shows that participating in a club sport ranks near the top when it comes to feeling a strong connection to the University, a fact not lost on Orrill.

"If you walk the Quad, you can see students wearing their sport club apparel. They are proud to belong to their team,

and for many it becomes an aspect of their identity here on campus," she said. "These activities result in strong bonds."

Justin Goforth is treasurer of the table tennis club, which was established as a registered student organization in 2017; he'll soon move into the president's job. Table tennis is open to anyone with an interest in the sport. The season is year-round, and the team competes in events sanctioned by the National Collegiate Table Tennis Association.

Goforth, a mathematics teacher education major from Lincoln, will be a sophomore this fall. He said his favorite thing about the table tennis club is that he gets engrossed in a sport that briefly takes his attention away from the rigors of the academic calendar.



The table tennis and women's water polo clubs are two of 26 club sports offered at Illinois State University. Colleen Zisk, *inset*, loads up for a shot during a practice at Horton Pool.

"Practice is a blocked-out portion of each week that is stable," he said. "I can escape the worries of my schoolwork."

Goforth applauded Campus Recreation for providing activities where students can get to know each other through a shared interest in a sport. He also likes that the sport he plays is straightforward but challenging.

"One reason people join table tennis specifically is because the sport is simple at its core," he said. "But it also requires a high skill level."

Allie Vosberg is president of the women's water polo club. A communication and business major from Rockford, Vosberg will be a senior this fall and has participated in water polo all three years at Illinois State.



Illinois State's women's water polo team is composed of 25 members who practice three times a week. No experience is necessary to join the club.



Justin Goforth serves during a table tennis club practice at the Bowling and Billiards Center.

The team practices three times a week at Horton Pool and competes in three competitive tournaments and two nonconference tournaments in the Collegiate Water Polo Association.

"There was some good competition this year, and it's fun to compete with teams of similar strength as us," Vosberg said.

Teams get an allocation from Campus Recreation to help fund their travel. To raise additional funds, Vosberg said her team organized a fundraiser scrimmage and sold T-shirts.

Vosberg participated in water sports in high school as a member of the swimming, diving, and synchronized swimming teams, but no experience is required to join the water polo club, which carries 25 members during the season. Vosberg was already an athlete, but she saw the social benefits of joining a sport club.

"I saw water polo at Festival ISU, and figured I'd give it a try," she said. "I like the friendships I've made. It was nice to join a team and make some good friends right away."





# Slice of college

How pizza shaped the Redbird experience

By John Twork

For Nina (Cowden) Elkins '87 and other Illinois State University alumni, "college was all about pizza."

Elkins remembers Garcia's Pizza in a Pan as "epic" and "a great meeting spot to hang out and eat." She remembers ordering Pizza World and Domino's late at night when dining centers were closed.

"It was cheap and came with free fountain sodas. I think every student then had dozens of those free plastic Domino's cups," Elkins said. "Our delivery guy would even stop at White Hen Pantry on his way to pick up stuff for us."

And if Elkins and her friends were "living high on the hog," they would get Micheleo's or Tobin's with perfectly crisp crust covered by generous amounts of cheese and toppings.

Dozens of pizza joints have served up so much more than dinner for generations of students in Normal. Their pizzas, whether round or rectangular, have shaped the Redbird experience.

## The first bite

John and Fred Baldini, children of immigrant parents from Lucca, Italy, brought pizza, a little-known novelty in America at the time, to town in 1936 when they opened Lucca Grill in Downtown Bloomington. A 1953 *Vidette* ad touted Lucca's "choice steaks, Italian pizza, and spaghetti."

Takeout options, such as Casella's Pizza Palace, opened near campus in the mid-1950s. A 1955 *Vidette* article introducing Homecoming court nominee Mary Broomfield '56 contained the paper's first account of a college student enjoying pizza under the headline "Mary Likes Pizza." Another *Vidette* story in 1957 described "a pizza party and dancing" at Smith Hall.

## Delivering dough

By the late-1950s, pizza ads included phone numbers for delivery. "Have pizza, will travel" became Casella's slogan. Ronnie's Pizza boasted "fast, speedy delivery." A 1962 ad for Pizza on Wheels described "a real Italian pizza completely prepared and baked in our spotless, radio-dispatched, mobile kitchen enroute to your door." Mr. Kelly's, across from the Normal Theater, offered "rush service on pizza." And Tobin's, which opened in 1963, assembled the largest fleet of food delivery vehicles in town.

Yet some students still preferred dining in. Ragusa's Pizza Palace and Italian Restaurant opened in the early 1960s on Dale Street. Avanti's opened a block north in 1971. It served pizza, pasta, and sandwiches on its famously sweet bread.

"If dad wanted to take me to dinner on Sunday night before he headed back home, we ate at Avanti's," remembered Barbara (Fairweather) Byer '75. "Nothing else compares."



## Pairs well with beer

A pizza renaissance was set in motion on July 9, 1973, when previously dry Normal approved the sale of alcohol in town. Because establishments serving alcohol were also required to sell food, pizza was a tasty option for restauranteurs catering to the Illinois State crowd. Among the first to receive liquor licenses were The Gallery and The Welcome Inn (upstairs restaurant)/The Cellar (downstairs bar) in Downtown Normal, which featured pizza on their menus.

"Our friend, Patricia Cronin '81, worked at The Cellar, and once in a while she would bring home a pizza for my roomie, Sue Mallonee Necessary '79, and me, at midnight after they closed," recalled Marguerite "Peg" Vahldieck '79. "If we were already sleeping, we would get up and eat that wonderful deep dish."

Josie's Pizza Kitchen opened a two-story restaurant on East Beaufort Street in 1976 that served pan pizza and beer and featured trees and plants growing under a skylight in the center of the bar.





## Landing “The Flying Tomato”

Garcia’s, a pizza game-changer, opened its first Normal location in 1978 on Dale. Owners Ralph Senn and Joe Ream, known as “The Flying Tomato Brothers” for their iconic hot air balloon that occasionally floated over the Quad, pegged Illinois State’s campus as a prime location to grow their Champaign-based business.

Garcia’s differentiated itself with rectangular pan pizza by the slice. It also served sharable thick crust “pizza in a pan” and stuffed pizza available as a “Gutbuster,” heaped with cheese, sausage, green peppers, mushrooms, and onions.

A second location on Broadway Avenue invited patrons with an indoor waterfall, tropical greenery, balconies, and a 1,000 square-foot skylight from which customers could see 10-year-old Watterson Towers rising high above. Pinball machines and arcade games including *Centipede* and *Galaga* added to the appeal.

“It was considered ‘cool’ to work there with our blue jean shirts and red bandanas,” said Karen Mordini-Schnorr ’82. “I met my future husband at a party after work. I was still in my work clothes and swore he was attracted to the scent of Garcia’s pizza.”

Many relationships were launched at Garcia’s. Others failed to take flight. “I remember being on a not-so-great date when my date announced he had the recipe for Garcia’s pizza sauce,” said former student Sandy Stolberg. “For that all-too-brief moment, the date improved dramatically.”

Garcia’s, also located on East College Avenue and inside the Bone Student Center, became “intermingled with the ISU college experience,” according to a 1988 *Vidette* article.



## Normal twist on Chicago flavor

Another pizza heavyweight, Micheleo’s, opened in Downtown Normal in 1981. Faced with heavy competition, owners Mike and Geri Koch created made-from-scratch thin crust and Chicago-style deep dish pizzas that students couldn’t resist. A 1988 *Vidette* article comparing seven campus pizzerias deemed Micheleo’s “king.”

“My check register was Micheleo’s, Micheleo’s, Micheleo’s, Kroger,” said Mick Hall ’89. “Those were priorities in the ’80s.”

As the food manager and treasurer for his fraternity, John Narish ’93 took full advantage of a Micheleo’s Sunday evening deal. “I looked at what the regular meal was going to cost versus taking the house to the pizza place,” Narish said. His favorite was cheese, sausage, and extra sauce. “Micheleo’s was far cheaper than the cost of feeding the guys through our service.

Everyone loved it, and I was a hero.”

By the late-1980s, more than 25 pizza places served Bloomington-Normal. The list included Chicago Dough Company and Papa John’s, which was unrelated to the national franchise and located in a “small shack at the corner of Willow and Normal,” according to the *Vidette*.

