THE FOOD ISSUE

• What students eat today
• Waging war on student hunger
• The Market Basket effect
• The Lowell food scene
• Alumni foodies
“If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.” —Anne Bradstreet

Students enjoy the season’s first blast of warm weather on the lawn behind Allen House, overlooking the Merrimack River.
A message from

Chancellor Jacqueline F. Moloney ’75, ’92

In 1970, students here revolted over the campus meal plan. They demonstrated their frustration over the lack of choices and variety with a planned food fight in the Smith Hall dining hall. Unfortunately, the main course that evening was beef stew.

I have to assume the students of the ‘70s (I am one!) would be astonished by the amount of food choices today’s students have. Our dining halls, which are on track to serve 2 million meals this year, feature everything from traditional pizza and burgers to gluten-free and vegan fare. Read more on Page 14.

The increasing focus on food here at UMass Lowell mirrors what’s happening across the country. The U.S. food and beverage industry is growing at a steady pace even as the population growth rate has slowed. Our alumni and faculty are right in the middle of today’s food culture—whether they’re researching food safety or its social impact, designing restaurants or growing and serving organic produce. Our students, meanwhile, are doing much more than eating in our newly renovated dining halls. In particular, I’m very proud of the work they’ve done to fight food insecurity among college students (Page 28).

But that’s just an appetizer! This edition of UML Magazine is packed with stories about how the UML community is impacting the food we all eat. Please turn the page and enjoy our spring Food Issue—maybe while nibbling on a delicious snack.

Bon appétit!

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Moloney ’75, ’92

ON THE COVER

Spaghetti and Meatballs

Serves 4

Ingredients

Pesto:

1 cup pitted nuts
1 large bunch basil, leaves only washed
2 tsp parmesan, grated
10 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp lemon juice
salt
freshly ground black pepper
Sauce:

2 tbsp olive oil
garlic, finely chopped
3 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cup parmesan (or other tomatoes)
1/4 cup white wine
Meatballs:

1 tsp dry basil
1 tsp dry oregano

Instructions

1. For the pesto: Place the pine nuts in a dry frying pan set over medium heat. Toast until golden and aromatic before tipping half of them into a food processor. Reserve the remainder for serving.

2. Add basil, parmesan and half of the olive oil. Pulse until the mixture is broken down and coarse.

3. Blend on high, pouring in the remaining olive oil, until the pesto is smooth. Season with salt and pepper, as needed.

4. For the sauce: Preheat the oven to 375.

5. Heat the olive oil in an ovenproof frying pan set over medium heat. Toast until golden and aromatic before tipping the remainder of the nuts into a food processor. Reserve for serving.

6. For the meatballs: While sauce cooks, combine beef with egg, garlic, parmesan and half of the basil. Pulse until the mixture is broken down and coarse.

7. Mix in the cherry tomatoes, passata, a splash of water, a handful of purple mint leaves and some lemon juice. Cover and chill until needed.

8. For the sauce: Simmer the pan to 22-25 minutes until the sauce is thickened and the tomatoes have collapsed.

9. For the meatballs: While sauce cooks, combine beef with the ingredients in the blender, 1 tsp salt and 1 tsp dry herbs. Pulse until the mixture is broken down and coarse.

10. Form into an ovenproof pan set over medium heat and add the sauce. Add the garlic and sauce for 20-30 seconds until just starting to color.

11. Cook in the cherry tomatoes, passata, a splash of water, a pinch of sage and some salt and pepper to taste. Bring to the simmer before transferring the pan to the oven.

12. Roast for 20-25 minutes until the sauce is thickened and the cherry tomatoes have collapsed.

13. For the meatballs: Sauté meatballs in the sauce and serve with a sprinkle of parmesan.

14. Serve with spaghetti and meatballs. Arrange on a serving tray and bake alongside the sauce for 20 minutes, turning once halfway through cooking, until golden brown.

15. Remove the sauce and meatballs from the oven when ready. Cover meatballs witholucent red. Add basil. Serve with spaghetti, pasta and a garnish of mint leaves before serving.
WOMEN IN POWER.

And, more specifically, women leaders. UMass Lowell was named No. 4 among the 2017 Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts in a ranking by The Commonwealth Institute and The Boston Globe Magazine. UML beat Harvard U, Bentley U—even Fidelity Investments—based on a series of criteria that included revenue, diversity and innovation.

THE WYCLEF JEAN JAM.

Singer-rapper Wyclef Jean recently turned to his tour manager and asked, “Hey Rachel, why don’t we go to your school?” Jean had a March show booked in Boston and knew Rachel Driscoll, who graduated from UMass Lowell in May with a bachelor’s degree in music business, had gone to school in the area. A week later, there was the former Fugee and three-time Grammy winner sitting in Durgin Hall listening with rapt attention to songs by three groups of student music majors. After offering an hour’s worth of advice, Jean grabbed his guitar, plucked a lead guitarist, bassist and drummer from the students in the crowd, and led them in a jam.

Jean showered students with praise, but saved some for his tour manager: “I’ve got to say, if that’s what UMass Lowell does, provides people like Rachel, then I might have to camp out there for a month.”

CONNOR HELLERBUCK.

It feels good to check (and double-check) the spelling of that name again—and sportswriters across the country know what we mean. The former UML hockey All-American goaltender, now with the Winnipeg Jets, was named to the NHL All-Star Game in January. Only the third alumnus to be selected to play in the game (joining Craig MacTavish and Dwayne Roloson), Hellebuyck has proven himself one of the best goalies in the Western Conference this season. At press time, the Jets were hovering near the top of their division standings.

MOBILE SAUNAS.

Thanks to a New England Foundation for the Arts grant, Asst. Art Prof. Misha Rabinovich is helping bring a mobile sauna to Boston. The goal? Let people at odds find common ground. His project, called Sweat It Out, will move a handmade mobile sauna to Boston’s artist-friendly Fort Point district in fall 2018. The wood-fired sauna was crowd-funded and built by the DS Institute, a think tank/art group that includes adjunct faculty member Calvin Foley and Rabinovich. The pair plans to hire conflict-resolution specialists to help people resolve their issues while taking a sauna.

SEEDS OF HOPE.

Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico just as it was experiencing an agricultural renaissance. Maria wiped out 80 percent of the island’s crops—and UML is doing its part to reverse that. The university launched a seed drive on campus in February in partnership with the Puerto Rican Resilience Fund. The organization is distributing the seeds—which will grow root to beans, cucumbers, squash, radishes, turnips and more—to Puerto Rico’s small scale farms, communities and schools.

CAMPUS LIFE
5 QUESTIONS on The Olympics

Associate professor of physical therapy Alex Lopes was one of a handful of international experts studying the performance of the athletes in PyeongChang on behalf of the International Olympic Committee. This was Lopes’ sixth stint at the Olympic Games; he conducted similar research in 2016 at the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro and served as a physical therapist for Olympians representing his home country of Brazil at four other Games.

WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN PYEONGCHANG?
We are conducting an epidemiological study employing the International Olympic Committee injury and illness surveillance system for multisport events, aiming to describe the pattern of injuries and illnesses sustained during the 2018 Winter Games.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO LEARN?
The most rewarding part of being a collaborator of this amazing research team is the feeling that you are helping athletes to prevent injuries. After many years helping and treating athletes as a physical therapist, I do not have any doubt that the most efficient treatment is prevention. This study will contribute to better planning and provision of athlete health care and, importantly, inform the development of measures to prevent injury and illness. That could include things like improving how venues are constructed or upgrading equipment used in competition.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF DIET IN AVOIDING AND RECOVERING FROM INJURIES?
There is a lack of consensus about this topic. As a physical therapist working with injured athletes, I am looking forward to seeing new research about this essential topic. Recently, a review published by a Scottish researcher in one of the main journals of sport sciences mentioned that there is still a lack of direct evidence on the efficacy of many nutrients, yet direct evidence is sorely lacking. He also suggested that the basis of nutritional strategy for an injured exerciser should be a well-balanced diet based on whole foods from nature that are minimally processed.

HOW WAS THE FOOD IN PYEONGCHANG?
During the Olympics, the organization of the Games provides international and local foods. There is a great variety of food. As I am an Asian food lover, I am very happy to have an opportunity to try new Asian foods almost every day.

BEST MOMENTS FROM THE GAMES?
The opening ceremonies were amazing. It was thrilling to see the two Koreas marching together. In general, it’s an incredible experience to see the best athletes around the world compete, overcome obstacles and experience victory.

Researchers Awarded $1.4M to Address Infrastructure Disrepair

In 2016, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave America’s infrastructures an overall grade of D+, indicating that they urgently need major repairs and improvements to make them safe and enduring. The ASCE estimates that a $2 trillion investment over the next decade is needed for the necessary repairs and upgrades of structures such as bridges, tunnels and dams.

A team of researchers at UMass Lowell hopes to ease that burden. Assoc. Prof. Tzuyang Yu and Prof. Pradeep Kurup of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, along with Prof. Xingwei Wang of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, are collaborating with researchers from Saint-Gobain, a multinational corporation with an R&D center based in Northborough, to develop fabrics integrated with optical fibers and sensors. These “sensing fabrics” can be applied to existing structures to monitor strain or detect cracks in their early stages, thereby minimizing maintenance costs, environmental impacts and disruptions to people’s lives and businesses.

The project is supported by an $853,000 grant from the Advanced Functional Fabrics of America and a $500,000 grant through the Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative.—EA

UMASS LOWELL MAGAZINE
Sticking with It

The biggest comeback story of the season for the women’s lacrosse team took place before its season even began. In September, senior Lambert returned to the practice field with the River Hawks 13 months after losing her left leg in a moped accident on Martha’s Vineyard. The junior attack, who opened their season on Feb. 21 at home against Boston University, learned at press time that Lambert was cleared to play.

As a freshman in 2016, Lambert led the River Hawks in scoring, netting 15 goals and six assists and earning a spot on the America East All-Rookie Team. But that summer, while vacationing with teammate Kelly Moran, Lambert’s life changed forever. The friends rented a moped and, with Lambert driving, lost control and hit an oncoming dump truck. Lambert lost part of her left leg below the knee at the scene, and Moran also sustained serious leg injuries. Thanks to the heroic actions of two passers-by, they were both stabilized and taken to the hospital.

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Go, Online!
According to new rankings released by U.S. News & World Report, UMass Lowell’s online graduate programs in education, information technology and criminal justice are ranked in the top 15 in the nation and sit No. 1 among all public institutions in New England. Its bachelor’s degrees are ranked No. 3 in New England and No. 22 in the U.S., up more than 30 spots over last year.

Global entrepreneurship program garners national recognition
What started as a pilot program in 2014 with nine Manning School of Business students visiting India over winter break to learn about entrepreneurship and innovation has grown into a nationally recognized model of international education.

The Institute of International Education named the university’s Global Entrepreneurship Exchange program, with the winner of a 2018 IIE Andrew Heiskell Award for Innovation in International Education.

Led by Senior Lecturer Ashwin Mehta, the program has brought nearly 700 students from 12 countries together to experience multidisciplinary and multicultural immersion in entrepreneurship, complete with project-based activities and field trips to businesses in the region.

UMass Lowell students earn three credits as they study abroad for two weeks in India (winter or summer) or China (summer). They can also take part in a three-credit summer course on campus with students visiting from India, China, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Pakistan, Vietnam, Guyana, Haiti and Nigeria. The program is open to both undergraduate and graduate students and has included students majoring not only in business, but also engineering, science and nursing.

Global Entrepreneurship Program Garners National Recognition

Virtual child to aid in autism treatment training
Nearly one in 50 children in the United States is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, usually before age 3, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But the number of people trained to help them isn’t keeping pace with the demand.

Richard Serra, an associate professor of psychology, is developing a solution to the problem—a “virtual child,” an immersive, interactive software that helps professionals learn key treatment techniques.

Serra won a $250,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to address the acute need for training. Early treatment is critical in addressing intellectual delays and disabilities, as well as in heading off behavioral problems.

Serra is collaborating with fellow psychologist and Associate Prof. Charles Hamadt of UMass Medical School to develop the training tool. The software will feature a virtual child, who will interact with people who are training in behavior intervention techniques.

Prof. Named to National Academy of Inventors

Prof. Olver C. Ibe of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering has been named a fellow of the National Academy of Inventors for having “demonstrated a prolific spirit of innovation in creating or facilitating outstanding inventions that have made a tangible impact on quality of life, economic development and welfare of society.”

Ibe’s research has led to improvements in cellular phone networks, particularly in making roaming calls between local and cellular carriers possible and managing network resources more efficiently. He currently holds 10 patents, all of which have been licensed.
In a recent global survey, San Sebastián, Spain, was crowned the best food city in the world. A group of the best honors students in the world is lucky enough to experience it for three weeks every year, as part of a faculty-led study abroad course on cultural immersion. The most recent trip featured cooking lessons with a popular chef in the city and “pintxos-crawls,” in which students tasted a variety of the tapas-like snacks usually served on toothpicks or skewers. They sampled the “world’s best tortilla” (according to The New York Times) at Bar Nestor. They ate plenty of gelato, and drank their share of café cortados. “We ate our way through San Sebastián,” says Visiting Prof. Julian Zabalbeascoa, adding that the course also examined other areas of the country’s history, including its politics, literature and art. “If only every class could be like this, and we had four stomachs.”

“...and know it’ll never happen again in the same fashion is heartbreaking. But like I told Aislinn after she had finished her last bite of the world’s best tortilla, ‘Don’t be sad it’s over, be glad that it happened.’” — Nursing student Corrina Quaglietta
The greenhouse vegetables will be growing in compost generated, in part, from the university’s dining facilities.

One of the first crops planted at the university’s new Urban Agriculture Greenhouse will never be eaten.

To decompact and enrich the soil surrounding the new greenhouse on East Campus—an area that was once used as a parking lot—the greenhouse team planted dahlia and radishes last summer. As the deep-growing radishes died in the ground this winter, they provided nutrients to the soil while serving as a natural means of aeration. In the spring, the ground will be ready for planting.

This literal groundbreaking technique is just one small example of the innovative agriculture approaches already being used at the greenhouse site, where university researchers and students are working with community members to find new and sustainable ways to grow organic produce in an urban setting—in this case, on an acre of land between Donahue Hall and the Merrimack River.

“We’ll be growing a lot of produce at the site in the coming years, but from our perspective, the long-term value is going to be solving issues that are pertinent to sustainable agriculture,” says Director of Sustainability Rui M. O’Mahony, who worked to secure $145,000 in grants from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources to fund the greenhouse project.

The Office of Sustainability is managing the site in a unique partnership with Mill City Grows, a Lowell-based urban farming nonprofit co-founded by alumna Lydia Sisson ’12 (see Page 37).

