

# Otterbein Towers

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WINTER 2020



RESILIENCE | SOCIAL JUSTICE | ADAPTING TO COVID-19

# From the President.

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I used to know more or less what tomorrow would bring.

I know this will not be published for about a month, and as I write tonight it is unclear whether the pandemic spike will recede, how the economy will recover, and when we will know social justice and equality. I cannot predict the next day, much less see into the future.

Now I imagine how unsettled our students must be. How their families may be suffering from job loss; how they are adjusting to new course formats; how they will connect without group gatherings.

It is at times like this when I focus on what we do know. There are still things of which we can be sure. The leaves will fall from the trees. Our families love and support us. Otterbein will beat Capital.

I also know that in times of need you find out who your real friends are. I am surrounded by them here on campus. More importantly, so are our students. You will read stories in this magazine about faculty adapting to teach in new ways, staff supporting students, and even alumni connecting back to campus.

All of these efforts surround and support our students. Many of you were students here — perhaps one year or 50 years ago. The distance

and time do not matter — our alumni have the same stories about a faculty member who was there when they were in need, a staff member who pushed them to the next level, a friendship that was formed for a lifetime. That is how we make it through uncertainty — relationships and support. We are never alone. Anyone at Otterbein, from Otterbein, associated with Otterbein is never alone. Is there anywhere better for students to be right now?

I know the Otterbein family stretches around the world. I'm proud to be a small part of it. And I'm humbled by your support. If you can, gifts are appreciated. We have students in financial need, countless new COVID-related expenses, and the need to plan for a bright future. If you can, there is a chance to make a difference right now.

Finally, I know we are resilient. You are resilient. Our students, faculty and staff are resilient. Resilience, the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties, is born of adaptability, community, support, hard work and innovation. All have been plentiful on campus for the past eight months.

Rest assured, we will be stronger, we will be better, we will be prepared because at Otterbein we are resilient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'John Comerford'.

John Comerford, Ph.D.  
President

## MISSION STATEMENT

Otterbein University is an inclusive community dedicated to educating the whole person in the context of humane values. Our mission is to prepare graduates to think deeply and broadly, to engage locally and globally, and to advance their professions and communities.

An Otterbein education is distinguished by the intentional blending of the liberal arts and professional studies, combined with a unique approach to integrating direct experience into all learning.

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The annual dance concert, *The Wild Within*, was all about imagination. Behind the scenes, choreographers and designers imagined ways to stage a safe production.

Photo by Mark Mineart.



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Read, hear and experience more of these stories online.

[www.otterbein.edu/towers](http://www.otterbein.edu/towers)

OTTERBEIN TOWERS WINTER 2020

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# Around the 'Bein.



(L-R): Felicity Boykin, first year, public relations major; Blake Sitch, senior, sport management major; Ana Cabrera, weekend anchor, CNN; Frandie Francique, senior, psychology and sociology major, race and ethnic studies minor.

## Class of 2024 is Most Diverse in Otterbein's History, Exemplifying Mission of Inclusivity

This fall, Otterbein welcomed the first-year students of the Class of 2024, which has the distinction of being the most diverse in the university's 173-year history. The 133 students of color and of non-Caucasian ethnicity make up nearly 27% of the class — a 98.5% increase from the 67 ethnically diverse students entering class in 2012, when current Vice President for Enrollment Management Jefferson Blackburn-Smith came to Otterbein. He says the growth is about community and not numbers.

"It's about the environment. We want this to be a home for students, not just a place they go to school. Otterbein is, and always has been, a college of opportunity. We want to meet students and families where they are, see them as a person first, and then help support their journey to where they want to be," said Blackburn-Smith.

Targeted admission campaigns and scholarship initiatives are key drivers in how Otterbein has been increasing student diversity year after year. Efforts began in Columbus City Schools in 2013, then expanded to other central Ohio urban districts in 2015 and became the Opportunity Scholarship for Ohio residents earning less than \$60,000 per year in 2018.



## Students Work with CNN on Debate Night Program

As viewers across the United States watched the first presidential debate on Sept. 29, Otterbein was again in the national media spotlight as our students had the opportunity to lend their talents and opinions to a national news production.

CNN came to Otterbein to host a focus group of 14 undecided voters, which included three Otterbein students. Another small group of students helped with field technical support as crew members. Additionally, CNN professionals visited several classes giving students meaningful insight into the work of national media.

This was CNN's second visit to Otterbein in less than a year. In October 2019, CNN hosted the fourth Democratic primary debate on a stage in Otterbein's Rike Center. More than 120 students had internships with CNN for that production, while dozens of other students met with *The New York Times* reporters, participated on panels, assisted with related events, and represented Otterbein to viewers across the country.



# Otterbein Recognized for Excellence in Academics, Civic Engagement

Otterbein University has been collecting honors this fall, as it is recognized in national publications for its programs and values, including *Washington Monthly*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and *Colleges of Distinction*.

Otterbein was named by *Washington Monthly* as one of America's Best Colleges for Student Voting 2020 for its high student voter registration and student voting rates, as well as its ongoing efforts. To make the list, schools must have submitted an ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge action plan in 2018 and 2020. Otterbein has received a gold seal from the Challenge for achieving a

student voting rate between 40% and 49% in the 2018 Midterm Election.

In the *U.S. News & World Report* annual guide to "America's Best Colleges," Otterbein is ranked in the top 15% among 156 peers in the Regional Universities–Midwest category and 10th in its category for Best Undergraduate Teaching. Additionally, Otterbein was recognized as a Best College for Veterans, Best Value School and A+ School for B Students. See the complete guide at [usnews.com/best-colleges](https://usnews.com/best-colleges).

Otterbein has once again been recognized as one of the nation's *Colleges of Distinction*. Otterbein received program-specific recognition in Business, Education, Engineering, Nursing, and Career Development.

Additionally, the Otterbein University-OhioHealth Grant Medical Center Nurse Anesthesia program was named the top nurse anesthesia program in Ohio by NurseJournal.org, and the Promise House was named the Volunteer Corporate/Organization of the Year for 2019 by the City of Westerville.



More information can be found at <https://collegesofdistinction.com/school/otterbein-university/>.



## Common Book Tackles Tough Topic of Opioid Addiction



Otterbein University's 2020 Common Book is taking on the complex issue of the opioid epidemic through an interdisciplinary lens. This shared reading experience challenges students to look at all angles of the epidemic throughout the academic year.

This year's Common Book, *Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic* by journalist and author Sam Quinones, uses the blue-collar city of Portsmouth, OH, as an entry point to examine the opioid epidemic, which has devastated hundreds of small towns and cities across the country. He weaves together stories of Big Pharma, narcotics investigators, survivors, and more into an examination of the causes and repercussions of an unprecedented epidemic of addiction in America.

Quinones visited campus virtually for classroom discussions and a livestreamed lecture on Tuesday, Oct. 27.



Sophomore Lindsey Payton was among the student leaders who organized a number of events to generate voter awareness and engagement.

## Otterbein Students Contribute to Large Youth Voter Turnout

The Otterbein University Center for Community Engagement (CCE) partnered with groups across campus to encourage student voter registration, awareness, and electoral participation with its #otterbeinVOTES initiative. The kick-off for #otterbeinVOTES on Constitution Day, Sept. 17, brought in more than 100 people to learn more about voting in Ohio. “The #otterbeinVOTES campaign is a cross-campus, non-partisan effort to mobilize our students to participate in the political process, educate themselves about the candidates and issues and vote,” said CCE Director Melissa Gilbert.