Pizza World, which originated in Normal in 1970 and became a small franchise, was another student favorite. In 1979, the company paraded its fleet of 34 red and white AMC Spirit delivery cars through campus, and across Central Illinois, to mark its rise in the world of pizza.





## Late-night pie

Grog's joined the scene in 1989. Located on East Beaufort, it offered 12-inch pizzas for \$3.99 and was open until 2 a.m. on weeknights and 3:30 a.m. on weekends.

"We would walk in and order a small cheese—and onions and green peppers were always free," recalled Scott Urbon '94. "I can't tell you how many times I burned the roof of my mouth sitting on the curb outside."

Grog's later became Prime Time Pizza, which continued the tradition of baking affordable pizza into the wee hours of the morning. Jake's, Rhino's, and Dirk's also served Downtown Normal.

Across campus, students living in Dunn-Barton and Walker halls didn't have to go far to grab a quality slice. They had Chatter's in the basement of Walker. "A whole pizza done to order, plus they sold pints of Ben & Jerry's," said Kathleen (Prohaska) Podraza '09. "We used to walk across the road, from Hamilton, late at night and then have everyone over, crowded into someone's room, watching movies."

In Bloomington, Monical's Pizza was a favorite of the late David Foster Wallace, an Illinois State professor and author of the acclaimed novel *Infinite Jest*. His first interview with *Rolling Stone* reporter David Lipsky for his book, *Although of Course You End Up Becoming Yourself*, took place at the Monical's on South Eldorado Road in 1996.

## A fresh slice

The new millennium brought more options including ZaZa's Pizza Palace, Redbird Pizza, and Gumby's with its deliciously greasy Pokey Stix, while a few legendary pizzerias served their final slices. Garcia's left Normal in 1999, and Micheleleo's closed in 2010.

For alumni craving nostalgia, Tobin's also serves Micheleleo's, and Garcia's still operates in Champaign. Avanti's, Lucca, and Tobin's remain major pizza players in Bloomington-Normal.

Uptown Normal's transformation in the mid-2000s sparked investments in new restaurants such as Medici, featuring stone oven pizza, and Firehouse Pizza. One of Uptown's newest restaurant's, Pizza Payaa, serves artisan pan pizzas. A 2021 *Vidette* article noted "the menu includes square pies, gluten-free pies and more." Flingers Pizza Pub is another community favorite.

Today's Redbirds have more options for different styles of pizza than ever. But instead of thumbing through the phone book or dialing a memorized number like 888-9999 (for Prime Time Pizza), they're more likely to order through a mobile app.

And while the selection has changed, generations of Redbirds hold shared experiences of laughing with friends or cramming for an exam between bites of crispy crust, melted cheese, and their favorite toppings.

"We'd get our pizza by the slice at Jake's, and we'd talk about classes and work and dreams and bucket-list vacations ... and everything else you can think of," recalled Ryan Elias '04.

Because when it comes to nourishing the college experience, pizza always delivers.



## LOOKING FOR LEFTOVERS?

Scan the QR code or visit [IllinoisState.edu/Magazine](https://IllinoisState.edu/Magazine) for the "deep dish" extended version of this story featuring additional photos, menus, and more.



# TEAM BEHIND THE TEAM

BY MATT WING

# FORMER REDBIRDS PLAY STARRING ROLES BEHIND THE SCENES FOR THE CHICAGO BULLS

**S**teve Pankow '11 stands in the entryway to the Chicago Bulls equipment room deep inside the United Center holding a Nike Zoom Kobe 4 "Fade to Black" basketball shoe. There's a five-inch gash above the shoe's hard rubber midsole that Pankow wiggles four fingers through as part of an equipment manager's postmortem examination.

Less than 24 hours earlier, the shoe was in fine working condition. It was on the left foot of Bulls guard Alex Caruso, who had helped engineer what was about to be a stunning upset of the Western Conference-leading Minnesota Timberwolves. But late in the game as Caruso and company were putting the finishing touches on the win, the 2023 NBA All-Defensive First Team selection jumped to contest a shot from Minnesota all-star Anthony Edwards. Caruso landed awkwardly as the shoe exploded.

Pankow was among the first to realize what had happened. He sprang into action, sprinting 40 yards to the locker room to retrieve a backup pair of shoes.

"When something like that happens, it's an adrenaline rush," Pankow said. "Whether it's blood on a jersey or a blown-out shoe, that's what we prepare for, and that's what gets me cranked up."

Amid a late-season playoff push, Caruso couldn't wait even the few seconds Pankow needed for the retrieval, instead finishing out the game wearing teammate Dalen Terry's Adidas models. The Bulls won the game, 109-101.

Pankow recounts it all the next day at the mouth of the equipment room as the Bulls prepare for a game against the Atlanta Hawks that's still a couple hours from tipoff. Bulls players and personnel coming from every direction squeeze past Pankow as they complete their pregame routines. Eventually Caruso arrives, puts his arm around Pankow, and laments the demise of his favorite pair of shoes.

Pankow is the Bulls' head equipment manager and team travel coordinator. At 6-foot-4, he's as tall as some players but skinnier than all of them. A Sharpie marker clipped to the collar of his team-issued polo serves as his trademark piece of flair, indicating to fans who surround the team bus when the Bulls arrive in another NBA city or kids who line the tunnel when the team takes the court that Pankow is not one they'll see on the court that night.

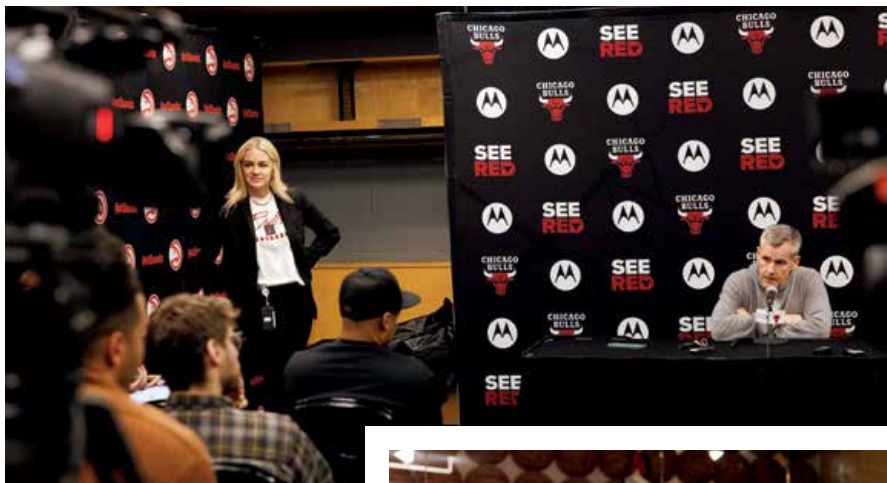
He doesn't play for the team, but he's an integral part of it.

Pankow got his start in sports at Illinois State University after sending an email to then-head football coach Denver Johnson the summer before his freshman year asking Johnson if there was anything he could do for the team. That led to four years as a student manager, internships with the NFL's Green Bay Packers and Indianapolis Colts, and a job with Navy athletics before a full-circle moment when he returned to Illinois State as a full-time equipment manager.

Now in his "dream job," Pankow travels full time with the Bulls, sits behind the bench, and loves every minute of it. He's one of at least eight Illinois State alumni working full time for the NBA team. Though none of them are scoring points or dish-ing out assists, they form the team behind the team. Several of them got their starts in sports at Illinois State.

"It's different every day," Pankow said. "That's the part I love about it, and that's what I think most people love about it."

→ **Steve Pankow '11**, near right, holds the failed shoe of Alex Caruso that spurred the veteran equipment manager into action the night before a home game against the Atlanta Hawks on April 1. Pankow, far right, hangs Caruso's jersey in the Bulls locker room before the game against the Hawks.



↑ **Beth Esler '10** is the Bulls' director of basketball communications. She gained experience as a student intern with Illinois State Athletics Communications and was mentored by longtime Bulls' head of public relations Tim Hallam '77, who retired last year. Among Esler's duties are moderating Bulls head coach Billy Donovan's pre- and post-game press conferences. She travels full time with the team. "No day is ever the same, and no season is ever the same," Esler says. "That's what keeps me going."



