

VOYAGES

STUDENTS
FIRST



ANCHORED IN
EXCELLENCE

Navigating Into the Future



THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF
CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY
SPRING 2025

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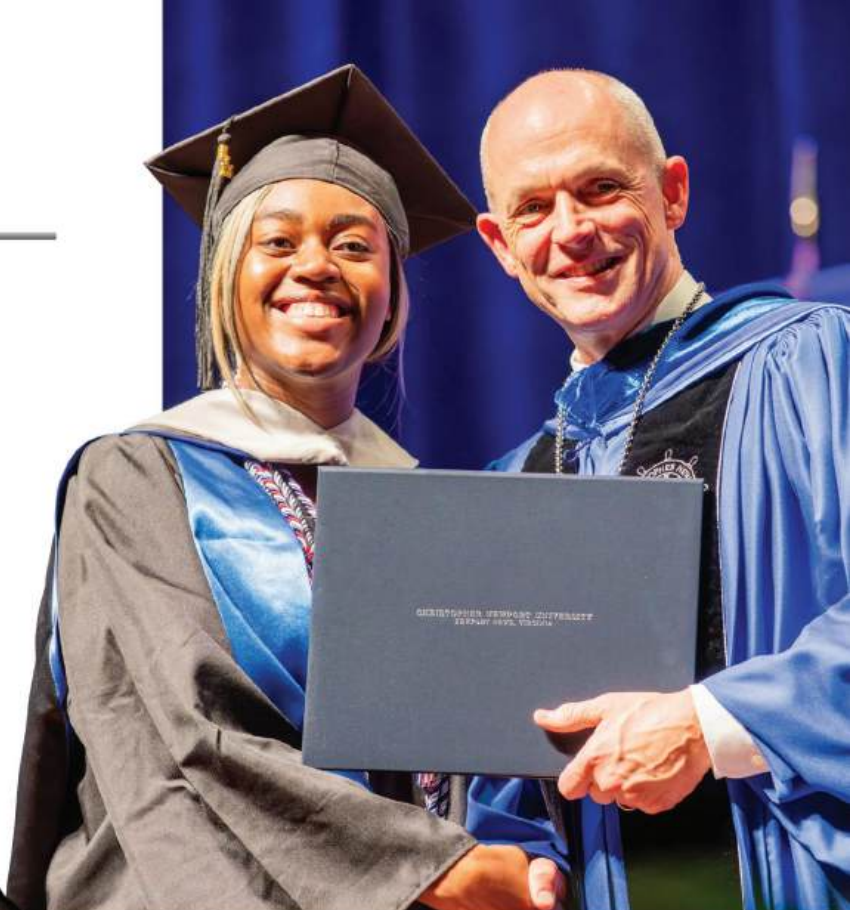
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Campus News



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THE PRINCETON REVIEW'S annual list of the "The Best 390 Colleges" has once again awarded CNU a top spot among the nation's premier undergraduate institutions, thanks to its supportive faculty and vibrant sense of community.

It also singled out the University's residence halls as being No. 1 in Virginia and No. 4 nationally among public institutions.

Christopher Newport's rankings appear in the education service company's 2025 edition of its annual college guide, "The Best 390 Colleges" and its Best Mid-Atlantic list.

A+

Christopher Newport's innovative core curriculum and rigorous academic standards have earned the highest grade possible from the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). CNU was the only public university to earn an A+.

1

U.S. News ranked Christopher Newport first among regional public universities in Virginia, third in the South among regional public universities and sixth among all regional universities, public and private, in the South.

FIRST IN VIRGINIA

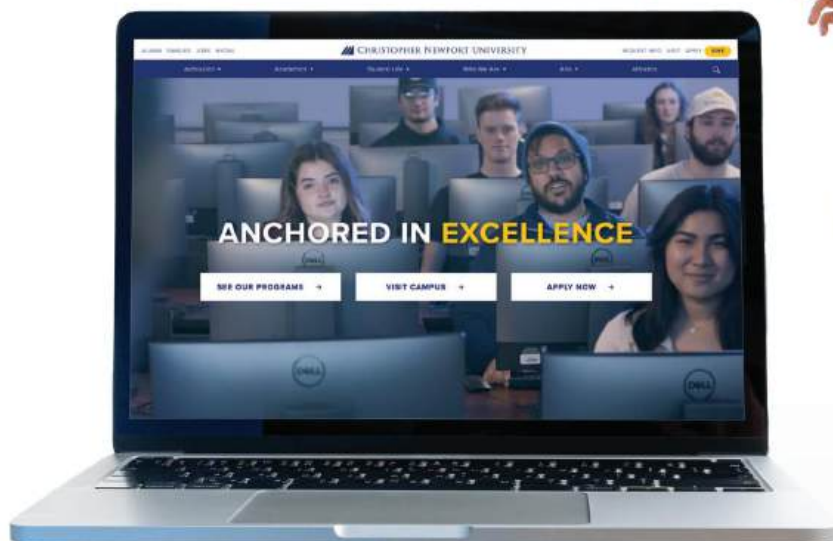
Christopher Newport is the first school in Virginia to offer students certification in undergraduate research and creative activity.

The Certificate in Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity elevates CNU's emphasis on meaningful work outside the classroom and provides students a tangible way to showcase their research prowess as they head into the workforce or to graduate school.

"We're breaking new ground in the Commonwealth," said Dr. David Salomon, Director of Student Research and Creative Activity. "It boosts us to the top."

The certification is key as CNU continues its ascent in the world of research. It provides students with yet another way to make themselves and their skill sets competitive and in demand as they journey into the world after graduation.

CNU.EDU IS NEW!



CHECK OUT CNU's website, which has a fresh new look! The redesigned homepage launched in January and boosted site traffic by 15% in just the first month. Users are enjoying a sleeker layout, better navigation, and improved search engine optimization — resulting in a 20% boost in visibility. Keep clicking for more exciting updates in the coming months, as we continue to showcase the best of Christopher Newport.



THE
**Best
Colleges**
IN AMERICA

Christopher Newport University has been lauded as one of the nation's top institutions by Money magazine, earning a top spot on its 2024 Best Colleges list. The selection reinforces Christopher Newport's reputation as a top choice for students seeking a high-quality education at an affordable price.

Money evaluated more than 2,400 four-year public and private institutions in the U.S., focusing on three key areas: affordability, quality of education, and outcomes after graduation.



EXPANDING TEACHING DEGREE OPPORTUNITIES

ASPIRING TEACHERS have a new pathway to the classroom with the launch of Christopher Newport's Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education (BAEd) program. Building on the University's strong tradition of teacher preparation, this new degree program complements the existing foundation currently offered through the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program.

The new degree offering, unanimously approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the Virginia Board of Education (VDOE), will offer students a more direct route to pursue their passion for teaching.

Similar to the MAT program, the Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education will feature partnerships with local schools, classroom immersion, and technology integration, ensuring that students graduate not only with theoretical knowledge but with practical skills and experience. The curriculum will meet and exceed all rigorous standards of VDOE, and prepare students for impactful careers in teaching and education leadership.

The program will also help address growing teacher shortages locally and nationwide. Christopher Newport's partner school district, Newport News Public Schools (NNPS), wholeheartedly endorsed the University's proposal to the state to license future teachers.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Captains,

Thank you for all that you do to support the University that we cherish and thank you for reading this unique edition of Voyages.

Angie and I have so enjoyed our second year as your President and First Lady. Everywhere we go, members of our community are engaged and their accomplishments are too numerous to fit in even 100 issues of Voyages.

This edition of Voyages is special because it is organized to emphasize the four priorities of the new Christopher Newport Strategic Compass. The Compass is a form of something you are probably familiar with through your professional and civic lives: a strategic plan. A compass indicates direction. That is what our Compass does. It identifies our priorities and goals, points the way and creates alignment for our ship's crew. One direction is not more important than another. All will be needed. And a compass will not reveal the best conveyance to follow its points, whether traveling by ship or the power of a unified community. We must decide.



The process of determining our Compass has unquestionably united and aligned us in common cause. Thank you to the Captains for Life and the hundreds of other people across every part of our community who contributed ideas, attended information sessions, and helped us define our priorities, our Compass points, as well as our goals and objectives.

Although a compass helps you start a trip, it will not tell you when you have reached the destination. The next step in our journey is to assess our resources and develop tactics so that we can accomplish the four priorities you will read about in the pages to come.

In addition to the Compass itself, the featured stories and photos showcase how our Captains for Life, supporters, students, faculty and staff are already fulfilling the spirit of the priorities, and we know there is so much more to come.

Thank you for the time, talent and treasure that you have offered your University and that we hope you will continue to give to make the voyage ahead a success. Angie and I are honored and excited to be part of a university anchored in excellence and intent on being the best regional public university in the U.S. and the most inclusive in Virginia.

Go Captains!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "W. G. Kelly".

William G. Kelly
President
Christopher Newport University



Scan the QR code to watch a special greeting from President Kelly, in which he shares insights about this edition of Voyages magazine.



BRING ON THE FUTURE

OUR NEW VISION

Anchored in excellence and focused on students, Christopher Newport University aspires to be the nation's premier regional public university, offering an innovative education embedded in the liberal arts that advances the values of honor, service, scholarship, and leadership to empower graduates to lead lives of significance.

OUR NEW STRATEGIC COMPASS

Created by the community and the result of months of work by hundreds of people, our Compass sets four priorities for the University that will guide us from now through 2030.

-  **Advance the Power and Promise of an Education Embedded in the Liberal Arts**
-  **Connect with Our Community**
-  **Create a Stronger Culture of Inclusion and Belonging**
-  **Build a Foundation to Thrive**

As this special edition of Voyages brings to life, everyone in our community, including our cherished Captains for Life, is contributing to accomplishing our Strategic Compass priorities and achieving our Vision.

[CNU.EDU/WHO-WE-ARE/STRATEGIC-COMPASS](https://cnu.edu/who-we-are/strategic-compass)

ADVANCE

THE POWER AND PROMISE OF AN EDUCATION EMBEDDED IN THE LIBERAL ARTS

Students will realize strong, enduring value from a comprehensive liberal arts education anchored in excellence that prepares them to understand contemporary challenges, solve complex problems, think critically, adapt to changing professional demands and career opportunities, develop fully as individuals, and become engaged citizens.

A student-focused experience prepares students to flourish for a lifetime, opening their minds to new ideas. The liberal arts-based curriculum, university programs, outstanding teaching, student-involved research, and mentoring will empower excellence in academics, including artistic creation and the sciences, and a commitment to service that contributes to a life of meaning in a free, democratic society and interconnected world.

Signature programs of distinction driven by a focus on outbound success will help graduates meet contemporary challenges and career demands while also responding to the interests of prospective students.

Academic and co-curricular offerings will include interdisciplinary and experiential learning that foster the development of tangible, transferable skills. Holistic student development promotes intellectual, emotional, and physical well-being and involves academics, athletics, arts, community engagement, support systems, and other student-centered programming.





ADVANCE

Scan here to learn about the
Objectives that will power
the Compass Goals and Priorities.



Slam Dunk

*Rico Francis '18 turns passion
for leadership into career*

BY KELLI CAPLAN



PHOTOS © THE PACERS FOUNDATION

When Rico Francis sat down for his interview with Pacers Sports & Entertainment, he was more than just a candidate — his CNU education positioned him to be a game changer.

THE NEW GRADUATE was able to wow his potential bosses with a resume packed with leadership experience and real-world achievements.

“One of the things my employer truly enjoyed and was excited about was that I had experience in college before I even graduated,” he said. “It made me really very competitive with others in the pool.”

The Communication Studies major landed the job, becoming the first-ever social impact director for the Pacers Foundation, the philanthropic arm for Pacers Sports & Entertainment. The foundation is part of a sports franchise that includes the Indiana Pacers (NBA), Indiana Fever (WNBA), Mad Ants (G-League) and Gainbridge Fieldhouse.

Francis was encouraged during his four years at CNU to set the world on fire with his enthusiasm and drive. He embraced that way of thinking, and it came across loud and clear in his interview.

“My current supervisor said he was excited for me to breathe new life into the foundation,” said Francis ’18.

In the three years since he was hired, he has done just that.

Francis has elevated the foundation to new levels and expanded its reach to make a difference in the community he now calls home.

As social impact director, his mission is to forge the way for the Pacers Foundation to be an agent of good. Francis works to establish relationships with community groups and leaders, administer grants to nonprofit organizations, and execute programs that make a palpable difference off the court, doing everything from funding the refurbishment of community basketball courts to initiating a program called NBA Math Hoops that fosters a love of math in young students.



A proud Captain for Life, Francis takes every opportunity to credit CNU with his success.

The University, he said, was instrumental in shaping him into the person he is today. He is always cheering for Christopher Newport, sharing his story and love of the school with potential students.

"It's really important to me to pay it forward, to pave the way for other students on the same path I was," he said.

The Maryland native toured CNU during his senior year and was surprised to discover a place focused on his passion: leadership.

"In high school, I had been involved in a lot of student leadership programs, so it was one of my biggest priorities to find a school where student leadership was baked into every student," he said.

"It was obvious that it wasn't just a few students who stepped up as leaders at CNU. Rather, it was an expectation that everyone was, so that was what sold me."

There was an undeniable connection as soon as Francis walked onto campus. He knew he had found his new home.

Francis wasted no time getting involved. He developed strong relationships with professors and sought out opportunities on campus and in the community.

The project that inspired his career goals was Friends of Phi Nu, a fraternity-led youth development program he started in 2016. The effort centered on a local elementary school, which Francis and his peers visited regularly to mentor at-risk students. He wanted to continue that momentum after he graduated.

"My hunger to share what I was learning really became my appetite," he said.