According to the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge, 68.7% of Otterbein students were registered to vote and 16.9% voted in 2014. Just four years later, 79.4% were registered to vote and 45.2% voted in the 2018 midterm election.



Read more about the ongoing voter awareness effort at [otterbein.edu/news/otterbein-students-contribute-to-large-youth-voter-turnout/](https://otterbein.edu/news/otterbein-students-contribute-to-large-youth-voter-turnout/).

## Scholarship to Serve Military Families

Otterbein is proud to support military families by offering the Otterbein Honoring Service Scholarship to Folds of Honor and Ohio War Orphans recipients. This scholarship will make an Otterbein education more affordable for the children of these families by providing \$19,000 toward an undergraduate degree — a 58% discount off Otterbein’s 2020-21 tuition.

“It is truly an honor to provide the Otterbein Honoring Service Scholarship to students whose families have sacrificed so much. Supporting these students not only benefits them, but also the inclusive and diverse Otterbein

community they will join,” said Otterbein President John Comerford. “This is one small way in which we can contribute to the common good and honor our own institutional values.”

The first recipient of the Otterbein Honoring Service Scholarship is Devyn Craner, a first-year pre-veterinary major from Navarre, Florida. “It means a lot to me the Otterbein is supporting military families like mine by offering this scholarship. It shows how the university realizes the importance of the role military plays and the sacrifices that they make for our country. It has been a huge blessing to receive it,” she said.



Devyn Craner '24.

## National Award Recognizes Professor's Innovative Teaching

Associate Professor Anna Young, director of the Zoo and Conservation Science program at Otterbein, has long understood the benefits of remote learning. While video chat services are now a common teaching tool, Young began incorporating them into her classes in 2013, when video chats were a novel idea. Due to her innovative teaching methods, she recently received the 2020 Penny Bernstein Distinguished Teaching Award from the Animal Behavior Society. As the recipient of the Penny Bernstein Distinguished Teaching Award, Young will host a workshop in December 2020 on the topic of transitioning to an online learning model.



# The time is now to help protect our students' futures.

These are challenging times and the realities of this pandemic are difficult enough. Our students' education and their dreams shouldn't have to be derailed, too.

If ever there were a time to support the most vulnerable, the most promising and those most deserving of an Otterbein education —  
**the time is now.**

If ever there were a time to help with unexpected, unprecedented costs like outdoor-tented classrooms, COVID-19 testing and extreme cleaning regimens to keep our students safe —  
**the time is now.**

If ever there were a time to help the University you love, to help Otterbein —  
**the time is now.**

Are you ready to learn how  
you can help us meet the  
urgent needs of our students?

**Contact us to make  
an impact now.**

Division of Institutional Advancement  
614.823.1305 | [otterbein.edu/thetimeisnow](https://otterbein.edu/thetimeisnow)

FOR THE LOVE OF  
**OTTERBEIN**  
THE TIME IS NOW.



# We Are More Resilient Than We Think

By Dr. Noam Shpancer, Professor of Psychology



The coronavirus pandemic has brought into stark relief our individual and collective vulnerability. That we are vulnerable is indeed true. But it is not the whole truth. On the other side of our vulnerability is the truth of our deep resilience.

The concept of “psychological resilience” describes one’s success in going through adversity without suffering debilitating effects. For instance, at-risk children demonstrate resilience if they nevertheless achieve certain social competencies (for example, the ability to trust others) or

developmental tasks (for example, school success).

Contrary to popular perception, resilience research with both children and adults has shown that human beings are robust in the face of adversity. We have evolved in a dangerous environment, and our faculties are therefore adapted to dealing. Human psychological functioning is a well-buffered process — that is, designed by evolution to succeed even under difficult conditions. Most individuals who experience collective or individual trauma end up adapting,

recovering, and returning to normal health. Resilience is not a bug in our software but a feature of our hardware.

It is tempting to think of resilience as chiefly the property of individuals — something one has more or less of. And indeed, individual characteristics such as intelligence or sociable temperament have been shown to predict resilience. However, current research suggests that resilience is not so much a trait but a dynamic, reciprocal process, in which individual qualities interact with contextual





Noam Shpancer is a professor of psychology at Otterbein and a licensed, practicing clinical psychologist in Columbus. He is also a published novelist and screenwriter, and an official blogger for the online magazine *Psychology Today* at [www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/insight-therapy](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/insight-therapy).

## Rather than...

### Self-flagellation —

increase self-care and compassion; become intentional about incorporating into your routine those activities that give you a sense of meaning, joy, peace, and solace.

### Isolating —

nurture and invest in your social relationships (intimate, familial, communal). Be kind and useful to others.

### Freezing in rigidity —

open up to flexibility. Bend so as not to break; accept your feelings and consult your values and goals in making decisions; seek to adapt and learn; assess your situation fairly in a broad perspective.

### Avoiding or worrying —

take problem-solving action. Focus on those aspects of your situation that are under your control; accept and face the challenge the world has placed before you. Instead of reacting from conditioned habit, respond from conscious choice.

conditions. A good driver is more likely to survive bad weather if the road they're driving on is good.

One factor that matters greatly to resilience is social relationships, both past and present. For example, children who grow up under conditions of chronic adversity are much more likely to recover successfully if they had at least one positive relationship with a competent adult during their childhood. The past informs the present.

At the same time, current relations are at least as important. Human beings are social creatures.

We are strong to the extent that we are connected. Social support aids resilience in various ways. For example, it may motivate people to adopt healthy behaviors, help them appraise stressful events as less threatening, and improve their self-esteem.

The take-home message from this rough summary is two-fold:

First, your own resilience in the face of adversity is not wholly up to you. Much of your success (or failure) will depend on the luck of the draw — whether the particular demands of the specific threat fit well with your particular

skills, experiences, and tendencies. Moreover, past and present external conditions (both of which are significantly out of our control) factor heavily in our ability to develop and deploy effective coping skills. Thus, your success is never yours alone, and a failure to achieve a certain resilient outcome does not mean that there is something inherently wrong with you.

At the same time, some aspects of your resilience are indeed up to you. For example, the decisions you make matter, and certain types of decisions tend to work better during stressful times.



# MARGINALIZED VOICES

Otterbein Art Exhibitions Put Social Justice Issues on Display

By Will Elkins

Artwork descriptions by Janice Glowski, Ph.D. and Magda Parasidis

**The** Otterbein Department of Art and Art History has opened the University's museum and gallery spaces this year to the issues of labor justice, the poor working-class, immigration and systemic racism with three exhibitions, two during fall semester and one during spring semester.

According to Museum and Galleries Director Janice Glowski, the Department wants those who see the exhibits to ask where they see themselves in the art, the stories and the exhibition themes. She hopes they will allow themselves to be open to change and being uncomfortable because that, Glowski said, is when the greatest learning occurs.

"Part of Otterbein's educational mission is to train students to think critically,

Kelly & Kyle Phelps  
*Grace*  
28 x 22 x 10 inches  
ceramic mixed media  
2020

Kelly and Kyle Phelps' large-scale, wall-mounted art is arresting and relatable. Naturalistic depictions of miners, machinists and welders show poignant moments when weary laborers are on break, at shift's end or nearly collapsed under the weight of plant closings and layoffs. *Grace*, like Phelps' other work, is built of found objects (e.g. metal, bandana, lipstick tube) from abandoned factories across the rural Midwest.



clearly and in an informed way about the narratives that dominate our social discourse,” said Glowski. “Importantly, we are asking the viewer to question, to look deeper into their understandings and to ask themselves difficult and sometimes uncomfortable questions.”

