

WASHBURN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION — FALL 2023

THE ICHABOD





BENTON HALL





On the cover:

The sun sets over Ichabod Plaza outside Morgan Hall and the Welcome Center. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*



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Your news, thoughts and questions are important to us. News of jobs, honors, weddings, and additions to your family are always welcome. Please include your name, class year, address and daytime phone number.
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From the President

Dear Alumni and Friends,

What an amazing summer we had at Washburn! We've been busy telling Shawnee County high school graduates about our new Together We Thrive financial aid package, we opened Robert J. Dole Hall – the new home of Washburn University School of Law – and we kicked off the school year invigorated and ready to help students reach big dreams. This issue of The Ichabod talks about the many ways we are dreaming and building big.

Together We Thrive is a game changer for area high schoolers and their families. I'm so excited to know there are pathways for students who wouldn't otherwise have educational opportunities beyond high school. This is a major part of our collaboration with and commitment to the Shawnee County community. We are very excited to see the positive changes in our community from these scholarships.

Students seeking a law degree now have the newest, most exciting opportunity to do so right here at Washburn. Attaching Sen. Dole's name to the building honors someone admired nationwide for his legacy of service, and a mural in the entryway pays tribute to lawyers involved in the momentous Brown v. Board of Education case and other civil rights battles. Washburn-trained attorneys truly helped change the course of history. Their work aligns with our value of education for all, which is not only a core value but our founding principle.

Ichabods are making a difference around the world and beyond, as you'll read in this issue. Brian Thomas, professor of physics and astronomy, and one of his former students are co-authors on a paper presenting innovative research on the impact supernovae have had on Earth. Our faculty members give students world-class opportunities, and Prof. Thomas is a shining star at Washburn and in his field. You'll also read about our School of Law Early Admission Program and the Great TEXTS certificate program. These unique programs help reach our goal of getting students across the stage at graduation in a way that's timely and with the least amount of debt.

As we celebrate all we have done and will do in the future, I am excited to invite you to the inauguration of my presidency on Oct. 27, 2023, during Homecoming weekend. We're bringing everyone together to celebrate making Washburn the best it can be through a renewed sense of vision and energy. I look forward to the future and humbly take on the tremendous responsibility of making sure we are doing the best we can.

It's a great day to be an Ichabod!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JuliAnn Mazachek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J".

JuliAnn Mazachek, Ph.D.
President, Washburn University





Washburn student Sophia Calderon-Sosa embraces Franki Ostrom, ba '20, instructional librarian, after learning about the new scholarship she will receive (left, photo by Scott Brackey). Topeka High School senior Yania Soto learns from Alan Bearman, vice president of enrollment management and dean of student success and libraries, that she will receive the Shawnee County Promise scholarship (right, photo by Jennifer Wiard).

Thrive at Washburn

New scholarships create long-term investment in Shawnee County students

By Annie Flachsbarth

Although recent Highland Park High School graduate Jackie Perez applied to other Kansas schools outside of Topeka, when she learned she qualified to receive Washburn University's new Shawnee County Promise scholarship – which will pay her tuition for all four years of her Washburn education – the decision of where to attend was an easy one.

"I jumped for joy," Perez said. "Not only do I not have to worry about how I'm going to pay back my tuition, but I'm also not putting that burden on my parents. I am blessed; not everyone gets this opportunity."

Education for All

The Shawnee County Promise scholarship is part of Together We Thrive, a financial aid package launched this summer to target Shawnee County high school

graduates to help retain and nurture local talent. The initiatives represent a significant investment in the future of Washburn students and the county.

Upon meeting certain criteria, the Shawnee County Promise scholarship reduces the barrier to higher education for students from households with an income of \$75,000 or less. True to its name, this scholarship promises Shawnee County high school graduates a chance to attend Washburn tuition-free. The Washburn Shawnee County Thrives scholarship provides Shawnee County high school graduates \$1,000 per year to attend Washburn University or \$750 per year to attend Washburn University Institute of Technology – regardless of income level. Others can qualify for these scholarships as well. See information on right for more details.

“We are doubling down on our commitment to Shawnee County by investing in the young people of our community,” said JuliAnn Mazachek, president, Washburn. “Washburn is proud to be a municipal university that is supported, in part, by the taxpayers of Topeka and Shawnee County. We plan to reinvest into local students and help them realize their educational dreams right here at home.”

These scholarships not only mirror Washburn's dedication to providing affordable access to quality education, but also the mission to secure equal outcomes for all students. This commitment has not gone unnoticed. U.S. News and World Report recognized Washburn as Kansas' top public regional university last year, also noting the university has the least student debt among all public regional universities in the state.

The Pursuit of Happiness

For incoming freshmen like Perez, the scholarship removes any concerns she had about the cost of pursuing a college degree, even when coming from a lower-income family.



Jackie Perez. Photo by Jenny Munoz

“As a first-generation college student, I’m looking forward to not having to worry about finances, and really enjoying my college career,” Perez said. “I’m excited to walk across the stage in four years knowing I’m the first person in my family to graduate from college.”

Washburn is not just investing in the education of students, but in the very fabric of Shawnee County's future. Emilio Chavez, ba '22, Washburn admissions counselor, said interest in Washburn will continue to grow as more Shawnee County students learn about this opportunity. He hopes this will help those students know they belong at Washburn.

“We’re setting an example that there are a lot of good things happening here and in the community,” Chavez said.

With these trailblazing initiatives, Washburn is paving the way for students in Shawnee County to both chase their dreams and contribute significantly to their hometown.

Together We Thrive Financial Aid Package

Available to Shawnee County high school and home school graduates, including freshmen, transfer and current full-time students. Other criteria may apply.

- **Shawnee County Promise:** Full tuition paid for those meeting certain financial requirements
- **Washburn Shawnee County Thrives:** \$1,000 a year at Washburn University and \$750 a year at Washburn Tech, regardless of income level

Learn more at washburn.edu/snco and washburn.edu/promise

For Perez, that dream is to obtain her nursing degree and get a job as a registered nurse at a Topeka hospital or pediatric clinic. She’s also open to other specialties after she explores her options. For now, she has a part-time job to support herself through college.

“I’m planning to live at home to save money and stay closer to family,” Perez said. “I also have connections with my high school ROTC program. Not having to worry about paying for school while I’m in school will be a big burden off my shoulders and allow me to focus on my education while helping out the ROTC program in any way I can.”

According to Chavez, promoting these new scholarships is the next step for the undergraduate recruitment and admissions team. They plan to visit Shawnee County high schools to make sure students know what they can get from Washburn before they decide where to attend school.

“Washburn is changing students’ and parents’ lives with the addition of these scholarships,” Chavez said. “As we promote these scholarships, and people see they can get a high-quality and affordable education here, more students will consider Washburn.” 🚶



(front row, center, left to right) Laura Kelly, governor, Kansas; JuliAnn Mazachek, president, Washburn University; and Shelly Buhler, chair, Washburn University board of regents; are joined by several donors and dignitaries as they cut the ribbon on July 21, 2023, at Robert J. Dole Hall. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*

An Ideal Opening

Ribbon cut on School of Law building this summer, welcoming first students

By Dannie Harris-Cooper • dharris-cooper@wualumni.org

Over the summer, the students, faculty, staff and alumni of Washburn University School of Law saw their dream of a new home become a reality. Robert J. Dole Hall was dedicated on July 21, 2023, after much anticipation and an extensive fundraising campaign that brought together more than 1,000 alumni and donors who contributed more than \$14 million for the project.

“Years ago, a handful of us dreamed of the day we might be here, surrounded by Washburn Law friends and family, dedicating a brand-new, state-of-the-art law building,” said JuliAnn Mazachek, president, Washburn University. “We know great things sometimes take a long time and are worth waiting for. We are grateful for the dedicated work and persistent vision it took by so many to bring this dream to life for the future generations of law students.”

The facility is designed for the way legal education has evolved. Classrooms can be configured to accommodate the needs of individual classes, and there are many spaces for students to meet and work collaboratively. In addition, two courtrooms allow students to refine their practice skills. These upgrades will allow students to continue their education from anywhere they can access the internet, capitalizing on the Third Year Anywhere initiative that began in 2019. The program allows students to finish their third year of law school remotely, gaining experience in a location they plan to practice in after graduation. Classrooms include the technology to embrace this form of distance learning.

Named after one of Washburn’s most noteworthy graduates, Sen. Robert Dole, the new home’s upgraded technology will be an asset to those who, like Dole, may face challenges

on their educational journey. With an injury to his right shoulder during World War II, Dole, ba '52, jd '52, h '69, h '85, earned his law degree while teaching himself to write with his left hand. During that time, he would use a bulky device to record lectures and learn the material. Now, the ability to record lectures in the new facility will allow all students to revisit those lectures at any time.

The building also embraces the history of the Law School and the impact of Washburn attorneys. A four-part mural by artist Michael Toombs hangs prominently over the entryway staircase. The artwork, aptly titled “Non Nobis Solum, Not for Ourselves Alone,” highlights the role of Washburn lawyers in the landmark *Brown v. Board* case. Another nod to history is the light fixtures in the Michael C. Manning Trial Courtroom. The fixtures are replicas of the lights in the federal courtroom where the *Brown v. Board* case originated in Topeka.

“When Washburn University was founded as Lincoln College in 1865, it embraced a commitment toward education for all, regardless of gender or race,” said Jeff Jackson, bba '89, jd '92, interim dean, Washburn Law. “From Charles Scott (ba '48, jd '48), John Scott (ba '42, jd '47) and Charles Bledsoe, three Washburn lawyers who filed the *Brown v. Board of Education* case, to lawmakers such as Sen. Dole and Rep. Jim Slattery (ba '70, jd '75), who helped fight for and secure passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in Congress, our alumni have been using the skills and knowledge gained at Washburn to ensure equal opportunity for all.”



Photos by Jeremy Wangler

Honoring Legendary Service

Visit wualumni.org/give-to-school-of-law to give to the James M. Concannon Dean and Professor of Law fund.