When he transitioned to the Pacers, he was ready, armed with big ideas and a knack for collaboration. He often refers back to what he learned at CNU from professors and hands-on learning experiences to help him navigate and achieve success.

"The University is really good at preparing students for jobs of tomorrow," he said. "It has definitely prepared me well." 🏀

At presstime, Rico Francis announced he's leaving the Pacers, but will remain in Indianapolis working in philanthropy. We wish him a rewarding next step in a career that exemplifies a life of significance.

Introducing The School of Engineering And Computing

WITH A GOAL of addressing the technical challenges of tomorrow, Christopher Newport University has launched the School of Engineering and Computing (SEC).

The new SEC, which officially opened Oct. 4, 2024, builds on the strong foundation of its predecessor, the Department of Physics, Computer Science and Engineering. It integrates physics, engineering, computer science, cybersecurity, and information science to create an inspiring, inclusive and interdisciplinary environment of excellence in teaching and research.

"The School of Engineering and Computing is home to research that creates innovative solutions to some of the world's greatest challenges and it is home to students who want a rigorous technical education that prepares them for careers across many fields, including some not yet imagined," said Head of School Dr. Anton Riedl, associate professor of electrical and computer engineering. Riedl previously served as chair of the Department of Physics, Computer Science and Engineering.

SEC's formation was approved by the University's Board of Visitors at its April 2024 meeting. Board members noted the formation of the SEC will facilitate engagement with external industry partners and improve responsiveness to industry educational needs.

"The newly approved School of Engineering and Computing creates new opportunities for students that leverage the strengths of CNU's outstanding engineering and science faculty," said Dr. Robert Hodson, chair of SEC's Industry Advisory Board. Hodson serves as Technical Fellow for Avionics at the NASA Engineering and Safety Center.

The SEC is temporarily housed in Luter Hall, but many of the SEC's faculty, labs and classrooms will soon be located in the Science and Engineering Research Center that is now under construction and slated to open in 2026.



THE FINISH LINE IS IN SIGHT!

The Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC) at Christopher Newport University is on schedule to open its doors in January. With its cutting-edge laboratories, along with collaborative research and learning spaces, the new building will be a hub for hands-on innovation by faculty and students, especially the more than 50% who pursue STEM degrees. SERC reinforces CNU's commitment to academic excellence, while advancing the power and promise of liberal arts.

Members of the Board of Visitors and University leaders mark the launch of the School of Engineering and Computing.



Preparing for Catastrophe

*State Resilience is
Priority One for Alex Tran*

BY KELLI CAPLAN



BEFORE ALEX TRAN was a master of disaster, he was a Captain.

When Tran, '22 Political Science and Criminology, graduated, he traded serene campus life for a career that is the antithesis of calm. He now spends his days anticipating calamity, residing in a world of worst case scenarios.

Tran is a regional exercise project coordinator for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), and his career is powered by preparing stakeholders across the Commonwealth for the possibility of dark days. He thrives on constant stress, looming deadlines, and confronting persistent and downright scary “what ifs.”

“This was truly my dream job out of college. Having the opportunity to serve the entire state is an honor,” he said.

Each year, he orchestrates more than 40 meticulously planned scenarios designed to give professionals around the state the chance to act out and learn from real-life emergencies, everything from active threats to storms.

Tran credits his Christopher Newport education and what he learned as a Captain — the importance of collaboration and strong interpersonal skills — for helping fuel his career success. Classes, he said, built a liberal arts foundation that proved priceless as he transitioned to the work world.

“CNU emphasized learning outside the class and my experience on campus is a great example of what you can do if you take advantage of the opportunity while you are in school,” he said.

Recently, Tran returned to Christopher Newport to plan a critical incident event that involved a simulated shooting in McMurran Hall. He transformed the campus he once walked as a student into a classroom for emergency preparedness.

Tran spent months organizing the full-scale exercise. His job was to boost safety at a place he loves — a place that helped shape him into the person he is today.

“It was a full circle experience,” he said.

Tran works everyday to ensure that people are not only ready for any turn of events, but that they are confident and comfortable in how they react.

“While we hope that these incidents we prepare for will never happen, I know that the first responders who serve the campus community and the greater city are prepared,” he said.

Tran’s journey into the world of disaster preparedness began in earnest at CNU. During Welcome Week as a freshman, there was a presentation that included information about the University’s Department of Emergency Management and what it does on campus. He left the presentation feeling like he had discovered his true calling.



“

I have always enjoyed a fast-paced environment. My best work is always done under pressure.

ALEX TRAN '22

Tran was able to secure an internship with the department just before the ultimate crisis happened: the COVID pandemic. Everything changed, and he found himself in the middle of a whirlwind of emergencies.

Tran's role was elevated, and he took on the job of supporting vaccine clinics on campus.

It gave him a taste of operating under pressure in a critical role with the potential to transform chaos into calm. He decided then that he would seek a career in emergency management.

“I have always enjoyed a fast-paced environment. My best work is always done under pressure,” he said.

After graduating, Tran was hired as a regional exercise project coordinator. Working for the state has allowed him to apply everything he learned at CNU, both in and out of the classroom. He has leaned heavily on his liberal arts education, a lesson he eagerly passes on to other Captains.

“Durable skills, a foundation of liberal arts, and a generalist mindset will amplify your future beyond campus,” he said. “Build and leverage your network through peer-to-peer exchanges to fuel both personal and professional growth. Take your time. Many race through their four years on campus, but there's a long road ahead after graduation. Don't rush — enjoy the journey.”

NURSING PROGRAM PREPARES CAPTAINS WHO CARE

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT has partnered with Riverside College of Health Sciences (RCHS) to provide students with an opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

The partnership entails students attending both CNU and RCHS. Students will complete the program with a bachelor of arts from Christopher Newport and a bachelor of science from RCHS. Riverside intends to immediately offer full-time employment to graduates of the program who meet all other qualifications.

“Great neighbors make for a great community. CNU is proud to be the hometown university for Newport News. We are proud that we can work with Riverside to educate and prepare the nurses so critical to the health of our community,” said President William G. Kelly.

The dual degree program paves the way for students to reach their career goals by melding two different and dynamic college experiences at both a liberal arts university and a premier hospital-based college of health sciences on nearby campuses.

“Every year, we have students who attend CNU because they love the University, but they want to do nursing, or we have students who come into college with the intent of becoming a physician or physician's assistant and find a career in nursing is what they really want,” said Dr. Gwynne Brown, Director of Pre-Health Programs at Christopher Newport. “This program will provide both groups an avenue to earn their BSN while staying connected to CNU.”



From Theorems to Twirls

Why Emily Lyon '23 put her science career on ice so she could skate for Disney

BY KELLEY MCGEE





When Emily Lyon received the offer to skate with Disney on Ice after graduation, she knew her physics career would have to wait. She couldn't pass up the dream she'd been chasing since childhood.



"PERFORMING WITH DISNEY has been my goal since I was eight. Skating professionally is easier while you're young, so I knew I had to seize the opportunity immediately after college."

Lyon has spent the past year dazzling crowds across the U.S. before heading to Europe, Australia and Asia. The travel is extensive, and the performances demanding, but from her first show, she knew she was where she belonged.

"I will never forget the feeling of running out onto the ice for the opening number after working so hard for so long to get there. It felt amazing to perform for such a large, energetic crowd. Every performance is magical in its own way, but my very first performance was by far the most special," she said.

Balancing a physics major and professional skating aspirations wasn't easy. Lyon split her time between intense coursework and rigorous training at Chilled Ponds Ice Arena in Yorktown.

"Most days, I was either in class, studying or practicing. My professors supported me, which made all the difference," she said.

"Emily is a very bright young woman, but that's just a small part of what made her an absolute delight as a student," said Physics Professor Dr. David P. Heddle. "She was diligent, responsible, respectful and curious. And the icing on the cake is that she is truly joyous, with an engaging sense of humor and a quick smile. I'm not surprised that she's pursuing a career as a professional ice skater. And if she later chooses to return to physics, I won't be surprised to hear of her scientific accomplishments either."

Her perseverance paid off when she landed an audition — and a contract — with Disney on Ice during her senior year. She credits her physics training with helping her understand the mechanics of skating and preparing her for life on tour.

"My time at Christopher Newport taught me adaptability and

perseverance — both crucial in a show environment. The collaboration skills I learned in physics have been invaluable on tour," she said.

Now dazzling audiences worldwide, Lyon reflects on how CNU shaped her perspective on success.

"True success isn't about prestigious titles or money — it's about accomplishing your dreams. Touring with Disney on Ice has given me invaluable connections and skills that will benefit me when I pursue a physics career," she said.

Lyon hopes her story reassures both current students and fellow alums that it's OK to veer off course and pursue their passions.

"My advice? Go for it! Touring has provided incredible experiences, but I also cherish my time at Christopher Newport — the community, the friendships, and my acapella group," she said. "Although I'm no longer on campus, I'm part of a new community in skating, and I will always be a Captain at heart!" 🐾

FACULTY NEWS



CNU Researchers Among World's Top 2%

Three Christopher Newport researchers have been identified as among the world's most influential scholars and scientists in a new edition of an annual ranking compiled by Stanford University and the analytics firm Elsevier.

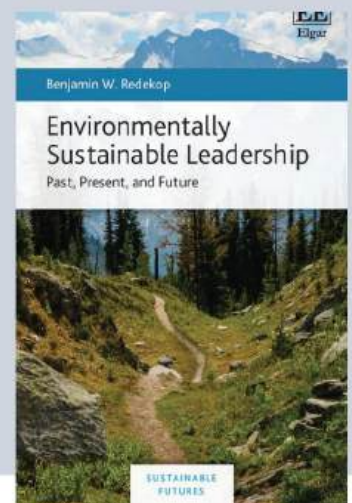
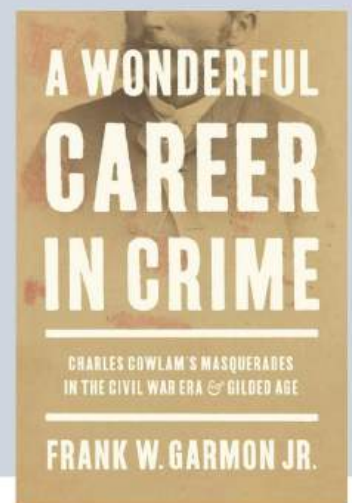
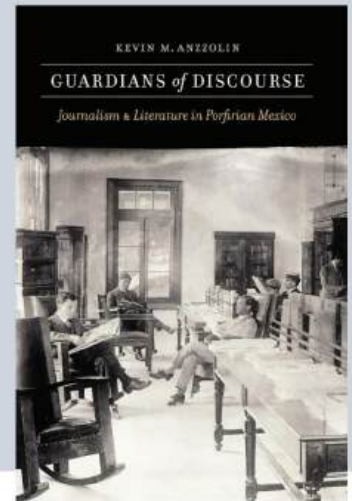
Psychology professors Dr. Sherman Lee and Dr. Timothy Pressley (pictured left to right) are new to the list. Chemistry Professor Dr. Tarek Abdel-Fattah has previously been recognized. All three were ranked by Stanford among the top 2% of researchers globally based on their academic publications and citation metrics. The authors of the annual study analyze the community of more than six million scientists worldwide.

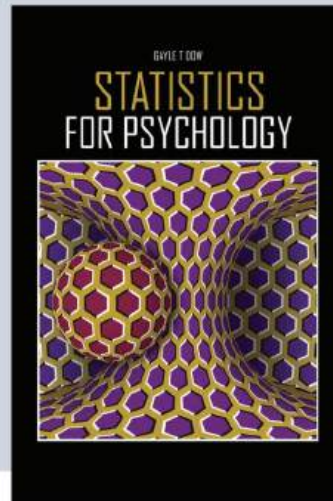
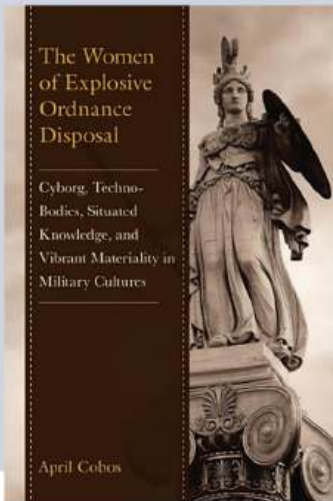
"This is a prestigious honor for Dr. Abdel-Fattah, Dr. Lee and Dr. Pressley, and for Christopher Newport University," said Provost Dr. Quentin Kidd. "Our students have the unique opportunity to conduct research side-by-side with prominent scientists, including three of the most influential in the world."

Abdel-Fattah is the Lawrence J. Sacks Endowed Professor of Chemistry and the CNU director of the Applied Research Center at Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility in Newport News.

Lee teaches courses in the psychology of personality and the psychology of death, dying and bereavement. He often co-authors articles with his students, who play an active role in his research lab. With more than 100 publications, Lee is on the American Psychological Association's expert advisory list for the subject of grief and sits on the editorial boards for the *Journal of Clinical and Basic Psychosomatics* and *Death Studies*.

Pressley leads courses in research methods, educational psychology, and classroom assessment for the Department of Psychology and the Master of Arts in Teaching Program. A former elementary school teacher, his research focuses on the lives of teachers and supporting their well-being. Recently, Pressley has published two books with Guilford Publishing; has published in leading educational journals, such as *Educational Researcher*; and is currently working with local public school divisions to support teacher well-being.