The three exhibitions — *Magda Parasidis: Ghosts in Sunlight, On(c)es Forgotten* and *Valentino Dixon: Journey to Freedom* — are challenging long-held assumptions about poverty, race and our country’s history. These exhibitions are meant to question the single narrative by directly addressing social issues through an aesthetic lens, present new voices and share often untold narratives.

“We are demonstrating that the Otterbein community is willing to commit to doing the hard work of listening, learning, being honest and moving toward shared truths. We are willing to engage in the difficult work of healing, so we can create the possibility of jettisoning the notion that there is a hierarchy of human value,” she said.

All exhibits are free and open to the public. Visit [www.otterbein.edu/art/art-exhibit-schedule](http://www.otterbein.edu/art/art-exhibit-schedule) for more information on hours and location.



*The Distance*, inspired by Ta-nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me*, reads, “this chasm makes itself known to us in all kinds of ways,” referring to the socioeconomic distance between the urban youth of the projects and their more affluent counterparts over the bridge. Parasidis explores what it might look like to use this awareness as a nutrient for the making of art and social consciousness.

Magda Parasidis  
Chasm / The Distance  
1993 – 2018  
C-print, ink marker  
24 x 36 inches



Janice Glowski, Ph.D, is the museum and galleries director and teaches art history and museum studies at Otterbein. She is co-founder of the Otterbein and the “Arts: Opening Doors to the World” program.

Valentino Dixon  
Hummingbird  
color pencil on paper  
20 x 16 inches  
2015

Vibrant drawings of golf courses brought Valentino Dixon’s twenty-seven years of wrongful incarceration, and artistic talents, to the national stage. Since gaining his freedom, the artist has expanded his repertoire to include bucolic landscapes, wild animals in fantastical surroundings and imagery touched by the surreal. In *Hummingbird*, Dixon depicts a golf ball-headed bird in mid-flight and holding a fencing sword, disarming the viewer with whimsy.

# Adap co





# oting to VID-19

COVID-19 has changed everything – how we learn, work and play. The Otterbein community has met the challenges of this pandemic with a variety of responses that are defined by grace, humility, humor, and ultimately, resilience and hope. In checking in with our community, we found shared truths that remind us we are not alone in what we feel, how we are coping and what we are learning about ourselves in adapting to this temporary but challenging COVID-19 world.



## Sarah Bouchard

PROFESSOR, BIOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCE

Sarah Bouchard, a professor in biology and earth science, describes adapting to the pandemic in phases. “At first, it was all crisis management: *Who needs a computer? Who needs help with their wi-fi connection? Does everyone have a safe place to live?*,” Bouchard said.

Then, after the dust settled and it was time to “get down to the business of teaching and learning,” Bouchard said it felt a bit like staring into an abyss. “I knew my students were all out there, but I wasn’t sure what was going on with them.”

Now, she says she’s discovered that with careful planning, creativity and flexibility, she can still capture much of what it means to be teaching and learning despite the challenges.

“Although it has been hard, my classes are all benefitting from the revisions and adaptations that I have had to make,” Bouchard said. “The pandemic has really highlighted how much I value the close, personal relationships that I’m able to have with my students.”

*Bouchard, named Otterbein’s 2020 Master Teacher, is a physiological ecologist, active researcher and active part of the Zoo and Conservation Science program.*



## Fernando Jose-Chairez '23

SPANISH/LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES AND JOURNALISM/MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

The biggest challenge I’ve faced during this pandemic has been trying to stay financially afloat while trying to grow as a person. Financially, I am on my own more than ever. Growing as a person is another challenge — it’s hard to know who one is if all you can do is mostly stay indoors, online.

## Adeline Almendinger '19

ASSISTANT MERCHANT, EXPRESS

**Adeline Almendinger '19** turned an internship into a full-time job as an assistant merchant at Express when she graduated. Until March 2020, she reviewed and planned timelines and sales from week to week, arranged store “looks” and worked with multiple teams to decide which styles will sell. But how has the fashion retail industry dealt with a pandemic when people aren’t shopping in stores, dressing for work or going out to eat? Almendinger said it requires a different approach to decision making. “COVID has made things a lot harder from a retail perspective because we are not able to physically see the product,” she said, adding that making connections with her teams also has been challenging.

## Theory of Relativity:

“Otterbein University’s deft first streaming production brims with ardent singing and honest emotions.” Those are the words of theatre critic Michael Grossberg, *The Columbus Dispatch*, about Otterbein’s first socially distanced production, *The Theory of Relativity*. The departments of Theatre and Dance and Music partnered to safely produce the musical, filming fully staged performances in advance — complete with lights, sound, scenery and costumes — and streaming to audiences online from Oct. 8-11.



## Paul Wendel

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, EDUCATION

So how are the teachers who are preparing the future teachers adapting? “We’ve learned to hold good classes in configurations ranging from entirely online to half in-person and half online. We’ve learned to conduct socially distanced in-person experiments with online lab partners, sometimes conducting the experiments outdoors.” The adaptations go beyond Wendel’s classes into his students’ K-12 field placements. “Our students are teaching classes in person and online, learning a wide range of online tools in the process,” he said.

This award-winning educator offers the perfect lesson to this situation. “With a good deal of humor we’re all adapting, learning and growing together as educators — and we’re finding we can handle just about anything,” Wendel said.

*Wendel was named the 2020 Exemplary Teacher and proudly describes his students as his future colleagues.*



## Sara Anloague Bogan '18

COMMUNICATIONS  
SPECIALIST,  
OHIOHEALTH

Since March, **Sara Anloague Bogan '18** has been supporting the incident command center at OhioHealth’s flagship hospital, Riverside Methodist Hospital, from home. Her goal is to keep OhioHealth associates and leaders informed and resilient through these hard times and support OhioHealth’s back-to-business efforts. “COVID-19 intensifies the need for clear, engaging communication. Because of the change of pace, there is always something that makes my job

*Wendel said.*

## Lisa Minken '03

BROADWAY MARKETING MANAGER,  
COLUMBUS ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
PERFORMING ARTS (CAPA)

Promoting CAPA’s Broadway in Columbus Series changed dramatically for **Lisa Minken '03** in March when she learned during a Columbus run of *My Fair Lady* that the State of Ohio was restricting theatre performances. “The show opened on a Wednesday and by Thursday gatherings were no more.” Since then, her work has focused on keeping fans engaged until theatre makes a comeback. “Normally we would be in our current season and we would have already had a show,” she said. Predicting the future during the pandemic is difficult, but Minken is hopeful Broadway in Columbus can return by spring 2021. “Every day is a day closer to having our theatre doors open.”



## Randy Mobley '80

PRESIDENT, TRIPLE-A  
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

Each spring, **Randy Mobley '80** would complete final planning and oversight tasks and gear up for the regular season to start. This season was different. "We shut down in March and began reworking our schedule, thinking we could start as early as late May. You look back now and think how silly we were," Mobley said. Now, Mobley is unsure about the future. Minor League Baseball teams continue to lose revenue while Major League Baseball is seeking to alter its relationship with the minor leagues. "We're going to do what we can do," he said, "but for now we're along for the ride."



## Evan Brandao '22

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

I have been using this time to think about what my passions are, how I want to pursue them and how Otterbein can help me. I've been reaching out to local professionals to get advice, and it is amazing how much insight people are willing to provide if you take the initiative to reach out.