↑ **Carla De Lio '92** is executive assistant to President and CEO Michael Reinsdorf, who she followed to the Bulls 14 years ago after working with him in a previous business endeavor. "I feel really lucky because this wasn't something I expected to be doing," she says. "I never thought I'd be working for the Chicago Bulls."

↑ **Jasmyn Mahone '16** is in her seventh year working for the Bulls. She's held a variety of human resources roles and is now a senior manager. "I like that my job plays a role in creating a positive culture in the workplace and elevating experiences for internal staff," Mahone says. "I enjoy attracting and retaining top talent, creating an engaging environment, and making sure our staff has fun at work."



← **Maya Brown '20** landed her first job in sports as a student athletic trainer at Illinois State. She's now a group sales account executive for the Bulls, managing groups ranging from as few as 15 to as many as 1,000. "It's a lot of phone calls, a lot of meetings on game days, and showing clients all the different fan experience packages," she says.



↑ **Kyle Cummings '11** is senior manager of basketball programming. That includes a "Court of Dreams" youth clinic held before the Bulls' game with the Hawks where he's assisted by Bulls radio broadcasters Chuck Swirsky and Bill Wennington. "I love it," says Cummings, a former student manager for the Illinois State men's basketball team. "It's the best job in the world."



↑ **Danielle (Gombac) Finnerty '15** got her start in athletics as a student intern with Illinois State Athletics Communications. She was one of the first five employees hired by the Windy City Bulls, the Chicago Bulls' G League affiliate, nine years ago. She's since held several roles with the NBA team and is now a manager of partnership marketing. "We have a very family-friendly culture here," says Finnerty, who welcomed her first child in May. "I wake up every day excited to come to work."



↑ **Yesenia Garcia, M.S. '16**, is an account executive for season ticket services in her second year with the franchise. While most other Bulls employees focus on today, Garcia concentrates on tomorrow. Her job is making sure United Center seats are full for the 2024-25 season. "We're already working on that!" she says, laughing.



Listen to an extended interview with Steve Pankow '11, above, on *Redbird Buzz*, the official podcast of Illinois State University.





# HOMELESSNESS to HOPE

by Kate Arthur

**W**hen Verneice Prince '17, M.S.W. '20, and her son arrived at his school, she'd open the trunk of her car, pull out a loaf of bread, and prepare his lunch: a beef bologna sandwich. They were homeless, living in a Detroit shelter where residents weren't allowed to bring in food.

One night she asked if she could put his food in the shelter refrigerator and was told she could not. There were words, and Prince and her son were put out on the street that night. Seven months pregnant, with no money and a car that wouldn't start, she and her son started walking until she couldn't go any farther and laid down on the sidewalk. A police car slowed and pulled over. Her son thought they were in trouble, but Prince knew differently. Now they'd have a ride to another shelter.

For the first 20 years of her life, Prince grew up in foster care, keeping her clothes in trash bags because she never felt secure enough to put them anywhere else. She never had a birthday cake, a sleepover, or a family vacation.

"There was no childhood for me," she said. "I know what it is like to have needs, but no one to call on to help meet those needs."

In 2017, the single mother of four earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Illinois State University, and in 2020, her master's. At 51, she is the CEO of a nonprofit she founded in 2018 to help people facing homelessness, Cruisin' Outta Poverty Services.

Prince provides an umbrella of services for those seeking emergency shelter, transportation, clothing, and food. She will enroll and tutor those interested in GED classes, has provided an address for job applicants, and temporarily cared for pets. As a counselor, mentor, and navigator, she moves people from homelessness to hope.

On the door of the nonprofit's storefront in an outlet mall in Normal is a handwritten sign that reads, "If we are not here, we are serving the community."

"We answer the call when someone is in need of help that they cannot get anywhere else," she said, sitting in the back room she's turned into a kitchen for those needing a place to sit, talk, or warm a meal. "This is where I want to be."

Inspired by her own experience,  
a School of Social Work alum formed a  
nonprofit to help lift people out of poverty.



Prince meets people where they are, and sometimes that's standing outside their tent in a parking lot encampment. She understands not wanting help or not wanting to be seen. She's been there.

"If I come to you and I haven't showered, my clothes are soiled, I don't want to be in front of you. I can't come to you for help because I'm not in any condition to," she said. "Once we get their basic needs met, we take it from there."

Homelessness is a growing issue in McLean County, where 15.7% of the population lived in poverty in 2021, rising from 14.2% in 2016, according to data from the McLean County Regional Planning Commission. In 2023, there were 1,249 homeless adults and children.

The School of Social Work has had students who experienced homelessness and food insecurity, Stipp said, "but the confluence of factors in Verneice was unique. She had little margin for error. Her student days—like her life—were about surviving while thriving."

Prince works part time as a counselor at the Bloomington nonprofit INtegrity Counseling and supplements her income as a substitute teacher and Uber driver. Whatever money is left over at the end of the month goes to her nonprofit.

A year ago, she wrote on Cruisin' Outta Poverty Services' Facebook page that she was facing some hard times of her own, feeling like she was still trying to escape poverty. She asked people to donate \$1 to the nonprofit. Some did, but not enough.

"If I can help one person, whether it is the children I work with or clients that come through, I would feel like I took back what was taken from me in my childhood."

— Verneice Prince '17, M.S.W. '20

When local shelters are full, Prince has driven people to a shelter 40 miles away. Last winter she shared her home with three people who had nowhere else to go.

Prince entered the foster care system when she was only a year old and was shuffled to so many families she has forgotten their names. She gave up hope of finding anyone to call mom or dad. Her goal was to survive childhood.

Aging out of the system at 20, she joined the United States Army, where she qualified as a truck driver only because a friend gave her a few driving lessons in a parking lot. The Army is where her education began when she took a college course. She always wanted to be a social worker.

After two years in the Army, Prince was honorably discharged as a disabled veteran. But homelessness followed her through two marriages and four children as she moved around, staying with family who didn't feel like family. In 2013, she moved to Bloomington and lived at Home Sweet Home Ministries with her three youngest children.

Wherever she was, she found a church and called on her faith when hope waned. One Sunday she saw a church van in the shelter parking lot and climbed in. After the service, she met the pastor's wife, Dr. Karen Stipp, who happened to be an associate professor in Illinois State's School of Social Work. Prince shared her dream of becoming a social worker, and Stipp became her encourager.

"She said she was going to be my cheerleader, and I didn't know what a cheerleader was," Prince said. "But she showed me."

Prince has received grants and donations and hopes to someday have an overnight shelter. She has the beginnings of a food pantry, but only enough rice, pasta, cereal, and vegetables to fill two grocery bags. A small refrigerator holds homemade meals.

Every day she's on her feet, sorting and organizing donations for the thrift store she opened next door. The disabled veteran doesn't stop until she must. She keeps crutches and a walker close by but keeps the fear of returning to homelessness further away.

"Whatever I have to do to keep things going and be able to help people, that's what I do," she said. "I think I've finally let go of the fear of being homeless, but I know that it can happen."

Stipp has had a decade-long relationship with Prince and sees her as a resilient and resourceful leader.

"One person can't take on poverty all by themselves," she said. "It takes a group of people to move the needle, and she's one of the people who's doing that in just incredible ways. With her faith and determination, she makes it happen every day."

Prince is not only looking to change the stories of homeless people, but her own.

"I love what I do, and I will be here until I am not," she said. "If I can help one person, whether it is the children I work with or clients that come through, I would feel like I took back what was taken from me in my childhood."

“It takes a group of people to move the needle, and she’s one of the people who’s doing that in just incredible ways.”

—Dr. Karen Stipp





Rose Marshack and Rick Valentin bring a do-it-yourself work ethic learned from their time as members of the band Poster Children to their teaching in the School of Creative Technologies. (Photo/Scott Nichol)

# THE INDIE ROCK STARS OF CTK

BY JOHN MOODY

**PROFESSORS BUILD COMMUNITY WITH STUDENTS  
BY SHARING WISDOM GAINED ON THE ROAD**

When Rick Valentin was a young college musician and had an opening for a bass player, he turned to Rose Marshack. There was only one problem: Marshack had never played bass.

“His bass players kept quitting,” Marshack said. “He didn’t know he needed *me* as his bass player.” The choice was between Marshack and a guy named Pete. “But Rose had perfect pitch, and she was into punk rock,” Valentin said. “Obviously, she was the right choice.”