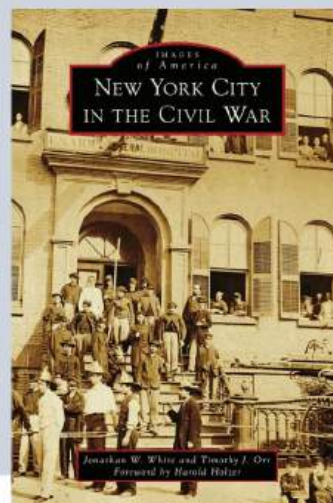
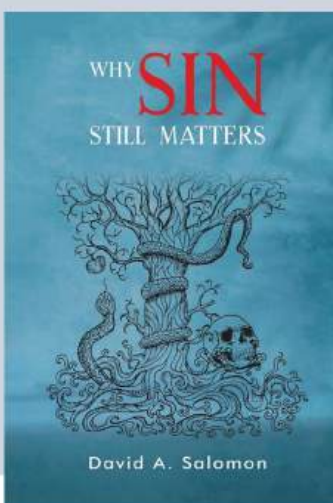
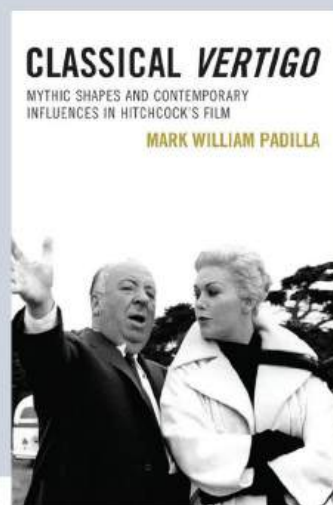
HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Dr. Andrew Falk's student-assisted podcast wins top honor from the American Historical Association

History Professor Dr. Andrew Falk's recently launched podcast, "Past is Prologue," has earned the American Historical Association's inaugural Sinclair Prize for "Most Outstanding Historical Podcast." This remarkable recognition, given in a highly competitive field, showcases Falk's passion for making history accessible and interconnected to today's challenges. The podcast also enhances the University's commitment to making scholarship more accessible by engaging with a wider audience.

"Past is Prologue" stands out for its ability to tackle a wide range of topics — from Artificial Intelligence (AI) to concepts in education — with depth and a touch of humor. Students play an important role by assisting with research and production. The result is not just a podcast, but a collaborative, educational experience that demonstrates how historical interpretation can inform contemporary conversations.

Listen to the "Past is Prologue" podcast on



For a full list of faculty accomplishments, visit:



CONNECT

WITH OUR COMMUNITY

As a regional public university, Christopher Newport will enhance the overall quality of life in the Peninsula, Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth. CNU will integrate with the community as an educational, cultural, societal, and economic hub of excellence.

The University will be a resource for residents who seek learning opportunities and for organizations who seek assistance in solving complex problems and capitalizing on unique opportunities. To model civic responsibility, we will directly serve our community through research activity, community-engaged learning, and collaborative partnerships.

CNU will be a major contributor to the regional economy, through the fostering of internship and service opportunities that create talent pipelines to reinforce the local workforce.

As a hub for the performing and visual arts, the Ferguson Center for the Arts, the Mary M. Torggler Fine Arts Center, and academic arts programs will provide an important cultural benefit for the entire region.

Athletic excellence will foster community spirit, bolster the economy and serve as a rallying point for Captains for Life and dedicated CNU supporters.





CONNECT

Scan here to learn about the Objectives that will power the Compass Goals and Priorities.



First Community Captains Graduate

BY KELLI CAPLAN

FOUR STUDENTS have earned a special place in Christopher Newport University history as the first graduates of the Community Captains program.

With the turn of their tassels, Tejah Butler, Krystal Langhorne, Briana Terry and Miranda Williamson transformed from Community Captains to Captains For Life.

"They are graduating from CNU after only three and a half years," President William G. Kelly said in his Commencement Address. "We are so proud of them, their teachers and counselors in high school, and their families and supporters."

The graduates' journeys as Community Captains began when they were sophomores in high school. The high-performing students, two of whom graduated from Heritage

High School and the other two from An Achievable Dream High School, were invited to apply to a brand new college-preparatory program at Christopher Newport, created in collaboration with Newport News Public Schools (NNPS) and the City of Newport News.

The Community Captains program offered them early access to a college class, events that introduced them to college life, and the promise of support every step of the way — academically, developmentally and socially. The four students, and many others since, realized it was an opportunity they couldn't turn down.

"I just thought it was really cool getting a feel for college culture. I was drawn to the program due to the college exposure," said Langhorne, who majored in Psychology.



"I knew the program was a good fit. How they described the program was intriguing and seemed like it was going to set me up for success."

Butler, Langhorne, Terry and Williamson completed the high school portion of Community Captains and then chose to attend Christopher Newport. The four students not only embraced life on campus, they also realized their goal of a bachelor's degree in less than four years.

"It feels GREAT!," said Butler, who majored in Finance and plans to stay at CNU to earn a Master of Financial Analysis (MFinA). "Finishing school early has allowed me to start my career way before I ever imagined, as I began in October. I am also able to begin the MFinA program at CNU next semester and will be done by the time I'm 22!"

Butler will be employed as a full-time accountant at Huntington Ingalls Industries as she works toward earning her MFinA.

Choosing CNU, the students said, proved to be the right choice.

"I chose to pursue my education at CNU solely because of the Community Captains program; being in the program allowed me to tour the campus and see CNU for myself and every time I went, it just felt like home to me," said Terry, who majored in Global Commerce and Culture. "I really liked the small campus, how everyone held doors and the

small ratio of students in a classroom. The campus is just really beautiful to me."

Langhorne was equally impressed.

"It just provided a lot of close-to-home opportunities that were affordable to me while still being an amazing experience," she said.

Langhorne spent much of her time on campus conducting undergraduate research. She hopes to continue her research in graduate school and one day become a clinical psychologist.

Completing her degree a semester early simply adds to Langhorne's joy.

"I could not be happier. I'm just proud of my fellow Community Captains and early graduates in general and just happy to be done," she said.

Since the program's inception, more than 350 students from NNPS have been served by Community Captains. Brandon Jones, director of the program, said he is excited for the graduates and is looking forward to watching them flourish in the world.

"All four of these students are such hard-working and deeply-feeling adults," he said. "On behalf of the team, we hope they all realize they are cared for, that they are competent and, by relying on the program and experiences they have had, that all will be well." 🍀

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We are so proud of them, their teachers and counselors in high school, and their families and supporters.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM G. KELLY
WITH GRADUATE KRYSTAL LANGHORNE







Finding Purpose at the End of a Leash

Former CNU athlete and Navy SEAL challenges students to turn adversity into discovery

BY KELLEY MCGEE

CHRIS CAPPA knows what it means to battle, both on and off the field.

As an outside linebacker at Christopher Newport, he stared down plenty of challenges on the gridiron. As a devoted son, he made the difficult decision in his junior year to leave college because his family needed help “putting food on the table.” And later, as a Navy SEAL, he navigated life and death situations in unfamiliar corners of the world — for a time with a four-legged partner by his side, a Belgian Malinois named Miki.

Cappa described his journey as a winding road, filled with tough choices and the occasional misstep. But he views it all as a lesson in growth and resilience. That was the message he shared with Christopher Newport’s football team during a pre-game pep talk. He urged the players to embrace life’s challenges as opportunities to grow. Life may not always follow the playbook, Cappa told them, but with perseverance, they can find their path and purpose.

“I came to campus in 2006 from a single parent household. Up until I arrived, I had to do most things on my own. But the football coaches and staff here were so welcoming. They helped me get my classes and financial aid squared away. They helped me develop as a player, but they cared just as much about me and my academics. That meant a lot to me at

that time in my life,” Cappa told the room full of players.

“I carried with me that sense of teamwork and caring as I moved through the Navy and into the SEAL community. There, it was always about the mission, the team, and your brother next to you. It was about being selfless, because as a SEAL, we were there to defend the country and freedom at the highest possible level. I carried with me some important lessons I learned on the football field with Coach Kelchner, Coach Lustig and Coach Wood: look out for your teammates, be selfless, and take accountability for your actions. These are all values I know Coach Crowley and his staff carry on today in the CNU football culture. These were the pillars I built my success upon. I learned all this at CNU,” Cappa said.

When Cappa reached out about speaking to the team, it was a “no-brainer,” said Crowley, also a former teammate of Cappa.

“One of the most rewarding parts about coaching at your alma mater is being able to check in with old friends, and constantly be surprised at the successes they are having,” he said. “Furthermore, building connections between past players and our current team is always something we try to do as a program. Chris’ story is inspiring, and I knew it would resonate with our players.”

And it did.



“

This is a special place. Use the opportunities you have here to grow and learn.

CHRIS CAPPA

Pictured left to right: Chris Cappa's dad, Joel Hughes; his son, Wade Cappa; his wife, Megan Cappa; and Cappa.



“As a fifth-year senior, I’ll be stepping into the challenges of the real world in just a few weeks,” said Amaan Miller ’24. “Hearing how Chris discovered his purpose only after joining the Navy SEALs gives me hope, as I believe there’s something out there for me that I have yet to find. His journey reminded me that everyone’s timeline is different and that some paths take time to unfold. It’s a powerful reminder to stay committed to hard work and stick to your values — good things will come in their own time.”

“I was grateful to be able to hear what Chris had to say. It was an honor to be in the presence of a Navy SEAL and I’m blessed CNU football gives me the opportunity to make these connections,” said Maddox Lee ’27.

Cappa wore his Captains jersey proudly during his visit to CNU, but these days you’re more likely to find him in a T-shirt bearing the logo of a cause close to his heart: the Warrior Dog Foundation.

Cappa works with foundation founder and former Navy SEAL Mike Ritland to rehabilitate and find permanent homes for retired military K-9s, often by reuniting them with their former handlers after the dogs and soldiers are retired. Supporting these K-9 heroes is deeply personal to Cappa. He experienced firsthand the extraordinary loyalty and courage of these dogs during perilous missions with Miki. Cappa eventually adopted Miki, and in the process, found a new purpose in helping other warrior K-9s receive the care and respect they deserve in retirement.

“After I got out, Miki was transferred to another handler and did two more deployments—five in all. He was a force multiplier wherever he went, a true warrior. But like many of these special animals, they don’t always transition well into civilian life. They get PTSD and anxiety. Because they are viewed as ‘assets’ by the military, they face potential euthanization after service.

Because I’m a trained handler, I’ve been able to work with him and he will be with me for the rest of his life. These dogs don’t have the Veterans Administration, they need organizations like the Warrior Dog Foundation to help them get the retirement they deserve,” he said.

Cappa is also enjoying his own retirement from service. Now married with two young children, he can be found on any given Saturday in the stands at TowneBank Stadium, cheering on his former team. Recently he was invited as an honored guest to the President’s Box to watch the Captains take on William Paterson University. Cappa was also invited to the 50-yard line — with Miki at his side — to participate in the traditional coin toss.

“CNU feels like home,” Cappa said. “I’m grateful for everything this school has done, and I try to let current students know, ‘This is a special place. Use the opportunities you have here to grow and learn.’” 🐾



THE YEAR AT THE TORGGLER FINE ARTS CENTER: IMPACT, ACCLAIM AND ACCOMPLISHMENT

The Mary M. Torggler Fine Arts Center, which celebrated its third birthday last October, is proud to report that its impact is growing, attendance is increasing, and the art world is taking notice.

The \$60 million-dollar state-funded 83,000-square-foot facility opened in October 2021 and features a stunning façade of cascading glass domes.

The domes symbolize the University's bold vision for the role art plays in the life of our campus, our community and the Commonwealth.

Most shows presented at the Torggler have been original exhibitions, organized and curated by Torggler staff. Included in these was *Reflections: Surface and Substance*, which was on view through February 23 of this year. *Reflections* featured work by 16 leading artists from the U.S., France, Germany, Jamaica and China that engaged the concept of reflection as both a visual and contemplative phenomenon. Bringing glitter and glow to the Anne Noland Edwards Gallery, the exhibition included work by internationally celebrated artists,

including 2024 MacArthur Foundation "Genius Award" winner, Ebony Patterson.

Thanks to the quality of its exhibitions and the range of programs offered, the Torggler has increasingly become a place for people of all ages to actively engage with the arts. That's reflected in growing attendance at Center events, such as Family Fun Day, Torggler With a Twist, camps and classes for children and adults, and lectures by exhibiting artists. Opportunities for children and families at the Torggler will further expand in early 2026 with the opening of a dedicated interactive gallery, which will allow younger children to engage actively with art and creative concepts.

"Our mission is to enrich the cultural landscape of Virginia by presenting exceptional visual arts programming that empowers creative expression, critical thinking, and cultural dialogue," said Torggler Fine Arts Center Executive Director Holly Koons. "It is rewarding to see the many ways that mission is being fulfilled every day at the Torggler — and we're just getting started!"



IN THE PAST YEAR:

The Torggler achieved re-accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition afforded to the nation's museums. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, to governments, funders, outside agencies, and to the museum-going public, and demonstrates that an institution has met the "gold standard for museum excellence."

The Torggler's exhibition, *A Grand Menagerie: The Sculpture of Anna Hyatt Huntington*, received the 2024 Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) Gold Award, equivalent to first prize in the prestigious competition.





Celebrating 20 Years

*The Ferguson Center continues bringing people together,
one unforgettable performance at a time.*

BY KELLEY McGEE

The idea of a world-class performing arts venue at Christopher Newport — one that would draw top performers and acclaimed productions — seemed improbable just a few decades back.

After all, several well-established venues already existed within an hour's drive, and the daunting question — "if you build it, will they actually come?" — loomed large over the University.

But thanks to a persistent vision and strong connections, the Ferguson Center was not only built, but has become a cultural cornerstone, enriching Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth in ways few could have imagined.