“We’ve never had a greenhouse like this, so we’re thrilled to be able to grow year-round,” says Sisson, who earned her master’s degree in economic and social development at the university. “It’s a huge benefit for us to be able to start our growing seasons early and extend our season.”

Mill City Grows volunteers will tend to rows and rows of vegetables like spinach, kale, Brussels sprouts, tomatoes and snap peas inside the 30-foot-by-60-foot polycarbonate structure, as well as the crops that will be planted in the outdoor garden area beginning this summer.

Twenty percent of the produce will be donated to nonprofit organizations in the city—including the student-run Navigators Food Pantry (see Page 24). Mill City Grows, which runs two other urban farms and several community gardens in Lowell, will sell the remainder of the produce back to the community. Its mission is to foster “food justice in a city where the majority of neighborhoods are classified as low-income with low food access by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.”

“If you’re trying to solve urban food issues, what better place to go than the university that’s embedded in the same community?” says O’Mahony, who adds that UML benefits from the symbiotic relationship. “You can’t put a dollar value on what Mill City Grows brings to the table. They’re in elementary schools; they provide food education to immigrant families. Having that tie-in with them is important.”

In addition to being a full-scale agricultural production site, the greenhouse serves as a hands-on living laboratory for sustainability and nutrition studies. Faculty and students from the university’s energy engineering program, led by Prof. Christopher Nielczewicz and Asst. Prof. Juan Pablo Trelles, are already conducting research at the greenhouse, focusing on the food/water/energy nexus. And nutritional science students who previously visited a Mill City Grows farm in Dracut can now learn about vegetables right in their own backyard.

“Our plant needs this greenhouse,” said Chancellor Jacquie Moloney during the November ribbon-cutting ceremony. “It needs us to think about the future and how we change the way that we feed ourselves and our communities.”

The greenhouse is powered completely off-grid, with a concentration on passive solar energy from direct sunlight. Solar panels were installed on power heating mats and germination boxes over the winter. And to maximize water efficiency, rooftop rainfall is collected in a 1,300-gallon subterranean tank and used to irrigate the crops. Plans also call for a rain garden to be planted on the north side of the greenhouse to filter any runoff before it reaches the Merrimack River.

“We’ve got to figure out how energy load requirements relate to produce that will be grown in there,” O’Mahony says. “That means they will study which crops can grow most efficiently in colder weather (like potatoes and carrots), thereby reducing energy consumption.

The soil inside the greenhouse is also sustainable: It comes from compost generated from the university’s award-winning food waste diversion program. So it’s possible that the greenhouse vegetables will be growing in compost generated, in part, from the university’s dining facilities.

As part of the greenhouse project, the community garden previously located at the site was moved to a university-owned parcel of land on Dane Street, near University Crossing. The new community garden, also run in partnership with Mill City Grows, features a half-dozen raised beds available to students, faculty and staff, as well as members of the Aro neighborhood.

“We’re very excited to practice what we’re preaching here,” O’Mahony says, “and establish our campus as innovation space for urban sustainability issues.”
The white salad bowl hangs frozen in midair, orbited by bits of iceberg lettuce, a fork and a stray slice of bread. Elsewhere in the photo, two plastic cups go tumbling, their contents spewing like paint toward a Jackson Pollock canvas.

The image, under the headline “Residents Revolt Over Meal Plan,” dominates the cover of the Nov. 2, 1970 issue of The Text, the student newspaper of the Lowell Technological Institute. The front-page editorial below the photo declares that student residents were fed up with the limited choices of the school’s mandatory meal plan, so they staged a demonstration in the Smith Hall cafeteria to get the administration’s attention.

“Their tempers overcame their good senses and the beef stew started flying.”

What would the grinning student in the photo, the one with the muttonchop sideburns, think of the university’s dining options today? Meal plans are still mandatory for students living in residence halls, but most would agree that the choices—not to mention the quality of the food and the dining facilities themselves—have never been better.

“We are always thinking about the health of our students as well as their educational experience, and there’s nothing more important to students’ health than the diet that they maintain,” says Chancellor Jacquie Moloney, who leads not only a major public research institution, but also one of the busiest eateries in the state. University Dining is projected to serve a record 2 million meals in 2018 (about 50,000 each week), up from 1.7 million in 2015. Most of those meals are served to the university’s 5,000 residential students, but plenty of commuter students, faculty and staff also take advantage of the value and convenience of campus dining.

Today’s students are greeted with a daily smorgasbord of all-you-care-to-eat breakfast, lunch and dinner at the three main “Dining Commons”—Fox Hall on East Campus, the McGauvran Center on South and the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center downtown. Hungry students can fill their plates with traditional favorites like pizza, pasta and burgers or go for something healthier like a vegan spinach salad or Moroccan vegetable stew. Students can also nosh at a dozen retail locations across campus. Using their meal plan’s “River Hawk Dollars” (or cash), they can grab breakfast at Einstein Bros. Bagels, lunch at Subway or Sal’s Pizza and an afternoon latte at Starbucks.

Students today have more dining choices than ever. But they also want health and sustainability on the menu.

Executive Sous Chef Mike Petit gives students in the Food and Nutrition Management course a tour of the South Campus Dining Commons.
### IS YOUR PLATE INSTA-WORTHY?

Moloney has a unique perspective on the University Dining program. As a University of Lowell undergrad in the mid-’70s, she worked part-time in the now-demolished South Campus dining facility. Living in an off-campus apartment at the time, Moloney appreciated the employee discount she received for flipping burgers behind the grill. “It was great. We could grab a grilled cheese sandwich or hamburger, or maybe some American chop suey,” Moloney recalls before pausing to reflect on those dietary choices. “Students today are much more health-conscious, certainly more than we were back then.” Indeed, the eating habits and dietary restrictions of today’s students have been major drivers in the evolution of the campus dining scene.

“The consumer is so much more informed now,” says Rachel DiGregorio, marketing manager for University Dining. She says students absorb the healthy eating messages they see on Food Network—and by following celebrities and athletes on social media who appear healthy and happy. “We like to say, ‘Is your plate Instagram-worthy?’” says University Dining’s social media team, whose focus is on social media promoting special meals and events like free cooking classes for students. To help students make smart dining choices, Aramark posts color-coded icons at food stations to denote whether something is low-fat, low-calorie or whole grain as part of its “Healthy for Life” program. Executive Chef Frank Hurley and Executive Sous Chef Mike Petit also use the program as a guideline to reduce unhealthy things like trans fats and sodium when creating their menus.

The university’s move to Division I athletics has also influenced what’s served in the dining halls. University Dining provides nutritious meals and snacks to help student-athletes fuel up for practices and games and to recover afterward. “There are a lot of protein sources, like chicken, fish, along with veggies and dressing choices on the salad bar,” says Bruce Perry, district manager for University Dining. Many of those items, like mortar Greek yogurt, almond milk, granola, barley and quinoa, have been integrated into the everyday dining hall menus.

International dishes are also growing in popularity. “Couscousals are No. 1 in the dining hall,” says DiGregorio, who adds that burritos and grain bowls are also top choices. This year, University Dining unveiled “Passport to Flavor,” a four-week menu that showcases locally grown and locally sourced ingredients. It also uses FarmLogix, a technology platform that connects local farmers to large institutional kitchens, to find as many locally grown fruits and vegetables as possible. And someday, produce grown in the university’s new Urban Agriculture Greenhouse will likely be served in the University Dining Commons across the street. “Everyone likes to know where their food is coming from, and we always try to promote what’s local,” DiGregorio says.

On the flipside, the university’s food waste reduction efforts have been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a “3 Star Certified Green Restaurants” by the Green Restaurant Association, a national nonprofit that provides benchmarking for restaurants to become environmentally responsible. O’Malley expects the University Marketplace and Suites dining facility to also be certified when they’re complete.

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### SUSTAINABLE SUSTENANCE

One other concept that wasn’t considered much in the university’s cafeteria 15 years ago is sustainability. Today, however, it’s baked into every aspect of the dining halls, from how the food is grown to how it’s prepared and how it’s disposed of.

Twice a year, University Dining features a “Farm to Table” menu that showcases locally grown and locally sourced ingredients. It also uses FarmLogix, a technology platform that connects local farmers to large institutional kitchens, to find as many locally grown fruits and vegetables as possible. And someday, produce grown in the university’s new Urban Agriculture Greenhouse will likely be served in the University Dining Commons across the street. “Everyone likes to know where their food is coming from, and we always try to promote what’s local,” DiGregorio says.

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Of course, no matter how fresh and tasty the food is or how nice the decor, people will always have an opinion about the meal for which they’re paying. Moloney welcomes the feedback she gets on the dining halls from students at her twice-annual Chancellor Open Forums, as well as from her monthly meetings with Student Government Association leaders. But, as Siegel notes, “Even if you want to dis a restaurant, that’s not what you really like and you were able to order anything off the fall menu, a year ago, you’d be lied of going there.” That’s why our job is now,” Perry says, “to keep up with the trends and to keep things fresh.”

Thankfully, they don’t have to worry about flying beef stews anymore.

| MILLIONS OF WHEELS | University Dining provides nearly 50,000 meals each week across campus, as well as many more through catering and Tangerine events. |
| TOTAL MEALS SERVED | 2015: 1.7 million |
| 2016: 1.8 million |
| 2017: 1.9 million |
| 2018: 2 million* |

*Suspended

| MILLIONS OF MEALS | University Dining, says more and more students are coming to campus each year with food allergies or religious restrictions like halal diets. Aramark recently hired a registered nutritionist who can meet with students and parents during orientation to develop menus that will work for them during the academic year. The nutritionist is also available to students looking to lose weight or adjust their diet to increase their energy. |
| SUSTAINABLE SUSTENANCE | One other concept that wasn’t considered much in the university’s cafeteria 15 years ago is sustainability. Today, however, it’s baked into every aspect of the dining halls, from how the food is grown to how it’s prepared and how it’s disposed of. |
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| Finding 30 years ago, I would say not even students from 15 years ago would recognize the dining experience here today.” | "Finding 30 years ago, I would say not even students from 15 years ago would recognize the dining experience here today.” |
THE WORLD ON YOUR PLATE

LOWELL’S POPULATION is a rich ethnic stew—and so are its eateries. In the mill city, bright and fragrant lemon grass lives alongside rich, potato-packed pierogis, and the powerful spices of Indian curries simmer a few blocks from Middle Eastern falafel. With each new ethnic group calling Lowell home, the palette broadens. Here is just a small sample of Lowell’s cross-cultural culinary delights.

PHOTOS: TORY WESNOWSKE
1) SIZZLING KITCHEN, MERRIMACK STREET
Asian fusion. Try this: Bibimbap (sauteed vegetables with meat or shrimp served over a bed of rice baked in a stone bowl).

2) VIET-THAI, MERRIMACK STREET
Vietnamese and Thai. Try this: Pho beef noodle soup, served with bean sprouts, basil and lime.

3) UDUPI BHAVAN, MIDDLESEX STREET
Indian. Try this: Paav bhaji (spiced, mashed vegetables mixed with potato, onion and garlic).

4) GRILLS IN THE CITY, MERRIMACK STREET
French. Try this: Dubois Special lounge cheeseburger with caramelized onions, roasted red peppers and spinach.

5) EMPANADA DADA, TRAVELING: CUBAN FOOD TRUCK
Try this: Guava and creamcheese empanadas.

6) EL POTRO MEXICAN BAR & GRILL, MERRIMACK STREET
Mexican and Central American. Try this: Carne asada burrito wrapped in corn tortilla and served with rice and beans.

7) THE OLYMPIA RESTAURANT, MARKET STREET
Greek. Try this: Grape leaves stuffed with rice, meat and spices served with lemon sauce.

8) EGG ROLL CAFÉ, UNIVERSITY AVENUE
Chinese, Korean and Japanese. Try this: Crab Rangoon and steak-and-cheese egg rolls.

9) BLUE TALEH, KEARNEY SQUARE
Thai and Japanese. Try this: Volcano Maki sushi (spicy tuna, tempura crumb, spicy mayo, topped with tobiko, crabstick, blackened scallops,lightluy torched).

10) OUR WORLD
The River Hawk New Venture Fund is backing UML-affiliated startups like Horsepower Technologies, with an eye on long-term payoffs for the university.
A peek into some of the most interesting faculty and staff offices on campus

> **WHO:** The man who puts the food on students’ plates, Frank Hurley, executive chef for University Dining Services. He’s a 1994 graduate of Johnson & Wales University’s Culinary Arts program. A stint as executive chef at New York University convinced him higher education would be his calling, and he worked at John Carroll University and Cleveland State University before coming to UML in 2014.

> **WHERE:** He formally hangs his toque in an office at the Inn & Conference Center, but he’s there by 6 a.m. to organize, sift through email and confer with team leaders from the university’s three dining halls. Then, well before lunch, he’s off. It might be to the bowels of McGauvran’s storage and prep areas, or to wow the Tuesday lunch crowd at Southwick’s food court with fresh dishes from around the globe.

> **WHY:** Wherever he is, he seems to know everyone’s name. Hurley, 42, says his job is only about 20 percent cooking; rather, his main work is to “accommodate every single customer that we encounter,” be they vegan, gluten-intolerant or adherent to religious restrictions.

> **HOW MANY:** One recent Thursday, he oversaw a campuswide operation of nearly 500 employees. They served 6,553 meals in the dining halls. Fox Hall is the largest, with 4,260 meals served.

> **THE BEST-SELLING FOOD ON CAMPUS?** “Chicken parmes, hands-down. The students love it.”

> **FRUIT OF HER LABOR**

Lecturer Regina Milan, UML’s graphic design program coordinator, started painting natural science and botanical subjects like this pineapple in college. “Now, I tend to paint what I grow or find,” she says. “I am part of an organic community garden, and this is a natural resource for some of my paintings. There isn’t much in nature that I don’t find magical enough to paint.” Milan has exhibited and won awards for her work all over the world. Read about other faculty work related to food on Page 32.
You may remember the story. It was nightly news for weeks four years ago, on TV screens across the region: the customers, vendors and associates of the DeMoulas Market Basket chain—the employment destination over the years for countless hundreds of UML graduates—rising up, thousands strong, in defiance of a corporate takeover. For 64 days, the protests dragged on: customers waving signs, vendors boycotting, associates resigning in droves, some after decades of service—all to protect the culture of a company.

And they won, Arthur T. Demoulas, son of T.A. Demoulas and grandson of the Greek immigrant couple who founded the first store in Lowell’s Acre neighborhood 100 years ago last year, beloved by nearly everyone in the company, remained at his post as president. And the company survived. David had saved Golfeh. The “99 percent” had exacted their revenge. It was the feel-good story of the year.