Marshack and Valentin have been bandmates for 38 years, married for 28 years, and Illinois State University faculty members in the School of Creative Technologies (CTK) together for more than a decade (Marshack was hired in 2007, Valentin in 2009). Both are CTK professors. Marshack is the interim director of CTK. The parents of two sons, Gram and Dao, they still play music together—just not as often as they once did. Their journey began when they met as undergrads in their dormitory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Their band, Poster Children, played dorms and house parties on campus and later opened for bigger punk bands. They were a touring band for over a decade. The years rolled by, and the shows piled up. Poster Children has played over 800 dates in the U.S. and Europe and released 10 albums. They’ve had music videos on MTV and been featured in wide-ranging media, from *The New York Times* to the Cartoon Network.

# PLAY LIKE A MAN

MY LIFE IN  
POSTER  
CHILDREN



As computer science majors, they knew a lot about technology. They designed their own album covers and were early adopters of new technologies. They posted blogs and podcasts on the internet long before those terms were part of our lexicon. It was a way to connect with their growing fan base. They published their first podcast in 1999, although that's not what it was called back then.

the houses and apartments of fellow musicians in the cities they played. (They reciprocated the hospitality when musician friends came to play in Central Illinois.)

*Play Like a Man* also documents the band's innovative ways and DIY approach to technology. Skills honed by Marshack and Valentin from their experiences playing in Poster Children have served them well as professors in CTK, where they infuse their teaching with the same innovative spirit they've brought to their band.

Valentin remembers feeling out of place as a tech-savvy musician back in the 1980s, but his students today embrace the identity. "Now it seems pretty normal to be kind of a creative, techie person, but it was unusual then," he said. "Now more people have seen the value of that mix of creative work and how technology can be creative."

But other lessons learned from the road permeate their teaching, too. They try to build the same community in the classroom that they have felt as a community of musicians.

"We teach students that community is important, and that they're a community of students," Marshack said. "I tell them in the middle of class when I'm teaching, 'OK, take a break now and see if the person next to you is caught up. I want you to make sure that they know exactly what's going on in the class.'"

"Because we're all in this together. Once you leave here, you're going to be working with other people. You need to learn to take care of them."

Valentin said CTK offers a collaborative environment to help students thrive. It's by design.

"We want the modern or future student to be able to ride the waves of technology and changes and still be able to be relevant and do good work," he said. "Because of their skills, a lot of times they become the sort of connectors in situations where the engineers can't talk to the creatives. So, they can be

**"WE TEACH STUDENTS THAT COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT,  
AND THAT THEY'RE A COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS."**

**—Rose Marshack**

"We knew that we could create an audio file, and we knew that we could put it on the internet so anyone could access it," Valentin said. "And then we started just the two of us doing a recorded kind of chat and putting that up."

Marshack wrote about the band's history and her experience in it in *Play Like a Man: My Life in Poster Children*, published last year. It chronicled the band's do-it-yourself (DIY) ethic: writing original music, booking its own shows, selling T-shirts, driving a van all over the country, and sleeping on floors in

the person who is trying to get everybody to understand each other. That's a really valuable job and skill.

"You can call it networking, or you can call it community. And that's where we came from. And I think that's typical of musicians."

CTK is growing at Illinois State—it grew from a program to the School of Creative Technology in 2023—and Marshack and Valentin have played no small part. But they haven't done it alone. Marshack praised her predecessor, Aaron Paolucci,

for his leadership, program creator Dave Williams for his vision, and advisor Jody Decremer for building relationships—and community—with students.

“I’m just thrilled to be the caretaker. We’re a really tight-knit group of professors who really respect—I could even say love—each other,” she said. “I’m thrilled that Rick is also part of it. These people are my heroes.”

Marshack recalls being impressed by the personal touch at Illinois State during the interview process. “The faculty were talking about students by name, and I was like, ‘You know their names!?’” she said. “I thought: ‘I’m home. I want to be here.’”

She still feels that way about her colleagues, describing them as “extra generous and extra caring.”

At her first winter commencement at Illinois State some years ago, Marshack was seated next to a faculty member from another department. She was curious about his experience.

“I poked him, and I was like, ‘Dude, my group of people, my faculty that I get to work with, I love them. Is it like that where you are too?’” Marshack recalled. “And he goes, ‘Yeah, just like that.’”

“And I just thought, ‘Wow, what a great place.’”

‘WOW,  
WHAT A  
GREAT  
PLACE!’







# BEING OF SERVICE

A teacher and U.S. Army veteran inspires his students to honor those who served and died for their country

by John Moody

**B**rad Marcy '09, M.S. '17, may have been born to be a teacher, but first he had to be a soldier.

From the ages of 19-25, Marcy served in the U.S. Army as part of the 233rd Military Police Company in the Third Infantry Division. He spent six years on active duty and was deployed to Iraq as part of the initial invasion in the Iraq War. He lived in Baghdad for 15 months.

"We were some of the first in the city and stayed longer than most of those who came in after us," Marcy said.

A big influence on him was his squad leader. Staff Sgt. Jermey Mayes was also from Central Illinois.

"He used to say, 'When we're not at war, we're training,'" Marcy said. "I was an introvert, and he told me I was going to teach, so I taught a lot of classes to soldiers, which made me think, 'I can do this.'"

It turned out his old staff sergeant was an astute judge of character. In April, Marcy was named Teacher of the Year by Illinois State's College of Education. Not bad for a guy who said he could've been a better student in high school.

A history and social science teacher and department chair at Le Roy High School, where he's taught for 13 years, Marcy takes every opportunity to engage his students in experiential learning. If that learning involves lessons about sacrifices made by veterans, then all the better. Marcy creates immersive lessons where his students create battle shields and catapults, plan and host a World War II-era themed hangar dance, and clean the headstones of military veterans.

That last one started about seven or eight years ago when Marcy noticed headstones of veterans in a local cemetery needed some attention. He started the Good Cemeterian project, which enlists the help of students in his American history class. They are charged with choosing a headstone and cleaning it up.

They use a cleaner recommended as an antibiological agent that won't hurt the surface where it's applied. It kills moss and lichen and continues to clean for months afterward. Beyond the clean-up are additional layers to the project.

"We want to tell these veterans' stories and make sure they're memorialized and remembered properly," Marcy said.

To accomplish that, Marcy and his students use Ancestry.com and two of its products: Fold3 (to research military records of the deceased) and Newspapers.com.

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"You have to meet them where they're at and get them outside of their comfort zone if you want to impact them. I like to get them moving because just talking to them old school doesn't do it."

—Brad Marcy '09, M.S. '17

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"Students take down info off their adopted headstone and use Fold3 to research each individual," Marcy said. "They then put together a bio packet using graphic design, which helps them build skill sets. And they use Ancestry.com to find the nearest living relative and send them a packet describing the project."

Marcy has found the work to be a creative, hands-on way of engaging his students that integrates history, research, and technology. He's received positive feedback from his students.

"You have to meet them where they're at and get them outside of their comfort zone if you want to impact them," he said. "I like to get them moving because just talking to them old school doesn't do it."



U.S. Army veteran Brad Marcy '09, M.S. '17, teaches his Le Roy High School students about history, service, and research through the Good Cemeterian project.

A Springfield native, Marcy said his interest in the military started at home. His dad was an Army Ranger in Vietnam. When he returned to civilian life, Marcy followed the same academic route of his brother, Steven "Troy" Marcy '99, M.S. '01, and his wife, Julie Marcy '99, M.S. '19, who both enjoyed being students at Illinois State.

"I got home from the war and started my new life adventure," Brad Marcy said.

Included in that adventure was meeting his wife, Ashlie Morfey Marcy '09. They are parents to two girls: Kennedy, 11, and Carsen, 8. Ashlie is a librarian and history teacher in Le Roy schools.

"We even had an ISU-themed wedding at Ewing Manor," Marcy said. "We did our first dance, 'The Chicken Dance,' with Reggie Redbird."

Marcy will begin his 14th year of teaching this fall. Although he initially wanted to be a physical education teacher, he found his calling in teaching material with connections to his time in the military. He's inspired by his students' interest in veterans like him.