Inspiration meets reality

Many know the Ferguson Center's origin story — born out of a late-night spark of inspiration in 1997 when then President Paul Tribble and his wife, Rosemary, watched renowned tenor Andrea Bocelli's first American performance on PBS. At that moment, an idea Tribble had been nurturing for some time became clear: "A great university needs a great performing arts center."

But from the outset, it was an ambitious endeavor — one that required strategic partnerships, political support, and a lot of determination.

"Back in that era, no one expected Andrea Bocelli or Diana Ross would ever perform in Newport News," says Bruce Bronstein, who has been with the Ferguson Center since 2004 and its executive director since 2015. "It took not only vision, but strong collaboration with city leaders like Mayor Joe Frank and influential supporters like Alan Diamonstein to make it happen."

With an initial multi-million investment from the state and additional contributions from local municipalities — including Newport News, York County, Poquoson and Hampton — the Ferguson Center became a reality. Ultimately, the project grew into an \$54 million investment in the arts, and emerged as both a cultural hub and economic catalyst on the Peninsula.

Countless world-class performers have graced its stages over the years, but the Ferguson Center's real legacy lives in the audiences who have filled the seats. Tens of thousands of CNU students, local schoolchildren, residents, retirees, community partners, and countless first-time theatergoers have experienced the magic of live performance, creating a bond between Christopher Newport and the broader community. As the University embraces Connect With Our Community as a Strategic Compass priority, the Ferguson Center stands as a testament to the goal of becoming a leading cultural and arts campus, benefiting the local community and the Commonwealth.

Anthony Colosimo '07 (left) shares the stage with famed Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli at a sold-out performance at the Ferguson Center on October 20, 2005. PHOTO © THE DAILY PRESS

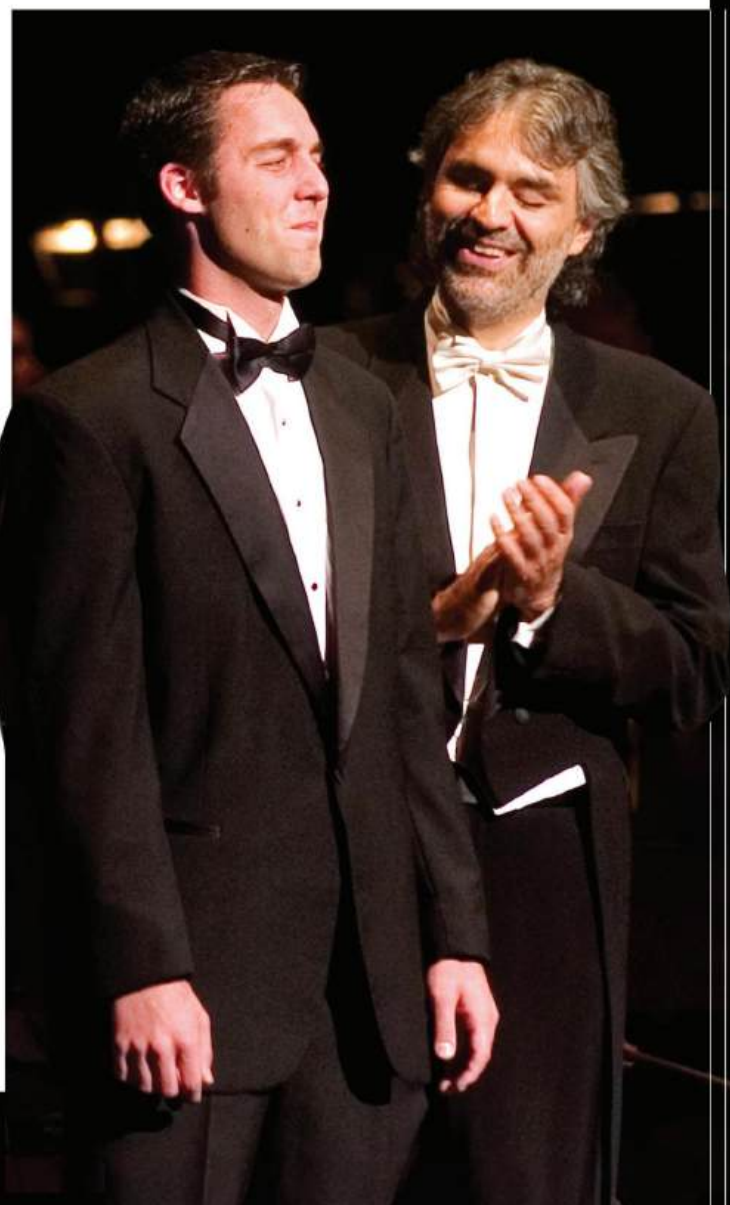
Bringing the Community Together

Bronstein believes one of the most visionary aspects of Tribble's idea was to leverage the arts as a bridge between the University and the broader community.

"Before the Ferguson Center, if you didn't attend CNU, you probably just drove past it," Bronstein explains. "This space, along with the spectacular offerings at the Mary M. Torggler Fine Arts Center, has invited the public in, creating a true town-and-gown connection."

The Arts for All Community Concert Series, a variety of music, dance and theater performances designed to make the arts accessible to everyone in the community regardless of financial means, has served as a compelling example of this commitment.

"Across the country, tickets for these performances sell for \$40 or \$50," Bronstein says. "This past season, we offered a six-show series for just \$20 per ticket, with individual tickets available for \$10. Our goal is to make the arts available to everyone, regardless of financial means."



Great Performances Unite

If you wander through the backstage corridors, you'll see plenty of familiar faces lining the walls and weaving together the story of the past 20 years. Bocelli, iconic folk singer Joan Baez, observational comedian Brian Regan, soulful singer/songwriter John Legend, and legendary crooner Tony Bennett are among the elite performers and countless productions that have lit up the stage, and helped to connect the community through shared experiences.

"When you come to a theater, you sit in the dark next to a stranger and experience someone else's perspective. Music and storytelling transcend language, culture and background. It reminds us of our shared humanity," Bronstein says.

The power of performance can also spark important conversations. Bronstein recalls when the musical "Rent" came to the Ferguson Center: "Some donors weren't sure what to expect. But I challenged them to watch without preconceptions. By the end, even skeptics had fallen in love with the characters."

While a passionate advocate for the arts, Bronstein is also pragmatic, quick to point out that the Ferguson Center is more than just entertainment. Over the last two decades, it has been a driving force for the region's economy. Local businesses benefit from the influx of patrons who dine at local restaurants, stay in hotels and shop. It also plays a key role in attracting top talent to the region.

"When Riverside Hospital recruits world-class surgeons, having the Ferguson Center across the street is a game changer," Bronstein says. "If a candidate's spouse loves ballet, jazz, or classical music, that becomes part of the conversation."

A Gateway to the World

For many students, the Ferguson Center is their first exposure to global culture, and in some cases, a chance to perform on the big stage. The All City Music Festival brings hundreds of students to the Ferguson from various local elementary, middle and high schools to perform in band, chorus, orchestra and guitar ensembles, thanks to various grants from the Newport News Arts Commission and the Newport News Education Foundation.

"The Ferguson Center has become home to music students across the Commonwealth and beyond," says Dr. Mark Reimer, Distinguished Professor of Music, the George and Mary Torggler Professor of Music, and Director of Music at Christopher Newport (pictured right). "We have hosted All-Virginia Band and Orchestra, district honor ensembles, CNU honor ensembles, the Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Festival, the Torggler Summer Vocal Institute, International Symposia for Emerging Conductors, Hampton Roads Philharmonic, Soundscapes Middle School Jazz Ensemble,



and the Virginia Community Music visiting ensembles from across the country, and countless lectures, workshops, masterclasses and festivals." Reimer credits the acoustic quality and size of the Ferguson Center's performance halls, studios, classrooms and recording studios for helping attract a wealth of culture and talent.

"We are truly an ideal location for professional musicians, students, community musicians and audiences alike," he says.

Sustaining the Legacy

As the Ferguson Center celebrates its 20th anniversary, it continues to evolve. The facility has received several upgrades, including fresh signage, improved lighting, and revitalized reception spaces, such as the newly named Lockwood Lounge in the Ferguson's Inner Circle Room, which underwent a full renovation, courtesy of Captain for Life, Lee Lockwood '07. (Learn more about the remodeled Lockwood Lounge on page 47.) All of these updates are designed to enhance the audience experience, but the Ferguson's core mission remains unchanged: to bring high-quality, diverse performances to the region, while at the same time integrating Christopher Newport with the community and providing vital academic arts programs.

The challenge now is sustaining that mission.

"Ticket sales cover only 37% of our operating expenses," Bronstein explains. "We rely on donors and sponsors who believe in the arts' power to transform lives."

Thanks to that continued support, the Ferguson Center has demonstrated its unique value by connecting generations, sparking inspiration, and bringing a level of entertainment to the region few could have imagined.

And if the past 20 years are any indication, the next 20 will be just as spectacular. 🎭



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Music and storytelling transcend language, culture, and background. They remind us of our shared humanity.

BRUCE BRONSTEIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF THE FERGUSON CENTER



Dr. Mark Reimer

TO THE WONDERFUL DONORS AND PATRONS OF THE FERGUSON CENTER,

From the moment I arrived at the Ferg, I felt not only incredibly welcomed, but wholly inspired by the artistic community you are cultivating in your very own backyard. The tight-knit community of students, musicians, educators, creators and guest performers you've woven together between the Ferguson Center, Christopher Newport University and the Torggler Fine Arts Center is different from anything I've seen. You are truly creating an ecosystem of artistry that I hope you realize is singular and unlike anything else in the country.

The dozens of young people who turned out to see their very first symphony show on April 20 serve as testament to you all. Thank you for supporting not just the next generation of artists, but the next generation of audience members. I am hopeful the Ferg will continue to serve as an example to other performing arts centers, proving that these world-premiere events are risks worth taking if we want to sustain live entertainment as an art form for decades to come. The experience of getting to debut a solo symphony performance on your stage is one I do not take lightly, and I am immensely grateful for the amazing opportunity.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for making a difference in my life, and in the greater Newport News community.

Sincerely,

Erika

PHOTO © JOANIE WILLSON



Erika Henningsen, who originated the role of Cady Heron in Broadway's "Mean Girls," brought her star power to the Diamonstein Concert Hall for a memorable, one-night-only performance of Broadway show tunes performed with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

CREATE

A STRONGER CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND BELONGING

Christopher Newport University will provide opportunities and embrace all who wish to belong and thrive in a community committed to inclusion, accessibility, and excellence. This community will be grounded in our core values of honor, scholarship, service, and leadership.

CNU will offer a culture of caring and kindness, as these qualities are integral to a community that embraces the full spectrum of human attributes and experiences. We will engage and learn from one another through active listening and respect for freedom of speech and expression. We also will prepare students to thrive in an interconnected world through modeling global and intercultural fluency and competence.





CREATE

Scan here to learn about the
Objectives that will power
the Compass Goals and Priorities.

Longtime Friends Unknowingly Choose CNU

*Basketball players share
love of game, school,
and Filipino heritage*

BY KELLI CAPLAN



Gabbi San Diego (left)
and Camille Malagar

THE MOMENT Gabbi San Diego was recruited to play basketball at Christopher Newport, she knew she had found the ideal place to thrive both in the classroom and on the court. What she didn't know at that time was that her close family friend, Camille Malagar, was also on CNU's radar for basketball and was equally optimistic that she had discovered her future home.

Though they played for different high schools in different cities, San Diego and Malagar were on parallel paths that would ultimately converge on the court at the Freeman Center.

The duo would become proud Captains, and at this spring's Commencement, they will transition to Captains for Life. Their walk across the stage will be the culmination of an educational and athletic journey shaped by coincidence and a lasting friendship spanning decades and continents.

It began when their fathers graduated high school together in the Philippines in 1987 and then moved to the United States. The San Diegos settled in Northern Virginia and the Malagars in Columbia, Md.

The two families were tight, and their children developed a deep bond, often celebrating holidays and taking vacations together.

They young women also shared a passion for basketball, playing from an early age on a mini hoop, then on youth teams and eventually for the prestigious Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) organization.

With basketball deeply rooted in their Filipino heritage, San Diego and Malagar happily carried on the cultural tradition, taking to the court any chance they got.

Neither knew the other was being recruited by Christopher Newport until a family get together when San Diego mentioned she was leaning toward Christopher Newport. Malagar was shocked. She too was sold on CNU. Their busy schedules in high school meant they had not kept up with the day-to-day happenings in each other's lives, including the colleges in which they were interested.

"The coach (Bill Broderick) didn't even know we were friends," San Diego said. "It was kind of a crazy coincidence."

The two friends were not only being wooed by CNU, they were also vying for the same position on the team: point guard.

On a subsequent visit to campus, when both San Diego and Malagar were together, San Diego's mom approached Coach Broderick and said, "You should take both of them."

So, he did.

"It was a full-circle moment," San Diego said.

The rest of the story is filled with what powers collegiate drive and dreams. San Diego and Malagar have proudly represented both their nationally-ranked team and their Filipino heritage, which serves as their foundation.

"We are super proud to be representing a minority on such a high level," San Diego said. "Diversity on the court is definitely something we are proud of."

The women take great pride in the culture that has shaped them into focused players and students.

"Our culture definitely has instilled in us to work hard and be resilient," Malagar said.

They believe they are honoring the traditions and passions that have been infused in them.

"During a game at Old Dominion, a group of Filipino girls came up to us and told us what an inspiration we were to them," Malagar said.

Their families glow with pride when they play. San Diego's mother lives in the Philippines and streams every game.

The duo continued the theme of parallel trajectories during their time at CNU, both double majoring in business management and marketing. They opted to stay at CNU for a fifth year, paving the way for them to complete their majors and play another year with the team.

San Diego and Malagar lived together, studied together, and competed together.

"We are like sisters in a way," San Diego said. "We are best friends. We are inseparable."