Still, there were many who predicted a gloomy future. To reach a majority holding of the company’s stock—the only condition that had allowed him to stay—Arthur T. took on more than $1.5 billion in debt. Many said the load would be too great, that the company would have to abandon its notoriously low price structure to service the debt, cut back on its employee profit-sharing or even close some stores.

The opposite has happened. In 2015, the first full year following the protests, DeMoulas took in more than $4.6 billion in revenues—at the time, the most in company history—and opened five new stores. And the pace of growth has continued since. The chain had 70 stores that summer of the walkouts; it has 79 today.

The secret to the company’s ongoing success is customers’ fierce loyalty, says David McLean ’82, Market Basket’s operations manager.

“The customers were as involved [in the walkout] as the associ- ates were,” says McLean, who has been with the company for 42 years and was one of those who resigned their jobs in protest. “It was their company as much as ours. That’s the real story of that summer.”

It is not a simple story. But if there’s a common theme, it revolves around what the longtimers like to call the company’s “front-end” culture.

Most of our people start the same way, as kids, at the front end of the store bagging groceries,” says McLean, a graduate of UML’s Kennelly School of Sciences who began his own Market Basket career at age 15, as a bagger in the Billerica store, and has never worked anywhere else. “You ask any of our top managers where they started, they’ll tell you the same story. ‘Oh, Lowell in ’82 or Billerica in ’76’ or whatever. That’s just the culture here. I’d say a majority of our full-time people started at the front end.”

In the room next to him on this day are two more of the company’s longtimers. Michael King ’80, a Manning School alumnus, is the Market Basket comptroller, with 30 years’ service; next to him is the company’s operations supervisor, Joseph Schmidt, with 31 years—which brings the total tenure of the three to a little more than a century. And that’s without including the fourth among them, Madeline Demoulas, daughter of Arthur T., in her late 20s and working today in the family business, who smiles at the question of years: “Fortunately, most of my life.”

With this kind of longevity, company loyalties are apt to run deep—and often are passed down. “Kids start here as young as 14, because maybe their mother worked for us, or their older brother,” says McLean. “We have whole generations of families working here.”

Brianna Trainor’s family is one of these. A 2015 graduate of UMass Lowell, Trainor began working at Market Basket at 15 (following the example of her father, who is a longtime associate in the company) and has since worked in several departments. She’s currently completing her master’s degree in public health at UML, with a minor in dietetics; her goal is to be a Market Basket dietitian.

The Pieslaks are another Market Basket family. Julie Pieslak, a UML honors student and chemistry major, is now in her sixth year with the company, where she works part time as a cashier. Both of her parents started as baggers at age 16, and both are still with the company.

Many companies offer internships to attract young workers. Market Basket doesn’t, and doesn’t need to. “We cultivate them at the store level,” says McLean. “They begin young, then move up; many stay with us. That’s our internship.”

But they do offer help. As of January, 139 UML students were benefiting from Market Basket scholarships—which, over the past three years, have amounted to $370,000 in aid. According to McLean, himself the beneficiary of a $500 scholarship, the company has hired more graduates from UML than from any other school. “They’re everywhere you look,” he says. “Our IT area is practically dominated by them.”

It isn’t hard to see how Market Basket managed to prevail through its 2014 crisis. Unlike most, the company doesn’t rely on want ads or job fairs to fill its spots, or on online sales to win its customers (it didn’t even have a website before last October). Instead, it invests in its people “at the front end,” builds loyalty through the region and keeps its prices low.

“Having a CEO who is known to track the weddings, new babies and health problems of his workers probably doesn’t hurt either. ‘We’re not an island; we all work here,’” says McLean.

“Our company is about people first, the food business second. That’s the culture we teach. The rest will take care of itself.”
Ashley Cochran ’16 paid her way through UMass Lowell with the help of financial aid, a work-study job and a second job on weekends as a food runner at Lowell Beer Works. All her earnings went to pay for campus housing, a required meal plan and books. Her family, who lived in Haverhill, helped out with an occasional meal or toiletries but were unable to assist her financially. When they moved to Nevada her sophomore year, she lost her safety net.

The public health major moved to Riverview Suites her junior year so she could drop the campus meal plan and save money. Friends who also cooked for themselves fed her when they could, but sometimes she had nothing to eat. Then she heard about the Navigators Food Pantry on campus.

“I used it as often as I could,” she says. “I remember feeling ashamed and embarrassed that I couldn’t manage to feed myself. I knew there were other students in my situation, but I didn’t know them personally. I always felt like I was the only one.”

She wasn’t. Nationally, nearly half of college students report going hungry or not knowing where their next meal will come from, and 20 percent of those attending four-year colleges report very low food security, according to the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. Students of color and first-generation college students like Cochran are especially vulnerable.

The College and University Food Bank Alliance lists 582 member campuses, including Syracuse University, Georgetown University and Cornell University. Closer to home, MIT, Tufts University and Emerson College have started food pantries or other aid programs. At UMass Lowell, a recent survey of undergraduates by the Student Government Association found 16 percent have struggled with food insecurity.

“We have students who have aged out of foster care and students who are single parents. We have students who are dealing with homelessness. We have students who are veterans, students with disabilities and students whose families also face food insecurity,” says Larry Siegel, associate vice chancellor of student affairs and university events. “We’re not alone: Food insecurity is an issue at every college and university, whether public or private. It’s been a problem for the 30 years I’ve been here.”

For most of those 30 years, faculty and staff addressed the problem on a case-by-case basis. As the numbers of needy students grew, administrators looked for a long-term, sustainable solution that wouldn’t drain university resources. The Navigators Food Pantry and Support Our Students (S.O.S.)—came from the students themselves.

When psychology Asst. Prof. Stephanie Block arrived on campus in fall 2011, she knew some of her students might need extra support. Block, who researches child maltreatment, was proved right when students who were aging out of foster care began finding their way to her office—and each other.

Soon they formed a club, The Navigators, with Block and Assoc. Prof. Doreen Arcus as advisors. One of the biggest problems the students shared was hunger. “Many of our students have no financial cushion. They’re one crisis away from having to choose between

Continued
**FEATURE STORY**

**“We have students who have aged out of foster care and students who are single parents. We have students who are dealing with homelessness.”**

“Many of our students have no financial cushion. They’re one crisis away from having to choose between buying food and buying a textbook.”

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buying food and buying a textbook,” Block says. The Navigators held food and clothing drives to help each other and other needy students.

Meanwhile, Block and business lecturer Deborah Finch ’13, ’16 started keeping granola bars and other food in their desks. This loose network soon became the Harbormasters, a formal group of faculty, staff and alumni who worked alongside the Navigators to support students in strained circumstances. They found an ally in Julie Nash, then associate dean of the College of Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and now vice provost for student success, who gave money to Block for groceries. “But it was a piecemeal response to each crisis,” Block says.

Even as donations grew, distribution—getting food to the students who needed it most—remained a problem, says Michelle Wojcik ’15, who served as the Navigators’ president for two years. The Navigators pushed the university administration to provide space for a food pantry. Siegel and Annie Ciaraldi, associate dean of student affairs, championed their cause. Even as donations grew, distribution—getting food to the students who needed it most—remained a problem, says Michelle Wojcik ’15, who served as the Navigators’ president for two years. The Navigators pushed the university administration to provide space for a food pantry. Siegel and Annie Ciaraldi, associate dean of student affairs, championed their cause.

In fall 2014, Ciaraldi offered the Navigators a pair of locked cabinets in the mailroom at Fox Hall. The fixed location was welcome, but it was embarrassingly public. “Students didn’t have the freedom or privacy to take what they needed, because the mailroom workers were there and other students came to the front counter,” Wojcik says.

When University Crossing opened as a hub for student clubs and services, Erika Nadile ’16, a first-generation college student who succeeded Wojcik as Navigators president, asked Ciaraldi for a dedicated space. With help from Facilities Management, shaving donated by Aramark (the campus food vendor) and a $3,000 startup budget from Siegel, Ciaraldi oversaw the transformation of an office near the loading dock, with a private entrance. The new Navigators Food Pantry opened in September 2016.

At the same time, the Navigators were realizing that their volunteers and resources were stretched to the breaking point. Again, Ciaraldi and her team stepped in, building on the Harbormasters team to create a “neighborhood food project”—a group of 50-plus faculty and staff across campus who collect donations of food, toiletries and school supplies every month. Staff in Student Affairs also trained work-study students to help out in the pantry so it could hold regular hours.

Now, about 150 people visit the pantry each month. Although it’s open to any member of the campus community, 90 percent of visitors are students. Most are suffering a temporary setback. “When they’re back on their feet, they want to give back by donating or volunteering,” Nadile says.

Support Our Students—S.O.S.—began with three graduate students in community social psychology. Through the university’s DifferenceMaker program, they teamed up with three undergraduates to develop an online meal donation system. S.O.S. allows students with meal plans to donate a swipe each semester to students who need meal plan scholarships, and it also allows anyone to donate money. Aramark donates 1,000 swipes each year.

S.O.S. won first prize in the 2014 DifferenceMaker competition. “It’s students helping students, which is fantastic—and with dining hall meals, you get fresh food, which we can’t offer through the pantry,” says Nadile, who is pursuing her master’s degree in chemistry. Now S.O.S. and the Navigators work together on food drives and meal swipe donation campaigns.

Through sponsorship by the nonprofit UMass Foundation, the Navigators Food Pantry can now shop at the Merrimack Valley Food Bank—where everything is 16 cents a pound—and also receive free peanut butter, tuna fish and shelf-stable milk through a federal program. UMass Lowell hopes to become a model for how to provide social services to students through cooperative relationships. Ciaraldi, who serves as the single point of contact for homeless and hungry students at UML, chairs a committee of her peers from every Massachusetts public two-year, four-year and university campus that advises the Massachusetts Post-secondary Homeless Student Network.

Meanwhile, ending student hunger has become a cause for the entire campus. Faculty and staff donate to the Navigators Food Pantry through payroll deductions. Residence Life staff organized a silent auction last fall that raised $3,500. Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney turned her annual holiday party into a benefit for the food pantry, collecting 6,000 pounds of food, feminine hygiene products and toiletries. And Athletics and student athletes help out through events like River Hawks Against Hunger and the America East Food Frenzy Challenge.

“The people here are so generous—and they’re willing to do anything for our students,” Ciaraldi says.

Those who once benefited are the first to repay the favor. Cochran spent the summer after graduation researching and writing a resource guide for students that lists food pantries, soup kitchens and other social service programs in Lowell. Even when she was struggling and using the campus food pantry, she sometimes donated meal scholarships through S.O.S. “If I’d had a really good weekend at work with a lot of tips, I’d donate a meal—because I knew it really sucked to be in that situation,” she says.

**“If I’d had a really good weekend at work with a lot of tips, I’d donate a meal—because I knew it really sucked to be in that situation,” she says.**

**SPRING 2018**

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“Many of our students have no financial cushion. They’re one crisis away from having to choose between buying food and buying a textbook.”

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During the winter holidays last year faculty and staff donated 6,000 pounds of food and toiletries.
Food. It used to be that there wasn’t much you could say about it—you killed it or planted it, cooked it, picked it from a tree or dug it up from the ground. Then you ate it. And that, for many centuries, was pretty much the end of things. No more. Now there is fast food, slow-cooked food, comfort food, organic food, processed food, food chains, food pyramids, foods blessed (or not) by the FDA. There is food science and food engineering. The government keeps a registry of Food Adulteration Incidents. It puts out a reference source called the World Factbook of Food.

Food is big, and getting bigger—and UMass Lowell researchers are at the center of much of what’s going on.

And it’s not all about what happens in the lab or on the farm. For Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences Prof. Katherine Tucker, the focus is on food’s societal impact. Now in the final stage of a 15-year research project, Tucker was recently awarded a $2.5 million grant by the National Institutes of Health to study the effects of diet on cognitive decline and dementia. (The initial two stages focused on its effects on aging and heart disease.) The current study’s cohort, she says, includes roughly 700 Puerto Rican Boston-area residents, those still remaining from the original group of 1,500.

“In the U.S. today,” she says, “there is a general deficiency of nutrients—like magnesium, potassium, vitamin B6—in the food most of us eat. Without them, there’s a far higher risk of problems like diabetes and sometimes dementia, all of which are symptoms of too much low-quality processed food.”

Such problems, says Tucker, are far more prevalent among lower-income populations, such as the cohort she is studying: “When you lack the resources to buy healthy foods, you buy the cheapest foods you can—which often means they’re processed and have a longer shelf life, but lack the vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients we need for health.”

Tucker, who heads the UMass Lowell Center for Population Health, came by her interest in nutrition early as an undergraduate at the University of Connecticut, where she took part in a study of the diet practices of teenage African-American girls. Later, as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Philippines, she witnessed close-up the effects of severe malnutrition: blindness in children with vitamin A deficiencies, goiters in women who lacked sufficient iodine.

“Nutrition is an endlessly fascinating field,” she says. “It touches everyone; it intersects with just about everything.”

THE POLITICS OF FOOD

Chris Wilkinson comes at things from a wholly different angle. Wilkinson ’09, ’11, winner of the university’s 2016 Haskell Award for Distinguished Teaching, is an adjunct professor of political science whose course, The Politics of Food, aims to “break down the misconceptions our society has surrounding this most necessary commodity.” In doing so, it offers a withering look at what he calls the “gross manipulation” of the system through which food is processed, distributed and sold.

“In a single lifetime, just since World War II, there’s been a fundamental change in our relationship with food,” Wilkinson says. “What started as a system of locally sourced farming has now become a process of large-scale, monocrop farming, through which a few huge, multinational companies”—Dow Chemical, Monsanto and others—are able to control the production of most of what we eat and drink.

These conglomerates, he explains, manage
thereby bringing him to the U.S., where he earned his doctorates in nutrition and food science from the University of Maryland, then worked as a postdoctoral fellow with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. At UMass Lowell today, he teaches courses in food science and safety; his principal research focus is on the detection and prevention of the various pathogens that contaminate our food.

The biggest challenge, he says, comes with fresh produce: lettuce, spinach and other vegetables and fruits that, in the course of shipping and handling, are sometimes exposed to bacteria tainted water or laid on unclean surfaces.

Much of Zhang’s research has been devoted to the development of low-cost sensors to detect this—a dye-treated paper he developed is now in the discussion phase that precedes the awarding of a patent. On the prevention end of things, he is at work to create minimum sanitation levels for water and also, in cooperation with the university’s Toole Use Reduction Institute (TURI), to develop a process to improve the safety of the chemicals used in handling.