Jeremy Llorence, an assistant professor in English, has encouraged his students to find activities or hobbies that they find fulfilling to balance their worries.

"You can use things you enjoy doing to recharge after all of the video calls you're going through," Llorence said. "Whether for socialization, for classes or for work, video calls can be really draining. I think it's important for your mental health to take that time for yourself to do things that you find fulfilling — whether that's creative work or just reading a book that you really love."

Llorence acknowledges that these are difficult times — but he's taking heart. "If I've learned anything at Otterbein over my career here, it's that we are a strong community, we are capable and we will get through this together," he said.

*Llorence was named the 2020 Best New Teacher and is the faculty advisor for Otterbein's Quiz and Quill literary magazine.*

## Jeremy Llorence

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
ENGLISH



## Lily Burnside '23

ECONOMICS

I found a hobby of gardening. Working at the Otterbein Community garden was perfect because it was easy to social distance with my coworkers and because of the mental health benefits of being outdoors.

## Anna Egensperger '23

POLITICAL SCIENCE  
AND COMMUNICATION  
STUDIES

The biggest challenge I have faced during the pandemic is the inability to focus during online classes. I was frustrated with my lack of concentration, so I decided to take action to combat it.



# Finding Your Inner Peace During Difficult Times

By Rev. Judith Guion-Utsler,  
Otterbein Chaplain

**Chaotic.** Unprecedented. A very weird time. Dumpster fire. These are various ways I have described the year 2020. From the time the pandemic interrupted an otherwise normal year, to the overwhelming public outcry and protests following the murder of George Floyd, to an unusually tense and anxious election season, we are living in a truly challenging time. I know there have been other moments in history that have been just as fraught (and more), but with 24/7 news coverage and social media it feels like we are stressed to a breaking point.

## So, what can we do?

**First, pay attention to the way you talk to yourself.**

When I'm stressed, I am more self-critical, and that inner voice can be pretty mean. In fact, if others talked to me the way I talk to myself, I would be furious. Just noticing that I'm being self-critical helps me to stop and reframe my thinking.

**Second, breathe.**

Meditation has become really important to me. Just a little time in the morning before I start the day, being still and focusing on my breath helps me feel grounded. I can find quiet through the day to stay grounded.

**Third, focus on gratitude.**

There is so much joy all around, and it's easy to miss when we're wrapped up in miserable. The way the sunlight touches the trees, the birds in flight, the small gestures of kindness from strangers and friends — all of these can make us feel happier if we notice them.

**And finally, practice compassion.**

For yourself (you don't have to be perfect) and for others. We can't tell by looking what kind of battles people are facing. Be kind and compassionate as a default when you are walking around in the world.



*Rev. Judy Guion-Utsler is the University chaplain and has a master of divinity degree from Boston University and doctorate degree from The Ohio State University. She focuses on social justice, anti-racism, and changing the world.*

None of these things will clear up a pandemic (please wear your mask and wash your hands), or end racism, or change a broken political system. But they can help us get through this (ahem) very weird time.

I invite you to follow the Otterbein Religious and Spiritual Life Instagram page [@Otterbein\\_Spiritual\\_Life](#) for reminders to pause for prayer and pause for peace.



# An Invitation to Understand Racial Healing Circles

TRHT:  
4 Letters,  
3 Life-changing  
Concepts

By Rev. Vaughn Bell

I have the honor of being a part of Otterbein's Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation team and the work that we began in 2019 is proving to be needed now more than ever before.

Following the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, the nation's attention became focused on the need for social justice and racial healing and reconciliation.

Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) is a process designed to bring about transformational change by addressing the effects of systemic racism through eradicating the conscious and unconscious belief in a "hierarchy of human value," the reprehensible belief

**Eradicating  
the conscious  
and unconscious  
belief in a  
"hierarchy of  
human value"**

in the inferiority or superiority of persons based on physical characteristics such as race, skin color or place of origin.

The TRHT process begins by grounding our experience in TRUTH. Truth involves the inclusion of narratives and perspectives that have historically been neglected and/or ignored.

The process of racial healing is facilitated through participation in Racial Healing Circles (RHC). RHCs are facilitated group experiences where participants are guided through answering a series of questions that progressively go deeper and more personal. RHCs allow participants to share their personal experiences unfiltered and uninterrupted.

One of the greatest

benefits of RHCs is the allowance for participants to engage in deep listening, hearing the stories of people they might not otherwise connect with and have a heart conversation.

RHCs offer ways for us to heal from the traumatic wounds of the past, to build mutually respectful relationships across racial lines and to transform ourselves into the beloved community.

If you are interested in an experience that leads to personal transformation and community engagement, then I invite you to join us and participate in a Racial Healing Circle.

**RHCs  
offer  
ways for us  
to heal from  
the traumatic  
wounds of the  
past...**

*Information about RHCs can be accessed online at [otterbein.edu/TRHT](http://otterbein.edu/TRHT). Let the transformation begin!*



*Passionate about education, Rev. Vaughn Bell serves as the vice president of the Westerville City Schools Board of Education and is the establishing pastor of the Triumphant Church of God in Westerville, OH.*

# Conversation and Connecting about Social Justice

PRY SOCK: Part of advocacy is doing some things you don't necessarily have to do, but it's something that you really want to do. Why did you feel it was so important to be a part of the leadership of the Westerville protest, Desmond?

FERNANDEZ: I've been a part of this community for so long – it's my lifeline for success and happiness. This is my time to be a part of this mission to better our community and make it even more diverse and more inclusive.

What I thought was going to be maybe 50 people was almost 1,000 people. It was inspiring. Not only was I protesting with my classmates, I was protesting with my teachers. Teachers who exposed me to morals and lessons from *To Kill a Mockingbird*; who helped mold my belief that black people do have a purpose in theatre; who were there photographing everything to make sure it leaves an imprint on our history – and one professor even brought her son. What this is about is deeply ingrained in my community ... Westerville is going to be an example by the time we get done with this.

*Desmond Fernandez '21 said this is his time to be a part of bettering his community.*



**James Prysock '09, MBA '19**, director of Otterbein's Office of Social Justice and Activism, connected with Otterbein graduate, **Tony Bishop '15, MSAH '18**, the new executive director of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus, and **Desmond Fernandez '21**, a senior BFA acting major who organized several Westerville-based Black Lives Matter protests this summer. During their conversation, Bishop and Fernandez shared their insights and hopes for how working together can enable change.

*To read more of their conversation, visit Towers online at [otterbein.edu/towers](https://www.otterbein.edu/towers)*







PRYSOCK: What specific changes would you like to see to be an inclusive community?

BISHOP: Community is the way through all of this. These protests are everybody – young, old, black, white and everybody in between. That's the beautiful thing about it. This is our opportunity right now to redefine what it means to be an American and say that is an inclusive thing. The reason we are so strong as a country, historically, is because of our diversity. The only substantive pillar of American exceptionalism is the fact that we're all in it together. We have the best minds from all over the world under one roof. I'd like to see people rally around that.

FERNANDEZ: For me, it's unity. If we get stuck in these debates of each side saying, "I'm not going to budge," we're going to remain stagnant. We've got to be able to find that middle ground. We've got to come together. Then, as we begin to understand one another, what is the next action going to be? We've got to hold those that are in a higher position than us accountable. We've got to know who to contact – whether that's in Congress or local legislators. Voting is a powerful thing. Voting is not the cure – it is simply a tool. We've got to do other things as well.