Several special guests joined the Washburn community for the opening of the building, including Sen. Roger Marshall, Sen. Jerry Moran, Gov. Laura Kelly and Dole's daughter, Robin Dole. Notably missing was James Concannon, who died one month before the ribbon cutting. The 50-year impact of the former dean and professor will continue to be felt for generations of students and alumni, as evidenced by an anonymous donor who made the James Concannon Dean's Suite in the new facility a reality. The University is also raising money to establish the deanship in honor of him. One of Concannon's well-known phrases is positioned above the door as guests depart the suite, “Don't think great thoughts. Read the statute.”

The gratitude toward alumni and friends who brought the new building to life cannot be understated. Their gifts will allow future generations of Washburn attorneys to succeed with a premier legal education that will last a lifetime.

“Today at last, the Washburn University School of Law has the home that it needs, that it deserves and that it has earned,” said Marshall Meek, president, Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation during the ribbon cutting event. “Thank you, all of you, for making today possible.” 🏃



To the Stars

From NASA-funded research to mentoring students, Brian Thomas uncovering the cosmos

By Angela Lutz

Imagine, for a moment, a massive star exploding in the depths of space. The resulting supernova would be brilliant and catastrophically violent, sending harmful X-rays and bits of atoms rippling through the cosmos, penetrating anything in their path. This persistent radiation can last for centuries and reach planets hundreds of light years away – yes, planets like Earth, where there is hard evidence for such an event about 2.5 million years ago. In the most extreme and unlikely scenario, this could trigger a similar event and corresponding mass extinction. For Brian Thomas, Washburn University physics and astronomy professor, taking a closer look at these kinds of existential threats is all in a day's work.

"In the cases we've examined, these events contribute to the destruction of ozone molecules in the Earth's upper atmosphere, which protect us from ultraviolet light from the sun," Thomas said. "This can cause negative effects on humans and other organisms, and in some cases, we could get an increase in background radiation exposure that could cause a rise in cancer rates. We think this kind of major event has happened a few times in Earth's history."

The likelihood of such an event occurring again anytime soon is small, but Thomas has discovered people love talking about it. This year, he coauthored two published studies on the topic. Over the years, he has collaborated on nearly 30 peer-reviewed articles on this and subjects including the ecological impact of radiation events and the connection between radiation events and mass extinctions. A passionate researcher, Thomas has also served as a principal investigator on multi-year research projects funded by NASA. He finds most people have a certain degree of curiosity about how supernovae can impact their everyday lives.

"I think the connection between these very distant stars and the very present life on Earth is really fascinating, and I think that resonates with people,"

Thomas said. "On the whole, people are very interested in past life on Earth – people love dinosaurs – and astronomy is interesting in and of itself. I get to study a variety of topics and have worked with people across the sciences to try to connect these big-picture questions."

I've had some incredibly capable students who have done some fantastic work. It's exciting to see students go from not knowing anything about how to approach these research questions to making significant progress and contributing to science.

— *Brian Thomas*

Thomas' prolific career is the culmination of a lifelong fascination with what he calls "the big questions." His interests clicked when he took physics and calculus in high school and discovered some of the mysteries of the universe could be understood through math. Ultimately, he earned his doctorate in philosophy at the University of Kansas before coming to work at Washburn in 2005.

"I was fascinated by how we could basically explain the universe using equations," Thomas said. "I also have an interest in philosophy and cosmology, which is essentially the study of the origin and structure of the universe. These struck me as the biggest questions one could ask."

In his work at Washburn, Thomas strives to involve students in research as much as possible. For Cody Ratterman, bs '21, learning how to use an intermediate-level climate simulator alongside Thomas fueled his interest in climate science. The program allowed him to run computational experiments that demonstrated the complexity of the Earth's climate system and how small changes can have big impacts. Today, Ratterman is pursuing a doctorate in climate science at Utah State University, and he credits Thomas with putting him on the path to his future career.

"He was really open to new ideas while giving me challenging opportunities with just enough help to get me started," Ratterman said. "The astrobiophysics work he focuses on with supernova events includes people from lots of different backgrounds collaborating to fill in the gaps. It seems he has an opportunity for almost any young researcher regardless of their background or experience level. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be pursuing graduate school, climate science or a research-oriented career."

Students have contributed to Thomas' research papers and helped him build tools and software for data analysis.

"I've had some incredibly capable students who have done some fantastic work," Thomas said. "It's exciting to see students go from not knowing anything about how to approach these research questions to making significant progress and contributing to science."

Going forward, Thomas plans to keep asking the big questions through research and encouraging students to do the same, driving their continued interest in physics and astronomy. He's currently collaborating with other scientists on a project looking at how Earth's climate millions of years ago may have been affected by clouds of gas and dust in the galaxy – and through this possibly gaining a glimpse at what the future could hold.

"I've been fortunate at Washburn to be able to teach subjects I really enjoy and influence a lot of students in both the specialization and general classes," Thomas said. "I love helping students gain skills they can use in whatever they do. It's satisfying to see them grow in that way." 🦋



Brian Thomas stands in the server room in Stoffer Science Hall, which houses a new 40-core machine purchased with funds granted by Washburn for the High-Performance Academic Computing Environment. HiPACE is used for research and teaching by students and faculty in the physics and astronomy, chemistry and computer information sciences departments. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*

Single Steps

A journey of a thousand miles winds up at Washburn for Elizabeth Ngatia

By Brad Porter • bporter@wualumni.org



Second-year law student Elizabeth Ngatia. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*

For Elizabeth Ngatia, ba '23, entering Washburn University School of Law is the culmination of a journey beginning 8,744 miles away in Mombasa, Kenya. The fact that it ended up with her and her sister both earning college degrees – the first in their family to do so – and Ngatia going on to law school required an unlikely confluence of circumstances, and more than a little luck. Enough so that, upon receiving her bachelor's degree in political science this spring, Ngatia commented to a reporter at commencement, “This is literally the American Dream.”

Because Ngatia won Washburn University's Sibberson Award as the top graduate in the College of Arts and Sciences and she spent last year taking law classes as part of the Law School Early Admissions Program, her story might be Washburn's dream too.

Ngatia's journey started in southeast Kenya, where her parents' hard work allowed them to get by, but they


yearned for better opportunity. Her parents applied for the Green Card Lottery, a program run by the U.S. State Department. It was such a longshot that even when Ngatia's mother received her letter announcing she had won, she assumed it was a scam. If her father hadn't found the letter weeks later in a pile of junk mail, the opportunity might have been lost forever.

That wasn't the only luck needed. While flying to the U.S., their host family backed out and they had nowhere to stay. A family member eventually found someone willing to host them in Fort Scott, Kansas. As they settled in and began their new lives in America, Ngatia got a job in high school working in the Bourbon County attorney's office.

“Pretty much all of the lawyers there were Washburn grads, and they told me a lot about the university, the law school, life in the capital city,” she said. “I went on a campus visit and just fell in love with the place and the community. I was hooked.”

Kenya had a great deal of local corruption, so as a child, Ngatia became interested in good government. As an Ichabod, she joined WSGA, serving as diversity and inclusion chair, and joined the Pre-Law Club. She became convinced of two things: She wanted to go to law school and she wanted to stay at Washburn. She applied for LEAP and was accepted. That meant she took first-year law school courses as a senior, with those classes completing her undergraduate degree and beginning her law degree. Meeting certain conditions, LEAP offers a full scholarship during that fourth year and scholarships for the other two years of law school. A LEAP student can finish in six years what would normally take seven – and at the cost of less than five years.

“I push myself hard because I know what my parents put in to get me here,” Ngatia said. “Everything I accomplish is not just for me, it's for them as well.”

Learn more about the Law School Early Admission Program at washburn.edu/academics/interdisciplinary-studies/leap. 

Studying the Greats

New certificate program exposes students of all majors to value of literature, art

By Jeremy Wangler • jwangler@wualumni.org

The opportunity to study great literature and works of art has always existed at Washburn University. But until now, if a student wasn't majoring in humanities, their exposure to these works was usually limited to the electives they took.

A new certificate program at Washburn, called Great TEXTS (Transformative, EXperiential and Team-Taught Studies), is making that easier. Through a series of five courses, students will study not only texts, but artworks, musical compositions, theatrical performances and more as they explore issues and questions of humankind. Faculty from varying areas team teach the classes in an interdisciplinary setting. Thanks to a generous donor, Washburn can offer Great TEXTS classes, books and local outings at no cost to students.

"This will be one of our hallmarks of differentiation: an experience that the only place students can get it is right here at Washburn University," said JuliAnn Mazachek, president, Washburn.

"They grapple with big, timely and timeless questions that are as relevant today as whenever the work was originally created," said Kelly Erby, interim dean, College of Arts and Sciences. "The humanities are so important to broadening students' perspectives and developing their ability to think critically, read closely and speak with confidence."

Erby, a history professor and Rik Hine, an associate professor of philosophy and religious studies, both taught the first Great TEXTS class in the spring. Philosophy major Tiffany Mack took the class.

"I really like things that force you to challenge your own worldview," Mack said. "It is so critical we do that to broaden our horizons in order to connect with our fellow citizens because we're all very different. I love academics so much, and these opportunities mean the world to me."

One of Mack's classmates, Madelin Gates, didn't have the same enthusiasm about academics.

"I enjoy college, and I want to be here. However, I'm not always excited about what I'm learning," said Gates, a



Great TEXTS student Tiffany Mack studies in the Welcome Center.

psychology major. "This course has reinvigorated me and made me more excited. I want to be at school. I want to learn. I credit this course for that because I just haven't felt that way in a long time."


Kerry Wynn, professor of history and director of the Honors Program, is team teaching the class this fall with Madeline Eschenberg, lecturer in art history.

"It's part of the richness of life to look at art over the centuries or to read fiction over the centuries. There's a beauty in it," Wynn said. "I still have the books that really moved me in college. I still have those books on my shelves."

Great TEXTS faculty implement trips to places like museums, plays and historical sites. They have dreams of nationwide or international travel as part of the curriculum.