“In China, the main threats come from herbicides and pesticides,” he says, while in the U.S., “the biggest problems are biohazards, the bacteria and viruses that can contaminate our food.

“There is an increased public awareness. The consumer wants his fresh salads—and that’s a healthy thing. But it means we have to stay careful.”

FOOD SAFETY

For Asst. Prof. Boce Zhang, the big issue is safety—not from the predators of the food industry, but from the dangers of food itself. Zhang, a member of the faculty in the Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences, is a teacher and researcher who came to UMass Lowell from China, where he earned degrees in technology and nutrition. He has lived in China, from which he came, for most of his life—until he came to UMass Lowell, where he is at work to create minimum sanitation levels for water and also, in cooperation with the university’s Toole Use Reduction Institute (TURI), to develop a process to improve the safety of the chemicals used in handling.

“In China, the main threats come from herbicides and pesticides,” he says, while in the U.S., “the biggest problems are biohazards, the bacteria and viruses that can contaminate our food.

“There is an increased public awareness. The consumer wants his fresh salads—and that’s a healthy thing. But it means we have to stay careful.”

FOOD AND HEALTH

While the doctor treating a sick patient will have a thorough knowledge of the most effective pharmaceuticals with which to treat him, she also needs to be well versed on what diet the patient should follow—and the diet may be as critical to treatment as the drugs.

“A typical student in medical school will take, at most, one or two courses on nutrition,” says nutritional sciences Adjunct Prof. Michelle Palladino ’11, ’17, who earned a master’s degree in public health from the university last year while also working for three years in the bone marrow transplant unit at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester. Most of her job there, she says, was “to work with the doctors and nurses to develop the dietary formulas that were best for each patient.”

There needs to be more awareness and more training in the field of nutrition, says Palladino: “Doctors today have too much on their plates already to be able to keep up with diet requirements.”

Palladino is in her first year teaching a course in medical nutritional therapy—loosely defined, the science of matching diet with disease. Most of her UMass Lowell students, she says, will begin their careers as doctors or nurses, and in some way or another, they will have jobs in the medical field, where they will work side-by-side with doctors and nurses on patients’ dietary needs at the same time that they educate the patients themselves on their nutritional requirements.

“I tell my students as the first thing, ‘You are the lead person. As far as diet and nutrition, you are the one. You have to be confident in your knowledge.’”

FOOD PACKAGING

The MRE, or Meal Ready to Eat, has long been the staple of our soldiers in the field. They carry it with them in their packs to carry out. But burning can be a hazard, and when the course of food and alcohol “are all wrapped up in the history of this country.”

Montrie, who teaches a course called Alcohol and American History, cites examples as far back as the 17th century, when the early settlers traded liquor to the Cherokees “as a way to get their skins and furs without using cash.” More recently, he says, the late 18th- and 19th-century temperance movement was used by many as a way to contain immigrant groups, while the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of the late 19th century was “among the first groups in this country to empower women politically.”

Montrie hopes soon to supplement his alcohol course with a course on food in American history, which has been proposed and is now pending review. Food, he says, is at least as central as alcohol to the history of our country. One idea he would like to try in the course is to “get hold of a, say, 19th-century cookbook, pick a recipe and research what it might have to say about class, race or gender. Like okra, for instance: How did it get here, and what does it have to tell us about slavery? Or Aunt Jemima pancake mix: Aunt Jemima was originally derived from a 19th-century minstrel show character. What might she have to say about pancakes, or about race?”

There is no shortage of modern-day applications, Montrie notes. “Remember that line, ‘A taco truck on every corner,’ that was supposed to be [according to presidential candidate Donald Trump] an argument against Mexican immigration? And right now, in Chicago and other cities, there are ethnic kitchens being closed down by U.S. Immigration and Customs every day.

“Food is everywhere. You don’t have to look very far.”

Might there be another way?

“This was the focus of plastics engineering Prof. Margaret Sobkowicz-Kline, a former field engineer in the oilfield industry, whose Army-funded research project, completed last year offers a packaging solution to all these problems at once.

The proposed new container, a biodegradable, moisture-resistant package developed as a joint project with the Army’s Natick Center, combines the Center’s expertise in biodegradability testing with the experience of Sobkowicz-Kline’s research. Her Army colleague on the project was none other than Ratto Ross, a 1993 alumnus of the UML, plastics engineering doctoral program.

“We did not think that a product that’s both compostable and biodegradable, and that’s a healthy thing. But it means we have to stay careful.”
Couple Looks Back on a ‘Real Gem’ of an Education

Tom O’Connor ’77, ’80 is a retired board chairman and former CEO who climbs 20,000-foot mountains in his spare time. His wife, Diane Lamprey O’Connor ’84, a former hospice volunteer with a master’s degree in religious studies, is happiest painting watercolor landscapes and abstracts. They’ve been married 34 years—since not long after they met at a two-for-one night at an Irish pub in downtown Lowell. As Tom is fond of saying today, “I got both a beer and a bride.”

He was 26, from Lawrence, two years past earning his master’s degree at UMass Lowell. She was 23, from North Andover, working for a Boston nonprofit and two courses short of her ULowell bachelor’s degree, which she would complete the same year they were married.

Their memories share a common thread. Both recall the tuition rates the year they enrolled—$100 a semester for Tom, $300 for business student Diane four years later—and their pride in being the first in their families to graduate from a four-year college. Tom remembers the “blessing” of a $500 state scholarship; Diane tells the stories of the little apartment she lived in next to the sub shop at the end of the University Avenue bridge, and of the jobs she worked at to keep herself afloat.

Almost everyone in those days,” she says, “worked at DeMoulas.” (See related story, page 26.)

The paths they’ve followed since then have widened their worlds. Tom is the retired chairman of the board and CEO of Colorado-based DCP Midstream, among the nation’s largest natural gas gathering and processing companies, and has over three decades of experience at all levels of the energy field. At one point during his 20 years with Duke Energy, where he finished as group vice president of commercial businesses, he was CEO of a division overseeing more than 18,000 miles of pipeline to 1.2 million customers.

Over the course of his career, he says, “the whole conversation about energy has changed. We’ve gone from worrying all the time about not having enough, being ‘energy poor,’ to having this huge abundance—solar, wind, natural gas—most of it homegrown and home-developed, definitively to the benefit of the country. It’s been a fascinating trend to be a part of.”

Diane, meanwhile, has pursued her own path. Following her years as a young mother to three children through the 1990s, she launched a part-time volunteering her father’s last months in hospice care. Determined to turn the experience into some public gain, she trained as a respite volunteer in Houston and continued in this role in Colorado.

2007—while also organizing training for new staff and volunteers. She was determined to turn the experience into some public gain, she trained as a respite volunteer in Houston and continued in this role in Colorado and on Cape Cod. In addition, says Bob Tamarin, emeritus dean of the Kennedy College of Sciences, “Both he and Diane are absolutely wonderful people, dedicated to helping both students and faculty.

His personal generosity and leadership were extraordinary,” says Tamarin. “Both he and Diane are absolutely wonderful people, dedicated to their family and to UMass Lowell. I’ve never worked with a finer couple.”

For Tom, recipient of the University’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2016, “I remember that $500 scholarship I got back then, how much it meant to me,” he says. “It’s a real honor, for both of us, to be able to help these kids today.”

“You wouldn’t believe some of the letters we get from these kids, thanking us,” says Diane, whose degree was in management information systems. “They’re pretty awesome. I read them, and I can see that we’re achieving exactly what we’d hoped to. It feels so good to know that.”

As for the alumni hosting, she says, “We’ve developed some very warm personal relationships, both with staff and other alumni. We’re not big-time socialites, not by a long shot. But this is important to us, and we really enjoy the people.”
The U.S. food and beverage industry is growing at a steady pace even as the population growth rate has slowed, according to industry analysts. Consumers have more money to spend on food and are more concerned than ever about health. There are a growing number of food companies and products on the market in response to these trends—and our alumni are in the thick of it. Meet some of them on the following pages.

COVER STORY

THE RESTAURATEUR

His roots are in the food business, says Mike Covino ’93,’95: “My father was a beer distributor at Logan Airport, my mother was a bartender and my grandfather was a chef.” But Covino’s master’s degree was in physical therapy, and so was his first job after school. For several years after earning his degree, he “dual-careered” between his PT day job and his night work in restaurants and bars.

In 2005, the contest was settled. With his opening of Block Five, an upscale burger restaurant on Green Street in Worcester, just as that neighborhood was enjoying a rebirth, Covino announced his arrival in the city. He opened a second restaurant in the city a year later, the tapas bar Bocado.

Today there are 10—eight in Worcester, one each in Leominster and Wellesley—and they range across the food-and-drink spectrum: pizza, burgers, seafood, steaks, tapas, Mexican, health food. There is a wine bar and a sports bar, there is pricey and down-home. They are all part of the Niche Hospitality Group.

Covino has had several partners over the years, as well as a staff of employees that grows with every new opening. But none among them has been more critical than his wife, Deb Covino ’95, who also put aside a UML degree in physical therapy to focus on the restaurant trade. In addition to her role in raising the couple’s three children, she oversees private events for all 10 restaurants and is “a major key to our success,” Mike says.

The Covinos, meanwhile, have been key to the transformation of downtown Worcester. “Mike and the Niche group illustrated a vision for a Worcester market that hadn’t quite existed yet,” Tim McGourthy, then Worcester’s chief development officer, told the Worcester Business Journal two years ago.

“We’ve been part of some pretty cool changes,” Covino says. “That’s all. We were never trying to change the world.”—GD

FAVORITE FOOD? “I find myself always sampling the fresh guacamole at our Mezcal location. I love the creamy texture from perfectly ripe avocados smashed with fresh lime, cilantro, onion, tomato, salt and some fresh jalapeño.”

THE ICE QUEEN

Business alumna Jennifer Heng ’13 opened Snowdaes on Westford Street in Lowell after falling in love with shaved snow in Southern California. Working with her then-fiancé Nyden Heng and sister Juli Ho ’13, they opened Snowdaes in 2014. Customers have been flocking to the shop for matcha, Thai tea and other flavors of shaved snow (a mix of ice cream and shaved ice) topped with everything from rainbow mochi to marshmallows.

“Business is great” says Heng, who just had her third child, a daughter, with husband Nyden. “Life is hectic but never boring.” It’s about to get even more hectic: The couple is currently searching for locations in which to open more branches of Snowdaes.—DP

FAVORITE FOOD-RELATED MEMORY? “The Korean BBQ in Los Angeles. All kinds of meat and sides, all placed in front of you. You get the opportunity to cook the meats however you like and the smells are amazing. The colors of all the clothes and the aroma of sizzling meats ... I’m pretty sure heaven has a Korean BBQ restaurant.”
THE URBAN FARMER

Lydia Sisson ’12 grew up in the rural South, where her family had a vegetable garden and kept chickens. She fell in love with farming as a student at Nassar College, where she got a work-study job with a nonprofit farm that rented college land, and then went to Brazil to study the Landless Workers Movement. “That really changed my perspective on what equity is about, and the incredible disparity in access to food and land and capacity for people to have self-sustaining lives,” she says.

After graduating, she moved to Lowell and worked on farming projects at the United Teen Equities Center, then apprenticed at several farms before starting her own CSA (Community-Supported Agricultural) farm in North Reading in 2006. But just one farm wasn’t enough. Everywhere she looked, Sisson saw signs of food disparity—and city land that was unproductive. So she signed up to earn a master’s degree in economic and social development of regions at UMass Lowell, where she made community connections through internships at local nonprofits and studied the city’s food system and needs. For her master’s thesis, Sisson—working with garden educator Francine Slater—developed a business plan for a sustainable nonprofit that increases access for city residents to fresh, healthy food.

Since founding six years ago, Milk City Gardnes has developed six community gardens, 14 school gardens and three urban farms—including a new greenhouse and garden space behind the residence halls on East Campus. It also runs a mobile farmers market and gardener education programs. “We really do create lasting change in the community through transforming spaces into urban food production hubs,” Sisson says. “And I love that we are building these new green spaces in the city that change the entire landscape.”—KW

THE WINE ENGINEER

The electrical engineering alumnus from Westborough started Broken Creek seeing a need for recruiters who can speak engineers’ language. He was Vineyard owner is actually Preusse’s third career turn. In 1989, he transitioned from engineering working on missile guidance systems at Raytheon, to focus full-time on his vineyard. While Massachusetts will never be confused with Napa Valley or Tuscany, there are more than two dozen wineries across the state. Preusse enjoys the scientific challenge of finding just the right varieties of grapes that can grow in the hot-and-cold Northeast climate. “I meet a lot of winemakers who are engineers. We couldn’t do it without the people that started this.”

Preusse, who produces 300 cases (3,600 bottles) of reds and whites each year, plans to double that production after a recent expansion. The Preusse, who produces 300 cases (3,600 bottles) of reds and whites each year, plans to double that production after a recent expansion. The Vineyard and Winery in Shrewsbury, Mass., at the North or South campus.”

FAVORITE THING TO EAT WHILE A STUDENT HERE?

“I’d have to say the hamburgers. I think I had a couple hamburgers for lunch every single day, regardless of whether I was eating at the North or South campus.”

THE MIX MASTER

Louis Beaudette ’74, founder, came to the field by a most unlikely route. As a biology major at Lowell Tech, he wrote his senior thesis on the treatment of groundwater pollution. This led to his first job, at Kericks Corp. in Andover, where he spent 15 years designing mixing and blending equipment—initially for water treatments, and later for food.

“I became fascinated with the food processing business,” he says. “It’s a constantly changing environment—one day it’s all about low-fat, then it’s high-protein, the next day it’s gluten-free. I came to love it and wanted to stay involved.”

And he saw his chance: “The machines that companies were using to mix food were really slow. I felt the process could be more efficient.”

So in 1989, he founded Admix. Today, it is the largest supplier of mixing equipment for canned and packaged, prepared foods. He was right about the speed thing: Admix can now do in just 30 minutes a mixing job that used to take up to eight hours, Beaudette says.

It’s demanding work that never seems to slow down. A few years ago, he says, when the media began writing about the evils of fructose corn syrup, “The phones were ringing off the hook. Kraft, Campbell’s, M&M—they all wanted new machines, so they could get off fructose and mix with solid sugar instead. It was a crazy time.”—GO

FAVORITE FOOD MEMORY:

“My dad had a banana bread with raisins in it. I think I ate a couple hamburgers for lunch every single day, regardless of whether I was eating at the North or South campus.”
THE FOOD HISTORIAN

History grad Kathleen Curtin ’86 may just know more about the first Thanksgiving than anyone. A former food historian at Plimoth Plantation, she is co-author of “Giving Thanks: Thanksgiving Recipes and History, from Pilgrims to Pumpkin Pie.”