"We are super supportive of each other on and off the court," Malagar added.

They are competitive with each other, but in a friendly way, one that motivates them to excel. The two players not only share a deep love of basketball, but also of Christopher Newport. They found their home, and success in the classroom and on the court.

San Diego and Malagar have given their all, and are now ready to apply that energy and excitement to their next steps as they become Captains for Life. San Diego hopes to pay it forward and become a basketball coach.

"As my time at CNU comes to an end, I am filled with gratitude and fulfillment as a student and a basketball player as well," San Diego said. "I would not want to spend my college career anywhere else and I am excited to embark on my coaching career in the future!" 🏀



Gabbi San Diego's family cheers on the Captains.



Sealing a Place in University History

Alum's artistic creation from decades ago continues to represent CNU

BY KELLEY McGEE

The Year Was 1971, and Christopher Newport College (CNC) had just become a four-year, degree-granting institution.

TO MARK THIS important milestone, then President James C. Windsor launched a contest to design Christopher Newport's first — and ultimately only — official seal. More than 50 years later, that original design remains an enduring symbol of the University's history and identity.

While the seal is familiar to many, the story of its creation — and creator — is lesser known.

Kenneth Flick, a sophomore at the time with a talent for sketching, decided to enter President Windsor's contest. He recalls wanting to craft a design with a nautical image that incorporated meaningful symbols connected to the University's roots and mission. Flick found unexpected inspiration for the project while visiting a nearby library, and that's when his vision for the seal began to take shape.

"There was a nine-foot mural of Capt. Christopher Newport, complete with his hook, at the West Avenue Library in downtown Newport News. So I returned with some paper and pencils and spent about an hour sketching him out. I eventually added a ship's wheel, incorporating Old English lettering into the wood, with Captain Newport's hand on the wheel, piloting the ship," said Flick '73.

"I also wanted the seal to pay homage to our history as part of William & Mary, so I included ship anchor chains dividing the seal into three sections. In the left section, I placed the seal of the College of William & Mary, our parent school. On the right, I added the shield of the old two-year community college along with the date of Christopher Newport's establishment, and finally I added in the lamp of knowledge," he said.

Flick recalls that a table was set up in the breezeway of the former Gosnold Hall to display all the design entries. Students and faculty came by to vote for their favorite. Flick was thrilled to learn his seal had won, but says once he turned his original drawing over to President Windsor, he kept quiet about his prize-winning design.

"Honestly, I didn't want to seem like a braggart," Flick said.

But memories of the seal and contest resurfaced decades later, a few years before Flick attended his 50th class reunion. He shared his story with Senior Director of Alumni Engagement Baxter Vendrick. Flick wondered what became of his original sketch.

Vendrick smiled. "Please follow me, sir," he said to Flick, and guided him through the Gregory P. Klich Alumni House to where a copy of Flick's original sketch is showcased in glass. "He seemed a little shocked when he saw his work displayed. I don't know who had more tears, Kenneth or myself."

Vendrick described that day at the Klich Alumni House as a "beautiful moment, when history converged with the present."

"It was a really special day at the Alumni House. That's exactly what this building is intended to do: unite our Captains with their alma mater, and help tell their stories," he said.

Flick's considerable talents were also utilized in two other important projects at Christopher Newport when he was a student. He was selected to design the first CNC flag, as well as the college's first four-year class ring, which was worn by members of the first baccalaureate class in 1971.

After graduation, Flick married, began a family and pursued a variety of professions, including working security for the City of Newport News. He recently rekindled his connection with Christopher Newport when he decided to come out of retirement — he says boredom was to blame! — and began working part time for the campus Police Department. Flick says he feels grateful at this stage in his life to be enjoying such deep ties to his beloved alma mater.

"It makes me so happy to know my work is still meaningful to the University," he said. "I'm so proud the seal will be my legacy of sorts, and will last well beyond my time here." 🍷



WELCOME TO THE *First Lady's Tea*



Leading With Heart: First Lady Angie Kelly

Whether she's welcoming the University community to a charming tea party or sharing holiday stories with local children, First Lady Angie Kelly brings warmth, joy and grace to all she does. Her kindness and spirit of inclusion continue to leave a lasting impact, allowing everyone she encounters at CNU and beyond to feel seen, supported and truly at home.



Transfer Students Flock to CNU

New programs and transfer center make becoming a Captain easy

BY KELLI CAPLAN



CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT this year has welcomed a near record number of transfer students, thanks to increased efforts to streamline the transfer process and two new partnerships with area community colleges.

At the beginning of the Fall semester, 191 transfer students had enrolled at CNU, the most since the fall of 2013 and the second highest number in 15 years.

"We are very transfer friendly," said Dr. Evanne Raible, Senior Director of Transfer and Student Success Services. "We really work hard to make the students feel welcome."

The University also partnered this year with Virginia Peninsula Community College (VPCC) and Tidewater Community College (TCC) to provide their students the opportunity to further their education by obtaining bachelor's degrees. The VPPC Bridge to CNU program and the CNU Ready program at TCC both guarantee admission to the University. The programs develop and grow pathways to CNU by granting early access to advising, career development, success support services, and experiences.

Students interested in transferring must be pursuing a transfer-oriented associate degree, including the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or Associate of Fine Arts (AFA).

CNU has put a renewed focus on attracting transfer students, hoping they discover a warm campus community where they can thrive, Raible said.

"We want them to know that they belong here," she said.

To make transferring a smooth process, the Transfer Center has been created on campus to work with students both before and during their time at Christopher Newport. Raible said the Center is "a place a student can come with any questions about the entire transfer process."

"We offer hands-on, personalized support, from selecting the right courses that transfer to CNU and walking with them through the admission process to registering for their first semester of classes at CNU and sharing and referring to campus resources," she said. "We want them to know that they can come to us, that we will help them figure it all out here."

President Kelly shakes hands with Virginia Peninsula Community College President Dr. Towuanna Porter Brannon (above) and Tidewater Community College President Marcia Conston (right). The signings symbolize a shared commitment to student success and expanded access to four-year degrees.



TURNING TRANSFERS INTO CAPTAINS

A new student club is building friendships and creating community for transfer students.

"Never refer to yourself as 'just a transfer student.'"
— President Bill Kelly

This piece of advice, offered by President Kelly during Changing Tides orientation, resonated deeply with Elliot Bruce '27.

Bruce's college journey began at The Citadel, her dream school, but she quickly realized it wasn't the right fit. Visiting Christopher Newport on weekends, where her boyfriend and a close friend were students, she felt at home and was thrilled to be accepted as a transfer student.

Recognizing that transfer students come from diverse backgrounds — military service, community colleges, large and small universities — she saw the need for tailored support.

Bruce went to work creating a student club that would help transfer students make friends and feel a sense of belonging, easing any feelings of being an outsider.

"Transfer Link is all about students helping students," she said.

With support from her advisor, Dr. Lorraine Hall, Assistant Dean of the Luter School of Business, and Andrea Cataldo from CNU's Transfer Center, Bruce got the organization off the ground and membership continues to steadily grow. Her ultimate goal? For the club to become unnecessary.

"If students stop coming, that will mean they've found their people. And that's when I'll know we've succeeded," she said.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELLIOT BRUCE



BUILD

A FOUNDATION TO THRIVE

Christopher Newport will develop sufficient public and private financial resources to achieve its mission. CNU will invest in recruiting, retaining, and developing its students, faculty and staff. CNU will acquire sufficient endowment funding to provide scholarships to enroll prospective students and support endowed faculty chairs.

The University is a dedicated fiduciary of its resources, leveraging technology and artificial intelligence to improve efficiencies, implementing system integration and data sharing across campus, and managing costs in a manner that shows responsible stewardship.

CNU will foster an environmentally sustainable campus and use its natural resources in an environmentally conscious way. The University will maintain its beautiful grounds and facilities and continue to invest in its technologically-advanced classrooms and laboratories so that every aspect of learning, working, and living will be anchored in excellence.





BUILD

Scan here to learn about the Objectives that will power the Compass Goals and Priorities.

LETTER FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT



Dear Captains,

I am excited and honored to lead the Office of Advancement at Christopher Newport University. Although I am new to the University, I am not new to Hampton Roads. My wife and I were born and raised in Hampton and have lived in Williamsburg for the past 10 years. Having only been at Christopher Newport since August, I've quickly learned how special this place is and the value our alumni, parents, community members, faculty, staff and friends bring to the success of our students and our University priorities.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my predecessor, Adelia Thompson. She is a pillar of the Captain community who set the standard for philanthropic engagement. Adelia's caring and confident approach to development has positioned the current Advancement team for success. She is and always will be a Captain for Life!

We are at a pivotal moment, and on the cusp of something special. I implore you to continue your engagement, reach out to a fellow Captain and share how great this institution is. We are looking for alumni stories and want to hear from you. We are expanding our regional footprint and hope to connect with you wherever and however that may be.

Richard Long
Vice President for University Advancement
CEO for CNU Education Foundation
Christopher Newport University



If your time at Christopher Newport made an impact on your life, consider paying it forward. Every gift — big or small — makes a difference.



CNU DAY

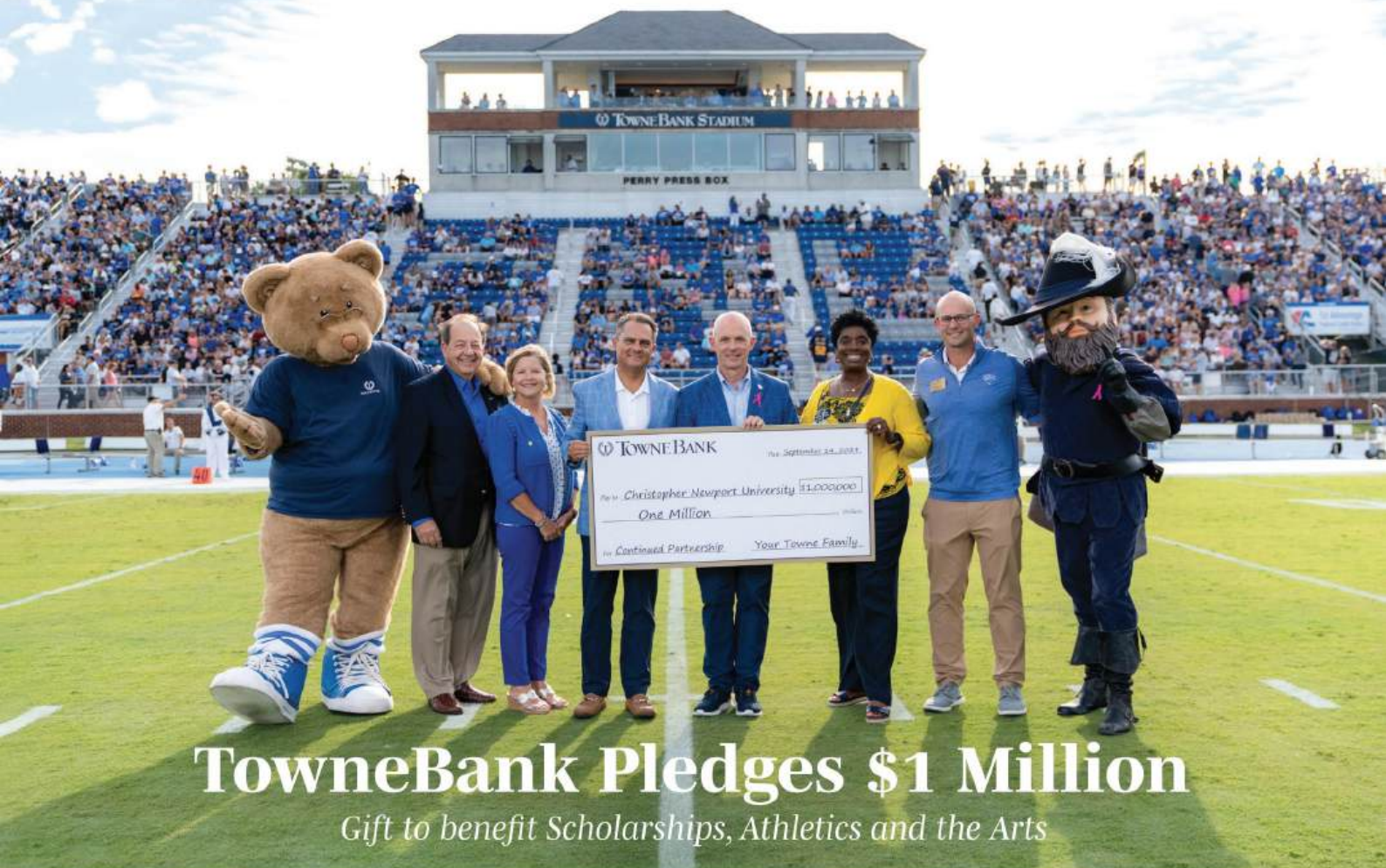
HONOR YOUR PATH: REFLECT, GIVE, INSPIRE

MARCH 12, 2025

OVER
\$660,000
RAISED

THANK YOU TO ALUMNI, FRIENDS, STUDENTS,
FACULTY AND STAFF FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!





TowneBank Pledges \$1 Million

Gift to benefit Scholarships, Athletics and the Arts

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT proudly announced a \$1 million pledge from TowneBank that will help support academic scholarships, athletic facilities and programs, and the arts. The gift reaffirmed TowneBank's longstanding partnership with the University, and ensures that its name will continue to headline TowneBank Stadium, home to the Captains football and track and field teams.

The gift will help the University build a foundation to thrive by directly benefiting students through the TowneBank Leadership Scholarships, which offer essential financial support to deserving recipients. It will also enhance Christopher Newport Athletics, as well as the Ferguson Center for the Arts, a key element of the University's commitment to enriching cultural life in the Commonwealth and on campus.