"I believe the program will have tremendous demand as the word gets out, and then I think it's going to invigorate and help us attract the very best and brightest faculty," Mazachek said.

The success can already be measured in the responses from students.

"To have these discussions that are changing my worldview in such a big way, it's just really exciting and I've never experienced a class like this," Gates said. 



Maj. Jim Webber, ba '72, (right) and Capt. Rich Sanders, pose next to a Minuteman III missile as they were special guests at Armed Forces Day at Hill Air Force Base in 1975. *Photo submitted*

Vital Role

Maj. Jim Webber's career in military service reached impressive heights

by Annie Flachsbarth

On the heels of the space race, Maj. Jim Webber's story seems plucked from a Cold War novel. It is a tale of humble beginnings, coupled with grit, determination and a dedication propelling him to unimaginable heights.

Webber, ba '72, graduated from Leavenworth High School in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1968. His grandparents lived in Topeka and offered him free room and board to attend Washburn University – an offer too good for Webber to pass up. As luck would have it, another life-changing offer was just around the corner. One afternoon at a career fair, he joined the Air Force ROTC after being swayed by a scholarship and a \$100 per month stipend for his remaining two years of college. This decision set the stage for the rest of his career.

In May 1972, he graduated with a degree in biology and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Air Force. He and his wife, Suzy, moved to Vandenberg Air Force Base in California for his first assignment as a Minuteman I missile launch officer. For the next four years, at the height of the Cold War, he served this role with Strategic Air Command with 200 missiles in Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming under his charge. Webber served a staggering 201 times on alert, 60-feet underground, ready to launch nuclear missiles if the order came through.

“The Soviet Union had 1,600 missiles aimed at us, and we had 1,054 aimed at them. With enough power in my wrist to turn the key and decimate millions of people in less than 30 minutes, it was a different kind of important,” Webber said. “Many think those nuclear weapons were all bad. But the deterrent part is

what kept us from using them for nuclear war, and I played a part in that.”

Soon after, he was selected as one of the first missile combat crew members to transition to the Minuteman III system, the newest nuclear missile system in the world at the time and a huge step forward in operating and targeting capabilities.

After his four years of missile duty, Webber transitioned into a little known and evolving career in space systems operations. He left a permanent mark on the American military landscape by contributing to the development of PAVE PAWS, a strategic radar early warning system that greatly improved the effectiveness of the U.S. defense system. The \$130 million system was designed to provide warning in the event of a sneak attack by submarines. His test team of six Air Force members thoroughly evaluated the system – much like test pilots would check out a new aircraft – and then provided “go” or “no-go” recommendations to NORAD and Pentagon leadership.

After the radar site was declared operational, he became the first training officer for the new unit. In this critical position, he developed the first training program for the system, the fundamentals of which are still in use today.

“Had I accepted the old adage that ‘you can’t teach an old dog new tricks,’ I would still be digging ditches



Maj. Jim Webber (right) and Suzy Webber celebrate their 50th anniversary in 2022. *Photo submitted*

Had I accepted the old adage that ‘you can’t teach an old dog new tricks,’ I would still be digging ditches like I had to do to pay my way through college.

—Maj. Jim Webber

like I had to do to pay my way through college,” Webber said. “That’s something I learned from Washburn – to be adaptive and to put your ego in your back pocket and be open to learning new things.”

Webber's career wasn't limited to missile and radar systems. He was appointed the first ground-based sensor training officer at the 1st Space Wing headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado. This wing transitioned space operations and missile defense to the newly established Air Force Space Command. Webber was promoted to major and was the first Air Force Space Command liaison officer at RAF Flyingdales in Great Britain.

Webber worked with sophisticated systems and developed an understanding of mission, purpose, team effort and leadership.

“Reflecting back on my time serving my country, it dawned on me – I would never be responsible for anything that important ever again,” Webber said. “Nothing after that could ever match it.”

Upon retiring from the Air Force, he worked as a civilian employee for the Army and shared his experience as an adjunct professor of technology and science at three universities.

“All of these things happened for a reason, and I owe a lot of that to Washburn,” Webber said. “I graduated there, met my wife in Topeka, I joined ROTC, and I ended up seeing the world and having a wonderful career. I was an 18-year-old, know-nothing Kansas country boy who ended up doing something much more important than myself.” 🦋



Freddy Mawyin, mba '17, poses in front of Topeka's City Hall. He became chief financial officer of the city in January 2023. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*

More than Education

A series of calculated risks led to career success for Freddy Mawyin

By Annie Flachsbarth

When you think of an idyllic American story, you may imagine a tale like that of Freddy Mawyin, mba '17. Born in the U.S. by accident, Mawyin grew up a U.S. citizen in Ecuador before coming to the States to find his way.

Before he was born, Mawyin's Ecuadorian parents came to New York City on a working visa. His pregnant mother intended to fly home to give birth, but the

airline wouldn't let her travel in her third trimester. She delivered Mawyin in the U.S. and returned to Ecuador a few days later where he grew up with his family. When he turned 18, he wanted something different.

Mawyin moved to New Jersey alone and without speaking much English. At the suggestion of his landlord who saw him struggling, he joined the U.S. Army. He served 12 years as an intelligence officer

with two deployments to Iraq and Kuwait. His military tenure moved him around the country, but as luck would have it, his last stop was Topeka – which became his home and impetus for his civilian career.

Leaving military life behind, Mawyin was drawn to Washburn University. A new husband and father at the time, he was a stay-at-home dad by day and student by night. He recalls feeling an immediate connection and a sense of belonging that made his decision to pursue an MBA an easy one.

“When you’re deciding where to go to school, you take a risk,” Mawyin said. “But I felt like this was going to be more than just an education, and it turned out that way.”

From the halls of academia, Mawyin took a role with the Greater Topeka Partnership as the senior economic advisor, creating a profound impact on the local economy for six years. Despite his bonds at GTP, he felt pulled to a new venture and accepted the role of chief financial officer for the City of Topeka in January

2023, where he uses his experiences and insight to guide Topeka’s economic growth.

Mawyin’s story is not only a testament to the American dream, but also to the possibilities for those who arrive in Topeka for an opportunity and stay for the community.

“Working for organizations that are really involved within the community is significant,” Mawyin said. “Staying in Topeka was the right choice for my family.”

Mawyin’s wife, Shannon Mawyin, a nurse anesthetist, and their three daughters make up his support system, and his reason to strive for continued progress. Despite his demanding role, Mawyin remains connected with faculty and staff at Washburn.

“I leverage their guidance to help me grow as a leader – because I wasn’t just a student; they’re part of my network.” 🙌





Tirzah Riddle, ba '15 (top row, left), poses with other international students at Universidad de Belgrano in Buenos Aires, Argentina. *Photo submitted*

Speak the Language

Study of modern languages opens many doors for students

By Angela Lutz

The first time Tirzah Riddle, ba '15, went to Paraguay for six months, she had a transformative experience. A Washburn University student at the time, Riddle had grown up in Topeka and never taken public transportation or been away from her mom for more than two weeks. But soon she was living and studying in a region where almost no one spoke English. As an aspiring interpreter and translator, that's exactly what she was hoping for.

"I had been studying Spanish since high school, but I knew I wouldn't get to the level I needed to be a linguist if I didn't study abroad and become immersed in the language," Riddle said. "I needed to become fluent. But

first I had to get over the culture shock, and it was scary at the beginning."

When Riddle returned home, she felt empowered. She found studying abroad so personally and intellectually fulfilling that she decided to do it again in Argentina. All of her dedication paid off professionally – today she is working her dream job as an interpreter, both as an independent contractor through the Jackson County, Missouri, courthouse and through an agency called Bridging the Gap Interpreting. Without her time in South America, she doesn't feel she would be the person she is today.

“You become more independent and realize there are no limits. If you put your mind to something, you can do anything,” Riddle said. “I think the initial struggle makes you a more well-rounded individual. You have to try to communicate, and your personality is suppressed for months until you have the vocabulary. I felt like I came back a completely different person.”

Many foreign language students have stories like Riddle’s. As professor and chair of the modern languages department, Miguel Gonzalez-Abellas, who is originally from Spain, has seen the positive impact on many students’ lives in his 27 years teaching Spanish at Washburn. As the business world becomes more global, Gonzalez-Abellas points out that being multilingual creates unparalleled opportunities for communication and understanding.

“There are a lot of soft skills students can use in whatever career path they decide to take,” he said. “You develop empathy. When you know the language and you have access to the culture, you develop an appreciation and respect for the people. It helps with critical thinking, and it helps you to express yourself. It also helps you gain better knowledge of your own language.”

For Prof. Courtney Sullivan, enhanced career opportunities are just one benefit of studying a foreign language. Sullivan has been teaching French at Washburn since 2003 and has watched several students blossom and grow after learning about different languages and cultures and making the decision to travel or study abroad.

“It sets off a spark,” she said. “On the last trip I co-led to Paris, students were able to get around the city and enjoy communicating. It enriched their lives and will



Tirzah Riddle (center) poses with friends she made in Buenos Aires Province, Argentina. *Photo submitted*

help them personally and professionally in the future. It’s also rewarding when students go abroad for a semester or a year and come back excited and speaking French really well.”



Ingrid Bego, ba '03

Personal enrichment was certainly a benefit for Ingrid Bego, ba '03, who is originally from Albania and now works at Western Carolina University as an associate professor of political science and director of the international studies program. She came to the Midwest as part of a study abroad program and chose to attend Washburn because it was close to her host family in McPherson, Kansas. She believes her studies in political science, German and Spanish have enhanced her appreciation of different cultures and communities.

“For me, it’s been fundamental to who I am as a professional and as a person, and now I’m helping other students study abroad,” Bego said. “I imagined Washburn would be like a family and it was very much like a family. When I think of home in the United States, Washburn and Kansas are places I go back to.”

Riddle also found personal value by studying Spanish and embracing new cultures. Without the exposures she gained through Washburn, she would not have been able to fulfill her passions for language, people and learning by working as an interpreter.