The book is full of both history and recipes, which she collected from historic documents and cookbooks and contemporary home cooks across the country. The recipes run the gamut from authentic English colonial fare to regional specialties like Southern sweet potato pie and adaptations by newer immigrants, including Cuban stuffed turkey and Lebanese rice and meat stuffing.

“Thanksgiving is a uniquely American holiday,” Curtin says. “It’s the only holiday that we all share. We all sit down at that communal table and we all eat very much the same foods. Historically, it had very religious connotations, but it’s become an extremely secular holiday when it doesn’t matter what religion you are.”

A few years ago, Curtin left Plimoth Plantation and earned her teaching degree at the University of New Hampshire. She’s now a U.S. history teacher at Portsmouth (N.H.) Middle School, where she uses Spam to teach her curious eighth-graders about World War II rationing.

But Curtin still keeps a finger in the pumpkin pie. She volunteers at the Museums of Old York in York, Maine, helping well-known chefs put on hearth-cooking demonstrations. An accomplished chef herself, she also cooks for Ethel Kennedy and her family in Hyannis, Mass., for a week every summer when the regular chef, a friend, is on vacation.

THE ORGANIC GROCER

Ronnie Elliott ’86 earned a degree in English, but a book she read for a nutrition class made all the difference in her life. “Fast for a Small Planet,” a 1971 bestseller that detailed the environmental impact of the meat industry and advocated for healthy eating, changed her life.

“That was pivotal for me. I read it and could no longer eat meat. I became a vegetarian at age 14,” she says. “That book made me question convention.”

Elliott went on to found Planet Organic, a successful health-food grocery based in London, where she moved after graduating from UML. Established in 1960, the company has since grown to a seven-store chain. She’s a sought-after speaker on nutrition and wellness and teaches healthy baking at the College of Naturopathic Medicine in London.

She’s written three cookbooks, most recently “What to Eat and How to Eat It,” a guide to incorporating healthy ingredients like quinoa or maca into everyday meals.

“It covers all the ingredients people know they should be eating but don’t know how, she says. “It’s a guide through the maze of choices.”

A mother of three, Elliott spends time mentoring women entrepreneurs, especially those who are trying to start food- or wellness-related ventures. Last year, she and her husband launched Beluga Grain, which offers life and business coaching to women. Now, she’s exploring a project that’s part cookbook, part family history, based on the recipes and stories of her mother, a New Orleans native and outstanding home cook who died in 2015.

“I have done the preliminary work—that’s a joy. But I think I will have to live in New Orleans for six months to finish it,” she says.—AG

THE CHICKEN KING

Owens native Rob Parsons ’95 knows New Englanders prefer their local sub shops, pizza joints and clam shacks to big restaurant chains. But Parsons, who earned a business degree in finance and has built a successful career in real estate development, says Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen is different. The fresh chicken is cooked in small batches throughout the day and does not sit under heating lamps for hours. The sides are prepared from scratch.

“And I’ve always liked spicy food,” says Parsons, who until recently owned seven Popeyes franchises in the Boston region. He now owns one, in Nashua, N.H.

Parsons learned about the restaurant industry while working as director of development for Popeyes and Denny’s Restaurants. He developed franchise markets in 42 states, and even took Denny’s into Central and South America. In 2009, Parsons shifted gears, founding Synergy Dining Group and developing his Popeyes franchises, including the Kimmore Square location that was a well-known favorite of several Red Sox players.

“Jonathan Papelbon and David Ortiz used to come in there quite a bit,” he says.

In 2015, Parsons sold his Popeyes to focus on a new franchise venture: developer and owner of Primrose Schools, a national private preschool chain. He had no intention of getting back into the restaurant business.

But when he saw a Wendy’s go out of business near his family’s home in Nashua, he had a craving. He bought the property and opened a new Popeyes in May 2017. “Popeyes was still fresh in my memory, so I ventured back in,” says Parsons. “I’ve always loved the brand. I love the food.”—EB
THE RENAISSANCE MAN

William Ben Williams '06 and 15, his father, an Air Force major serving as a dentist, was posted to Aviano Air Force Base near Venice, Italy. Williams quickly fell in love with the city, where he spent his childhood. After his mother was diagnosed with cancer, his family returned to Bloomington, Ill., where Williams helped start the first Baggio's Ristorante Italiano, which has since become a small restaurant chain. After his mother died, Williams went back to Italy at age 21.

With a friend, Marco Mazzocco, he won a contract to operate a Greek food stand at Atlantic Air Force Base. At Mazzocco's Mediterranean Grill, they delivered "Greek with a twist," adding Italian and Lebanese spices and ingrediants.

After their 10-year military contract expired in 2011, Williams and Mazzocco opened a second Mazzocco's in the United States, building a food trailer and stationing it near Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. They soon moved it to Lowell, where Williams was living—and it's been parked in a lot between Appleton and Summer streets ever since.

While Williams wasn't the only chef: He completed his undergraduate degree in political science at UML, and earned a law degree at New England School of Law. Now, in addition to working at Mazzocco's every weekend at lunchtime, Williams teaches political science classes as an adjunct professor, including Foundations of Law.

FOOD YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT: "Really good olive oil and aged balsamic vinegar, the kind that costs $400 a bottle."

THE DESIGNER

Tanya Nayak '97 says trying a new restaurant is like going on a first date.

"You want to be attracted to the person, and you hope they have substance," she says. "And when you walk into a restaurant, it has to have a little of everything, but there can also be some give-and-take. If the food is stellar, you'll be more forgiving of the design. Or, if the service is outstanding and the design is over the top, but the food is just-so, you'd go back again.

As an A-list interior designer well-known for her work with Ellen DeGeneres, Rachel Ray, HDTV and Food Network's "Restaurant: Impossible," Nayak has helped develop eight eateries in the Boston area over the past decade, most recently the Yellow Door Taqueria in Dorchester.

She's currently sinking her teeth into her most ambitious project yet: renovating Cheryl's read a story in the alumni magazine about me doing 'Restaurant: Impossible' and asked if I'd be interested in working with them on a big brand refresh and expansion," says Nayak.

Nayak also takes on high-end residential projects for clients such as Bruins star Patrice Bergeron, NHL president Cam Neely and former Red Sox star Jason Varitek. She's currently sinking her teeth into her most ambitious project yet: renovating the Farm School in Athol for a year, he developed a business plan for his own farm, Horne Family Farms.

After attending the Farm School in Athol for a year, he developed a business plan for his own farm, Horne Family Farms.

Christopher Horne '14, the Farm School in Athol for a year, he developed a business plan for his own farm, Horne Family Farms.

THE FAMILY FARMER

After his mother suffered a massive heart attack, Christopher Horne '14 says he "starved going to farmer's markets and learning about healthy eating." In the process, he met Mill City Growers founders Lyda Sessions '12 and Francony Baltic and went on to work for them, first as a volunteer and later as their first full-time employee. After attending the Farm School in Athol for a year, he developed a business plan for his own farm, Horne Family Farms.

Last summer, he provided microgreens—sprouts and baby lettuces, kale and Asian greens—to several local restaurants, and he plans to sell about two dozen shares in a CSA this summer. —KW

THE VINTNER

During his years at UML—where he majored in environmental science while also pursuing combat search-and-rescue HC-130s out of Hanscom Field in Bedford, Mass., for the Air Force—Mark Proden '03 was dating a woman whose family invited him to their home for Sunday dinners. "We would sit down to these really good meals of her mom's and drink her dad's homemade wine," he says. "It's a nice memory. I think maybe, unconsciously, I planted a seed."

The seed bore fruit a few years after graduating, when Proden was in Los Angeles finishing up his Air Force tour. He began making day trips to vineyards in the Napa and Sonoma valleys, sampling the wines, learning about the harvests.

In 2006, he enrolled at the Northwest Viticulture Center in Salem, Ore., at the same time apprenticing with local winemakers. Within a year, he had developed his own wine from local Oregon grapes, which he made by hand in small batches. By the time another year had passed, he was in Hawaii, on the island of Kauai, working as an engineer and developing a second line of wines, this one from local tropical fruits.

In 2012, Proden made the leap from maker to seller, opening the Hawaiian-themed Portland Wine Bar and Winery in southwest Portland. The winery, which features his labels and those of other small makers, is today regularly listed among the downtown's prime tourist destinations.

And it now has a sister on the coast: The Winery at Manzanita, which opened late last summer along an uninterrupted seven-mile stretch 90 minutes west of Portland, likewise specializes in small-batch area wines. —CD

FAVORITE THING TO EAT WHILE A UML STUDENT: "Simply Khmer was a big meeting spot for me and my friends. But I had to pick one food; it would be lahm mii, the Vietnamese sandwiches. They're the perfect lunch between classes—with a combination of head cheese, pork and even ham sometimes."

MOST VIVID FOOD-RELATED MEMORY? "I'm from India, and my mom cooked Indian food every single night of the week. It was usually a vegetable, a rice, a lentil—we didn't eat a whole lot of meat growing up, which is ironic since I design steakhouses now. But I remember always smelling garlic and onion—my mom's cooking. I'd be sneaking out to go on a date, because I was not allowed to date, and my ciholas would stink."
THE BUSINESS WOMAN OF FOOD

Cheryl Henry ’96 says her love of food and cooking came from her grandmother, Vita Antoinette Puopolo Ricardo. “All my memories of her take place in a kitchen,” she says. “She came to the United States from Italy as a child speaking no English. She became a from-scratch cook, and the way she communicated with people was through her food.” When Henry was a child growing up in Medford, her grandparents bought a small home in New Hampshire and her grandmother, she says, “transformed its unfinished basement—cold, cement floors and walls, and a tiny wood-burning stove in the corner—into a pasta-making factory. That is where I learned how to make up my fondest memories is of when grandmother decided that we should make our own pasta. She had two sawhorses that she stole from my grandfather, a piece of plywood she cut out of an old broom handle. And when we were finished, we would hang the pasta on a wooden clothes rack to dry.”

Today, Henry is president and COO of Ruth’s Hospitality Group, a fine-dining company with more than 150 Ruth’s Chris Steak House restaurants worldwide. “I oversee everything to do with food,” she says, adding that she also runs the real estate division, HR, brand marketing and IT.

But she hasn’t forgotten where she came from. Her grandmother, she says, cooked not for herself, “but to bring joy to every person who sat around her table. And when I walk into our restaurants to this day, whether I’m in the front of the house, or in the heart of the house in the kitchen, I look for that glimpse of Vita Antoinette Puopolo Ricardo.”

THE FRANCHISEE

“I n the food business today, it’s all about competition,” says George Zografos ’78, who just sold off the last of the 13 Dunkin’ Donuts franchises he spent 30 years collecting on Cape Cod. You can see the trend just by what’s happening with coffee, he says. “Cumberland Farms is giving it away now. McDonald’s is selling it for a dollar,” he says. “It’s about competition. And to be able to compete, you have to be able to do less—less labor, lower prices, a lower learning curve.”

Dunkin’ Donuts, among other companies, is responding by streamlining its own operations, says Zografos, who started in the business 40 years ago in 1978, when he took a job as store manager at a Dunkin’ franchise in Connecticut.

“They’re going to be selling fewer kinds of donuts, not selling cookies anymore, cutting out some other things too. It’s the 80-20 thing—you focus on the 80 percent you sell the most of, kill the other 20 percent go. That’s how you streamline. That’s what it takes now to compete.”

Still, it’s not the competition that’s driving Zografos out. He’s seen his share of that over the years and has prevailed at least as often as not. “Competition is a good thing,” he says. “It forces you to stay current; it keeps you relevant.”

But he’s 64 now. His three sons are doing well. He has family and friends he wants to spend time with; there are other things in life. “I’ve had a good run. You never know how many more years you’ve got left, and you want to use it well. So it’s time.” —GD

WHAT DOES FOOD MEAN TO YOU?

“My favorite food is ice cream, and I’m not too shameless to say that one of my favorite meals is a strawberry shortcake with ice cream that we offer here at the farm.”

FOOD YOU CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT?

“My favorite food is ice cream, and I’m not too shameless to say that one of my favorite meals is a strawberry shortcake with ice cream that we offer here at the farm.”

THE FRUIT LABORER

Mark Parlee ’90 caught the farming bug at a young age. When he was 12, he started working on his uncle’s farm in Chelmsford. Parlee, who studied biology before switching majors and earning a degree in chemical engineering, continued to work on the farm on weekends.

After earning his degree, he went to work in Boston at the engineering firm Stone & Webster, where he spent 10 years and met his wife, Ellen. But when some farmland along the Merrimack River in Tyngsboro became available, Parlee couldn’t resist. He gave up his chemical engineering career to pursue his true calling.

“It had always been in the back of my mind that it wouldn’t be a bad way to make a living,” says Parlee, who started with two acres of pick-your-own strawberries in 1988 and now manages 93 acres of apples, strawberries, blueberries, cherries, peaches, sweet corn and pumpkins. His chemistry background is useful, he says, when it comes to choosing the least-toxic methods for growing crops.

The business has flourished through the years and now features a spacious retail shop (The Farmstand) that sells fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers, as well as Mary’s Country Kitchen and Bakery, where visitors can enjoy strawberry shortcake in the summer and warm apple crisp and cider donuts in the fall.

“Everything we grow is sold on the farm,” says Parlee, who adds that he can’t compete on the wholesale level with the 3,000-acre farms of the industrial agriculture industry. “We’re at the end of the food chain. Our fertilizer costs and labor costs are high, so we pretty much retail everything directly to the public.” —EB

THE COVER STORY

SPRING 2018
Even in middle school, Al Contarino ’92 was thinking of ways to turn food into a business. “I would walk to the five-and-dime store in downtown Andover and get all those different 10-cent candies—the boxes of Mike and Ikes and the Jolly Rancher sticks—and then sell them for a quarter at school. My whole locker was full of candy,” recalls Contarino, who even kept track of his sales on his family’s Apple computer by learning to use VisiCalc, the first-ever spreadsheet program.

Contarino, who earned his bachelor’s degree in industrial technology from the Francis College of Engineering, has channeled that same entrepreneurial spirit as president and co-founder of KettlePizza, an innovative line of products that turns charcoal and gas grills into backyard pizza ovens.

“I've always been a grill guy, but I found it really hard to cook pizza on the grill because you lose all the heat when you lift up the lid,” says Contarino. “The trick to pizza is hot and fast. We get the grill up to 900 degrees so you're cooking a pizza in three minutes. It's a great alternative to spending thousands of dollars on a pizza oven.”