PRYSOCK: Tony, you passed on one opportunity in order to work for the Black Caucus. What compelled you? (Bishop was invited as the United States' representative to the Foreign Service program at the University of Oxford, England.)

BISHOP: If something happens to this place and I was somewhere else and I wasn't doing my part – protesting, helping out legislatively – I don't think I could live with myself. This country is everything to me despite its flaws and warts ... we believe so much in this place that we're honestly willing to die for it.

Also, when you do the right thing, good things normally come back to you. I got invited to speak in the U.K. about what I'm doing now. It all comes full circle when you do what you're supposed to do.

Otterbein instilled that in us – making those values basically a part of the core curriculum. Otterbein has a history of doing what's right before it's popular and not being afraid to stand out there as the first one. That level of sacrifice is necessary to change something.

PRYSOCK: What advice would you give to people who want to be advocates and are trying to figure out the way to best support their community?

FERNANDEZ: Alice Walker. Rosa Parks. Martin Luther King Jr. Malcolm X. Maya Angelou. John Lewis. Colin Kaepernick. These are absolutely profound people, and they made a huge impact on our American culture. But they're just humans. You don't need to give speeches in front of thousands of people or have all the press there to be an advocate. These people were advocates but they're also activists. Like the first part of that word, you simply need to act. You've got to do it and you've got to act now.

BISHOP: The best way to formulate changes to a system is to learn how it works in the first place so you know you can rebuild it better. I'll give you a quote from the movement: "We are the ones we've been waiting for." Everybody has a part to play. There's a way to raise awareness about what's happening and show where you stand. Whatever your strengths are – volunteering your time or baking cookies or whatever – there's a place in this for everybody.

## Notable Giving News

HIGHLIGHTING GENEROSITY WITHIN  
OUR OTTERBEIN COMMUNITY

### Step Up for Students

An exciting new opportunity has begun at Otterbein, called the Step Up for Students Challenge. Start your very own four-year scholarship, while making use of a limited-time pool of matching donor funds.

This challenge is a part of The Otterbein Fund Scholarship Program, which provides direct assistance to offset tuition expenses for a student's four-year undergraduate experience. The \$10,000 Otterbein Fund Scholarship can be the deciding factor for whether a student enrolls or graduates on time. While alumni love the experience of setting up their own scholarship and corresponding with their student, for some, this charitable commitment is out of reach.

The Step Up for Students Challenge provides \$3,000 in matching funds, making an Otterbein Fund Scholarship a real possibility for donors who want to make an impact. This \$7,000 commitment gradually "Steps Up" a donor's giving over the course of four years, while making a substantial difference in the life of a student at Otterbein. In 18 months, Otterbein's goal is to establish 47 new scholarships, to reflect the year Otterbein was founded — 1847.

We would like to highlight some of our amazing donors who have already stepped up to the challenge: **Dr. Chris Cordle '69** and **Dr. Susan Palmer '70**, **Luis Navarro and Mary Navarro P'11**, **Virginia Phillippi Longmire '55**, **Annie Upper Ames '86**.

Many continue to fund the traditional Otterbein Fund Scholarship Program; new donors include **James F. Boltz '86** and **Bernie Campbell '61**.

### 1847 Minutes for Otterbein a Success!

Thank you to all 412 donors who accepted the 1847 Minutes for Otterbein challenge! Thanks to you, we exceeded our goal of 250 donors and set a new challenge giving record — \$105,392 raised for Otterbein.

Now more than ever, we're grateful for the community that has come together to make a difference for Otterbein, since its founding in 1847. Donors **Brad Longo '12** and **Karissa Dahdah Longo '12** (right), shared why it was important to them as young alumni to pay it forward and support Otterbein.

"We are beyond grateful for Otterbein because it provided us with so many memorable experiences and relationships. It is important for us to give back so that Otterbein can continue to do the same for other students."

Brad also gives his time by serving on the Young Alumni Board. We're grateful to the Longos for their support.



### Cowan Hall Dressing Room Renovations

In July 2020, the Chang Family gave a generous donation to fund dressing room renovations for the Otterbein University Department of Theatre and Dance. The renovations will provide an enhanced behind-the-scenes experience for our talented theater and dance students. The Changs, parents of **Cameron Chang '20**, reside in San Diego, CA, and made the gift during their son's senior year at Otterbein. "We are honored to give back to the Department of Theatre and Dance. Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, to the outstanding faculty for their incredible training, guidance, and support our son was so fortunate to receive during his four years in the BFA Musical Theatre program at Otterbein."

— **Chang Family P'20**



To learn more,  
please contact  
**Kathleen Bonte**,  
Executive Director  
of Development, at  
[kbonte@otterbein.edu](mailto:kbonte@otterbein.edu)  
or 614.823.2707.



# Cardinals Care in Times of Need

## OTTERBEIN HAS BEEN

humbled by the outpouring of support for our students since the pandemic began earlier this year. The effort to assist students was named “Cardinals Care” and donors to date have given more than \$70,000 to help students with multiple areas including:

- **Student Emergency Fund** to provide funding to Otterbein students who were challenged to afford housing, transportation, basic needs, and required resources for learning as a result of protective measures resulting from COVID-19.
- **Promise House** to help combat food and resource insecurity for students.
- **Textbook Affordability** to provide copies of textbooks from the library that can be reserved by Otterbein students who are challenged to afford textbooks.
- **Counseling Center** to help ensure that any student who needs extra guidance from Otterbein counselors during this time has easy access to it.
- **Areas of Greatest Need** to help Otterbein adapt operations to best serve students during COVID-19.



## IN AUGUST, DARRELL

**Miller '79** and his Columbus-based water treatment company Aqua Science Inc. donated 600 gallons of hand sanitizer to keep Otterbein students healthy and safe as they returned to campus. In-kind donations of critically important supplies make a tremendous difference for our ability to serve students, and we are so grateful for Miller and his company's generosity.

## A NUMBER OF ALUMNI

have helped Otterbein with unexpected expenses over the past few months to directly support the student experience while on campus, including **Bill Cole '52** for COVID and outdoor enhancements; **Gwen Swigart Nichols '93** and Nichols and Co. LLC for student programming and games; and **Robert Woodruff '67, Curt Moore '64** and several nursing alumni for providing funding for flu shots.

600 gallons of hand sanitizer was donated by Columbus-based water treatment company, Aqua Science Inc., owned by **Darrell Miller '79**.

## THE NIGEL CHATMAN

Student Emergency Fund has been established to help students with emergency needs such as food, toiletries, books, utilities, car repairs and more. The fund honors Chatman, a sophomore at Otterbein, who died in a car accident in September 2019, en route to football practice.



To support the fund, visit [www.otterbein.edu/give](http://www.otterbein.edu/give) and in the “Designation” line, please enter: Other, “Nigel Chatman Fund.”



## OTTERBEIN IS GRATEFUL

for the support of Coral Harris, who generously donated funds for enhancements at the Otterbein Community Garden. Harris also helped purchase tents for the campus community, so students could hold classes and outdoor activities while being socially distanced.

# Faculty and Staff Earn State Grants for Otterbein Efforts

Otterbein faculty and administrators have recently received numerous grants from prominent foundations and federal programs to support research, academic studies and community education. Faculty and administrators pursue

grants to support the mission of Otterbein, enhance faculty achievement and student learning, and strengthen social justice in the central Ohio community.