“Washburn was the greatest time of my life,” Riddle said. “The modern language department was the best, and the professors were amazing. Speaking another language will help you no matter the job you have, and it also helps you in everyday interactions with people.”

Gonzalez-Abellas and Sullivan say these types of life-changing experiences – along with small class sizes and personal attention from professors and mentors – make Washburn’s foreign language department stand out from other schools.

“It’s a great feeling when you know you’re a little part of your students’ success,” Gonzalez-Abellas said. “Every language has a value.” 🏃



Team Player

Sibberson Award winner brings team spirit and work ethic to nursing career

By Lindsay Thompson

Paige Robbins is fascinated by how the human body works.

“All these little things are happening on a micro scale,” said Robbins, bsn ’23. “Both for conscious things like walking and the things you don’t see or think about like digestion and heartbeat. I think it is interesting how it all works together to make the big picture happen.”

It is not surprising that Robbins is drawn to the network of systems inside the body and the complex but beautiful ways they support one another. Not only does it speak to her intellectual curiosity, but it also is a model of her values and motivations. She believes in the power of teamwork, dedicating her energy to helping others and working tirelessly to get the job done.

Robbins brings these three qualities to everything she does, and that approach has brought her success. As a

student, Robbins won the 2023 Sibberson Award for the School of Nursing because of her academics and other work.

She comes from a family lineage of nurses, teachers and law enforcement officers. Helping others was a value she was encouraged to apply in her professional and personal choices. Volunteering was a regular practice, helping at the WU Moves Community Wellness Center, the Sheldon Head Start program and Pine Ridge Family Health Center. She loved career-relevant experiences like administering vaccinations and hearing and vision screenings.

She was also a member of the Washburn softball team. Balancing practice and away games alongside her classes, clinicals and studying was difficult, but she was passionate and determined to play. A head injury in 2021 took her out of the game for nearly a year. She had a challenging recovery but returned to the field for the 2022 season. The Ichabods won the MIAA regular season championship that year.

Robbins credits support from her professors, coaches and teammates, including two fellow nursing students, for helping her achieve her goals on and off the field. But many who know her point to her hard work and positive attitude as the keys to her success.

“Paige was an absolute delight to have in the classroom and clinical setting. She always gave 110%,” said Crystal Stevens, msn ’07, dnp ’18, associate professor, School of Nursing. “No matter what was thrown at her, she excelled. She is a great addition to the nursing profession.”

Robbins is now an ER nurse at Overland Park Regional Medical Center, realizing her dreams and giving 110% to help her patients and support her team.

“The ER was always where I wanted to be growing up, and it was what I loved the most in my clinicals,” she said. 🏃



Paige Robbins, bsn ’23. Photo by Jeremy Wangler

Her Life's Calling

Beryl New closes the book on 35 years of serving students

By Lindsay Thompson



Beryl New, ba '88, m ed '02. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*

Over the summer, Beryl New retired from Topeka Public Schools, bringing her 35-year career in education as a teacher, counselor, principal and administrator to a close. In every role, she was guided by the same objective.

"I enjoy helping people recognize their potential and develop it," said New, ba '88, m ed '02.

New's career in education began in 1984. She was a secretary with six young children when she received a calling that changed the direction of her life forever.

"I was returning from a church trip," she said. "I heard what I know was the spirit of God speak to me. It said, 'When you get back to Topeka, go to Washburn and enroll. Be an English teacher.'"

She was nervous about how she would manage going back to school, but she trusted the guidance she received.

"I have to give a shout-out to Dr. Robert Stein," she said of the professor emeritus who was chair of the English department for 33 years. "He placed me on track for the honors program, and I graduated with honors. He invested his time and personal attention in my success. So many of my professors built true relationships with me. They motivated me."

When New graduated in 1988 and started teaching English at Topeka High School, she focused on her students similarly, encouraging them to believe in themselves. She gave special attention to those who weren't naturally motivated by the material.

"If I could help them understand how important it is to have those skills, it would open up doors for success in their life," she said.

New loved teaching. She didn't picture herself doing anything else. But her principal, Ned Nusbaum, ba '64, noticed students often sought her advice.

“Dr. Nusbaum said to me, ‘You can help more kids if you become a counselor.’ That stuck with me.”

She combined teaching and counseling for three years at Topeka High. Over time other colleagues, like Dale Cushinberry, encouraged her to apply her talents to help even more students. It was a call to action she could not refuse.


She became an assistant principal at Highland Park High School and an assistant and associate principal at Lawrence High School. During the same period, she completed her master of education from Washburn in 2002 and a doctor of education from the University of Kansas in 2007. In 2010, she returned to Highland Park High School, becoming Topeka's first female African American head principal. In 2017, she became the district's director of certified personnel and the director of equity, the positions she held at retirement.

When she first enrolled at Washburn, she had no way of knowing the many ways she would grow and change

I have to give a shout-out to Dr. Robert Stein. He placed me on track for the honors program, and I graduated with honors. He invested his time and personal attention in my success. So many of my professors built true relationships with me. They motivated me.

— Beryl New

so she could help students recognize and realize their potential. In retrospect, it seems clear.

“I can look back after all these years and see the true purpose in what God told me to do,” New said. 



Alumni Awards

Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes alumni who have made personal and professional contributions to society, demonstrated exemplary support to the Washburn University Alumni Association and the community, been of service to humanity, distinguished themselves in their careers and brought honor to Washburn through their accomplishments.

Robert Meinershagen, ba '63, h '21



Robert Meinershagen worked in sales and marketing of medical diagnostics products before starting his own company, Columbia Diagnostics, in 1976. Based in suburban Washington, D.C., the company distributed a full range of

diagnostic instrumentation, reagents and laboratory disposables to the hospital, pathology and medical research laboratory markets. Meinershagen navigated the business into becoming a major pioneer in medical diagnostic kits until his retirement in 2000 when Columbia was sold to a large, multinational business. Meinershagen served on the board of trustees for the Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation from 1997 until 2010 and remains a trustee emeritus. He was honored as an Alumni Fellow in 2000 and received an honorary doctor of science in 2021. Meinershagen was instrumental in creating the biology field laboratory in Karlyle Woods that now bears his name, and he and his wife's contributions established the Robert E. & Helen L. Meinershagen Excellence in Biology Fund.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and

career: My years as a student at Washburn were ones remembered as the most informative in my life. Looking back, my professors were always student centered, and I attribute that in part to the high quality of my education. It opened for me a range of opportunities and helped me succeed in my career and life. For this, I will always be grateful.

Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose, bsn '82, h '12



Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose served in the Air Force for 28 years and became the highest-ranking female to serve in the Kansas National Guard. She was a line officer leading at all levels of the 190th Air Refueling Wing of the Kansas

Air National Guard. Rose was promoted to brigadier general in 2007 and was director of the Joint Force Headquarters, responsible for homeland security missions for the Kansas National Guard. She also served a dual-hat position as the Air National Guard assistant to the commander of the 17th Air Force. She received several awards including the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal with Four Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters. She retired from the military in 2011. Alongside that service, Rose was a nurse at Colmery-O'Neil Veterans Administration Medical Center. She serves on the Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation boards as a director and trustee and is a member of Washburn Women's Venture Partners and Nonoso. She and her siblings fund a Washburn Woman's Alliance scholarship in their mother's honor. She was a Washburn Alumni Fellow in 2007 and received an honorary doctor of public service from Washburn in 2012. Rose has served on the boards of directors of local organizations including Stormont Vail Foundation and Kansas STARBASE, Inc.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and

career: I came to Washburn to ensure I could support my family if needed. Washburn gave me redemption after failing 10 years earlier, and as a non-traditional student, I always felt included. The School of Nursing provided an outstanding education for me, and my nursing degree provided a variety of life skills no matter my position.

Lilla Day Monroe Award

This award honors women who have distinguished themselves as teachers, instructors, administrators or benefactors at Washburn and also have given service to the community and/or their chosen professions. The award is named after suffragist, lawyer and publisher Lilla Day Monroe.

Cynthia Hornberger, bsn '78



Cynthia Hornberger is a professor emeritus at Washburn University and currently teaches graduate courses in nursing and leadership. A member of the faculty since 1989, Hornberger served as dean of the School of Nursing from

2000-09 and special assistant to the president from 2010-16. Past administrative responsibilities also include leadership of the University Relations, Alumni Association and Strategic Analysis and Reporting departments. As special assistant to the president for Jerry Farley, she maintained communications with the Washburn board of regents and coordinated the development of the Leadership Washburn professional development program and the Vision 2022 Strategic Plan. As dean, she implemented the graduate nursing program, the Mobile Health Clinic and new international exchange programs. Hornberger has received awards for teaching, mentorship and research, and she earned certification as a Lean Six Sigma: Green Belt and as a Clinical Nurse Leader. She was named a Washburn Alumni Fellow in 2009. Along with other volunteer and leadership commitments, she serves on the Stormont Vail Health board of directors and is past-president of the Kansas Association of Colleges of Nursing.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and

career: Washburn has been part of my life for nearly 50 years as a student, faculty and administrator. I treasure my memories of nursing school where I learned to be a professional nurse. Lessons learned helped me succeed in my nursing career as I sought to emulate my teachers to achieve the highest standards of my profession while helping others achieve their goals.

Col. John Ritchie Award

This award honors men who have distinguished themselves as teachers, instructors, administrators or benefactors at Washburn and also have given service to the community and/or their chosen professions. The award is named after Col. John Ritchie, who donated the land on which Washburn is built.

Randall Scott, mba '05



Randall Scott worked 22 years for the Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation, retiring in 2020 as senior development director. He held several other roles including vice president of operations. Among

many projects he helped raise funds for since starting in 1998, Scott said the Living Learning Center was his favorite because it changed the culture of the campus. He also played a key role in completing Washburn's first comprehensive campaign, 150 Forward, which raised over \$140 million. Scott started his career in banking before coming to Washburn. He and his wife, Kay Scott, financially support several areas at Washburn and have established a music scholarship, an Ichabod Success Institute Scholarship and a Washburn Women's Alliance Scholarship. They also pledged a gift to the new recital hall project. They are members of Washburn's Lincoln Society for their lifetime cumulative contributions and of the Whiting Society for including Washburn in their estate plans.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and

career: As a first-generation college graduate, I know firsthand the benefits of higher education. I love the mission of Washburn University and Washburn Tech, and it was very meaningful to be a part of transforming lives. The work of the Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation to communicate with supporters, build relationships, engage and thank donors is significant to this mission. By far, my fondest memories are the many people I came to know, love and respect during my career. You are all intelligent, generous, interesting, kind and committed to strengthening our university and creating opportunities for students.

Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) Award

This award honors recent Washburn graduates who demonstrate leadership in career or civic endeavors and loyalty to Washburn. Recipients of the award must have graduated within the past 10 years.

Corey Ballentine, als '19



Corey Ballentine is a cornerback for the Green Bay Packers of the NFL. He will be playing his second season with the Packers this fall and fifth season in the NFL. He has played in 40 career games with 48 tackles, two passes defended and

an average of 23.8 yards per return as a kick-return specialist. Ballentine was drafted by the New York Giants in the sixth round and 180th overall pick of the 2019 draft. As a rookie, he played in 13 games with 26 tackles. He played two seasons for the Giants and has also played for the New York Jets and Detroit Lions. He wrapped up his Washburn football career in 2018 with the Cliff Harris Award as the small college defensive player of the year and with several All-America honors.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and

career: Washburn has had such a big impact on my life, the people I've met – great people, great coaches, great faculty. Don't underestimate the impact you have on people's lives. The littlest things can go the longest ways. I would not be where I am without Washburn. I appreciate all the values that I've learned there – easy or hard. I appreciate them all.

Mallory Lutz, ba '18



Mallory Lutz is a lobbyist at Little Government Relations in Topeka, Kansas. She started with the firm in 2018 and advocates on behalf of clients in the fields of public education, access to health care, children's health, local

governments and local food systems. She works with clients and legislators on policies aimed at improving the quality of life for Kansas kids, students, families and communities. She fosters relationships with lawmakers, agencies and partners to have meaningful debate and make progress on pressing issues for Kansans. Prior to that, she was a park ranger for the

National Park Service at Brown v. Board of Education National Historical Park. Lutz serves or has served on the boards of YWCA Northeast Kansas, Forge Young Professionals, the Shawnee County Historical Society and Friends of the Free State Capitol, among others. She is a 2021 graduate of Kansas Emerging Leaders and a 2022 Topeka's Top 20 Under 40 honoree. She has also written book reviews for "Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains."

How has Washburn contributed to your life and

career: Washburn immediately set me up for success not only academically but socially, professionally and financially. The history department in particular – its faculty and generous supporters and donors – enriched my educational experience beyond expectation. From working with professors my first semester to do honors projects and research, presenting at out-of-state history conferences, traveling to Canada to do archival research (thanks to an extremely generous donor), to getting an internship that would turn into my first real job, studying history at Washburn has truly been one of the best decisions I have made.

Honorary Ichabod Award

This award is given to individuals who are not graduates of Washburn University, but whom we recognize for their steadfast support of Washburn by way of their time, talent or treasure.

Matt Pivarnik



Matt Pivarnik is president and CEO of the Greater Topeka Partnership, which was created in 2018 when the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Topeka Inc., GO Topeka, Visit Topeka and other

economic development organizations merged. Pivarnik came to Topeka in 2016 to lead the chamber and GO Topeka. In completing Momentum 2022, GTP boasted a 24 percent increase in household income and a \$2 billion increase in the gross domestic product. GTP, Pivarnik and several community leaders are currently embarking on Momentum 2027 to capitalize on that success. Pivarnik was previously executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Tulsa Regional Chamber, working with the organization for 16 years. He is the past-chair of the Chamber of Commerce Executives of Kansas, the US Chamber Institute for Organization Management's national

board of trustees and the board of regents for the US Chamber's Institute for Organization Management at the University of Arizona. He serves or has served with several other organizations as well.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and career: Washburn University has been an integral part of my personal and professional life since my family first stepped foot in Topeka. The University is an integral part of our economy and future and is also a major contributor to our quality of place and life. And now my youngest son is fully immersed into the benefits as a student-athlete.

Laura Stephenson



Laura Stephenson is interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at Washburn University. She moved into that role in May 2022 after serving as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences since 2014. In her current role, she leads academic and faculty affairs of all academic units at Washburn and establishes academic priorities. In all her roles, she has been involved in several academic program expansions and creations.

She has been integral in the recently announced seven-year plan to transform the learning spaces at Washburn, a plan that will involve several buildings and academic programs. She came to Washburn in 1985 as an assistant professor of psychology, served as chair of the psychology department from 2000-03 and became an associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in 2004. Her psychology work has been in child clinical psychology and family therapy, and she worked at several medical centers and mental health agencies before beginning her career as an educator.

How has Washburn contributed to your life and career: Just as Washburn has transformed the lives of so many students, Washburn has shaped my life in unexpected ways, challenged me, supported me and inspired me. I came here expecting to spend a few years teaching and then move on to clinical practice, never imagining that I would end up devoting my career to higher education. This is such a special place where people aspire to our motto, "Non nobis solum." Each day I am greeted with kindness, generosity and beauty. Being a part of Washburn has been a blessing for which I am exceedingly grateful. I am proud to be an Ichabod. 🦋



New Leadership

Alumni Association and Foundation welcomed new board members Aug. 1, 2023

Alumni Association Board

Blythe Landon, bba '22 | Topeka, Kansas



Blythe Landon has been an onboarding specialist at Advisors Excel since June 2022 and has been with the company since interning with recruitment in 2021. She became marketing committee chair for Topeka's Jayhawk Theatre

in June 2023. While a Washburn student, she was an intern in the president's office and a member of both Beta Gamma Sigma and Phi Kappa Phi honor societies.

Blake Porter, bba '16, jd '19 | Topeka, Kansas



Blake Porter has been corporate counsel at Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka since March 2023. He was an associate attorney from 2019-23 at Fisher Patterson Saylor & Smith. While a student, he was a member of the Ichabod golf team,

Alpha Lambda Delta, Kappa Sigma, Sagamore and WSGA, serving as student body president.

Board of Trustees

Ewan Auguste, bs '02, mba '10 | Cedar Park, Texas



Ewan Auguste has been chief marketing officer of PlanSource, a technology company specializing in employee benefit shopping experiences, since April 2022. His career in marketing and related fields has grown since graduating

from Washburn. As an Ichabod on the basketball court, he was a two-time MIAA MVP with six All-America awards. He stayed on as an assistant coach as he earned an MBA. He later became a software engineer at Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas before moving to IBM, where he became digital marketing director. There, he led the social and digital marketing

teams and the IBM Cloud Marketplace rollout. He and his wife, Stephanie Auguste, ba '04, established the Auguste Family Endowment at Washburn, which provides scholarships to Caribbean students. He is a member of the Washburn Athletics Hall of Fame.

Dan Bennett, ba '76 | Dallas, Texas



Dan Bennett has worked in radio since his days as a host on WREN while a Washburn student. He is a regional vice president for Cumulus Media and runs daily operations for six stations in Dallas and the Houston operation. Dallas

is Cumulus' top market for revenue and cash flow.

In 2017, the National Association of Broadcasters awarded three stations under Bennett's leadership the Marconi Radio Award, recognizing the best radio stations in their category. Radio Ink magazine named Bennett one of the top 20 managers in radio several times and the top manager in fall 2020. He is on the board of directors of the Davey O'Brien National Quarterback Award and the Doak Walker Award national selection committee. He was a board member of the Travis Fredrick Foundation, helping food deprived children in the Dallas and Fort Worth area.

Dina Bennett, ba '90 | Overland Park, Kansas



Dina Bennett is deputy director of the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City, Missouri. AJM exhibits jazz as an original American art form through performance, exhibition, education and research at one of the

country's jazz crossroads — 18th & Vine. She oversees visitor engagement through exhibitions, collections management and programming. With a doctorate in ethnomusicology, Bennett specializes in telling the story of African American music and its various genres through her curatorial work in music museums. She was previously the curatorial director of the National Museum of African American Music in Nashville,

Tennessee; associate director of the Mulvane Art Museum at Washburn University; director of education at the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center in Indianola, Mississippi; and manager of collections and exhibitions at the American Jazz Museum.

Michel' Cole, ba '85 | Topeka, Kansas

Michel' Cole has spent close to 40 years in public relations, marketing and communications with organizations throughout the country. She retired in 2018 as vice president of corporate communications and public affairs at Westar Energy, now Evergy, a role she held for four years. She worked for Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Kansas Press Association, Security Benefit and FleishmanHillard. She serves on several boards including Capitol Federal Savings Bank and Stormont Vail Health, as well as the United Way Women United advisory committee. She has served in volunteer leadership roles for the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, Topeka Civic Theatre and Academy, Topeka Collegiate School, Stormont Vail Foundation, Family Service and Guidance Center and more. Cole is a graduate of Leadership Greater Topeka,



Leadership Kansas City and Leadership Kansas. Washburn's mass media department named her an Outstanding Alumni.

Megan Jones, bba '00, mba '02 | Topeka, Kansas

Megan Jones founded Jones Advisory Group in 2008 and is president, working directly with clients in developing comprehensive financial strategies to help reduce taxes, increase income and preserve wealth and legacy. She is the host of "Money Matters with Megan," a financial show on radio and television. She is also a prominent public speaker in the Topeka and Kansas City areas. Jones has worked as an investment advisor representative for both AE Wealth Management and Global Financial Private Capital during her career. She is vice president of the board of directors of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas, where she is also chair of the investment committee and sits on the governance and compensation committees. 🏃





From left to right: David Kibet (photo by Christa Roehl), Gabriel Chinya (photo by Christa Roehl) and Tommy Roehl (photo by Gene Cassell).