Working out of the barn at his home in Boxford, Mass., Contarino started KettlePizza in 2010 with co-founder George Peters. Business has heated up through the years (most of their sales are online, but they’re also found in Crate & Barrel and local hardware stores) and they’re now headquartered in North Andover, where they have a showroom and warehouse.

“It's a challenging market, but I love having my own business,” says Contarino, who takes pride in the fact that all KettlePizza products are made locally. In fact, some of the metal parts are machined at Sparton Technology Corp. in Hudson, N.H., where Contarino’s friend and fellow industrial technology alumnus, Scott Breton ’92, is vice president. —EB

**THE PIZZA GUY**

Er_first job in the early ’70s in Laconia, N.H., was as a waitress at Hart’s Turkey Farm in nearby Meredith. She was about 14 at the time, and recalls having to lie about her age to get it, says Sandy Green ’86.

Over time, Green moved up the food chain to better jobs in fancier restaurants. By the time she was in college at Salem State, she was serving Bananas Foster and specialty coffees at the Andover Inn.

Green took a long break from the restaurant business, spending more than 25 years in IT—a natural progression from the M.S. she earned in electrical engineering at UML—before selling the IT services firm she founded, i-Link Corp., to its employees in 2009. By then, she had moved with her husband from Washington state to Bend, Ore.—where, during house-hunting, she says today, “We could never find a place where we both liked to eat.”

Most of the dining options in Bend at the time, she recalls, were either granola, redneck or hoity-toity. There wasn't much in between. It was a real gap in the market.

In 2010 she filled that gap with The Phoenix restaurant. Designed from the start as a “restaurant for everyone,” it targets its menu and its layout across the demographic spectrum.

“Top service, and quality ingredients. And something for every taste.” —GD

**FOOD YOU CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT?** Scallops sautéed in fresh butter with parmesan. That’s heaven to me.”

**THE GAP-FILLER**

**THE GAPS FILLER**

**MOST VIVID FOOD-RELATED MEMORY?** “I have one memory of the dining hall my freshman year. It was a snow day, and everybody decided to go eat at Fox Hall. It was packed in there. All of a sudden, somebody threw a piece of food and it landed on our table. One of my buddies said, ‘It’s on,’ and threw it back. And it started a food fight, just like you see in the movies. I was horrified. I don’t remember how it ended, but it was pretty funny.”

**ALUMNI LIFE**

Jonathan Cheever, who studied mechanical engineering at UML between 2003 and 2005, now spends his days engineering big air in the halfpipe. A member of the U.S. Olympic Snowboarding team, Cheever is ranked the seventh best snowboarder in the world—with nine X Games appearances, two World Championship appearances and many World Cup starts. Cheever—a Saugus native who got his start on the slopes of Nashoba Valley Ski Area in Westford—finished 28th in the men’s snowboardcross event in PyeongChang. When he’s not on his board, Cheever works as a plumber.

**PIPE DREAMS**
Mary D. LaBally
celebrated her 110th birthday in October.

Gertrude (Long) Kelleher was honored on Education Post, a nation-
wide website focused on public education. She recounted her stories of being one of a handful of women in Lowell Tech, where she broke barriers in athletics and hazing, and emerald coffee like her in her engineering society Phi Sigma Rho and Tech Players, the theatrical society.

Judith A. Whitney was named president of the New Hampshire Justice of the Peace Association and was honored at a Community Teamwork luncheon.

Ann F. Chadnew was honored with the 2017 Albert Nelson Marquis Life-
time Achievement Award, given to those who have been listed in “Who’s Who” for more than 20 consecutive years and have accrued more than 50 years in a particular career field. She has been a published poet since her teenage years.

Sue L. McHendry and Walt J. McHendry ’64 celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September.

Arnold J. Pollard is preparing for a new life after retirement. He is looking forward to celebrating his 70th reunion in May.

Lt. Col. Robert D. Carlson retired from the Defense Acquisition University in January 2016 after 23 years teaching courses in program, funds and earned value management. Currently a DRU inter-
mittent professor, Bob teaches several online courses and consults.

Robert S. Ward was elected to the newest class of The National Academ-
ny’s projects at the time, designing a plastic body for the Chevy Corvette, was, he remembers, “the first exposure I’d ever had” to the new material.

Michael S. Kaplan recently retired and was awarded with his wife of 45 years to the San Diego area to be near their two sons and their families. He spent 40 years working in various positions, including the fields of purchas-
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Celeste T. Trembley ’72, ‘10 retired from UMass Lowell in January 2017 as a clinical associate professor of nursing. She received both bachelor’s and doc-
toral degrees at UML and worked at the university for 15 years.

Mary L. Byrom was named one of the top-eight teachers in New Hamp-
shire for 2017 in December by Parenting New Hampshire Magazine. She has been teaching for 36 years, with the last 10 at St. Joseph Regional Catholic School in Salem, N.H.

Frieda Fultz successfully ascended the north face of the Eiger via the 1938 route on Nov. 1, after several attempts over the past 20 years. Poor climbing conditions and/or bad weather had prevented this in the past, but he says he is thrilled that his lifelong dream finally came true.

Robert S. Squires continues to play guitar as he approaches retirement.

1. GERTRUDE (LONG) KELLEHER ’59
2. ROBERT S. SQUIRES ’79
3. BARRY BURBANK ’72
4. KAY DOYLE ’77, ’86
5. NICK T. ’81 AND BRENDA ’92 REESE

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He Came of Age with the Plastics Industry

W

ien Mel Ettenson ’54 want to work at his first job with Owens-Corning Fiberglas more than 60 years ago, the plastics industry was barely an infant. One of the compa-
ny’s projects at the time, designing a plastic body for the Chevy Corvette, was, he remembers, “the first exposure I’d ever had” to the new material.

It would be the first of many. After Owens-Corning came a job with Uniglass Industries—a manufacturer of plastics for boats—then one as senior vice president of Dayco Corp.’s Cadillac Plastics Division, and finally his last, as president of AN Plastics Michigan, from which he retired more than 20 years ago.

But he wasn’t done yet with the industry. Not even close. As far back as the 1950s at Lowell Tech, as editor of the university’s student newspaper The Text, he had always had “sort of a thing” about writing. And now, finally, as a retired executive with a vast knowledge of his industry, he was determined to resurrect his editing career.

So it was that, in January 1999, the Global Plastics Newsletter was born.

“During my 40 plus years in the plastics business, I have always wondered why there wasn’t a single, concise, reliable source of information about our industry,” Ettenson says. He changed that. His newsletter today is a bi-monthly, subscription-only source of all manner of plastics news: marketing updates, corporate changes, resource and technology breakthroughs, previews of new and upcoming products. Unlike similar publications, he says, the paper contains no advertise-
ing.

“That makes it possible for us to deliver the news objectively, without distractions, which in today’s world I think is important.”

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“During my 40 plus years in the plastics business, I have always wondered why there wasn’t a single, concise, reliable source of information about our industry,” Ettenson says. He changed that. His newsletter today is a bi-monthly, subscription-only source of all manner of plastics news: marketing updates, corporate changes, resource and technology breakthroughs, previews of new and upcoming products. Unlike similar publications, he says, the paper contains no advertise-
ing.

“That makes it possible for us to deliver the news objectively, without distractions, which in today’s world I think is important.”


GOOD CHEMISTRY

A good teacher’s influence takes many forms. The late Donald McQuarrie ’58 was, by his own account, an indifferent student at Lowell High School—that is, until he fell under the spell of a wonderful chemistry teacher, who recalls his valor, Charlie (Harper) McQuarrie ’59.

Mark L. Cohen

Peter G. Putnien, composer of the nation’s ríne piano piece “That Land of von der Einde”, with a recording on the Thorton label. Peter is also assistant professor of chemistry at the University of California, San Francisco.

Richard M. Keenan worked at Honeywell for 15 years. He truly appreciates the company’s tuition reimbursement program, and was able to attend UML right now, excellent, for his masters in science degree.

Kathleen Stack was appointed as chief executive officer of Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley. He is a technical specialist, with over 30 years of experience and more than 45 intellectual properties, including patents and trade secrets. Over 40 percent of these patents have been licensed for production, far more than the 4 percent industrial average.

Lorna A. Boucher won the 2017 Women in Finance Award. She has a wealth of experience in marketing from MassMutual in New York City. She is currently a marketing officer at Mindsight GmbH.

Thomas A. Fondoulis


donald McQuarrie was awarded the National Academy of Sciences Medal in 1978 for his work on the quantum theory of liquids. He is a leading expert in chemical physics and has made significant contributions to the field.


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Giving Peace—and Dental Care—a Chance

In 2010, Donna Hackley ’15 looked up from her busy life—a successful pediatric dental practice, a loving husband, two active adolescent daughters—and realized something was not right.

“I couldn’t figure it out,” Hackley says now. “I had all the blessings in the world. But something was missing.”

So Hackley set out on a five-year journey. Her journey began with a four-day church retreat and led ultimately to UMass Lowell’s Peace and Conflict Studies Program, where she went on to earn a master’s degree in the program’s organizational leadership track.

This summer, it will culminate in Africa, when the University of Rwanda School of Dentistry graduates its very first class—a program that Hackley, together with dental medicine faculty from Harvard and the University of Maryland, helped launch.

Hackley, who had fled to Canada and had rarely traveled farther than Canada, has now made 15 trips to Rwanda, where she spends about six months of the year living in the capital city of Kigali, working alongside Rwandan dental professionals as they rebuild the country’s health care infrastructure, which had been devastated during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

When people tell her she’s making such a sacrifice, Hackley is quick to say, “This,” she says with a yin, “is completely selfless.”

Whatever was missing from her life has been filled to overflowing by meaningful work, the warmth of her Rwandan colleagues and the opportunity to bear witness to a country working for peace in the aftermath of unimaginable conflict.

“I’ve learned so much,” she says. “And I’m sure I get far more than I give.”

MORE EDUCATION, MORE IMPACT

Hackley’s road to Rwanda actually began in Doylestown, Pa., where she grew up. Her parents both made community service a priority, and she found a way.

Her interest in health care originated when her mother called her father a dentist and Hackley worked in his office during summer vacations. It did, almost by chance, at a fundraiser where one of the auction items was a football jersey belonging to famed Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver Lynn Swann—a sort of holy relic to Pennsylvanian native Hackley. When the host learned she was a Steelers fan, she introduced her to Lynn’s brother, Brian Swain, who happened to be part of a Harvard team helping Rwanda open its first school of dentistry.

“The next thing you know, I’m on a plane to Rwanda,” Hackley says. “I’m off, I’m away.”

When she arrived in Rwanda not quite 20 years after the genocide, in which an estimated 800,000 people, most of them ethnic Tutsis, were killed and nearly 250,000 women were raped in the space of 100 days, Conflict doesn’t come much starker than that—which makes the country’s subsequent efforts for peace and reconciliation all the more moving to Hackley.

“Rwandans know who’s who, and they still have to live side by side with the people they were fighting,” she says. “Yet they’re putting that aside to help their country heal, move forward and grow.”

To rebuild the country’s health-care system, the government launched an ambitious seven-year program called Human Resources for Health (HRH) in partnership with more than 30 U.S. academic institutions and foundations. U.S. medical professionals like Hackley work alongside Rwandan colleagues to develop a curriculum and strengthen the faculty foundations. U.S. medical professionals like Hackley work alongside Rwandan colleagues to develop a curriculum and strengthen the faculty foundations. U.S. medical professionals like Hackley work alongside Rwandan colleagues to develop a curriculum and strengthen the faculty foundations. U.S. medical professionals like Hackley work alongside Rwandan colleagues to develop a curriculum and strengthen the faculty foundations. U.S. medical professionals like Hackley work alongside Rwandan colleagues to develop a curriculum and strengthen the faculty foundations.

From the start, she says, she was warmly welcomed, not only into the community but also into the home of the senior vice president of the University of Rwanda, who became a knowledgeable and encouraging mentor, assuring Hackley that she felt a strong calling, her path would emerge.

She enrolled at UMass as a part-time student and, with professors like Jim Narring and David Tardoc, studied various peace-building efforts, focusing on Rwanda, which offered powerful lessons about how a country recovers from such trauma. From the start, Rayman proved to be a knowledgeable and encouraging mentor, assuring Hackley that she felt a strong calling, her path would emerge.

She opened a practice in Watertown with two of her instructors. Along the way, she married her high school sweetheart Steve Hackley, now a senior vice president at Comcast, and had two daughters, Hannah and Cara.

Yet even as she sank her roots in Massachusetts and became active in the community, Hackley felt called” by Africa, particularly by the escalating humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Together with her best friend, she collected tons of donated school and first-aid supplies and shipped them to Darfur—a process that took over a year. To have more impact, she says, “I needed more education.”

In 2011, she found it. While attending a lecture by ULM’s Ghevex Peace scholar, Layman Obwese— the Liberian peace activist who would win the Nobel Peace Prize that same year—she learned the university had launched its Peace and Conflict Studies Program. She poured over course listings and decided to take a class called “Gender, Work and Peace,” even if it meant being “a mom in a room full of teenagers.”

She never had to worry. Taught by then-program director Prof. Paula Rayman, the class was, she says, “a portrait of diversity, as well as a conversion experience. ‘No one was like anyone else—they were different ages, from different countries and different walks of life. It fit right in.’”

Hackley’s classmates included Gordon Halm, a Ghanaian-American who founded the African Community Center of Lowell, as well as students from Colombia, Nigeria and Syria. Many of them, she says, “carry unbelievable burdens. Yet instead of being vengeful, they’re working to change society for the better. They’re such a source of education and inspiration for me.”

More recently, the students have come to love. Her family has now joined her on several trips to Kigali, and together with a Rwandan friend, Marcellin Kanimba, she has founded a beekeeping business called K+H Hilltop Honey. In addition to producing honey, the business has brought electricity and water lines to a rural neighborhood and provided jobs for local residents, including a group of deaf students who build honey’s hives.

“I never expected this chapter in my life, and so much of it grows out of what I learned in Peace and Conflict Studies at UMass Lowell,” says Hackley. “I hope the work we do has a positive impact. I know it’s had an amazing impact on me.”

MORE EDUCATION, MORE HEALTH CARE

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The students want so much to learn, often in the face of challenges that would overwhelm many of us,” she says. “They want to serve the people in their country who need their care.”

This summer, 14 of those students will become the very first dentists to graduate from the University of Rwanda School of Dentistry. The following year, when the HRH partnership concludes, the Rwandan faculty will assume full control of the school’s operations. Observes Hackley: “This collaborative project really speaks to the talent and dignity of Rwandans who want to run their school as a center of excellence in a Rwandan-driven, self-sustainable way.”