"They aren't moved or inspired by grades alone. They are more motivated by the impact they can have," Marcy said. "When they know that real people are counting on them, they come through for you. They will move heaven and Earth to not let you down because you trusted them."

"It's not always easy to move them to care, but it's inspiring for me. It fills my cup."



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Dr. Aondover Tarhule  
*President, Illinois State University*  
Episode 38, April 2024

**“One of the things that really sets this place apart is the people.”**

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Dr. Linda Herman, M.S. '72, Ed.D. '83, and  
Dr. Jill Hutchison, M.S. '69  
*Women's athletics pioneers, Illinois State University*  
Episode 2, May 2022

**“We hope that we inspire young people to think about the past but also ... take the baton and see what needs to be done.”**

—Linda Herman

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Dr. George Pruitt '68, M.S. '70, LHD '94  
*Retired president of Thomas Edison State University, author*  
Episode 21, April 2023

**“I'm so happy to be here because I (want) people that love the ISU of today, as I do, (to) know how it got to be that way.”**

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Jane Lynch '82, LHD '17  
*Actor, comedian, singer, host, and producer*  
Episode 23, May 2023

**“I learned at ISU how to think like an actor.”**

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# ■ AlumniReport



## Redbird alum's career takes flight

Children often follow in their parents' footsteps, but Ashley Delhotal '20 is following her mom's flight path.

Suzanne Delhotal was a commercial pilot who first put her daughter in the pilot's seat when she was just 15 years old. "We would always joke that I'd get my pilot's license before my driver's license," Ashley Delhotal said.

Wide-ranging interests caused Delhotal to reroute her career plans early in life. She first wanted to explore work in health care. Then she majored in communication studies at Illinois State and landed a job as an account executive for a media company.

But once again, she took a detour.

"I started taking flying lessons again as a hobby," Delhotal said. "Every other day after work, I was going to flight school. Then, one day after work, I was sitting in the parking lot, and I thought, 'Why am I not doing this as a job?'"

Delhotal passed her Federal Aviation Administration practical test to earn her private pilot's license. Her first passen-

ger was her mother. Three days later, she quit her job and enrolled in flight school to earn a commercial license.

"I knew if I didn't do this now, I was never going to," Delhotal said. "It was just going to be a different excuse each time, and I didn't want to get 10 years down the road and wonder why I didn't take this chance."

A couple short years later, Delhotal is earning her wings, piloting smaller planes on regional flights. She splits her time between Minnesota and Texas. Some days, she has scheduled flights. Other days, she's on "airport reserve," at the ready in case there's a delay or a pilot is sick.

Her Illinois State degree comes in handy. "Whenever I tell someone in the aviation field that I got my degree in communication, they tell me how beneficial that is," Delhotal said. "When I'm flying, I'm spending hours with my captain and the crew, and I have to be able to communicate with them."

Delhotal hopes to one day pilot bigger planes on longer flights. For now, she's just ready to see where her next flight takes her.

## 1950s

**James '58 and JoAnn (Hosto) Kijewski '59** celebrated 65 years of marriage; are retired; reside in Lansing.

## 1960s

**Kay (Gedelman) Deffley '61** has been a director for Mary Kay for 50 years; is an organist and pianist for Asbury Memorial Church; resides in Savannah, Georgia.

**Helena (Lampi) Feinberg '61** is a retired teacher; is a member of the Illinois Education Association and National Education Association; resides in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

**Frances Jean (Tobias) O'Brien '66** is retired from teaching roles in West Aurora Schools and Aurora University's College of Education; resides in Aurora.

**G. Kent Schipper '66** is retired from 36 years of teaching science; was nominated for Arizona's Teacher of the Year award; marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, Alabama; resides in Show Low, Arizona.

**Donna (Skorburg) Brookbank '69** is retired from a 37-year career in education; resides in Belvidere.

## 1970s

**Vivian (Sanders) Sallee '70, M.S. '91**, is retired from a 35-year career in special education; resides in Houston.

**Dr. Craig Gentzle '73** is a retired college professor; plays golf; mentors youth with the local First Tee chapter; resides with his wife in St. Simons Island, Georgia.

**Roger Henkel '73** is a retired farmer and transportation director for Pontiac District 90; is a substitute bus driver; resides in Pontiac.

**Barbara (Pacholski) House '73, M.S. '78**, is a retired school administrator; enjoys running and golf; resides in Cypress, Texas.

**Judith (Reddish) Peterson '73** is retired from a 45-year career in social work; resides in Wonder Lake.

**Judith (Nowlin) Porter '73** is a retired high school teacher; resides in Woodridge.

**Judith (Seibert) Caveglia '74** is a retired special education teacher; resides in Sun City Center, Florida.

**Alice Diver '74** is retired from the Farmington School District as an art teacher; resides in Glasford.

**Otis '74 and Maureen Michalski Kirchoefer '74** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary; met as members of a recreational volleyball

team at Illinois State; Otis worked in business for 35 years; Maureen taught English in suburban Chicago for 30-plus years.

**Marie (Kirkwood)**

**Dooley '75** is a retired teacher and research reference librarian; is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, actively contributing to her chapter; worked in Milner Library as a student in the acquisitions department; resides in Villa Park.

**Alfreda Keith Keller '75** is a retired juvenile probation officer, with the Circuit Court of Cook County with 30 years of service; was a concealed carry instructor and cosmetology teacher licenser for the state of Illinois; resides in Monee.

**Bill Emerson '76** is retired from the School City of Hammond (Ind.); is an elected city councilman representing Hammond's fourth district; resides in Hammond, Indiana.

**Mike Matthews '76** has been the color analyst for Illinois State men's basketball radio broadcasts for 30 years; enjoys bringing the action to life on Redbird Sports Properties on Learfield.

**Linda Moley '76** is a retired behavioral health therapist; is currently a part-time peer support specialist with COPA Health; resides in Sun City, Arizona.

**Claire (Goldstein) Berger '77** published *How Much is Enough?: Getting More by Living with Less*; is a comedian, improv actor, speaker, and writer; began her career at The Second City in Chicago; earned acclaim as a warm-up comedian for notable sitcoms, including *Seinfeld*; resides in New York City.

**Amy Inlander '77** is a retired director, office manager, and paralegal of a 200-person law office; resides in Flossmoor.

**Ed Lewandowski '78** is a retired teacher and administrator; resides in Shorewood.



## Salute to State

Classmates who met while living in Haynie and Hamilton halls have gathered for reunions the past three years, the most recent a tour of Italy. The group includes Caryl (Royster) Rieckman '81; Mary (Cihak) Savitski '80; Maureen (Boyce) Sarsfield '80; Linda (Lyznicki) Pizzo '80; Carol (Ashcraft) Cross '80, M.S. '90; Amy (Tarrant) Buoscio '79, M.S. '80; Linda Poett '80; and Sue (Ravaschietto) Alexa '80.

**Patricia (Roth) Taylor '78** is a retired teacher of deaf education; taught for two years in Illinois and the rest in Colorado; resides in Grand Junction, Colorado.

**Lawrence "Larry" Whittet '78** has returned to the United States after an assignment in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, building the largest solar park in the world; is a consultant in the renewable energy industry; resides in Granbury, Texas.

**Arles Hendershott Love '79** earned three certifications from the National Association of Nonprofit Organizations & Executives; resides in Rockford.

## 1980s

**Tim Como '80** taught and coached in Roswell, Georgia, for 30 years; taught and coached in Brussels, Belgium, in a role with the Department of Defense that allowed him to visit all the U.S. bases in Europe; earned master's and specialist degrees from the University of West Georgia.

**Valerie Tate '80** volunteers for Feeding South Dakota and was named its volunteer of the year; is retired; works at Custer State Park during the summer; resides in Hermosa, South Dakota.

# Redbird Legacy



Owen Ritter '24 is a budding branch on a family tree with deep Redbird roots.

Ritter graduated from Illinois State University in May exactly 50 years after his grandfather Bill Arbogast '74, and 101 years after his great-great grandfather Chester M. Hammerlund, class of 1923. And they're just three from a family that's produced at least one graduate every decade since the 1890s. Ritter's mother and many cousins, aunts, and uncles have also graduated from Illinois State.

"Pretty much everyone went to ISU, so I can talk about and connect with all of them about my time in college," Ritter said. "I was brought to all the Homecomings, and we went to a lot of games. I still remember when Jackie Carmichael hit a game-winning 3-pointer when I was a ball boy."