Quick Work

Leaders from men's cross country team looking for more success after breakout season

By Angela Lutz

Cross country can be a grueling sport. Athletes must run long distances in all types of weather, from sweltering late-summer heat to chilly November rains. They have to push themselves through physical discomfort and find the determination to be their best, not only for themselves but for their teammates. It's not easy – which is exactly why Washburn University sophomore Tommy Roehl loves it.

"I started running in fourth grade," Roehl said. "My first 5K was a run through a zoo. Right away I fell in love with cross country. I like the fact that it takes discipline to do it, and it's a good way to take my mind off things."

Thanks to their disciplined and focused approach, last year the Washburn men's cross country team had a breakthrough season. The program is still relatively new – it was reinstated in 2016 after being discontinued

for 34 years. Now the school's distance runners are finding ways to distinguish themselves amidst tough national competition. Led by Coach David Granato, last fall the men's squad competed in the NCAA Division II national championship for the first time in school history. The Ichabods set school records with a fifth-place finish in the NCAA Central Region race, a fourth-place finish in the MIAA championship and their first-ever national ranking during the season.

For Gabriel China, a senior who started running in high school after moving to the Midwest from Uganda in 2016, the Ichabods' success has been the culmination of several years of dedication. In addition to Granato, China credits Paddy Robb, a graduate assistant coach, with helping the team maximize their efforts and improve their times.

"Paddy always pushes us to do better and run faster. He himself was once an athlete who competed for a top Division II school, and listening to him is like getting advice from an elder sibling," China said. "We all have goals and times we strive to achieve, but every time we get advice from our coach or graduate assistants, I feel like it helps us focus and look at things from a different perspective. Overall, it has helped to rely on my coaches and give them the time to develop me and my fellow teammates."

Along with the coaches, the teammates also rely on each other for support and encouragement. According to David Kibet, a senior who came to Topeka from Kenya in 2019 and whose strong finish in the national championship has positioned him in a leadership role, last year's team was competitive right from the start. After their first race, they knew they had a shot at greatness, but only if they continued to test their limits. To do this, they focused not only on their own personal improvement but also on bolstering their teammates.

"Cross country is all about teamwork," said Kibet, whose father is a professional runner. "We managed to go to nationals because everybody worked hard and got good scores. Communication was important; we kept each other in check. At practice everybody was focused and wanting to run."

China and Roehl both said the team's chemistry and promising early season results last year changed the way they saw themselves. They knew by staying focused on their goal, they could compete at the highest levels.

Cross country is all about teamwork. We managed to go to nationals because everybody worked hard and got good scores. Communication was important; we kept each other in check. At practice everybody was focused and wanting to run.

— David Kibet

"This was huge for us – we race extremely well together, and we all feed off each other," Roehl said. "Knowing we were all there with each other made it easier to fight through the pain and keep going. We keep each other accountable, and we are able to joke around with each other and stick together no matter what."

While these student-athletes have found success on the course, they have also excelled academically. Last year, China and Kibet were named U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association All-Academic Individuals. For China, academic prowess isn't just about his own future, but also that of his brothers and sisters.

"When I came to the States, I didn't know I would go to school to run – I just wanted to learn," he said. "I'm the first generation to go to college. My parents don't have degrees and as a result don't work their dream jobs. I'm also the oldest sibling, so it gives a better example to my younger siblings. I would like to get an advanced degree to motivate them and my family to keep working hard because this country often reflects on your hard work."

On the course, the teammates also hope to continue motivating each other to achieve their shared goal of going back to nationals and improving on last year's performance. The 2024 season started in September and the postseason begins Oct. 20.

"This year, I'm confident we are going to do the same thing but even better," Kibet said. "We have new recruits, and I'm sure someone will step up. If we work harder than we did last year we should be able to achieve this goal." 🏃



Lauren Frost, jd '17, interned in athletics compliance while studying at Washburn University School of Law. She now runs the compliance operations at Washburn Athletics. *Photo by Jeremy Wangler*

Keeping Order

Lauren Frost following her heart and the rules as athletics compliance director

By Jeremy Wangler • jwangler@wualumni.org

Somewhere within the struggles and triumphs of athletics and the rigor of completing a college degree lie the rules and regulations governing what it is to be a student-athlete.

At Washburn University, Lauren Frost, jd '17, studies those rules and regulations as associate athletic director for compliance and senior woman administrator. Among other duties, she makes sure student-athletes pass enough classes to stay eligible, coaches follow recruiting guidelines and administrators are aware of any new issues.

Her job is a perfect combination of the things she loves. She's a sports fan who grew up in Topeka. She earned an accounting degree from the University of Kansas and a law degree from Washburn University School of Law. She even likes the rigid attention to detail her work demands. Seeing teams compete in the postseason and win championships is a bonus.

"Game days are exciting, and what we provide the community is awesome," Frost said. "Sports seem to bring people together. There's a lot of triumph of the human heart and spirit, and that draws me to it."

College-aged students are at the time in their life when they navigate a lot of changes. They can use sports to cope with their life, their struggles. And at the same time, they can expose their talent and show the world what they're made of.

— *Lauren Frost*

Frost decided to go to Washburn Law during her senior year studying accounting. She said a business degree can help someone through everyday life, but adding a law degree was always on her mind. Early in her legal studies, she realized she didn't want to be a courtroom attorney, so she looked for other ways to use her degree. Shawn Leisinger, jd '99, associate dean for centers and external programs at Washburn Law, recommended externing for Britt Lauritsen, Washburn's compliance director at the time. Lauritsen took on Frost and it turned into a full-year internship.

"After the internship, I knew I wanted to go this route," Frost said. "Something clicked right away, and I owe a lot of credit to Britt because she let me ask the questions and explore this world however I wanted."

Frost graduated and worked a handful of jobs around the country in law and athletics compliance. During that time, Lauritsen left Washburn to become athletic director at Bemidji State University. Lauritsen remained a mentor to Frost and made sure she knew the position opened. Frost was hired in July 2022 and was happy to return home.

Like accounting or practicing law, Frost's new job is full of ever-changing rules and regulations. New issues like the NCAA transfer portal, student-athletes possibly being deemed as employees and student-athletes profiting off their name, image and likeness keep her busy, as does making sure student-athletes, coaches and administrators follow the rules.

"Some of those national issues are a small piece of what I do on the day to day, but they're a big piece in terms of where college athletics is going," she said. "College-aged students are at the time in their life when they navigate a lot of changes. They can use sports to cope with their life, their struggles. And at the same time, they can expose their talent and show the world what they're made of. When I was their age, I didn't know anything, and you really rely on people to help you through things. I've always wanted to give back and help. I made it a priority to make sure I paid it forward." 🏃



Campus News

Washburn Launches Program to Prepare Public Health Professionals

Beginning this fall, students may pursue several education options through a new public health program offered by the allied health department in the School of Applied Studies. Completely online, the offerings provide flexibility to students who wish to enter the public health field or advance in their current careers. Full-time or part-time schedules are available. Options include a bachelor of health science degree in public health, a minor in public health, a certificate in public health and a public health advanced certificate. Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play. The field is experiencing a workforce shortage, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, due to workers retiring or leaving for the public sector. Demand for workers, however, remains high, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. BLS predicts job growth of up to 25% by the year 2031.

Alumnus Wins Kansas Association of Broadcasters Award for Documentary

Kris Bailey, ba '22, won first place in the college documentary category of the 2023 Kansas Association of Broadcasters Student Awards contest. For his documentary and Washburn University film class, Bailey created "I Am...Brihanna Jayde," a documentary that follows Nate, a gay man who works as a barber and is passionate about performing as a drag queen. Bailey was director, producer, sound designer and editor when creating the documentary. He was determined to bring attention to issues members of the drag community face and the discrimination against LGBTQ+ people.



Casey Steward was drafted by the Philadelphia Phillies in the 2023 MLB Draft. *Photo by Joy Smith*

Baseball Player picked in 19th Round of MBL Draft by Philadelphia Phillies

Washburn right-handed pitcher Casey Steward was drafted by the Philadelphia Phillies in the 19th round with the 583rd overall pick in the MLB Draft. Steward was the first MIAA player drafted this year. He earned all-MIAA second team honors as a junior last year after leading the MIAA and finishing 12th in NCAA Division II with 110 strikeouts, which also tied Washburn's single-season strikeout record. Steward is the second Ichabod drafted under Coach Harley Douglas, ba '02, and the first since David Gauntt, bba '16, was selected by the Miami Marlins in the 2016 MLB Draft in the 18th round. 🏆

Class Notes

The Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation loves to receive your news and updated information, and your former classmates are interested in what you have accomplished. Submit your news and updates online at wualumni.org/alumninotes or to Jeremy Wangler at jwangler@wualumni.org by Nov. 30, 2023, to be included in the winter magazine.

1960s

Maj. Robert Armstrong, bs '67, Army ROTC, and **Janet (Hillyer) Armstrong**, b ed '68, Colorado Springs, Colorado, celebrated their 55th anniversary on June 15, 2023, with travels throughout the year in the United States, Canada, Amsterdam and Iceland.

1970s

Lt. Col. James Brenton, bba '70, Air Force ROTC, Round Rock, Texas, is retired from his military and civilian careers and is now a board member for the Austin, Texas, chapter of the FBI's InfraGard non-profit organization, supporting cyber-security outreach to critical infrastructure firms. He also volunteers at Learning Ally, reading textbooks for blind and dyslexic students.

Larry Habluetzel, ba '71, Overland Park, Kansas, is the co-writer and lyricist of the song, "Come In Mr. Lonely," which was released in 1968. The song was featured during a 2023 episode of "The Umbrella Academy," a Netflix series, and has now been streamed more than 1 million times due to the show's popularity.

James Klausman, ba '74, Topeka, Kansas, was elected to an additional four-year term on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas board of directors during the May 2023 meeting. He is the owner, president and CEO of Midwest Health, Inc.

Hon. Steven Montgomery, jd '79, retired on July 5, 2023, after 17 years as a judge in Kansas' 6th Judicial District, serving Bourbon, Linn and Miami counties.

Linda (Usher) Mott, b ed '73, Austin, Texas, started as an education specialist with the Texas Education Agency in December 2022. The longtime educator has worked in several roles during her career.