What won’t end is Hackley’s relationship with a country she has come to love. Her family has now joined her on several trips to Kigali, and together with a Rwandan friend, Marcellin Kanimba, she has founded a beekeeping business called K+H Hilltop Honey. In addition to producing honey, the business has brought electricity and water lines to a rural neighborhood and provided jobs for local residents, including a group of deaf students who build honey’s hives.

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> BY SETH BROSNOAN

> CLASS NOTES

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2015

> SPRING 2018

> BY BETH BROSNAN

> CLASS OF 2015

> UMASS LOWELL MAGAZINE
Christian L. Doherty was featured in Banker & Tradesman in a piece about why he pursued his path working for then-U.S. Rep. Marty Meehan, attending law school and then becoming a prosecutor for the Middlesex District Attorney’s office.

Sean Osborne, who received a master’s degree in civil engineering at UML, is chair of the New England Human Rights Committee in Lexington, Mass., and founder and president of the Association of Black Civilian of Lexington. After five years of active duty in the Air Force, Osborne worked for a large civil engineering consulting firm in Cambridge before opening his own firm, OSD LLC, in Lexington.

Brian S. Dempsey is executive vice president and chief operating officer for Mintz Levin Strategies in Boston.

Carolyn Rolfe ’01 and Todd Rolfe recently welcomed their first daughter, Georgia Anne Rolfe, in June. Carolyn is currently the director of development for the College of Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at UMass Lowell. She, Todd and Georgia make their home in Westford.

Krisa A. Kozlowski became a partner at Cantor Fitzgerald in the quality control division on Sept. 15.

Kimberly A. (Zande) MacKenzie received her MBA at UML, as well as a graduate certificate in professional with over 19 years of experience in operations and information technology. MacKenzie received her MBA at UMass Lowell.

Natalie Jones Evans, who earned a certificate in behavior intervention in justice at UML, aims to make cutting-edge speech and language therapy resources more accessible to parents and children through her “Connecting Kids with Communication” program. A pediatric speech-language pathologist, Evans is a certified member of the American Speech Language Hearing Association, a certified autism specialist and a board-certified cognitive specialist. She is the CEO of Puzzle Piece Kids, a private speech and language therapy agency for pediatric patients in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Nicholas M. Dragoni was named technical assistant for noise and vibration at American Cambridge, Mass.

Eric Watson was promoted to captain. He joined the Chippewa Force in 1999, was promoted to sergeant in 2003 and became a lieutenant in 2014. He received a master’s degree in criminal justice from UML, as well as a graduate certificate in forensic criminology.

Carolyn Rolfe is seen with her husband, Ron, on a recent trip to the White Mountains.

Sean Osborne talks with his wife, Ruds, during a family trip to the beach.

A "A coach and mentor to UML engineering students, Cynthia Conde often finds herself addressing their uncertainties about the direction their futures might take. One useful approach to this, she has found, is “just to use my own story.”

It’s not hard to see why. Conde ’01, ’07, a member of the advisory boards for both the Francis College of Engineering and the Society of Women Engineers, has traveled a path across the engineering spectrum—from consumer products to biotech to IT, from a mom-and-pop business to a global behemoth—that any serious student would envy.

Growing up in Lawrence as the seventh of nine children, she was an early believer, she says, in the power of education to “take you places you otherwise would never imagine.” Her journey began with a B.S. in industrial engineering, followed by a master’s in management science, both from UMass Lowell. Then came the professional groundwork: an early job with Procter & Gamble as a manufacturing engineer, then three years with C.R. Bard overseeing the manufacture of packaging and medical devices. At that point, in the spring of 1994, barely 30 years old and only five years out of school, Conde embarked on her first big project: antepreneurship, a family-owned business, Hawkeye Software Systems, that provided case management software to the legal profession. For much of the two years this job lasted (before the company was sold in 1996), “I was going door to door between law firms, showing demos, convincing lawyers of a new way to manage their cases,” she says. “It was challenging work, for sure.”

The next job became a building block for most of what followed. As director of operations for diagnostic products at Genzyme Corp. in Cambridge, she found herself closer than ever to the center of things. “It was an exciting time,” she says. “Genzyme was growing fast, it was all very entrepreneurial—lots of mission-driven people doing important things for patients.”

Over the next 20 years, until well after its 2011 acquisition by multinational pharmaceutical firm Sanofi-Aventis, Conde ascended through the ranks at Sanofi and Genzyme. When she left in November 2016, she was president of the biotech arm of the New Hampshire High Tech Council, she is chair of the New England Human Rights Committee in Lexington, Mass., and founder and president of the Association of Black Civilian of Lexington. After five years of active duty in the Air Force, Osborne worked for a large civil engineering consulting firm in Cambridge before opening his own firm, OSD LLC, in Lexington.

Throughout it all, Conde says, she has a single priority: “to connect the dots between the business needs and IT, across all functions, for the biotech arm of the New Hampshire High Tech Council, she is chair of the New England Human Rights Committee in Lexington, Mass., and founder and president of the Association of Black Civilian of Lexington. After five years of active duty in the Air Force, Osborne worked for a large civil engineering consulting firm in Cambridge before opening his own firm, OSD LLC, in Lexington.

Through this open and direct manner and strong followership, Conde says, she has a single priority: “to connect the dots between the business needs and IT, across all functions, for the biotech arm of the New Hampshire High Tech Council, she is chair of the New England Human Rights Committee in Lexington, Mass., and founder and president of the Association of Black Civilian of Lexington. After five years of active duty in the Air Force, Osborne worked for a large civil engineering consulting firm in Cambridge before opening his own firm, OSD LLC, in Lexington.

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When He Tweets, People Listen

Electrical engineering alumnus Vala Afshar ’95, didn’t join Twitter until 2011. And even then, he didn’t create his account.

“T he CEO of my company created it without a Twitter handle,” says Afshar, who was vice president of global services at Enterasys Networks, and spent 11 of 12 years at the time. “He used my badge ID photo and wrote my bio.”

Afshar’s identity wasn’t being stolen, nor was he falling victim to some catfishing scheme. He was co-piloting in-house social media platform that was part of its Salesforce customer relationship management system. The chief information officer noticed that Afshar had the most Chatter followers among the team—"the context was he was sharing wasn’t being seen by the outside world.”

Afshar agreed to try tweeting for one month.

Seven years later, Afshar is up to 251,000 Twitter followers. Forbes has named him the top social media influencer of chief marketing officers. He is now chief digital evangelist at Salesforce, a position he has held for two years running. He is now chief digital evangelist at Salesforce, a position he held for over two years for the Northeastern Family Fund, provider of scholarships to UML student-veterans.

Afshar’s family emigrated from Iran to the United States when he was 10. He major French companies. She is now pursuing a second master’s degree, this time in ecology and geography at the Sorbonne in Paris. (9)

Alec DeFronzo is executive director of the nonprofit Piers Park Homes and working in development for the Northeastern Family Fund, provider of scholarships to UML student-veterans. He is executive director last year, when he managed several group homes and worked in development for the Northeastern Family Fund, provider of scholarships to UML student-veterans. He is executive director last year, when he managed several group homes and also helped program in the Northern province of Tigray.

Elise M. Miles began working at New England Rehabilitation Hospital in Lowell as a registered nurse after graduation. She later obtained a master’s degree in nursing as a family nurse practitioner and currently works at Friendswood Medical Group in Lowell.

Maria E. Price received a master’s degree in music education at Boston College and later became an adjunct faculty member there, teaching a music appreciation class and leading choirs. She worked at various teaching and musical organizations while teaching music. She is currently leading in Kenya, teaching lessons in violin, cello, and viola, and coaching orchestras at Mount Kenya Academy.

Amanda R. Landers is the environmental health and safety leader at Advanced Filtration Systems Inc. (a joint venture of Caterpillar and Donaldson) in Channahon, Ill.

Amanda (Brad) Tezanos and Christopher J. Tezanos ’13 married in August 2016 in Georgetown, Mass. Christine Tezanos graduated from Marmion College with an E.D.S. in May 2015 and currently works in the Career Development Center at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, N.H.

The War Hero

The UMass Lowell band endorses into the “Star Spangled Banner.” The Air Force ROTC, 354’s honor guard plants flags at each side of the stage.

Nick Lavery snaps to attention. His arms are suspended at his sides. His gaze is forward. The hardware on his chassis— he’s the Silver Star, a Bronze Star with Valor, Three Bronze Stars, Three Purple Hearts, and whose inhabitants have ties, “some of which were high among the Peace Corps in Ethiopia, spent two years with the Peace Corps in Ethiopia, where he was an agricultural and environmental volunteer in the town of Elega, Anfara, in the northern province of Tigrai. The chief youth development programs and also helped provide training and funding to the surrounding subsistence farmers. The area’s farmers have been resistant to change, and environmental volunteers have been few and far between. “The most important skill in a digital economy is your ability to stay teachable,” says Afshar. “”It’s the most important skill.”

And even then, he didn’t create his account. “The CEO of my company created it without a Twitter handle,” says Afshar, who was vice president of global services at Enterasys Networks, and spent 11 of 12 years at the time. “He used my badge ID photo and wrote my bio.”

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Nick Lavery snaps to attention. His arms are suspended at his sides. His gaze is forward. The hardware on his chassis— he’s the Silver Star, a Bronze Star with Valor, Three Bronze Stars, Three Purple Hearts,
Playing catch(up)

I want to solidify myself as a bullpen guy for the Pittsburgh Pirates. It’s been a great stellar junior year with the River Hawks, has endured a few bumps along his career, and get ready for the season. I get to see my friends and family, which I don’t get to who gets in a few rounds of golf with Harring each fall. “I can hang out with my dog New Englander. He bought a house in his hometown of Beverly last summer, just a after the surgery, but it was probably 18 months before I finally started feeling like my old self. It’s a great sports city. The energy they have for their sports teams is awesome.”

But no matter where his baseball career takes him, Leathersich will always be a New Englander. He bought a house in his hometown of Beverly last summer, just a 10-minute drive from his off-season workouts. North East Sports Performance in Danvers.

“When I come home, I don’t want to leave. I love New England,” says Leathersich, who gets in a few rounds of golf with Harring each fall. “I can hang out with my dog and get ready for the season. I get to see my friends and family, which I don’t get to do for seven or eight months out of the year.”

The 6-foot-2, 205-pound Leathersich, who was drafted by the Mets following a stellar junior year with the River Hawks, has endured a few bumps along his career, but he’s never lost his fastball when it comes to confidence.

Leathersich was optioned to the Triple-A Indianapolis minor league, but UML is 60 UMASS LOWELL MAGAZINE

“Rising Star” by Plastics News.

Mike A. Leo was named a Rising Star” by Plastics News.

Jonathan Cabellou (top left) and Michael Angelos, both classmates, were instrumental in encouraging campus brought us, the support from our peers and classmates was instrumental in encouraging us to continue exploring the songwriting process together, networking with bands from other colleges in the area and just continuing to grow and always continue as a band.

DM: We also had a chance to play Boston Calling in 2013. That day had one of the biggest stages and crowds that we ever played on, it was our debut as a band.

UML: THAT WAS WHAT I LIKE TO PLAY HOMECOMING THIS FALL?

DM: It was such a great day for us. So good seeing some classmates and faculty and staff that we haven’t seen in so long, not to mention first time amping the campus loud enough for us. We were very proud and honored to be a part of that event and look forward to coming back sooner rather than later.

UML: DID THE KIMMEL GYM GIVE TO ANYTHING ELSE?

DM: We are currently planning a possible European tour, which has been something we have been talking about for a long time now. Kimmel appearance really boosted us in a way to make us feel like we are really ready for that.

UML: ANY OTHER GIDS THAT HAVE BEEN HIGHLIGHTS?

DM: We also got a chance to play Boston Calling in 2013. That day had one of the biggest stages and crowds that we had ever played on, it was our debut as a band.

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UML: WHAT IS THE KIMMEL GYM GIVE TO ANYTHING ELSE?
Playing the Field

Amanda McGrew ’10 was swiping for love in all the wrong places. “I tried all the dating apps—my friends would make me profiles—but something was missing,” says McGrew, who didn’t like wasting time “dipping into this pot of everybody” without a good filter. “There are all these dating apps for farmers, for Christians, for seniors, but I don’t fall into any of those categories. It doesn’t work.”

That’s when McGrew, who played three-plus seasons of Division I basketball at the University of Rhode Island before injuring her knee and transferring to UMass Lowell in 2009 for a fifth redshirt season, had her “aha” moment. She created Playoff, a dating app exclusively for current and former college or professional athletes.

“Competitive athletes, from the junior college level all the way up to the pros, invest thousands of hours of hard work and practice into their sports,” McGrew says. “Those experiences help create who we are and the way we view the world. Dating someone who can understand that perspective is invaluable.”

Indeed, niche dating apps are becoming bigger players in the $3 billion online dating industry. McGrew hopes Playoff can carve out a strong presence in the low post.

Launched in December for Apple and Android devices, Playoff requires users to verify that they were part of a collegiate or professional sports program for at least one season after high school, generally by providing a link to their online athletic bio.

The free version of the app lets users filter by gender and age within a 150-mile radius, while the premium version ($7.99 a month) allows for filtering by school and sport, as well as for unlimited “mulligans” in case you swipe “no” on someone too quickly and want to revisit them.

McGrew, who earned a bachelor’s degree in finance from URI before getting a second degree in marketing from the Manning School of Business, moved back home to Los Angeles after college. She works as a physical education teacher at a private school in L.A., coaches youth basketball and runs The Sandy Farmhouse, selling handmade wood signs on Etsy.

Turning her Playoff idea into an actual business—hiring a developer, creating an LLC, attracting investors and starting a brand ambassador program to promote the app on social media—has been an eye-opening experience for McGrew. “At times it’s been intimidating and overwhelming, because it literally started as nothing more than an idea, but that’s also the thrill of it,” says McGrew, who believes her background as a competitive athlete, combined with her business degrees, has helped her succeed. The app drew nearly 1,000 users in its first month on the market. —EB

Most Magical Job on Earth

Like many kids, Dean Kennedy ’15, ’16 grew up on Disney. The Norton native gobbled up the movies and music and counted down the days until the next family vacation to Disney World. But Kennedy turned his love of Disney into a career.

“I’ve wanted to work there forever,” says Kennedy, who earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mechanical engineering from the Francis College of Engineering. “I gained my career goals toward that all through high school and college.”

Kennedy’s dream came true when he was hired as a planner with Facility Asset Management at Walt Disney World in Orlando. He assists project managers with the planning and budgeting of construction projects big and small—both “onstage” (the ones visible to guests in the theme parks and resorts) and “backstage” (the offices and infrastructure seen only by employees).