Such memories are shared when the family gathers, and Arbogast has many. He's still making them.

"I love the Bloomington-Normal area," he said. "It's nice living in town and still being able to take advantage of the opportunities the University has to offer."

Arbogast's "Redbird family" extends even beyond biological connections.

"Living in the dorms, I gained 30 brothers all of a sudden," said the former Manchester Hall resident. "I think ISU does a great job of making campus feel like home to people who don't have a legacy here, who didn't grow up in town."

The grandfather and grandson exchange stories regularly, and that continued at Ritter's graduation and pinning ceremonies when he earned a bachelor's degree in nursing in May. Arbogast and other family members were in attendance.

Ritter may be leaving the nest and spreading his Redbird wings, but he's certain he'll return to reminisce and create more memories, just like his Redbird relatives before him.

**Scott Wagers '80 '93** is a project manager and staff archaeologist for Ethnoscience; has worked in the ethnoscience field since 1996; resides in Billings, Montana.

**Mary Abbott '81** finished her sixth and final year as a classroom assistant after previously serving as a classroom teacher for 35 years; resides in Wilmette.

**Bruce Brown '81** is retired from Allstate Insurance as a senior operations leader; is trustee board president of Countryside Fire Protection District in Vernon Hills; is vice president and co-founder of Cornerstone Educational Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization; resides in Vernon Hills.

**Eileen (Moore) Harmon '81** and her husband have provided over 20 years of missionary service, including eight trips to Papua New Guinea; the Harmons are now entrepreneurs with an e-commerce business; they reside in Sanford, Florida.

**Peter Mazzone '81** has been the owner and managing attorney of Mazzone Law Firm for 30 years; resides in Mill Creek, Washington.

**Richard Schmidt '81, M.S.W. '04**, is retired as a public service administrator for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, serving McLean, Dewitt, and Livingston counties; resides in Villa Park.

**Pamela (Wenzel) Hiller '82** is retired; worked in residential mortgage lending for 37 years and at State Farm for one year; resides in Normal.

**Kevin Hieronymus '83** was named the "Sportsperson of the Year" for the sport of softball by the Illinois Coaches Association; was inducted into the Illinois Valley Sports Hall of Fame as "Distinguished Media"; has been sports editor of the *Bureau County Republican* in Princeton since 1986.

**Donsia Strong Hill '83** was promoted to executive vice president of equitable engagement and impact strategies at Cinnaire, a nonprofit community development financial organization; recently led creation and implementation of a \$55 million fund to support affordable housing; was a member of the College of Applied Science and Technology Hall of Fame's inaugural class; resides in Chicago.

**Jerry Kyne '85** retired after 37 years as an area sales manager with Chrysler/FCA/Stellantis; enjoys riding his Harley Davidson motorcycle across the country and playing golf; resides with his wife just outside Milwaukee.

**Debbie (Wilhelm) Shuppert '85** is retired from a 37-year career in education; enjoys spending her retirement traveling, playing pickleball, exercising, sewing, crocheting, and reading; resides in Gurnee.

**Tracy Bochantin '86, M.S. '89**, is semi-retired and working as a hospitalist; resides in Fort Myers, Florida.

**Julie (Thomson) Burns '86, M.S. '88**, is a clinical educator and instructor in Illinois State's Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders; has a husband and child who also attended Illinois State; resides in Normal.

**Jackie (O'Neal) Lukasik '87** retired from teaching at Algonquin Middle School; resides in Union.

**Chris Berggren '88** is vice president of distribution and benefits at Pan-American Accident and Health; resides in Gilberts.

**Cara Graves '88** is retired from a 35-year career of teaching elementary school physical education; resides in Orland Park.

**Kathy (Anderson) Loveland '88** is a pre-K teacher with Educare; resides in Wheaton.

**Brad Price '88** cowboied on ranches in Nebraska, Montana, Arizona, Colorado, and Texas; ran a business starting colts and training sorting horses in Solvang, California, for 22 years; recently relocated to Mission, Texas, to work at Murdoch's Ranch Supply in the equine department.

**Andrea (Frowein) Bollinger '89** is retired; enjoys traveling; splits time between Chicago and Carlsbad, New Mexico.

**James Guinnee '89** is an operating partner with Storr Group, an operational equity specialist, and vice president of marketing with Storr platform company SPS PoolCare in Austin, Texas; resides in White Plains, New York.

**Steven Jones '89** is employed by Goodwill Industries; resides in Pekin.

**Paula (Liebhart) Ruddy '89** is a teacher in Community Consolidated District 59; met her husband, **Mike Ruddy '87**, at Illinois State; has three children who have or soon will attend Illinois State; resides in Downers Grove.

## Troops

**Mark C. Jackson '87** retired as a major general from the Illinois Army National Guard after 39 years of service; was commissioned as a second lieutenant from Illinois State's ROTC program; is Illinois State's first ROTC cadet to achieve the rank of brigadier general, and, later, major general; received the distinguished service medal at retirement; resides with his wife in Frankfort.

**Jennifer (Grampp) Aurora '96** retired after 23 years in the Air Force; was the first female command chief for the Illinois Air National Guard; is an operations specialist for Hueman People Solutions; resides in Bloomington.

**Bianna Yeager '13** is a retired U.S. Army combat veteran who served from 1994-2006; resides in Elmhurst.

Vernon Switzer; 2/24  
George Walden; 3/24  
Donald Weakman; 3/24

## In memory

### Faculty/Staff

John Albee; 1/24  
Lee Brasseur; 4/24  
Michael Brunt; 10/23  
Darrell Elkin; 1/24  
Judith Fish; 2/24  
Laura Gowdy; 3/24  
Joseph Harris; 1/24  
Steven Kagle; 1/24  
Joseph Laurenti; 2/24  
Anna Lehr; 2/24  
Jimmy Nagel; 1/24  
Billy Norfleet; 2/24  
John Presley; 2/24  
Rati Ram; 3/24  
Paul Schollaert; 1/24  
Peter Schuetz; 11/23  
Gary W. Scott; 2/24  
Barbara Starcevic; 1/24

### Alumni

#### 1940s

Mary (Nelson) Swanson '40; 2/24  
Cathryn (Wink) Frisby '42 '59; 12/23  
Mary E. Brucker '46; 12/23  
George Cross '46; 12/23  
Janice (Ellingsworth) Blakeley '47; 4/24  
Joyce (Irons) Theobald '48; 1/24

#### 1950s

Pauline Bury '50, M.S. '56; 2/24  
Martha (Ellis) Norcross '50, M.A. '66; 2/24  
Ruth (Austin) Trusheim '51; 2/24  
Kathryn (Maurer) Steingraber '52; 1/24  
Elsie (Wilkins) Utterback '52; 3/24  
Wilma (Rodeffer) Voigts '52; 3/24  
Bettyglen (Render) Clark '53; 1/24  
Bessie Parks '53; 3/24  
Opal (Lee) Kerchenfaut '54; 12/23  
Mary (Cultra) Merritt '54; 1/24  
Mary (Nickrent) Necessary '54; 1/24



### Inspiring Latinas

The Association of Latinx American Students and Association of Latino Professionals for America co-hosted an event celebrating Women's History Month. Dr. Rocio Rivadeneyra, associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, provided the keynote address.





### Centenarian celebration

Gladys (Moore) Williamson '41 celebrated her 105th birthday at Cedarhurst Senior Living in Lexington, Kentucky. Williamson has pursued lifelong passions of travel, education, swimming, and spirituality. She has traveled to all 50 states and abroad and won 10 national titles in senior swimming before retiring in 2017. She still holds two senior swimming national records.