Michael Myers, b ed '70, Tennis, Spring Hill, Kansas, spent 45 years in construction management and then was a state director for prevention and protective services at the Kansas Department for Children and Families. Retired, he is now a substitute teacher in the Gardner-Edgerton, Olathe and Spring Hill school districts.

1980s

Greg Brenneman, bba '84, h '99, Alpha Delta, Student Council, Spring, Texas, began serving as chair of the Baylor College of Medicine board of trustees in May 2023. He has been on the board since 2012. Brenneman is executive chair of CCMF.

Joe Cosgrove, Jr., jd '80, Phi Delta Phi, Austin, Texas, recently published the featured article, "Meta-Regulation: Regulatory Framework for a Virtual World" in the American Bar Association's spring 2023 edition of *Infrastructure*. He is an adjunct professor at the University of Texas at Austin School of Law.

Jerry Loney, bs '81, Air Force ROTC, Topeka, Kansas, celebrated on May 6, 2023, his 40th anniversary in the clowning entertainment industry, performing as JR Juggles the Clown.

James McClinton, aa '85, bas '87, Dallas, Texas, was recently appointed director of the Community Development and Housing Department for Tarrant County, Texas. Tarrant County is the 15th largest county in the United States.

Beryl New, ba '88, m ed '02, Topeka, Kansas, retired in April 2023 as the director of the equity council and certified personal. She was previously principal at Highland Park High School, among other positions.

Charles Shirley, jd '89, Spring, Texas, was elected to the Montgomery County Hospital district board of directors during the November 2022 general election.

1990s

Joy Marie (Soerries) Galliant, ba '99, Softball, Bixby, Oklahoma, was named head coach of the Washburn Rural High School softball team in May 2023. She was previously head coach at Bixby High School.

Jeremy Littrell, bs '97, was promoted to lieutenant in the Kansas Highway Patrol and serves Troop B, Zone D in northeast Kansas.

Rebecca (Albert) Kramer, b ed '96, m ed '02, Topeka, Kansas, was named superintendent of South Brown County school district in northeast Kansas, effective July 1, 2023.

Hon. Michael Montero, jd '96, received the Innovator of the Year Award by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges on July 18, 2023. Montero was recognized for creating the first transitional living center operated by a juvenile justice agency in the state of Nevada.

Beth (Hall) Martino, ba '97, Debate, Campus Democrats, Las Vegas, Nevada, began on June 5, 2023, as president and CEO of Three Square, a food bank serving Las Vegas and other parts of southern Nevada.

Jim Turgeon, ba '88, Independence, Kansas, was named an assistant coach for the Morehead State University women's basketball team. He was previously head coach at Independence Community College.

Hon. Kristi Venhuizen, jd '98, Law Clinic, Grand Forks, North Dakota, was appointed a judge of North Dakota's Northeast Central Judicial District, serving Grand Forks and Nelson counties.

Carolyn Vincent, bsn '93, Huntsville, Alabama, retired from nursing after a long career as a staff nurse, nurse supervisor, case manager and director of case management.

2000s

Jodi (Zimmermann) Adolf, jd '02, Law Journal, Kansas City, Missouri, became a partner at global law firm Norton Rose Fulbright in April 2023. She was previously a partner with Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP. She focuses on insurance regulatory, InsurTech and insurance insolvency matters.

Wes Ashton, jd '03, Rapid City, South Dakota, was promoted to vice president of Wyoming and South Dakota utilities at Black Hills Energy. He has more than 17 years of experience in utility leadership.

Melinda Kline, bsw '05, msw '08, Burlingame, Kansas, recently started as national project director for AdoptUSKids, a national project that supports child welfare systems and connects children in foster care with families.

Quentin Rials, jd '07, Lawrence, Kansas, was named interim principal of Lawrence High School, effective July 1, 2023. At the time of his appointment, he was interim principal of West Middle School in the same district.

Andrew Smith, jd '01, Las Vegas, Nevada, recently became assistant general counsel at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Rebecca (Wormington) Stowe, bba '05, Lee's Summit, Missouri, is a 2023 Kansas City Business Journal Women Who Mean Business honoree. She is owner and CEO of Design Supply Doors.

Amanda (Walter) Wells, bba '09, and **Richard Wells**, bba '99, Topeka, Kansas, married on June 29, 2023. Amanda recently became development director at TARC.

2010s

Kyle Breneman, bba '19, Christian Challenge, Salina, Kansas, was promoted to second assistant manager at Casey's general store in Salina.

Blake Bryant, ba '12, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Prairie Village, Kansas, recently completed a doctorate of nursing practice and is licensed as a family nurse practitioner working at Cosmetic Physician Partners. He and his husband, Michael Whaley, married in April 2023.

Benjamin Busboom, jd '14, Omaha, Nebraska, joined Polsinelli in May 2023 as a shareholder and attorney in the environmental practice group.

Dr. Hannah Fairchild, ba '19, Christian Challenge, Russellville, Arkansas, recently graduated from Southern College of Optometry and started as an optometrist at Robertson Eye Center in Russellville.

Lainey (Lord) Faulkner, as '15, bhs '16, Osage City, Kansas, is in her first year as section director of the Community Clinical Linkages section at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. She has been with KDHE for five years.

Briana (Anderson) Gorman, bsn '13, Bod Squad, Loveland, Colorado, completed an MBA with an emphasis in health care administration. She and her husband, **Joseph Gorman**, bba '19, recently moved to Colorado with their 1-year-old son, Emery.

Dr. Marija K. (Crockett) Lawless, c '14, bs '16, LinC – Bonner Leaders, Salina, Kansas, completed residency training at the University of Kansas School of Medicine–Wichita Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency. She will be practicing at Holton Family Medicine in Holton, Kansas.

Heather Jones-Rutschmann, als '16, Topeka, Kansas, became administrative professional/receptionist at the Kansas Hospital Association.

Garrett Love, bba '10, Men's Basketball, WSGA, Leadership Institute, Montezuma, Kansas, was elected to a four-year term on the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas board of directors during the May 2023 meeting. He owns Love Land & Cattle, LLC.

Trey Parker, als '18, bis '22, Football, Topeka, Kansas, became head coach of the Topeka West High School football team in March 2023 after serving three games of the 2022 season as interim head coach. He was previously defensive coordinator at TWHS.

Rebecca Schmidt-Jeffris, bs '10, Wapato, Washington, is a finalist for a 2023 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal for her pioneering work using insects to control other bugs that damage crops, reducing the needs for pesticides. She is a research entomologist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service.

Greyson Thornburgh, ba '19, jd '22, Football, Phi Delta Theta, Topeka, Kansas, became an associate attorney and human resources adviser at The Law Offices of John R. Dietrick, PA and at HR Partners, LLC.

Carey Woods, ba '19, Football, Topeka, Kansas, was inducted into the Bemidji High School Athletics Hall of Fame in May 2023. He scored 52 points in a single basketball game for a BHS record and scored 25 touchdowns as a senior football player.

2020s

Carter Ball, c '22, Walnut Shade, Missouri, is a radiation therapist at CoxHealth facilities in Springfield and Branson. He recently earned a bachelor of health science degree.

Brie Bradshaw, ba '20, Stillwater, Oklahoma, began working with University College Advising at Oklahoma State University, where they are advising and teaching First Year Seminar.

Larresa Kelpin, bba '23, Topeka, Kansas, started as a staff accountant in May 2023 at Mize CPAs Inc.

Marissa Wager, b ed '22, Topeka, Kansas, is in her first year as a fourth grade general education teacher with Topeka Public Schools.

In Memory

The following information was received by the Washburn University Alumni Association and Foundation by July 31, 2023. Where available, name, maiden name, graduation years, Washburn affiliations, age, residence and date of death are included. Submit omissions to Jeremy Wangler at jwangler@wualumni.org.

1950s

Paul E. Camblin, bba '59, 88, Woodland Hills, California, on Aug. 14, 2022

Paul H. Galbraith, ba '59, Young Democrats, 90, Topeka, Kansas, on March 27, 2023

Lois E. (Allen) Kelly, b ed '59, Alpha Phi, Student Council, 86, Topeka, Kansas, on April 21, 2023

Graydon D. Luthey, jd '54, 92, Tulsa, Oklahoma, on June 18, 2023

Calvin L. McMillan, ba '53, jd '58, Debate, Phi Alpha Delta, 92, Wichita, Kansas, on April 6, 2023

George "Bud" A. Schwindt, ba '55, Air Force ROTC, 89, Whitewater, Kansas, on April 11, 2023

Lenora J. (Melzer) Speer, ba '52, Delta Gamma, Choir, Singers, 92, Walnut Creek, California, on May 21, 2023

Sara "Sally" A. (Austin) Stansbury, ba '58, Alpha Phi, Washburn Review, Young Republicans, 86, Hays, Kansas, on March 15, 2023

Dallas J. Todd, bba '59, Track, Young Republicans, Kappa Sigma, 87, Carmel, Indiana, on April 1, 2023

James H. Treiber, bba '58, 89, St. Joseph, Missouri, on March 28, 2023

Wayne E. Vandeventer, bs '50, 97, San Antonio, Texas, June 8, 2023

1960s

Walter Broadnax, ba '67, h '94, 78, Fayetteville, New York, on Dec. 2, 2022

Jacqueline R. (Burkhead) Bush, b ed '66, m ed '74, 86, Seabrook, Texas, on April 16, 2023

Thomas M. Frenn, bba '68, 77, Topeka, Kansas, on June 15, 2023

Elizabeth J. (Bardsley) Henrie, b ed '64, 80, Topeka, Kansas, on March 30, 2023

William E. James, bba '65, 80, Topeka, Kansas, on June 14, 2023

Argell D. Jantzen, b music '63, Marching Band, Choir, 83, Topeka, Kansas, on July 15, 2023