Despite already having two engineering internships under his belt at Walt Disney World—the first in 2015 after earning his bachelor’s degree and the second in 2016 after earning his master’s—Kennedy faced an intense interview process for the full-time position.

“The more interviews I had, the more unsure I was that I’d get it,” says Kennedy, who braced himself for a move back home to Massachusetts before getting the big news. “It was a big relief.”

Kennedy hopes to stay at Walt Disney World at least through 2021, when the park celebrates its 50th anniversary. After that, he’d like to explore a move to Walt Disney Imagineering of Disneyland in California.

But now that Kennedy goes to work every day at “The Most Magical Place on Earth,” has any of that magic he felt as a kid worn off?

“That hasn’t faded at all,” says Kennedy, who visits the parks as often as he can (his favorite ride is “Expedition Everest” in the Animal Kingdom). “I still get that emotional feeling when I walk into the park and see the castle or watch the fireworks. It doesn’t get lost on me.” —EB

Most Magical Job on Earth

Andy Raitto won the men’s open event at CRASH B’s Indoor Rowing Championships in Boston in February, with the fastest time of the day (5:54). Once considered the world indoor rowing championships, CRASH B’s event will qualify Raitto for an invite to the national team camp in June.
We will be rolling out the "bliss" carpet to honor seven alumni who are in their professions and communities and in their service to the university. This reception, dinner and awards ceremony is one of the university's premier alumni recognition and achievement events. Don't miss it!

Thursday, April 26, 5:30 p.m.
UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center

The Honorees Are…

Richard Lynn ’87
Executive Vice President & Northeast Region Market President, Beacon Health Options
ZUCKERBERG COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Miriam Smith ’57
Elementary School Teacher (retired)
GEORGE DAVIS INVITATIONAL TRACK MEET

George Davis ’52, ’80
Senior Health Physicist, MJW Corporation

Elizabeth Brackett ’84
Senior Health Physicist, MJW Corporation
KENNEDY COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

Lisa Brothers ’94
Chairman and CEO, Arch Capital Group
FRANCIS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Pauline Dyer-Cole ’57
FRANKLIN COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT

Richard Grande ’72, ’90
Managing Director, First Republic Investment Management
MAKING MARKS OF BUSINESS

Tickets can be purchased at alumni.uml.edu/2017alumniawards.

Alumni Events Calendar

APRIL

SECOND ANNUAL DAYS OF GIVING
April 20, 10 a.m.

Tongas Center at UMass Lowell
St-P’s annual run/walk benefits veteran causes. 
www.chrisbullivansmemorialtongas.com/

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING ALUMNI & STUDENT NETWORKING RECEPTION
April 16, 6 p.m.

StaC, ENC, North Campus
Chemical Engineering alumni give students insight on job opportunities, their experiences in the field and what they may have known when they were in college.

GEORGE DAVIS INVITATIONAL TRACK MEET
April 21
Courtney Field Complex, Lowell
A track meet and opportunity to honor graduating seniors

20TH ANNUAL UNIVERSITY ALUMNI AWARDS
April 26, 3:30 p.m.

UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center
Seven of UMass Lowell’s star alumni are recognized during this dinner and awards ceremony.

SEVENTH ANNUAL SIGMA PHI BETA FRATERNITY MEMORIAL 5K RUN/WALK
April 29, 10 a.m.

Tongas Center at UMass Lowell
St-P’s annual run/walk benefits veteran causes.

JUNE

WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
June 19

UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center
Women leaders discuss the challenges and paths forward to empower women in today’s workplace.

September

BIOLOGY 50TH ANNIVERSARY
September 28, 5 p.m.

Center for the Arts, North Campus
Biology celebrates the 50th anniversary of the college.

University Crossing

BIOLOGY 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
October 27, 5 p.m.

Oct. 12, 8 a.m.

Alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends gather for a weekend full of entertainment, reunions and family fun.

RIVER HAWK HOMECOMING WEEKEND

SPRING 2018
1. Alumni and friends gathered at The Cannery in Newport Beach, Calif. From left: Chuck Hour '82, Executive Director of Alumni & Donor Relations Heather Milone '02, '08, Rahul Bhalerao '91, Director of Development Sally Waltham '03, Jacqueline Clark, David Clark '68, Roy Humphreys '80, Cindy Humphreys, Helen George '75. '80, '83, '89, '96. From left: Christine Vaccaro '98, Michael Vaccaro '70, and NEA/NASDSE Dunsmuir '84.

2. Barbara Masue (center) posed with her son-in-law and three of her five children who attended UMass Lowell at a summer reception on Cape Cod. From left: Chuck Campbell '94, Kyle Masue '91, Barbara Masue, Kimberly Masue '81 and Stephen Masue '83.

3. Alumni and friends enjoy a summer reception in Maine along the Kennebunk River. From left: Phil Pelletier, Robin Pelletier, Susan '99 and Paul King '99.

4. Alumni and their families gathered at a Punch Bowl Social in Denver, Colo., for some fun and networking.

5. Alumni in Athens, Greece, made connections with fellow UML graduates over dinner with Vice Chancellor of University Advancement John Finno (right) and alumni from left: Chris Pavianolas '92, '88, Chris Katsarouzos '86, Petros Panayiakos '01, Costas Pavianolas '98, Dimitris Kalabas '85, Feudo, Costas Dalianis '71 and Iainos Venizelos '79.

6. Jim '88 and Amy '89, '90 Regan, with fellow alumni and friends, traveled to Tempe, Ariz., to root for the River Hawks ice hockey team; here when they Antonios Stavropoulos.

7. Alumni and friends gathered at the Hawkeye Way Homecoming pre-game festival. From left: Paul LeMacghorne '00, Philip Sollivette '10, David Mathews '10 and Nalle Manand.

8. Alumni and friends gathered at the Alumni Way Homecoming pre-game festival. From left: John Bork, Adam '03 and Katy Hogue, Mike Jarvis '06 and John DeAngelis '03.

9. Sigma Phi Omicron night of River Hawk hockey.

10. Bill Bork, Adam '03 and Katy Hogue, Mike Jarvis '06 and John DeAngelis '03, Kata Szabo, Elisia '13 (H), Saab.

11. New members of UML’s Manning School of Business Advisory Board were recognized during the annual Celebration of Philanthropy. Pictured with Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney '75, '80, Rick Meek, Rick back row, from left: John and June '92 Ragusa, D.E. and Carol Mucita, Fred Chapelier '11, Kathryn and Robert Delhomme, Charles '78 and Joanne '78 Yestramski. Front row, from left: John Bork, Adam '03, Rick Meek, Patricia Solomont '77, '94 (H), Moloney, Jennifer and Russell Collins '85, '74 and Deborah Pinch '93, '06, '13.

12. Celebration of Philanthropy guests joined Chancellor Jacqueline Moloney '75, '80 in congratulating Alan Solomont '77, '94 (H) on his recent induction into the university’s Circle of Distinction. From left, John and Barbara Thompson, Rick Solomont '77, '94 (H), Moloney, Mark '91, '13 and Diane '13 (H) Gacek.

13. Diane and Eugene McAuliffe enjoyed the pre-game reception for True Blue members, those with two or more consecutive years of giving to UMass Lowell, before the River Hawks hockey team took on the University of New Hampshire.

14. Bobby Tugbyale '05 and Prof. Sue Kim, chair of the English Department and co-director of the Center for Asian American Studies, gathered with alumni and friends during the Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Night with the River Hawks.

15. During the Manning School of Business Night with the River Hawks, Joseph left, All right and their mother, Susan Dudrey '77 (center), were presented with a hockey stick signed by the team. The gift was a token of the Manning family's night of River Hawks ice hockey.

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17. Back row, from left: Chris Demange, Kyil Collins '08, '12, LeeAnn Nelson '94 and Robert Dudley III '74, father to Joseph and Ali and husband to Susanne, who recently passed away. Bob was a loyal and dedicated friend to UMass Lowell, served on the Manning School of Business Advisory Board and was a DifferenceMaker mentor and judge.

18. Sandy and John '67, '71 Silvas and Prof. Michaela '97, '04 and Paul Girolami celebrated the newly named College of Education during the college’s night of River Hawks ice hockey.

19. Advisory Board member Richard Joniowski '78 (right) and Kitty Balhi, Abby Joniowski and Chris Joniowski enjoyed the Zubeckberg College of Health Sciences pre-game reception.

20. Fraternally and sororitly alumni and friends gathered for a night of hockey, including the Alpha Epsilon Council, when the River Hawks took on Boston University. Back row, from left: Chris Damang, Pat Collins, '93, '96, LeeAnn Deaky '94, Angela Damang, Jay '94 and Judith Suaco, Adam '03 and Alex Hogue, Stephen Anthony '90, Kimberly Mark '15, Eugene Pizzi '96 and Bradley Rose '96. Middle row, from left: Angela Rosciano, Tiffany Sareghan '06, Jac- queline Suaco, Brenda Mirani '91, '11, Leah Mirani, Blanca Merri '15, '20, Scottish Faller '15, Ronald 9514 and Lincoln. Front row, from left: Chris Davis, Connor Davis, Andrew Davis, Cody Richards, John Pinnouls '83, Kate Deaky, Monica Melletti '91, Larry Griffin '79 and Robert Valverde '75.

21. Bill '83, '89 and Deb Vallancourt attended a Francisc College of Engineering gathering at the Tupper Grove Center to watch the River Hawks against Boston University.

22. Foodbank '01 and Greg Childs '92 were greeted by Dean Mou-Hendrick Bradly, Director of College of Sciences night of River Hawks hockey.

23. Tom Bork, Adam '03 and Kat Hogue, Mike Jarvis '06 and John DeAngelis '03, Kata Szabo, Elisia '13 (H), Saab.

Continued...
ALUMNI EVENTS

22. "Maura Walsh '80 talks with Luís Díaz '18 and Cristina Arroyo '18 about her experience with disaster preparedness in healthcare. A leading healthcare executive in the second largest healthcare system in Boston, Texas, Walsh was featured as an Alumni Showcase speaker from the Zuckerman College of Health Sciences.

23. Merci Szczepanek '56, '91 and Toby Hiskes '68 attended a Faculty Showcase event about advances being made in the textile industry at UMass Lowell, presented by Prof. James Sherwood from the Francis College of Engineering.

24. Director of the UML Climate Change Initiative, Prof. Juliette Rooney-Varga took alumni and friends on an interactive lecture exploring the effects of climate change policy and what it would take to create a stable climate and green economy during a Faculty Showcase event. From left: Robert Slezak, Richard and Nancy Grove, Ronald Cornamount '15, Rooney-Varga, Gregory Bohnsack '14, Kristin McClary '09 and Fahmina Zaman '14, '15, '16.

25. Prof. James Sherwood talked with audience members about the future of textiles at UMass Lowell during his Faculty Showcase presentation.

26. Maura Walsh talks with Luis Disla '18 and Cristina Alvarado '18 about her experience with disaster preparedness in healthcare.

27. Marcy Szczepanik '56, '91 and Toby Hodes '58 attended a Faculty Showcase event about advances being made in the textile industry at UMass Lowell, presented by Prof. James Sherwood from the Francis College of Engineering.

28. Prof. James Sherwood talked with audience members about the future of textiles at UMass Lowell during his Faculty Showcase presentation.

29. Award-Winning Producers Stewart Lane and Bonnie Comley '81 met with Theatre Arts, Digital Media and Sound Recording Technology students during a return to campus to celebrate the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the Comley-Lane Theatre.

30. Alumni, students and friends gathered for the Women Engineers and Scientists Kickoff event. From left: Hannah Pastagal '19, Allison Clark '13 and Heather Sweeney '11.

31. Patricia Sullivan Talty '78, senior Lindy Reed and Brenda Maille '78 connected at the annual Lawyers, Mock Trial and Pre-Law Society alumni and students event at Allen House.

32. Prof. James Sherwood talked with audience members about the future of textiles at UMass Lowell during his Faculty Showcase presentation.

33. The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) chapter celebrated the past, present and future of the organization at their seventh annual soiree, as they honored the founder of the UML chapter, Rich Reese '15. Vice president of the NSBE UML chapter, Agbanjeh Mathews '14 and President of the NSBE UML chapter, Brenda Rice '15 (right) posed for a photo with Rich '15 and Brenda '12 Reese.

34. Alumni enjoy their time back on the river during the annual Alumni Rowing Day.

35. Alumni, students and friends ventured up Pack Monadnock for an insightful hike with Prof. Lori Weeden '00 from the Department of Environmental, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.

36. Dave Kazmer, chair of the Plastics Engineering Department, (right) gave Jim Riggs '10 (left) a student-made, laser-cut River Hawk that Biggins won in an auction during the annual Plastics Engineering Golf Tournament.

37. Alumni and friends gathered at LaBelle Winery for a wine tasting event. From left: Tiffany Saragian '06, Maria Zacchini '10, Joyce Keefe '04, '13 and Dean of Student Affairs and Event Services Brenda Evans '04, '05.
50th, 60th and Golden Alumni Reunions

Classes of 1958 and 1968 (Classes of 1957 and 1959 are also invited) and Golden Alumni who graduated in 1967 and prior

May 18-20, 2018

Enjoy campus tours, faculty lectures, Golden Alumni Luncheon, class dinner and opportunities to reunite with classmates.

Classes of 1958 and 1968 are invited to march in gold robes and receive recognition in the 2018 Commencement ceremony.

To let us know if you plan to attend, or to volunteer, contact Reja Gamble at Reja_Gamble@uml.edu or 978-934-2208.

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Named after Mary E. McGauvan, the university’s former vice president of student affairs, the new McGauvan Center opened in 2016 after a $34 million renovation. The all-you-care-to-eat South Campus Dining facility features “home-cooked” entrees at Full Plate, pizza and pasta at Aroma, sandwiches from Broadway Deli, a salad bar at Wilder Farms, gluten-free options at Choices and late-night takeout from Grill Out. There is seating for 400 on the first floor, including a bright and open section with a two-story glass wall providing a view of the South Campus quad.

The aroma of fresh-baked bread and coffee greets guests on the second floor, which connects to O’Leary Library and has seating for another 400, including several tables and chairs on a new outdoor terrace. In addition to a bakery and cafe, the second level features retail food options at Subway and Freshii, a Canadian chain specializing in wraps, burritos, salads and smoothies. Grab-and-go options are also available at the Merrimack Market.
The Women’s Leadership Conference at UMass Lowell is a day of empowerment, enrichment and connection.

Skills workshops on four leadership tracks:

• Lead, Empower, Inspire!
• Succeed in Business and Entrepreneurship
• Cultivate Career Development Skills
• Invest in Your Personal Capital