"This is a game-changing gift from TowneBank that will energize our athletic programs and enrich the experience of every student on campus," said President William G. Kelly. "We are proud to continue our strong partnership with TowneBank, whose ongoing support inspires our student-athletes on and off the field, allows us to attract top talent, and enriches the cultural life of our campus through the arts."

Brian Skinner '92, a Captain for Life and TowneBank President of Virginia and Northeastern North Carolina, expressed the importance of sustaining this meaningful collaboration: "This continued commitment reflects the deep

partnership between TowneBank and Christopher Newport University. We celebrate opportunities for student engagement, professional development and career exploration, alumni involvement, athletic support, and enjoyment of world-class cultural offerings available right here in Newport News. It is an exciting time at CNU, and as an alum, I could not be happier for the support offered by TowneBank to make the future even brighter."

TowneBank Stadium, with its natural grass surface and high-definition video board, opened in 2001 when Christopher Newport's football team played its first game. It has a seating capacity of 4,200. TowneBank's generosity, along with contributions from Christopher Newport alumni, have contributed to the stadium's ongoing success.

"We are deeply grateful to TowneBank for its remarkable generosity and ongoing support. TowneBank's gift will have a lasting impact, empowering us to provide exceptional opportunities for our students and athletes," said Richard Long, Vice President for University Advancement. "We also extend a heartfelt thank you to our devoted Captains for Life who are employed by TowneBank, whose contributions of time, talent and treasure help us to nurture our students and strengthen the future of Christopher Newport."

The announcement was celebrated with a ceremony before kickoff of the Family Weekend football game on Sept. 14.



GIFT ACCELERATES GOING GREENER

HEADLINED BY a history-making gift, Christopher Newport's yearlong emphasis on environmental sustainability produced strong results and positioned the University well for the future.

The Redekop Family Endowment donated \$3 million to fund projects advancing sustainability.

The gift, the largest single donation in the University's history with a sustainability focus, was made by Leadership Studies Professor Dr. Benjamin Redekop on behalf of his family's endowment and to honor his parents, Calvin and Freda Redekop.

The gift of \$1 million for each of three years will support programs and infrastructure that save the University money and propel it forward on a path to net-zero environmental impact.

"Sustainability projects funded from this gift will provide our students with concrete examples of CNU's commitment to the greater good, ideas on how to become more environmentally sustainable in their own lives, and hope for the future of the planet," Redekop said.

News of the gift capped a year that President William G. Kelly declared as Going Greener '24. Here are some of the ways the CNU community made good on the President's pledge:

A zero-waste campaign focused on home football games and other events gained momentum through the fall.

Efforts to reduce energy consumption on campus intensified with encouraging results.



Dr. Benjamin Redekop

The new Science and Engineering Research Center will be a model of thoughtful, energy-efficient design.

Students embraced the Green2Go program that calls for reuse of to-go dining containers. More than 97% of the containers were reused, resulting in substantial cost savings and a reduction in plastic and paper waste.

Going Greener '24 may have been oriented around one calendar year, but the Strategic Compass underscores that this will be a universitywide emphasis far into the future.



SCORE ONE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Christopher Newport has begun a new program designed to divert at least 90 percent of waste generated at home football games in TowneBank Stadium through recycling and composting.

The ultimate goal is to reduce CNU's reliance on landfills and promote sustainability on campus.

When fans order at stadium concession stands, the food and beverages will come served in more environmentally-friendly packaging, with many of those items converted to recyclable and compostable options.

For example, the utensils provided with orders are now constructed with plant-based materials and are compostable, as are nacho trays, coffee cups, plates, and that unfinished pizza and other uneaten food items.

The effort is part of CNU's Going Greener initiative that focuses on sustainability and reducing the University's carbon footprint.



A Captain's Captain

*Scott Millar Gives
Legacy Bequest*

BY JIM HANCHETT

Scott Millar '85 is a Captain's Captain. He has served Christopher Newport in countless capacities, with an infectious and inspiring spirit. Now, with the passing of his beloved wife fresh in memory, he is taking a significant and generous step toward ensuring generations of future Captains benefit from their time here as much as he has.



MILLAR HAS MADE a legacy bequest, one of the largest in University history, to support scholarships, the arts and athletics — three areas close to his heart and that of his late wife, Muriel Messick Millar '88.

"I love this University, and it has played such an instrumental and consequential role in my life as well as that of my beloved wife, Muriel," Scott Millar said. "As an alumnus, I am honored and grateful to have this opportunity to pay it forward and serve as a role model for other Captains for Life in making a lasting, legacy gift to the University."

One-third of the bequest will go to the existing Millar-Messick Endowed Merit Scholarship, which the Millars established in 2006 to honor their families. One-third will create the Muriel M. Millar '88 Memorial Endowments to support operations at the Ferguson Center for the Arts and the Mary M. Torggler Fine Arts Center. The final one-third will create the Millar Community of Champions Athletics Endowment.

There is no more devoted Captains fan than Scott Millar. He's a regular at football tailgates and cheers all of the teams from the stands. "Scott is so likeable, so engaged, and so passionate about this University we cherish," said President William G. Kelly. "We are grateful beyond words for his support. This bequest will undoubtedly inspire many more as Captains for Life embrace the importance of giving back. Few, if any, have given back more than Scott."

Millar is a summa cum laude graduate of what was then Christopher Newport College, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Governmental Administration with a concentration in Public Management and a minor in History. He served as a member of the Board of Visitors from 2011-2019, holding the positions of Rector, Vice Rector and Secretary. He is president of the CNU Education Foundation Board of Trustees and a member of the CNU Athletics Advisory Council. He served as President of the Christopher Newport Alumni Society and as a member of the CNU Alumni Society Board from 2005-2015. He also led successful fundraising efforts for the Gregory P. Klich Alumni House project. His impressive professional career culminated in his service as Senior Vice President and General Manager of Corporate Human Resources at Canon U.S.A. He retired in 2024.

Muriel Messick Millar received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. She served on both the Alumni Society Board as Treasurer and on the board of the Peninsula Alumni Chapter for nearly two decades. She was a member of the CNU Theatre Guild, the Encore Society and the Captains Crew. She volunteered at CNU's Lifelong Learning Society and co-chaired the CNU Alumni Golf Tournament which annually raises thousands of dollars for student scholarship and community support. The tournament was renamed the "Muriel Millar Captains Classic" in her honor after her passing in 2023. 🍷



Here is how Millar describes each element of the bequest:

SCHOLARSHIP

"One of the greatest thrills of my involvement with CNU is getting to meet the current generation of scholars who benefit from the Millar-Messick Endowed Merit Scholarship. Regardless of their academic discipline, they aspire to be leaders and key contributors in their communities. It gives me great hope for the future to see their passion and enthusiasm. My goal in making a legacy scholarship bequest is to have an impact for generations to come."

ARTS

"It is amazing to have world class performing and fine arts centers in our community. Muriel and I so often enjoyed wonderful performances at the beautiful Ferguson Center for the Arts and were thrilled to see the opening of the Torggler Center on campus. Fine and Performing Arts programming at CNU inspires everyone and I am pleased to honor Muriel's memory with sustainable support for these two outstanding CNU institutions."

ATHLETICS

"It has long been a thrill for Muriel and I to support our Captains athletic teams as they compete for conference titles and national championships. Even more rewarding is getting to know many of our student athletes personally, learning about their stories and dreams and cheering for their success both on and off the fields and courts. CNU Athletics is truly a Community of Champions, and I am proud to support the future success of our athletic programs at CNU with this legacy gift."



VIC ZODDA TRAINING CENTER

On May 21, 2024, Christopher Newport University celebrated the legacy of a Virginia Peninsula icon and lifelong baseball enthusiast with the opening of the Vic Zodda Training Center. Made possible by the heartfelt generosity of his daughter, Cyndi, and other generous donors, the center is a game changer for CNU's baseball and softball student-athletes, who now have a modern, indoor facility to sharpen their skills year-round.



Carl Farris (left) and Will Driscoll

CNU UNVEILS FARRIS HALL OF FAME, INDUCTS 2024 HONOREES

Christopher Newport University proudly unveiled the most recent inductees into the Carl & Denise Farris Hall of Fame in 2024, honoring those men and women who have made significant contributions to CNU Athletics as players, coaches, administrators and friends. The Farris family's impactful dedication to CNU Athletics has set a standard of excellence, supporting generations of Captains since 1989, when the Farris Hall of Fame was first established.

This year's Farris Hall of Fame class includes Lindsey Carney Smith '01, Tony Cruz '18, Jeff Dover '18, Jimmy Grace '17, Victoria Perry '17, and Grayson Reid '18, bringing the total number of inductees to 172.

Their achievements continue to enrich Christopher Newport's proud athletic tradition and the legacy of its Community of Champions.



LOCKWOOD LOUNGE: A TRIBUTE TO FAMILY

Lee Lockwood '07 is a passionate Captain for Life who gives generously of his time, talent and resources to his alma mater. To honor his parents, James and Deborah, Lockwood supported the stunning renovation of the Ferguson Center for the Art's Inner Circle Room, now fittingly known as the Lockwood Lounge.

In addition to this transformative project, Lockwood is deeply involved in the CNU community. He serves on the Education Foundation, the Athletic Advisory Council, the Champions Club, and was recently honored as the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year.

Lockwood's professional talent of design and construction has helped shape the future of CNU and enrich the campus experience, while also paying tribute to the values his parents instilled in him.



HALL FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT STRENGTHENS CNU SAILING AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Kenneth A. Hall and Patricia A. Hall Charitable Foundation has made a generous commitment to Christopher Newport University's sailing program, furthering its tradition of excellence on the water. The foundation has committed \$1 million in annual and endowed scholarship support and \$250,000 in support of the team.

Hall, a successful automobile dealer in Hampton Roads, established the foundation prior to his passing. His wife, Patricia,

was a talented artist who studied under renowned painter Barclay Sheaks in Newport News. The foundation's support was facilitated through a connection between Gray Kiger, the foundation's president, and Christopher Newport's leadership.

This investment ensures that CNU Sailing continues to thrive, providing student-athletes with the resources needed to compete at the highest level.

ATHLETICS ROUND-UP







COMPETITION CHEERLEADING SQUAD 2024

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS!

Competing at the National Cheerleaders Association (NCA) College Nationals for the first time, the Christopher Newport University Competition Cheerleading Squad had a memorable debut with the first NCA National Championship in program history. The Captains earned the team's fifth overall national title with a win of the Intermediate All-Girls

Division III category, which featured 19 of the top programs from around the nation. With a score of 96.0278 in the finals, the Captains celebrated the top performance at the NCA College Nationals in Daytona, Fla. The Captains posted a pair of routines without a single deduction and won the title by over two full percentage points.

BASEBALL

Josh
Reinhold

CNU Baseball reached the NCAA Super Regional, won the NCAA Regional Championship, and finished the season ranked No. 12 nationally with a 29-12 record.

The Captains secured both the C2C Athletic Conference regular season and tournament titles before earning an at-large bid to the NCAA Regional.

MEN'S GOLF

As a team, the Captains registered top-five finishes at the Cochran Collegiate, VSGA Intercollegiate, and O'Briant-Jensen Memorial.

Senior Aidan Baron closed out his career with a second team All-State selection and was also honored as a College Sports Communicators Academic All-District pick.

Aidan
Baron

WOMEN'S GOLF

The Captains finished in the top five at the Spartan Fall Invitational and the Chick-Fil-A Invitational.

Junior Alex Delgado claimed second team All-State recognition and sophomore Julia Pelletier was named a WGCA All-American Scholar.

Alex
Delgado

The women's lacrosse team wrapped up 2024 ranked 15th in the final IWLCA National Coaches Poll.

The highest year-end ranking in program history, CNU advanced to the third round of the NCAA Tournament while compiling an overall record of 14-7.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Brookelyn
Morrison

SAILING

Making history with the second ever ICSA Women's Fleet Race National Championship berth, the Captains went on to capture a 15th place finish at the ICSA Eastern Women's National Semi-Finals.

The Captains also placed second at the CNU Women's Regatta and added top-10 efforts at the Hanbury Trophy and SailPack Oriental Intercollegiate.

Laura Smith



Alex Brendes

The sixth-ranked men's lacrosse team advanced to the NCAA National Quarterfinals in 2024.

The Captains advanced to the Elite Eight for the fourth straight season before concluding the year with a 16-6 overall record.

MEN'S LACROSSE

MEN'S TENNIS

Vincent Truong

The Captains earned a second straight and fourth overall trip to the NCAA Tournament with an at-large berth into the postseason.

Wrapping up the season with 14 dual victories, the Captains logged the most wins since 2017 and advanced to the NCAA Championship Second Round.



SOFTBALL

CNU softball concluded the season ranked No. 10 in the nation, with Head Coach Keith Parr's team advancing to the NCAA Tournament for the 17th straight time.



Kate Alger

WOMEN'S TENNIS

SPRING 2024 SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS



Raine Weis

The Captains won their first-ever conference championship with a 5-2 victory over Mary Washington. The Captains made history with a top-20 showdown in the second round of the NCAA III Tournament before ultimately concluding the season with a 13-6 overall record.



C.J. Reiders

CNU won the C2C Athletic Conference Outdoor Championship, excelling in field events with titles from C.J. Reiders (triple jump), Wade Dunkelberger (high jump), Dante Ntiganzwa (hammer), and Tyler Palmer (shot put).

Reiders earned second-team All-American recognition and finished 13th in the triple jump at the NCAA Championships, securing his third career All-American certificate.



Katie Stevens

CNU women secured their fourth consecutive C2C Athletic Conference Outdoor Championship, scoring 209 points and winning eight individual titles and five All-Region citations.