**Cardinal Science Scholar**  
**Elizabeth Isaac '19**  
**(Chemistry) with Professor**  
**Dean Johnston.**



## Cardinal Science Scholars: Boosting Students' Expectations for Success in STEM

### AMOUNT

**\$999,348** *over five years*

Seventy-two percent of the funds (\$720,000) are reserved for student scholarships.

### AWARDED BY

National Science Foundation, Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S-STEM) Program

### RECIPIENTS

**Principal Investigator:**  
**Dr. Brigitte Ramos (Chemistry)**

Dr. Elena Caruthers (Engineering)  
Dr. Meredith Meyer (Psychology)  
Dr. Joan Esson (Chemistry)  
Dr. Uwe Trittman (Physics)  
Dr. David Sheridan (Biology and Earth Science)

## Sexual Violence Prevention in Central Ohio: Interrupting Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus

### AMOUNT

**\$298,658**

### AWARDED BY

U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women

### RECIPIENTS

**Project Supervisor:**  
**Dr. Kristy McCray (Health & Sports Sciences)**

Dean of Students Julie Saker (Student Affairs)  
OPD Chief Larry Banaszak  
Professor Suzanne Ashworth (English and WGSS)  
HR Director Scott Fitzgerald

## OTHER NATIONAL, STATE, PRIVATE GRANTS RECEIVED INCLUDE:

- Association of American Colleges & Universities (Papa John's and Newman's Own), awarded \$20,000 for "Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Campus Center." Wendy Sherman-Heckler (Academic Affairs).
- National Science Foundation, Division of Physics awarded "RUI: Neutrino Oscillations with DUNE and MicroBooNE" \$195,623 through 2023. Nathaniel Tagg (Physics).
- Ohio Department of Higher Education, Human Capital Strategies program, a total of \$52,2910 for "Pathways to Teaching." Kristin Bourdage applied; Amy McGrath will be project director. Three districts will be involved: Canal Winchester Local Schools, Olentangy Local School District, and Westerville City Schools.
- The Martha Holden Jennings Foundation awarded \$35,000 for "Network of Excellent Teaching Hub (NExT Hub): Professional Development in Educational Justice and Equity." Margaret Koehler (English) and Kristin Bourdage (Education).





## Leaving a Legacy

Alumni and friends who include Otterbein in their estate planning are celebrated through the 1847 Society. Planned gifts are vital to Otterbein's future. We acknowledge and thank the following who have recently provided for the University:

- Westerville resident and alumnus **Steven Leonhardt MBA'05** documented an estate bequest, estimated at \$75,000, for Otterbein's scholarship endowment fund. Steve and his wife, Julie, have been donors for more than 15 years contributing annually to the Otterbein Fund. Steve said, "The value of the MBA program at Otterbein and the interaction with peers during the program made this decision easy for me." Steve works as a senior manager consultant for Sogeti USA.

- **Dr. Lynn Corbin '75** has established through her estate The Edith Peters Corbin '48 and Lynn Ann Corbin '75 Fund for the Department of Music. The fund, estimated at \$100,000, will support students with domestic or international touring costs. Lynn's parents, Bob and Ede, were loyal Otterbein benefactors. This gift serves to honor their memories and their spirit of giving and service. Bob passed away in 2014 and Ede passed away in August 2019. This

endowment comes from Lynn's inheritance and commitment to also give back to the institutions that provided inspiration for her life and career. Lynn retired in 2018 after more than 42 years of teaching, including as a faculty member for several universities. At one time, she also was the music consultant for the Ohio Department of Education. She has been active as a choral director and professional singer in several churches and community choirs, most recently at First United Methodist Church of Madison, Florida, where she and her husband, Rolie Seiple, have lived for the past 15 years.

- Last fall, Otterbein lost beloved Professor Emerita of Art, **Joanne Miller Stichweh '67**. Her award-winning artwork was exhibited locally and regionally. Otterbein alumni from every decade credit Stichweh with inspiring their lives as artists and creators. She generously committed her estate, more than \$600,000, to benefit The Frank Museum of Art and the Miller and Fisher Galleries at Otterbein. To honor her life and impact on countless students and fellow faculty and staff members, Otterbein University and the Department of Art and Art History dedicated the Joanne Miller Stichweh '67 Gallery adjacent to the Miller Art Gallery located at 33 Collegeview Road. A formal dedication ceremony will be held in person once the University is permitted to host in-person events.

Joanne Miller  
Stichweh '67 Gallery.



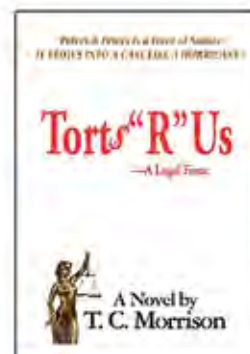
Joanne Miller  
Stichweh '67

## ALUMNI PROFILE



### Thomas Morrison '63 publishes *Torts "R" Us – A Legal Farce*

Alumnus and former chair of the Otterbein Board of Trustees, **Thomas Morrison '63**, recently published *Torts "R" Us - A Legal Farce*. Morrison spent his 50-year legal career writing briefs and trying cases around the country. In the book, Morrison captures the humor and absurdity in modern class action litigation. The book is available exclusively on Amazon.



### Giving note.

**The Fotis family and friends** have donated more than \$32,000 to establish the Cathy "Kate" Fotis Endowed Scholarship at Otterbein in memory of Cathy Fotis, a history buff and longtime Otterbein theatre fan who passed away in April due to heart failure. In addition, to honor their parents' legacy, the Fotis family recently established the William and Eleanor Fotis Endowed Scholarship with a gift of \$27,000 for a literary studies major. The Fotis family were Westerville neighbors and are advocates of Otterbein and education.

**Richard Morain '59** and **Maxine Swingle Morain '61** celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary June 4, 2020.

**Gretchen Van Sickle Cochran '67** and **Fr. Michael Cochran '66** announce that the Christ Church Anglican is moving from its longtime downtown Columbus location and is building a new church located just north of Westerville off Route 3. Completed by spring of 2021, Christ Church Anglican looks forward to offering traditional worship and music, welcoming Westerville residents, Otterbein students and alumni.

**Keith Wakefield '71** celebrated 35 years as a head football coach last season. Since his return to Massillon Perry (OH) High School, the Panthers are 47-15 in six seasons, making the playoffs four times, winning three Federal League titles and advancing to two Division II state championship games.

**Dee Hoty '74** was recently elected eastern regional vice president of the Actors Equity Board of Directors. The eastern region covers 20 states and the District of Columbia.

**Bill Stallings '74** recently retired after a 35-year career in the information technology industry. Among the companies he worked for were the City of Chicago Committee of Finance, the Belt Railway of Chicago, Precision Extrusions, Allstate Insurance Company, The University of Tennessee and CNO Financial Group.

**Mark Thomas '74** recently retired after 41 years serving churches in the United Church of Christ. He just published his first book, *Passing Stories: Stories from the End of Life for the Living of Life*, on Amazon. He studied ancient languages including Egyptian, Ugaritic and Coptic, provided lectures on archaeology and served as parliamentarian for many organizations including the

national offices of the United Church of Christ. He is completing his second book on the theodicy of Jeremiah.



**Pamela Canter '83** (above) was promoted to vice president and chief nursing officer at Jupiter Medical Center, Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast region, FL. In this position, she is responsible for overseeing the organization's team of nursing professionals committed to providing world class care in a patient-centered manner. During her tenure at Jupiter Medical Center,



## Alumnus Part of Team to Develop Human SARS-CoV-2 Detection Test

by Will Elkins, Otterbein University

**Mark Espy '79** has been at the forefront of three major pandemics during his career — H1N1, SARS and SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. His work on the latter, developing a test to detect the new coronavirus in humans, capped off a prestigious career in virus research.