William H. Layes, bba '66, 82, Topeka, Kansas, on March 31, 2023

Wilmer M. Loewen, ba '63, 87, Tulsa, Oklahoma, on April 8, 2023

Earl Duane McCarter, bs '61, 84, Topeka, Kansas, on April 13, 2023

Rinda A. (Coon) Oldham, b ed '65, m ed '84, Zeta Tau Alpha, 80, Topeka, Kansas, on June 14, 2023

Cpl. James S. Parsons, bs '62, 92, Scottsdale, Arizona, on Oct. 24, 2022

David L. Patton, jd '66, Delta Theta Phi, 90, Topeka, Kansas, on June 29, 2023

Douglas C. Richards, ba '69, jd '71, Law Clinic, 74, Salina, Kansas, on April 27, 2022

Doris K. Rolfe, ba '63, 82, Boulder, Colorado, on March 15, 2023

Thomas S. Romig, bba '62, Kappa Sigma, Basketball, 87, Topeka, Kansas, on July 26, 2023

Capt. David A. Srite, bba '61, Alpha Delta, 85, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on March 28, 2023

John W. Sutherland, ba '61, jd '64, 84, Topeka, Kansas, on April 22, 2023

Richard C. Wangeman, bba '66, 79, Springfield, Virginia, on March 25, 2023

1970s

Alfred B. Adam, jd '71, 80, Centennial, Colorado, on April 22, 2023

Wanetta K. (Gardener) Adam, jd '76, Law Clinic, Law Journal, 80, Centennial, Colorado, on April 9, 2023

Trueman "Don" Briggs, bs '72, 72, El Dorado, Kansas, on May 17, 2023

Steven C. Curwick, bba '71, 75, Clovis, California, on March 27, 2023

Robert G. Dallas, ba '76, 82, Marion, Iowa, on May 14, 2023

George W. Doss, b ed '73, 84, Overbrook, Kansas, on March 26, 2023

Harold J. Fanshier, ba '71, bba '78, jd '81, Law Clinic, 75, Arlington, Texas, on July 16, 2023

Connie D. (Benning) Guinn, ba '70, 74, Cleveland, Texas, on Feb. 5, 2023

David M. Hall, jd '76, 74, Anthony, Kansas, on March 31, 2023

Kenneth D. Hasenbank, bba '70, 79, South Berwick, Maine, on April 5, 2023

Benny D. Miller, bba '72, 85, Shawnee, Kansas, on March 22, 2023

Rodney D. Myers, ba '78, 68, Topeka, Kansas, on June 11, 2023

Jeffrey T. Smith, ba '70, jd '72, Law Clinic, 79, Leicester, Vermont, on May 7, 2023

1980s

David D. Beal, c '81, 61, Topeka, Kansas, on May 19, 2023

Dorla C. (Boyer) Bowers, bs '80, 92, Sarasota, Florida, on Dec. 25, 2022

Christopher G. Costello, jd '82, 67, Marion, Kansas, on July 13, 2023

Thomas M. Green, ba '86, 68, Topeka, Kansas, on May 31, 2023

Michael M. Jackson, jd '80, 74, Topeka, Kansas, May 23, 2023

V. Jeanne Purcell-Littell, aa '81, bsw '86, 86, Perry, Kansas, on June 17, 2023

Sheila J. (Bennett) Redmon, ba '83, aa '84, msw '02, Alpha Kappa Alpha, 63, Topeka, Kansas, on June 1, 2023

Loretta M. (Gates) Roth, aa '80, 90, Lawrence, Kansas, on July 13, 2023

Marilyn J. (Beutler) Young, bba '88, mba '91, 86, Brownsville, Texas, on Feb. 23, 2023

1990s

Nicolle L. (Spann) Buhler, jd '95, Law Clinic, 51, Wichita, Kansas, on Dec. 15, 2021

Paul D. Fecteau, c '96, 55, Rossville, Kansas, on May 19, 2023

Cynthia L. (Johnson) Ketter, bsw '97, 66, Topeka, Kansas, on May 19, 2023

Debra K. (Pack) Simmons, aa '99, 66, Topeka, Kansas, on May 24, 2023

Michael R. Swinney, ba '90, 65, Topeka, Kansas, on May 1, 2023

2000s

Jeff A. Ensley, ba '03, 45, Topeka, Kansas, on April 19, 2023

2010s

Daniel A. Wiggs, ba '17, 41, Topeka, Kansas, on April 28, 2023

Kelly J. Yoder, c '14, 64, Topeka, Kansas, on March 24, 2023

2020s

Ashley M. Seidl, als '20, 23, Alma, Kansas, on April 2, 2023

Friends

(Attendees, employees and others who had a close connection with Washburn during a significant portion of their lives)

Ann Maria "Trena" (Abrams) Ansell, 78, Topeka, Kansas, on July 11, 2023

Jan L. (Miller) Crocker, 77, Manhattan, Kansas, on April 23, 2023

Mary "Ruth" (Wolverton)

Fernstrom, 85, Sarasota, Florida, on July 16, 2023

Karen S. (Vogts) Lee, 65, Topeka, Kansas, on April 16, 2023

Lois M. (Kimball) Riveland, 83, Topeka, Kansas, on July 20, 2023

Ora "Gretta" M. (Nuttle) Ross, Zeta Tau Alpha, Student Council, 93, Mission, Kansas, on Feb. 13, 2023

Terry L. Schonlaw, 85, Topeka, Kansas, on April 12, 2023

Daniel P. Wade, 92, Topeka, Kansas, on May 29, 2023

Beth E. (Housh) Williams, 98, Hoyt, Kansas, on June 18, 2023

Luella M. (Wohlers) Wolff, 80, Urbandale, Iowa, on Aug. 9, 2022

Constance C. (Clarke) Yoxall, 92, Olathe, Kansas, on April 20, 2023

Ronald D. Zastrow, 65, Topeka, Kansas, in 2023

James M. Concannon, III, Professor Emeritus, Law, 75, Topeka, Kansas, on June 17, 2023



James Concannon joined the faculty at Washburn University School of Law in 1972 and remained there for nearly 50 years. He was dean from 1988-2001, and in 2013, he became the Senator Robert J. Dole

Distinguished Professor of Law. He is the longest-serving dean and faculty member at the School of Law. At the centennial of Washburn Law, he wrote the book, "The Ideal Place... for the Establishment of a Great Law School: History of Washburn Law School, 1903-2003." The Kansas Supreme Court honored Concannon with the Justice Award in 2012 and with a citation for contributions to the judiciary in 1997. Concannon and his wife, Melissa Masoner, funded a scholarship and made a gift to the new School of Law building, naming a classroom after him. The dean's suite in the new building is named after him.

Ross E. Johnson, Professor Emeritus, Biology, 91, Bella Vista, Arkansas, on April 20, 2023



Ross Johnson taught biology, botany and ecology at Washburn University from 1961 until his retirement in 1997. Throughout his Washburn career, he spent time as department chair and faculty representative to the

athletic department. He was a founding member of the Kansas Wildflower Society. Prior to Washburn, Johnson served in the Navy, did research for the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and taught at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks.

Douglas S. Wright, ba '70, jd '73, Phi Delta Theta, Law Clinic, Washburn University Board of Regents, Washburn Alumni Association Board of Directors, 74, Topeka, Kansas, on July 27, 2023



Douglas Wright served on the Washburn University board of regents from 1983-89 as he served as Topeka's mayor. He was mayor as several arts and entertainment venues opened in Topeka including the Topeka Performing

Arts Center and the Kansas Expocenter. He also served on the Alumni Association board of directors from 1990-91 and 1995-99, and he practiced law for more than 30 years. He created a scholarship at Washburn in memory of his late wife, Susan Wright, bs '72, upon her death. 🏃



Alumni Travel Opportunities

SEE THE WORLD WITH FELLOW ICHABODS

Mexico | Two Departures – Jan. 21-28 and Jan. 23-30, 2024

Get away this winter and enjoy the sun, sugary-white sands and crystal-clear waters of the Mexican Caribbean with fellow Ichabods and friends at the Majestic Costa Mujeres all-inclusive resort. Pricing begins at \$2,099 per person for two people sharing one room and includes roundtrip, non-stop airfare between Kansas City and Cancun (other departure cities available, but pricing may vary), seven nights at the resort, all meals and beverages.

England and Wales | April 9-20, 2024

Make a trip “across the pond” and spend three nights in London, two nights each in Cardiff and Conwy and three nights in Liverpool. Trip includes airfare from Kansas City (other departure cities available, but pricing may vary), to London and return from Manchester, 10 nights hotel accommodations, 13 meals, London tour, visits to Bath, Stonehenge, Cardiff Castle, Tintern Abbey, Brecon Beacons National Park, Snowdonia, Beatles Museum and more. Pricing available soon. Contact Susie Hoffmann to add your name to the list.

Egypt | Sept. 19-28, 2024

Fly to Cairo and spend three nights in one of the world’s most ancient cities. Enjoy a private Cairo tour, visit the Saladin Citadel, Muhammad Ali Mosque, Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza Plateau and Great Sphinx. Fly to Luxor and visit the Temple Complex and Valley of the Kings. Relax onboard the Jaz Regent for a four-night Nile River cruise visiting Edfu, Kom Ombo and Aswan. Fly to Abu Simbel to visit the Nubian Monuments, then fly to Cairo for one night before returning home. This trip costs \$5,528 per person for two people sharing one room and includes round trip airfare between Kansas City and Cairo (other departure cities available, but pricing may vary), flights between Cairo, Luxor and Abu Simbel, 21 meals, four nights hotel accommodations in Cairo, four-night Nile River cruise and more.



The Alumni Association’s travel club is exclusive to dues-paid members of the Washburn University Alumni Association. If you are not a member of the Alumni Association, consider joining online at wualumni.org/join. Membership is open to everyone. You don’t have to be a graduate of Washburn to join the Alumni Association and be a member of the travel club. Nearly all trips sell out quickly, so contact Susie Hoffmann to get your name on the list early to hold your place.

For more information about alumni travel, visit wualumni.org/alumni-travel or contact Susie Hoffmann at 785.670.1643 or susie@wualumni.org.



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HOMECOMING & INAUGURATION