Junior Katie Stevens became the first student-athlete in league history to be named Athlete and Scholar-Athlete of the Year in the same season and capped the season with an NCAA Championships appearance.

OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

CROSS COUNTRY

Lena Blagg, Sarah Dake and Andrew Janetsky were each honored as USTFCCA National All-Academic Cross Country honorees for the first time in their careers. Along with the individual honorees, the men's and women's programs were both celebrated as National All-Academic Teams. The women were honored for the 15th time, while the men received their seventh award.

On the course, the Captains posted a pair of top-10 team finishes at the NCAA Regional Championships. Janetsky was named the C2C Rookie of the Year and finished 28th at the NCAA Regional meet. He became just the 14th freshman in school history to earn All-South honors.

Dake was a first team All-Conference runner and placed seventh overall at the league meet with a 23:22.9 clocking.

Sarah Dake



Brooke Billhimer

FIELD HOCKEY

The Christopher Newport Field Hockey program finished the 2024 campaign with a 16-3 overall record, including four wins over top-25 foes and eventually advancing to the NCAA Quarterfinals while finishing the year ranked sixth in the NFHCA National Coaches Poll.

All-Americans Abby Asuncion and Alex Morales led CNU to another stellar season. Senior Brooke Billhimer capped one of the best defensive careers in program history, earning her second National Defensive Player of the Year award and first team All-American honors. The C2C Defensive Player of the Year recorded seven defensive saves and finished as a two-time All-American, three-time All-Region pick, and four-time All-Conference selection.

Also earning All-American plaudits in 2024 was Courtney Hughlett as she established herself as one of the country's elite midfielders, dishing out 13 assists, tying the single season mark at CNU, and ranked sixth nationally in assists per game this season. Six Captains were named All-Region selections for Head Coach Carrie Moura and eight Captains were honored as All-State picks, including Billhimer as Defensive Player of the Year and Avery Mast as Rookie of the Year.

FOOTBALL

Concluding the season with a 7-3 overall record, the Captains featured 15 All-Conference selections on the gridiron in 2024. Head Coach Paul Crowley's team won its final five games of the season and collected nine first team All-NJAC certificates.

Offensive lineman Amaan Miller, went on to secure third team All-American plaudits from D3football.com. He and safety Noah Martin were named to the All-Region team, while Martin was also tabbed the Defensive Back of the Year, according to the Touchdown Club of Richmond.

Sophomore quarterback Connor Barry was named the Quarterback of the Year after completing 68 percent of his passes and averaging 195 yards per game through the air. In just three seasons, veteran running back Gunner White continued his assault on the record books and has moved up to fifth all-time in rushing yards and second in career touchdowns scored with 35.

Amaan
Miller



Noelle
Starr

VOLLEYBALL

For the first time since 2014, CNU Volleyball hosted the NCAA Regional Championships in 2024, advancing to the regional final before a 3-0 loss to Washington and Lee. The Captains finished with a 26-10 record and were ranked No. 21 nationally, the team's highest since 2015.

Under Head Coach Lindsay Birch and the C2C Coaching Staff of the Year, the Captains faced the ninth toughest schedule, defeating No. 17 Calvin, No. 14 Washington and Lee, No. 25 Salisbury, and No. 8 East Texas Baptist. They closed the year with three straight wins, including a C2C Championship victory over Salisbury.

Individual highlights included Alyssa Dozier, named third-team All-America and C2C Player of the Year, with 386 kills, a .313 hitting percentage, and 147 blocks. Noelle Starr earned Honorable Mention All-American honors after surpassing 2,000 career digs and recording 667 digs in her final season across 36 matches.

FALL SPORTS

Since 2021, women's soccer has been on an 84-game unbeaten streak, which ended in the 2024 C2C Championship. Undeterred, the Captains won four straight NCAA Tournament games, reaching the national semifinals for the third time in program history.

Head Coach Jamie Gunderson and his staff earned their fourth straight Region VI Coaching Staff of the Year honor, with his career record now at 79-2-9 (.928) through 90 games.

CNU became just the second NCAA Division III program in history to reach the national quarterfinals or better in four straight seasons and closed out the season ranked No. 4 in the nation following an 18-2-2 overall record.

CNU set a program record with three All-Americans, led by first-team pick Hanna Heaton, the C2C Offensive Player of the Year and first-team Academic All-American.

Midfielder Ellie Cox and defender Reanna Slater also earned All-American honors, while goalkeeper Amy Sidaway and defender Nyah Savage joined them among CNU's five All-Region selections.

Hanna
Heaton

WOMEN'S SOCCER



Asher
Kuzemka

MEN'S SOCCER

Head Coach Justin Chezem was the architect of the nation's toughest schedule in 2024 as the Captains faced the No. 1 team in the nation three times and faced six games against teams ranked in the top 10 nationally.

The CNU men's soccer program advanced to the Coast-To-Coast Athletic Conference Championship Game where the team battled against top-ranked Mary Washington on its home field and forced overtime. In the title matchup, CNU suffered a 2-1 overtime loss and closed out the year with a 6-7-5 overall record.

Junior Asher Kuzemka was named an All-Region defender and collected second team All-State honors for his efforts in 2024. He was flanked by the Coast-To-Coast Athletic Conference Rookie of the Year in freshman Declan Karney at center back. The duo was joined by sophomore Yazan Yaghammour and rookie Carson Friedlein on defense as the Captains held opponents to just 81 shots on-goal for the season.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Closing out the regular season ranked No. 12 in the nation, the men's basketball team earned a berth into the NCAA Division III Championship for the 28th time in program history.

Under the direction of the "Jeff Gamber" Coaching Staff of the Year, including Head Coach John Krikorian, the Captains finished out the year with a 23-6 overall record including an impressive 13-1 record at home. Krikorian celebrated his 400th career win as the team finished the regular season.

Leading the way was All-American Jahn Hines, who capped his career with a record-breaking final season in the royal blue and silver. Hines had his number retired on Senior Night after becoming the first player in program history to earn All-America honors in all four years of his career. A second team NABC All-American following his senior campaign, he became just the second player in program history to record over 2,000 points and is the only CNU player to rank in the top-ten in career points, rebounds, and assists.

The Conference Player of the Year was joined on the All-Conference team by sophomore Toa Hollenbeck and junior Collin Hines.

Jahn
Hines



Hannah
Orloff

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The women's basketball team captured a sixth straight Coast-To-Coast Athletic Conference Championship and reached the NCAA Tournament for the 25th time in program history.

CNU finished the season with a 26-2 overall record and the senior class, led by All-Region performers Hannah Orloff, Gabbi San Diego and Camille Malagar.

Orloff was a first team All-Region selection after earning Conference Player and Defensive Player of the Year honors in 2024-25. San Diego was named the C2C Scholar-Athlete of the Year for women's basketball. Rounding out the All-Region selections was fifth-year senior Camille Malagar.

After his 12th season at the helm, Head Coach Bill Broderick and his assistants were named the "Bill Finney" Coaching Staff of the Year for the third time in the last four years. Broderick became the second-fastest women's basketball coach to reach 300 victories in Division III.

WOMEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Senior Katie Stevens hauled in her third career All-American honors after placing 16th in the Weight Throw at the NCAA Division III Indoor Track & Field Championships in March. She posted a 16.81-meter toss on her final throw to secure second-team All-American accolades.

CNU claimed a fifth straight Indoor Conference Championship, coming away with 10 titles and 165 points.

Three women athletes were named All-Region, as Ellie Nuckols led the way with two citations as an All-Region competitor in both the pentathlon and long jump. Stevens was All-Region in the Weight Throw while Ashley Eley ranked third in the region in the triple jump.

Ellie
Nuckols



Leo
Brennan

MEN'S INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Christopher Newport finished third at the Coast-To-Coast Athletic Conference Indoor Championship after posting 135 total points in the event.

Leading the way for the Captains was Field Athlete of the Meet Leo Brennan, as the junior captured the league titles in the long jump and the triple jump. He became just the third athlete in league history to sweep the two events.

For their efforts during the Indoor season, six Captains were named All-Region, including two certificates for Latrell Fomby. Fomby earned All-Region honors after leading the South in both the shot put and weight throw. He was joined on the All-Region team by two of his shot put teammates, Seth Morris and Daniel Young, and another thrower Colin Sliwa, was All-Region in the weight throw. Brennan was recognized in the long jump while Jahi Jemison was fourth in the Region in the heptathlon.

5 *Academic All-Americans in 2023-24*

20 *All-American student-athletes*

Overall winning percentage **.756**

Women's Soccer Final **4** *appearance*

**2024 NCA Cheerleading
NATIONAL CHAMPIONS**

Men's Basketball Elite **8** *appearance*

Men's Lacrosse Elite **8** *appearance*

Women's Lacrosse Sweet **16** *appearance*

Field Hockey Sweet **16** *appearance*

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captainforlife.com





ON AUGUST 16, 2024, the Gregory P. Klich Alumni House hosted a special gathering to honor the 2024 Alumni Award winners, selected by the Alumni Society Board of Directors. Joined by President William G. Kelly, First Lady Angie Kelly, CNU leadership, staff, and Alumni Chapter leaders, the event celebrated these extraordinary Captains for Life for their outstanding achievements.

With a global alumni network of more than 36,000, Christopher Newport graduates have carved unique paths of significance that enrich our world, emerging as leaders, innovators and changemakers. Their accomplishments serve as a testament to the transformative power of an education rooted in the liberal arts, and the spirit that defines our Captains for Life community.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Major General James M. Smith '92
Dr. Raymond Haynes '92
Samuel Sanders Jr. '94
Michael Yaskowsky '95
Shawn Avery '96
Nicole Holdly '05

JANE CHAMBERS VOLUNTEER AWARD

Susan Canny '96

DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

James Meyers Englert '13
Taylor Quinn '13
Baylen McCarthy '17
Kyle DeGood '20
Carlie Carer '21

MURIEL MILLAR '88 LIFE WELL LIVED AWARD

Maria Booker '10

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

The Honorable Jeion Ward Joyner '95

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR AWARD

Lee Lockwood '07

CLASS NOTES



Rebecca Howard '08
announces the birth of
her daughter, Helen,
on March 2, 2023.
The family resides in
Memphis, TN.

Career Announcements

1980s



Lisa Ziehmman '89 was named Acting Deputy Center Director of NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton.

1990s



Sheila Barnhart-Ramirez '96 was recognized by the Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA) as Virginia's Elementary School Counselor of the Year for the 2023-24 school year. During the same school year, Barnhart-Ramirez also defended her dissertation focused on "The Impact of Microaggressions and Micro Affirmations on Safety, Acceptance, and Inclusion for LGBTQ+ Middle School Students: A School Counselor's Perspective;" achieved the status of a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT); earned the designation of an Internationally Credentialed Sandtray Therapist (ICST); achieved the status of a Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) for her comprehensive school counseling program; and was selected for the Emerging Leader program for VSCA.

Sharhonda Rush '96 was named president of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi — the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines. As president of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi for the 2024-2026 biennium, Rush will work with the Society's board of directors and executive leadership team to develop and implement a new strategic and fundraising plan for the Society and further enhance governance and strategic oversight.



Robert Berry III '98 has been named Dean of the Indiana University Bloomington School of Education.



Vinay Singh '98 has been named Managing Director at Primus Partners. In his role, he will focus on building relations in the U.S. market, and establishing Primus Partners as a top voice when it comes to management consulting.

2000s



Sarah Bowman '01 was hired as Christopher Newport University's first Marketing Director. Bowman provides direction and oversight to University marketing initiatives, elevating the CNU brand on the regional and national level. With an incredible CNU team, she develops and implements comprehensive marketing strategies that advance the business objectives of the University and amplify its brand message.

Tammy Falls '03 is celebrating her one year anniversary as the office manager of CNU's the English Department. As a proud Captain for Life, she enjoys being part of her alma mater and making education fun for Captains.

Taya Jarman '04 director for the Institute for Public Health Innovation, received the Shining Star Award. The award recognizes a mid-level career professional showing a high level of achievement in public relations, demonstrating leadership as a professional within the industry and who actively gives back to the community.

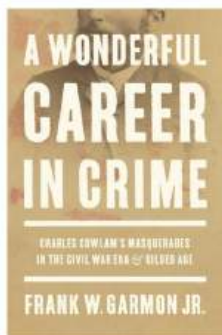


Career Announcements



Miranda Fulk '08 was originally introduced to Northwestern Mutual during a CNU career fair and completed an internship with the company in 2005. She returned to Northwestern Mutual in 2022 and took over as Managing Director of the Fairfax district office in 2024.

Frank Garmon Jr. '09 (Assistant Professor of American Studies at CNU) published his first book, "A Wonderful Career in Crime: Charles Cowlam's Masquerades in the Civil War Era & Gilded Age,"



with Louisiana State University Press in July 2024. The book follows the career of Charles Cowlam, a gilded-age swindler who received presidential pardons from Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis during the Civil War.

Kristin LaRiviere '09 has earned her PhD in Higher Education Administration from the University of Maryland. Her dissertation study focused on the resource allocation decisions of business deans at public and private research universities. She continues to work managing the MBA program at Johns Hopkins University Carey Business School.

2010s

Todd Bolick '10 has been named a Northern Virginia 40 Under 40 leader by the Center for Excellence in Leadership and Fairfax Leadership which "celebrates emerging leaders who demonstrate exceptional and impactful leadership in their professional and personal spheres within the Northern Virginia region."

Dr. Alex Ruble '10 has recently accepted a tenure-track position in Central European History at the University of Idaho.

Melissa Harrison '11 has been appointed to a seat on the Currituck Board of Education in North Carolina.