J. Joseph Raycraft '54; 1/24  
 Donald Rosenkrans '54; 5/24  
 James Sloneker '54; 5/24  
 Jane (Henderson) Solomon '54; 4/24  
 Beulah (Smith) Buhr '55; 3/24  
 Norma (Crouse) Cusey '55; 12/23  
 Bette (Chapin) Hallier '55; 5/24  
 Joanne (Smaling) Hartenbower '55; 3/24  
 Norman Jasper Jr. '55; 4/24  
 Joyce (Wessels) Mildred '56; 4/24  
 Peter Parmantie '56, M.S. '60; 2/24  
 Jeanne (Dooley) Snow '56, M.S. '64; 2/24  
 Donald Vandegrift '56; 2/24  
 Betty Baumgardner '57; 2/24  
 Louise (Gish) Holbrook '57; 4/24  
 Patricia (Stange) Poskocil '57; 11/23  
 Doris (Moody) Werries '57; 3/24

Gaylard Wikle '57, M.S. '64; 12/23  
 Janice (Esmond) Winterroth '57; 1/24  
 James Barry '58, M.S. '60; 10/21  
 Tom Prather '58, M.S. '66; 1/24  
 Josephine (Lowe) Barry '59; 12/23  
 Barbara (Conlon) Bressan '59; 5/24  
 Norma (Langhorst) Riley '59; 2/24  
 Wilma (Hunzicker) Strantz '59; 12/23

### 1960s

Angelo Abbott '60, M.S. '64; 3/24  
 Mary Ann (Shutt) McCloy '60; 1/24  
 Kenneth E. Miller '60, M.S. '62; 2/24  
 Sandra Rausch '60, M.S. '68; 3/24  
 Nancy (Gale) Schultz '60; 1/24  
 Delmar Smith '60, M.S. '76; 12/23  
 Michael Edel '61; 2/24  
 Patricia (Mann) Moy '61; 1/24  
 Bonita (Learned) Turnquist '61; 5/24  
 Wayne Whited '61, M.S. '67; 4/24  
 Merna (Grusy) Zimmerman '61; 5/24  
 Margaret (Jones) Ames '62; 3/24  
 Harold Hancock '62; 5/24  
 Richard Mariani, M.S. '62; 4/24  
 Carol (Hodge) Quitno '62; 2/24  
 David Youngberg '62; 2/24  
 Susan (Lohnes) Adams '63; 1/24  
 Marijane (Unsicker) Baer '63; 1/24  
 James Fulcher '63; 3/24  
 Richard Pommier, M.S. '63; 3/24  
 Kenneth Unzicker '63; 1/24  
 John Cade '64; 1/24  
 Diane (Bartlett) Commes '64; 4/24  
 Virginia (Schramm) Greenisen '64; 4/24  
 Donald Raycraft '64, M.S. '66, Ed.D. '72; 4/24  
 Karol (Stankus) Roehr '64; 5/23  
 Mary Ann Sims '64; 3/24  
 Darrell Smith '64; 4/24  
 Gerald Vincent '64; 12/23  
 John Zaugra, M.S. '64; 2/24  
 Judith (Bailey) Burkardt '65; 3/24  
 Dorothy (Flowers) Clayton '65; 1/24  
 John Dossey '65, M.S. '68; 2/24  
 Janet (Rasi) Pree '65; 8/23  
 Martha (Kinzer) Price '65; 1/24  
 Carolyn (Coffey) Pries '65; 3/24  
 Carl Radebaugh, M.S. '65; 1/24  
 Marian (Echerd) Cummings '66; 1/24  
 Judith (Amell) DeFrees '66; 5/24  
 Philip DeJaeger '66, M.A. '71; 1/24  
 Richard Erzen, Ed.D. '66; 4/24  
 Richard Floyd '66; 3/24

Marvin Getty '66; 1/24  
 Audrey (Williams) Hart '66, M.S. '70; 4/24  
 Linda Johnson-Kabisch '66; 5/24  
 Patricia (Hankins) Pearson '66; 11/23  
 Paul Pearson '66; 9/23  
 Karen (Frye) Jones '67; 3/24  
 Francis Dutton '67; 4/24  
 Bernard Hayton Jr. '67; 12/23  
 Stanley Petty '67, M.S. '71; 5/24  
 Ernest Rients '67; 1/24  
 Patricia (Breier) Rodriguez '67; 11/23  
 James Schlatter '67; 2/24  
 Susan (Hollister) Tanty '67; 1/24  
 Sandra (Harris) Eakes '68; 1/24  
 Valerie Larson '68; 4/24  
 Mary (Schooley) Marks '68; 4/24  
 Monica (Wolan) Masten '68; 3/24  
 John G. Novak '68; 3/24  
 Robert M. Davis '69; 4/24  
 Fred Gehrt III '69; 2/24  
 Frank Gunderson, M.A. '69; 3/24  
 Daniel E. Hall '69; 1/24  
 Sandra (Wellenreiter) Horner '69; 3/24  
 Larry Knuth '69, M.S. '71; 3/24  
 Joseph Mayotte '69; 2/24  
 James F. McMillan '69; 1/24  
 Charles Susmilch '69; 3/24  
 Morris Wiegand '69; 4/24  
 Peter Yuska '69; 11/23

### 1970s

Lynn (Black) Akins '70; 4/24  
 Judith (Foss) Bieze '70; 3/24  
 Charles Bohmer '70; 2/24  
 Carla (Belsey) Doty '70; 2/24  
 William S. Myers '70; 3/24  
 Timothy Nation '70; 1/24  
 Jaqueline (Saban) Rundall '70; 9/23  
 Frank Schaefer '70; 12/23  
 Charles Schindler '70; 12/23  
 Terry Sedik '70; 12/23  
 Ronald E. Williams '70; 3/24  
 William Brittain '71; 1/24  
 Luke Glowiak, M.S. '71; 3/24  
 Dennis Hendrix '71; 2/24  
 James Holt '71; 3/24  
 John McClarey, M.S. '71; 1/24  
 Laurel McKay '71; 1/24  
 Daniel Vicini '71; 5/24  
 Russell Beeler '72; 1/24  
 Barbara Brock '72; 2/24  
 Larry Field '72; 2/24

Anne D. Fox '72; 2/24  
 William Monken '72; 9/23  
 Beverley Jean Moore, M.S. '72; 4/24  
 Barbara (Dorsey) Sanner '72; 3/24  
 Roger Staffeldt '72; 12/23  
 Nancy (Cording) Stephens '72; 2/24  
 Paul Westfall '72; 1/24  
 William Bennett '73; 1/24  
 Bill Bernardoni '73; 3/24  
 Earl Buenting '73; 1/24  
 Joseph Comincioli, M.A. '73; 1/24  
 John Denison '73; 5/24  
 Cary Franks '73; 12/23  
 Diane (Holtmann) Fuehne '73; 3/24  
 Catherine (Miller) Hamilton '73; 2/24  
 David Kerr '73; 3/24  
 Betty Kinser '73, M.S. '75; 1/24  
 Warren Laflamme '73; 3/24  
 Mary Maxwell '73; 4/24  
 Jerry Rifner, M.S. '73; 1/24  
 Richard V. Peterson '73, M.S. '78; 4/24  
 Judith (Gibson) Stone, M.A. '73; 1/24  
 James Sylvester '73 '80; 5/24  
 Claremarie Verheyen, M.A. '73; 4/24  
 Victoria (Dubovi) Willet '73; 1/24  
 Guy Williams '73; 3/24  
 Eric Bates '74; 4/24  
 William Durst, M.S. '74; 2/24  
 Susan (Canty) Hall '74, M.S. '77; 3/24  
 Michael Hartnett, M.S. '74; 9/22  
 Billie (Yeager) Koch '74; 5/24  
 Mary (Ryan) Shock '74, M.S. '03; 2/24  
 Alan Syslo, M.S. '74; 1/24  
 John Toomb, M.S. '74; 2/24  
 George Wheelwright '74; 5/24  
 George Cermak '75; 5/24  
 Robert Johnson '75; 4/24  
 Norman Juers '75; 3/24  
 David Little, M.S. '75; 4/24  
 Susan (Edlund) Olson '75; 3/24  
 Ellis Ressler '75, M.S. '77; 12/23  
 Susan Sanstrom-King '75, M.S. '84; 7/22  
 Gary Stone '75; 5/24  
 Elaine Taylor, M.A. '75; 4/24  
 Sherrilyn Tipsord, M.S. '75; 2/24  
 Roger Tramel, M.S. '75; 12/23  
 Naomi (Inman) Walton, M.S. '75; 4/24  
 Sidney Dove '76; 12/23  
 James Folkerts '76; 1/24  
 John Fullerton '76; 3/24  
 Lynn Larsen '76, M.S. '81; 4/24