In early 2020, Espy was in his 35th year at the Mayo Clinic, working as a developmental coordinator in clinical virology and planning for his retirement when his team was called upon to develop a COVID-19 detection test.

He team turned to polymerase chain reaction (PCR), a fast and inexpensive technique to copy small segments of DNA millions of times to use in multiple laboratory tests. Using PCR testing on a COVID-19 positive patient, the team determined which genetic probe combinations would best target the virus. Then Espy used the data to create a test that looks at those specific DNA sequences to discover the presence of the new coronavirus.

According to Espy, determining which sequences worked the best was the hardest part of the entire process. He had to lean heavily on past lab experience and intuition.

"It took weeks of grueling 12- to 15-hour days to finally determine what we needed to target," Espy said. "Once this was done, we sent the results to the FDA where we finally obtained an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). The EUA finally

allowed us to use the test for Mayo Clinic patients, and hopefully more nationwide."

No stranger to virus detection, Espy previously developed an H1N1 test, the virus associated with the influenza outbreak in 2009 as well as the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918. He was also part of a team that used PCR on the SARS virus.

Espy began his journey towards virus research as a life science major at Otterbein.

"Otterbein allowed me to begin developing my scientific base and determine the area of life science I was most interested in. I especially credit Dr. Jeanine Willis and Dr. George Phinney, who mentored me and encouraged me to keep going even when things got difficult," he said.

After graduating in 1979, Espy went on to earn master's and doctorate degrees in microbiology. He joined the Mayo Clinic in 1985 as the institute was looking for someone to conduct research in clinical virology.

After 35 years of conducting research that has helped to save countless lives, Espy took his well-deserved retirement in August.

"Development of the COVID-19 test was definitely a major highlight and a good way to end a satisfying career at the Mayo Clinic," Espy said.

### ALUMNI PROFILE



she has played a pivotal role in garnering many of the hospital's national, regional and local accreditations and awards, including successfully achieving Top General Hospital for two consecutive years.



**Victor Jones '83** (left) is celebrating 10 years as the producing artistic director at Ohio University Lancaster Theatre. He has directed 37 OUL productions and more than 40 student theatrical showcases.

**Ann Jones '84**, owner of Art Restorer in Westerville, recently celebrated 35 years in business, specializing in the restoration and conservation of oil and acrylic paintings on canvas and panels. She designed her bachelor of fine arts degree at Otterbein to include the chemistry courses needed for her profession.



### Giving note.

Thank you for making the **Columbus Foundation's Big Give 2020** a huge success!

Gifts, augmented by the Columbus Foundation's match pool, resulted in nearly \$100,000 in support of our students. Moreover, 304 donors chose to support Otterbein during the June 10-11 campaign, making the participant count among the top 10% of all recipient organizations. Way to go Cardinal Nation!



### Giving note.

**Kirt '93** and **Nicole Moritz '92** gave a generous gift to the Otterbein Student Emergency Fund in August 2020 to celebrate their anniversary. The Moritz family said "When we gave our gift to Otterbein, we specifically added 25 cents to celebrate our marriage of 25 years that started with our first date at Courtright Memorial Library in the Spring of 1990."



### Giving note.

Happy Golden Reunion to the **Class of 1970**! Your class boasts 29 alumni couples and 23 families who are the proud parents of one or more Otterbein alumni. Additionally, with 35% of the class participating, the class contributed more than \$2,000,000 to Otterbein over the legacy period (time between the 45th and 50th reunions). Thank you, Class of 1970!

**Bob Kennedy '87** is an on-air personality and inside sales representative at WDLR Radio in Delaware, OH.

**Dan Gifford '88** is the chief financial officer for Bold Penguin, an insurance technology company in Columbus.

**Suzanne Hamilton '89** joined ERIEBANK in 2019 and was recently promoted to senior vice president, Commercial Real Estate. Her expertise is lending on investment real estate property including multi-family, office, retail, industrial and special purpose projects. She is also board emeritus for the Human Rights Campaign having served 12 years on the national boards and 16 years on the Cleveland Steering Committee. She's a 2018 graduate of Leadership Cleveland; advisory council member and past president of Commercial Real Estate Women; West 117 Foundation board member; and mentor and member of Urban Land Institute.

**Angela Masak '94** retired as a lieutenant colonel, U.S. Air Force, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH, after 23 years of active duty service.

**Margenett Moore-Roberts '94** was named one of The Network Journal's 25 Influential Black Women in Business for 2020. She is chief inclusion and diversity officer, Constituent Management Group, A Division of IPG, a collective of 28 marketing services

brands. She leads the Office of Business Relevance, Inclusion & Equity (OBRIE) for CMG with a charter to fortify people, business, and market systems for inclusion and equity, using business relevance as the lever for deep, sustainable culture change and revenue growth.

**Jason Nettle '98** was voted Teacher of the Year at Ponte Vedra High School, Ponte Vedra, FL. He has completed his fourth year as head of drama, tech and musical theater at the school.

**Jim Cooney '00** choreographed and directed a video for New York's Love Wins, Always campaign to promote wearing masks and staying safe during the pandemic. His video was featured by Governor Andrew Cuomo on one of his daily press briefings.

**Molly Bowen Harr '00** is the executive director, human resources business advisor for JPMorgan Chase, Columbus.

**Billoah Greene '01** is Mr. C in a weekly web-based series that addresses conflict, stress and anger management as well as mindfulness and resilience. Produced from his home in California during the quarantine for Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre, the series is primarily for children in third-fifth grades.

**John Eric Rutherford '01** is the concert choir director at Pierce College, Fort Steilacoom, WA. In addition to directing the choirs, he

also teaches music theory, music appreciation and private vocal instruction. As an accomplished tenor, he also performed in lead roles for the 2019-2020 season with Tacoma Opera, Pacific Northwest Opera and Puget Sound Concert Opera.



**Danielle Weeks '01** (above) celebrated her one-year anniversary as broker and owner of NextHome Turn Key Realty in Raleigh, NC. Turn Key Realty is part of the NextHome real estate franchise.



**Ken Grason MBA '02** (above) is a staff engineer at Honda of America's Marysville (OH) Auto Plant, where he serves as the project leader of the 2021 Acura TLX sedan, with responsibilities over white



## Alumna Helps Families Cope with Dementia Through Her Art

by Madelyn Nelson '23

Artist **Amy Parrish '03** put her most personal thoughts and emotions into *Check the Mail for Her Letter*, which features photographs of her grandmother and displays pieces of her grandmother's life. When it caught the attention of NPR's, *The Picture Show*, in April 2020, she wasn't sure if she wanted the publicity, but thanks to the story, her art is providing support for strangers across the country.

The NPR article and photo series tells the story of a letter she wrote to her grandmother, but never sent in the mail. Parrish's grandmother passed away in 2018 after battling dementia while Parrish was traveling for her art.

"This was one body of work that I made for myself, not for other people. When NPR reached out, I was a little shocked and uncomfortable at first because the work is very personal to me."

Gaining national attention for her work, Parrish said, "I didn't know what I wanted until it came. I had people writing me who has similar experiences watching their loved ones come to dementia. That's when all my worries faded away. I realized this is something people can connect with. That's the power

of art," Parrish said.