Gregory Rafal '12 has been named Senior Director, Program Strategy on the BigFuture Community Team at The College Board.



Taylor Walkup-Amos '12 was selected as one of 30 Music Teachers of Excellence in the United States by the Country Music Association Foundation. This recognition provided a \$5,000 grant to use to support music education at Yorktown Elementary School.

Abigail M. Pierce '13 was promoted to partner at Reed Smith LLP in the firm's Philadelphia office. Her practice is focused on complex litigation for clients in the health care and financial services sectors.



Stephanie Wheeless '13 has begun her own copyediting business after completing the certificate program through UC San Diego Extended Studies program. Wheeless Edits LLC offers editing services to authors and business owners, includes beta reading, manuscript evaluations, developmental editing, copyediting and proofreading, as well as course consultations for professors, teachers and other business owners.

Sarah Bierlein '15 has been promoted to Director of Engagement Management in the Aerospace, Defense & SLED Industry.



Valerie Washington '15 graduated from the L. Douglas Wilder School at VCU with a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning with fellow Captain, **Tucker Keener '22**.

Lindsay Mondloch Lesko '16 was nominated as Radford City Schools Teacher of the Year 2023-2024 at McHarg Elementary School.



Taylor Walters '16 is an Alpha Omega Alpha graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, completing her Doctor of Medicine in May 2024. She successfully matched for residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Pediatrics and Global Health.

Arttu Fiva '17 has started a new position as a board member at the Finnish American Chamber of Commerce in Houston.

Nicole Gould '17 has joined the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) as a Research Staff Member in the Operational Evaluation Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center.

Tim Laboy-Coparropa '17 is currently a graduate intern in the Inclusion and Cultural Department at Amtrak. He was recently recognized with the "Amtrak Impact Award" for his work on key cultural initiatives for the company.

Lauren Susanke '17 has started Sea Oats Psychotherapy LLC, a sole proprietor private practice in Virginia Beach, offering mental health therapy. She provides psychotherapy services to adolescents and adults in Virginia, as well as training in EMDR to provide relief for trauma and anxiety disorders.



Michael Costas '18 successfully completed the doctoral comprehensive exam and has begun work on his dissertation proposal, with the working title, "The Contemplative Pneumatology of John of the Cross." It offers an interpretation of John's spiritual itinerary as descriptive of the affective development that the human spirit undergoes as it becomes contemplatively receptive and skillfully responsive to the Spirit's gift of love in the heart. Costas intends to give special attention to the way that John depicts the gift of the Spirit through a romantic analogy of love and to consider what the restless human pursuit and experience of romance has to tell us about the Trinity.

Christina Barnes '19 graduated with a PhD in experimental psychology with concentrations in cognition and development from the University of Arkansas.



2020s

Destiny Coleman '20 was named Assistant Director of Hoos First: First Generation & Low Income College Student Initiatives at the University of Virginia.

Mare Scally '20 graduated from Washington State with a master's degree in Environmental Studies in September of 2022. She now works as a Contract Specialist (civilian employee) for the U.S. Air Force in Washington, D.C.



Brianna Wilson '21 graduated from Virginia Tech with a master's degree in Public Administration and began working in Washington, D.C., at the U.S. Department of Transportation as a program analyst.

Sophie Morley '22 is collaborating with Dr. Rocio Gordon to create a pen pal type of exchange between advanced Spanish students at CNU and her students in Colombia, where she teaches English at the Universidad Pedagógica Tecnológica with the support of a Fulbright.

Eva Nelson '22 is a German teacher at Massaponax High School in Fredericksburg.

Ariana Kopf '22/'23 teaches Spanish at Quioccasin Middle School in Henrico County. She was awarded the "Best of FLAVA (Foreign Language Association of Virginia)."

Mitch Pettus '23 is currently working as a recruiter and account manager in training for an IT talent solutions company called Insight Global in Richmond.

Weddings





1. Katherine Warakowski '13 married Robert Hudson on June 19, 2023, in Comfort, TX. The couple resides in Robinson, TX.

2. Ashley Thomas '14 married Justin Sweet on June 1, 2024, in Fredericksburg. The couple resides in King George.

3. Barb Ballvé '15 married Ryan Bester on June 20, 2024, in Virginia Beach. The couple resides in Newport News.

4. Madeleine Gibbons '15 married Peter Joseph Scheible on Oct. 28, 2024, in Manteo, NC. The couple resides in Henrico.

5. Lauren Thomas '17 married Chad Susanke on Aug. 15, 2024, in Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, WA. The couple resides in Virginia Beach.

6. Margaret McEwan '18 married Jordan Kuehnl on Oct. 11, 2024, in Madison, WI. The couple resides in Sun Prairie, WI.

7. Brianna Wilson '21 married Benjamin Boydston on Oct. 28, 2023, in Gainesville. The couple resides in Virginia Beach.

8. Jordan C. Usselman '22 married Jordan A. Murphy on May 11, 2024, in Seaford. The couple resides in Seaford.



Captains Marrying Captains





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1. Tori Terill '14 married **Adam Crockett '12** on Sept. 6, 2024, at The Omni Homestead. The couple resides in Hampton.

2. Chelsea Prescott '15 married **David Croghan '16** on Nov. 9, 2024, in Gainesville. The couple resides in Herndon.

3. Kaitlyn Anderson '16 married **Cody Anderson '16** on June 7, 2024, in Ashland. The couple resides in Louisa.

4. Noah Crawford '19 married **Andi Marie Crosby '15** on Aug. 5, 2023, in Crozet. The couple resides in College Station, TX.

5. Joshua Long '20 married **Kellee Ramsey '20** on Jan. 4, 2024, in Charleston, SC. The couple resides in White Stone.

6. Danielle Blair '21 married **Bradley Blair '17** on Dec. 21, 2024, in Chesapeake. The couple resides in Chesapeake.

7. Micaelah Hodge '21 married **Bobby Salazar '21** on July 20, 2024 in Swoope. The couple resides in Waynesboro.

8. Julia Morris '21 married **Eric Jennings '21** on June 8, 2024, at Christopher Newport University. The couple resides in Henrico.

9. Emma Brown '23 married **Ben Gleason '23** on March 23, 2024, in Lunenburg. The couple resides in Leesburg.

Future Captains





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13

1. Rebekah Loftis '07 and Dr. Derek Loftis '07 announce the birth of their daughter, Lissette. The family resides in Newport News.

2. Amber Boyer '08 and Mark Boyer announce the birth of their son, Henry, on Dec. 9, 2024. The family resides in Ashburnham, ME.

3. Sabina Furbiee '11 and Brent Furbiee '11 announce the birth of their daughter, Magnolia, on Dec. 2, 2024. The family resides in Columbia, TN.

4. Emily Howard '12 and Grant Howard '09 announce the birth of their daughter, Ellis, on July 10, 2024. The family resides in Fairfax.

5. Lyndon Garner '14 and Tiffany Garner '12 announce the birth of their son, Caleb, on May 4, 2024. The family resides in Stafford.

6. Michele Sandlin '14 and Jacob Sandlin announce the birth of their son, Henry, Nov. 9, 2024. The family resides in Great Mills, MD.

7. Barb Ballvé-Bester '15 and Ryan Bester announce the birth of their daughter, Lily Rose, on Sept. 12, 2024. The family resides in Newport News.

8. Olivia Dwyer '15 and Brenden Dwyer '15 announce the birth of their daughter, Kayleigh, on Nov. 21, 2024. The family resides in Reston.

9. Kayla Baker '16 and David Baker '16 announce the birth of their daughter, June, on Aug. 23, 2024. The family resides in Stoughton, WI.

10. Jonathan Toms '16 and Katie McCormick '16 announce the birth of their daughter, Ainsley, on March 22, 2024. The family resides in Hampton.

11. Amber Alred '18 and Chandler Alred announce the birth of their son, Atlas, on April 18, 2024. The family resides in Mechanicsville.

12. Alex Bolton '19 and Grace Bolton '20 announce the birth of their son, Thomas, on Dec. 30, 2023. The family resides in Gloucester.

13. Kylie Carter '19 and Marcus Carter '19 announce the birth of their son, Lawton, on Dec. 13, 2024. The family resides in Midlothian.

Announcements

♥ **Devon Bates '16** married in January 2024.

🐉 **Scott Basil '12** and Katie Basil announce the birth of their son, Cole, on March 17, 2024. The family resides in Henrico.

🐉 **Kristy Quinn '13** and Ryan Quinn announce the birth of their son, Camden, on March 19, 2024. The family resides in Canton, MI.

In Memoriam

FACULTY, STAFF AND FRIENDS

Dr. Marshall Booker
Susan Booker
Norma Brown
Professor George Dorsty

Colonel Melvyn D. Hutt
James M. Morris
Linda A. Searls
Nettie Ellington Young

FOREVER CAPTAINS

Josephine Berry Sinclair '63
Lynn Pryor Brockwell '72
Gerald DesLauriers '72
Gregory Warren Raines '72
Andrew L. Roberts '72
Linda Jones VanStory '72
Elton Woodrow Beasley '73
Andrew West '76
Harry H. Guthmiller '77
Walter Craig Sumerlin '77
Barbara Anderson '78
Wayne Richard Kennedy '78

Albert Budd '79
Larry V. Odom '80
Margaret "Peggy" Howells '81
Ray E. Bingman '83
David Hout '95
David Allgood '96
CDR Jerry Maddux Van Cleave '98
Charles "Lee" Duff '99
Tomika Smith '00
Timothy A. Stook '01
Cameron Dannel Deibler '03
Sierra (Pino) Funk '04

Dr. Tracy L. Keaton-Johnson '04
Joann Alice Shipe '04
Phillip Zsoldos '05
Benjamin Tyler Settle '06
Edward "Eddie" Harold Kline III '11
Susan Brown '16
Austin Shaw '16
Philip Christophe '17
Nathen Wilson '27
Quintin Easter Jr. '28
Karen L. Greene (class year unknown)



As of March 31, 2025

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Tributes



Building Community, Inspiring Connections

Jane Sulzberger leaves enduring legacy at CNU's LifeLong Learning Society

The Christopher Newport community is deeply saddened by the loss of Jane Sulzberger, the beloved director of CNU's LifeLong Learning Society (LLS), who passed away at the age of 86. Sulzberger was a passionate education advocate who dedicated decades of her life to developing the University's program for adult learners.

"LLS grew and thrived during Jane's more than 30 years at the helm, thanks to her joyful, welcoming spirit of curiosity and her remarkable organizational skills. She enriched the lives of thousands of adult learners and made the University and the community we cherish a better place," said President Kelly.

Under Sulzberger's leadership, LLS became a cornerstone of CNU's outreach, offering diverse courses for growth-minded retirees interested in exploring new interests, deepening their knowledge and becoming part of a unique learning community.

LLS Interim Director Mackenzie Byrd called Sulzberger "irreplaceable," vowing to uphold her legacy. "Her vision will forever be the heart and soul of our organization," she said.

Sulzberger is survived by her son, Robert Sulzberger, an adjunct professor in the Department of Psychology at CNU; her daughter, Jennifer Sulzberger, who resides in Charlottesville; her beloved extended family of nieces, nephews, grandchildren, great-grandchildren; and her brother, Robert Bigham.



Dr. Scott Pollard

Dr. Pollard, Professor Emeritus of English, served as an integral member of the Christopher Newport community as a faculty member of the English Department for 30 years.



Dr. Corliss Anne Tacosa

A longtime professor at Christopher Newport University, Dr. Tacosa taught international relations, government, and political science, inspiring students with her expertise and passion for teaching.



An Icon in the Department of Athletics Mourning the Passing of Wayne Block

Wayne Block, who for 27 years led CNU's Sports Information Department, passed away at his home in Arizona at the age of 79.

Block was a fixture at Captains games from 1983 until his retirement in 2010. His long and distinguished career led to him

being widely recognized as one of the top Sports Information Directors in the nation.

He was inducted into the Christopher Newport Athletic Hall of Fame in 2000, the USA South Hall of Fame in 2011, and the College Sports Information Directors Hall of Fame in 2014. He also received the Virginia Sports Information Directors' (VaSID) Distinguished Service Award in 1996.

In his nearly three decades at the University, Block was instrumental in the record-keeping and statistical history of every CNU athletic program. He was a key part of the growth of Christopher Newport from a small commuter college with only a dozen athletic programs to a vibrant residential university with 22 intercollegiate athletic programs at the time of his retirement.

Block was promoted to Assistant to the Athletic Director for Communications at CNU in 2000. He led the department's efforts in ushering in new technology and was the driving force of the first website dedicated to CNU Athletics.

Block is survived by his wife, Linda, who was also a familiar face to Captains fans as a longtime volunteer at CNU athletic events, and their son, Kevin.

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***Lucy Ann Hancock has always
believed in the power of education
and connection.***

A lifelong educator, she spent 44 years shaping young minds — 33 of them as a beloved principal in Newport News, Virginia. She didn't just know her students; she knew their families, often calling parents not to report problems but to celebrate their children's successes.

"I wanted parents to know what their kids were doing right," she recalled with a bright smile. "Every child needs someone in their corner."

Now, Hancock is continuing her lifelong mission in a meaningful way. Through a very generous gift to Christopher Newport University, she is ensuring more students have access to higher education. Her donation

will support scholarships and the Community Captains program, providing mentorship and financial aid to those who need it most.

Hancock's generosity is an extension of the life she built with her late husband, Mark. They never had children of their own, and she always held her students close to her heart. Through the Mark and Lucy Ann Hancock Community Captains Endowed Scholarship, their legacy of kindness and service endures. Lucy Ann Hancock continues to change lives — one student at a time.



**Learn how you can leave a lasting legacy at
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at (757) 594-0581 or keith.roots@cnu.edu.**