Deborah (Roels) Marlier '76; 2/24  
 Andrew Monteleone '76; 4/23  
 David L. Ridenour, M.S. '76; 3/24  
 Randall Jackson '77; 2/24  
 Charles Kerbs '77; 2/24  
 Sandra D. Lindberg '77, M.A. '78; 5/24  
 Paula (Marten) Orr '77; 5/24  
 Jeffrey T. Payne '77; 2/24  
 Robert Westbrook '77; 4/24  
 Diane Ahola '78; 2/24  
 William G. Douglas '78; 2/24  
 Marguerite (Mezydlo) Hedges '78; 5/23  
 Timothy Hinsdale '78; 10/23  
 Michael Lavin '78, M.S. '82; 3/24  
 William Schneider '78; 4/24  
 Stephen Edward Cerven '79, M.S. '80; 1/24  
 Steven Defenbaugh '79; 1/24  
 Christian Jaudes '79, M.M. '80; 2/24  
 Donna Kay Martin '79; 2/24  
 Monica (Overmier) Mathiasen '79; 2/24

Linda (Scott) Mushrush '79; 2/24  
 Richard Satchwell '79; 4/24  
 Adele Young '79; 2/24

## 1980s

Steven Austin '80; 5/24  
 William Bolen '80; 1/24  
 Peter Lira '80; 3/24  
 Kenneth Vallrugo '80; 3/24  
 Frank Van De Zande '80; 1/24  
 Mary (Carroll) Chrzanowski '81, M.S. '83; 12/23  
 Michael D. Clark '81; 8/23  
 Craig W. Culp '81; 12/23  
 Linda (Stephan) Karch '81; 3/22  
 Anita (Catalanello) Leonard '81; 2/24  
 Patricia McWherter, M.S. '81; 4/24  
 David Naborowski '81; 12/23  
 Michael Rodgers '81; 3/24  
 Michelle (Straka) Rowland '81; 1/24  
 Jolana (Reynolds) Rozanski '81; 1/24



## Banded together

Illinois State University's Alumni Band gathered for a weekend of events last October, which included a performance during a Redbird football game alongside the Big Red Marching Machine. This year's gathering and performance are scheduled for November 1-2. Join the Alumni Band Facebook group at [Facebook.com/groups/isualumniband](https://www.facebook.com/groups/isualumniband) for details.

David A. Waibel '81; 4/24  
 Carol Anne Ford '82; 3/24  
 Ernestine Lawler, M.S. '82; 3/24  
 Arthur Savage, MBA '82; 3/22  
 John A. Grimes '83; 11/23  
 Brian Hyzy '83; 12/22  
 William Kane '83; 1/24  
 Paul Legge '83; 2/24  
 Rebecca (Paddock) Lipp '83; 4/24  
 John P. Malone '83; 3/24  
 Glenn Nelson, M.S. '83; 1/24  
 Donna Vaughan '83; 3/24  
 James Zelasko '83; 1/24  
 Gail Gammel '84; 7/23  
 Marian (Wallis) Lien, M.S. '84; 3/24  
 Anita (Tokheim) Norem '84; 2/24  
 Linda (Walker) Richardson '84; 5/24  
 Timothy Gee '85; 5/24  
 Bradley Hillman '85, M.S. '91; 3/24  
 William A. Porter '85; 4/24  
 Daniel Strick '85; 1/24  
 Katherine N. Sullivan, M.F.A. '85; 3/24  
 Judith Augspurger '86; 5/24  
 Timothy Bernhardt '86; 2/24  
 Patrick N. Evans '86; 1/24  
 Timothy Filliman '86; 3/24  
 Jon Liston '86; 1/24  
 Susan (Gosda) Napolitano '86; 1/24  
 Robert Chancellor '87; 2/24  
 Kenneth Hansen '87; 2/24  
 C. Chris Jensen '87; 4/24  
 Tammy Jo Poole '87; 3/24  
 Shan (Wilde) Vogt '87; 11/22  
 Soumitra Ghoshroy, M.S. '88; 2/24



### What time is it?

Game time! Illinois State alumni cheered on the Chicago Bulls at an Alumni Association event at the United Center in March.

Warren Robertson '88; 1/24  
 Tad Williams '88; 12/23  
 Robert Wicks '89; 3/24

### 1990s

John Burreight '90; 2/24  
 Patricia Dvorak '90; 12/23  
 Jeffrey J. Moore '90; 1/24  
 David Ferrenburg, M.S. '91; 3/24  
 Jay Hamilton '91; 5/24  
 Cynthia K. Wells '91; 2/24  
 Mary Lou Miller '92; 4/24  
 Erin (Brock) Fleming '93; 5/24  
 Dawn (Bergesib) Hall '93; 1/24  
 Michael Bernhagen Jr. '94; 1/24  
 Terri McDaniel '94; 2/24  
 Kelli Rasmussen '94; 2/24  
 Dixie Brandenburg '95; 12/23  
 Dawn (Carls) Eckhoff '95; 3/24  
 Erik K. Anderson '96; 12/23  
 Barry Royster '96; 4/24

Eric Michel '97; 2/24  
 Daniel Herzing '99; 5/24  
 Rosanne (Reid) Wait '99; 1/24

### 2000s

Ryan Mott '03; 2/24  
 Christina (Sherman) Wilcox '03; 5/24  
 Mark Frederiksen '04; 1/24  
 William B. Johnson '06; 12/23  
 Stacey Stofko '09; 4/24

### 2010s

Amelia King '10; 7/22  
 Daniel C. Mathews '11, M.S. '13; 3/24  
 Paul Trapp, M.F.A. '11; 1/24  
 Doris Matosic, M.S. '12; 2/22  
 Karen Blanchard '13; 5/24  
 Bethany N. Jackson '15; 4/24  
 Evan A. Garrett '17; 1/24  
 Brady Mckeown '17; 4/24

### We want to hear from you!

There are three ways to submit your information.

- Go online to [Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/ClassNotes](http://Alumni.IllinoisState.edu/ClassNotes).

- Email your news to [mjwing@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:mjwing@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](mailto:alumni@IllinoisState.edu).

Notes extending beyond the Class of 1989 can be found online at

**[IllinoisState.edu/Magazine](http://IllinoisState.edu/Magazine)**.



# Thanks *to* You

**B**iology major Danielle Edwards is using wide-ranging skills to make an impact on the health of the Bloomington-Normal community even before she enrolls in medical school.

Edwards can often be found at the Community Health Care Clinic, a free clinic in Normal for people who are underinsured, where she works as a translator for Spanish-speaking patients. The opportunity allows Edwards to practice her Spanish and use her medical knowledge to educate patients about their ailments and the recommended treatments.

Edwards also volunteers and serves on the board of the School Street Food Pantry, which provides free food and personal care items to currently enrolled college and trade school students in Bloomington-Normal.

The experiences have been instrumental to Edwards' education and future career in the medical field, but she wouldn't be able to pursue them without scholarship support. Edwards received the Judge Russell DeBow Scholarship, named in honor of the late Judge Russell DeBow '35. The support lessened Edwards' financial challenges and associated stress and

allowed her to make an impact in the community.

"If I didn't have scholarship support, I'd have to spend less time getting involved in the campus community, which would mean spending less time volunteering," she said.

Edwards has her sights set on medical school, and after that, she wants to make the medical field more accessible and less threatening for those in the Black community.

"I am excited to pursue a career in medicine to alleviate the unease between Black and brown individuals and doctors, while also increasing their access to medicine," said Edwards. "Because of historic cases, such as Henrietta Lack and the Tuskegee Experiment, medical distrust among the Black community has grown.

"My hope is that by serving as a Black doctor, I can relate to my Black patients and their fears, while creating a safe space to help manage their illnesses as a team."

Scholarship support makes it possible for students like Edwards to go above and beyond during their college careers. To learn more about creating a scholarship or to give to a current scholarship fund, visit [Giving.IllinoisState.edu](https://giving.illinoisstate.edu).



**ILLINOIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Illinois' first public university*

**Advancement Operations**  
Campus Box 8000  
Normal, IL 61790-8000



### **Total eclipse of the Quad**

Redbirds flocked to the Quad for campus viewing of a solar eclipse on April 8. Thousands of pairs of eclipse glasses were available to the campus community, and educational experiences were offered by campus departments and registered student organizations.