Parrish graduated from Otterbein with a major in speech communication and a minor in English. "It's not a college education designed for a specific job title, it's something you can apply across the board. It taught me to think critically in a way that I wish everybody in the world could take a few courses and understand," she said.

While at Otterbein, Parrish had her own column in the *Tan & Cardinal* in which she interviewed students and faculty members and told their stories. She continues to use her storytelling skills as an artist, photographer, educator and editor.

Her work is touching the lives of others, especially families whose loved ones are affected by dementia. "For me, I use art very therapeutically, so it was my own form of healing. Thankfully, some other people were able to find that, as well," Parrish said.

*Check the Mail for Her Letter* will be featured at the Angkor Photo Festival in Cambodia in late November.

### ALUMNI PROFILE



An online exhibition in a virtual gallery is available now on her website, [www.amyparrish.com](http://www.amyparrish.com).

body manufacturing as well as overall leader of the weld new model group. The global production of this car is exclusive to the Marysville Auto Plant.

**Chris Lenz '02** is the manager of the pharmacy network contracting for EnvisionRxOptions in Twinsburg, OH.

**Kimberly Mason West '03** earned her doctorate degree in educational administration and policy at the University of Georgia, Athens. She also earned her education leadership certification. She is working on a research study about teachers' experiences during the COVID-19 quarantine.

**Meghan Scott '04** is a producer at Sutton Film Production in Ohio.

**Amy Troiano '05** is a senior tax manager at Maloney + Novotny LLC, business advisors and CPAs, Delaware, OH.

**Adam Berner '08** completed a three-year Tibetan Buddhist meditation retreat at Karma Ling in Delhi, NY, in March 2020. He returned to Columbus in June and is now the associate resident lama at the Columbus Karma Thegsum Chöling Meditation Center.



### Giving note.

**Dr. Nancy Smith Evans '68** and **David C. Evans '67** have established a \$25,000 endowment for the David C. '67 and Nancy E. Smith '68 Evans Endowed Scholarship for education majors. Both being retired educators, they wanted to give back because they believed the education they received at Otterbein was the foundation of their success later in life.



### Giving note.

**Westerville Otterbein Women's Club (WOWC)** started in 1921 with the purpose, along with socializing, to raise money for Otterbein and the students. In 1980, WOWC decided to focus mainly on student aid and created three endowed scholarships. Since January 1952, WOWC has donated over \$1 million dollars to the University. In 2021, WOWC will commemorate its 100th anniversary, where they hope to celebrate their devotion to Otterbein. The group hopes to share more details about a celebration soon.



### Giving note.

The **Zeta Phi Alumni Association** gathered \$25,000 from generous support over the years from alumni annual dues, donations and operations of the fraternity house to create the Zeta Phi Endowed Scholarship. Alumni Association President **Lincoln Schneider '99** led the initiative to provide scholarship support for active fraternity members in good standing within the chapter. Additional contributions are welcome.

**Jennifer Hill '08** marked her 10-year anniversary at The Ohio State University in July 2020. She received the Staff Excellence Award for 2019-2020 in the Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences.



**Matt Lofy '08** (above) was chosen for the Next Up Columbus Class of 2020, published in *CityPulse* magazine. The Next Up Columbus awards highlight emerging leaders who are connectors and cheerleaders in central Ohio and who are making a positive impact on the future of the area. He is the director of marketing and community outreach, Westerville Area Chamber.

**Bryan Curtiss '09** is the community outreach coordinator for The Awesome Company in Grove City, OH, a screen-printing company dedicated to embracing and providing employment for people with autism.

**Brian Gayler '10** operates and manages the global business development representative team and is the resident Xant software suite expert/guru/czar for the

information management business unit of Quest Software, a \$1 billion software company in Dublin, OH.

**Troy Anthony Burton '11** was recently named one of the Black LGBTQ Playwrights and Musical-Theatre Artists You Need to Know by [timeout.com/newyork](https://www.timeout.com/newyork).

**Kara Cover Miller '11** is an elementary general music teacher at Madison Local Schools in Middletown, OH. She also directs junior high and high school musicals and assists with high school marching band.

**Desiree Redman '11** is the administrative nursing supervisor for UNC-Health at the University of North Carolina Medical Center, Chapel Hill, NC. In August 2019, she earned her master of science in nursing degree at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

**David Kruk '12** is a digital marketing account manager at 30 Lines, Columbus.

**Jessica Fox '13** is a nurse practitioner at Dupont Circle Physicians Group, Washington, D.C.

**Lucy Pierce '13** recently joined GreenBlue, an environmental non-profit organization, as a sustainable packaging coalition project associate. Prior to GreenBlue, she was the assistant director of sustainability at The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA, where she received her master's degree.

**Kathleen Smart '13** is an eighth-grade science teacher at Reynoldsburg (OH) City Schools.

**Joseph Pokorny '14** is an attorney at Meyer, Roman, Friedberg & Lewis in Cleveland.

**Alana Gaither '15** works at T. Rowe Price consulting with financial advisors in the broker dealer channel. Her territory is Northern California.

**Jacob Hobbs '15** is the assistant vice president at ORIX Real Estate Capital.

**Jordan Donica '16** premiered his own interpretation of the classic Broadway standard, *If I Loved You*, from *Carousel* on YouTube in September.

**Ashley Jungclas '16** is the helpdesk manager at Ohio Dominican University, Columbus.

**Troy Perkins '16** is a family nurse practitioner at Silver State Health, Pahrump, NV.

**Angel Romina '16** is the visitor experience supervisor for the Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Columbus.

**Maria Slovikovski '17** is the assistant director of athletic communications at Saint Francis University, Loretto, PA.

**Katie Evans '19** is a registered nurse at OhioHealth.



## International Student Reflects on Otterbein Kindness 60 Years Later

**Idris Ben-Tahir '62**, a former international student from Pakistan, reflects on his ties to Otterbein and the kindness of the people he met 60 years after leaving campus.

On the United States Memorial Day, I found a package addressed to me marked "Honor Plaque" at my home in Canada. It was an honor bestowed by my fraternity in Westerville, Ohio, which I had left 60 years ago.

I arrived at Otterbein as a teenager from Pakistan in 1958. The welcome I received was awe-inspiring. I was invited by Pi Beta Sigma Fraternity, the oldest on the campus, to pledge along with two fellow brothers, **Robert Reichert '60** and **Gene Furbie '61**. With them I learned what teamwork meant and gained insight into the American way of living.

In the summer of 1959, I had no job, nor money. Unbeknownst to me, Pi Beta Sigma's alumni chapter decided to let me stay rent-free in the fraternity house. Their generosity still touches me when I think of the American kindness that helped me survive.

Besides joining the fraternity, I was the first "alien" to enroll in the U.S. Air Force ROTC program, which prepared me when circumstances had me move to Canada in 1960 where, as a British subject, I could join the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). While a student at the University of Ottawa, I was commissioned as a pilot officer (second lieutenant) in the RCAF Reserve. I owe this to the USAF ROTC

Commanding Officer who went to bat for me and the cadet commander who assisted me as my leader — my fraternity brother, Robert Reichert.

In 1967, I joined the Canadian Federal Public Service, serving as the command editor and staff officer at the Air Transport Command Headquarters in Ontario. In 1974, I became senior technical editor at the Aerospace Engineering Test Establishment in Alberta. In 1978, I returned to Ottawa to serve on the staff of the Chief of the RCAF at the National Defense Headquarters. When the position was eliminated in 1980, I went to Lehigh University, PA, to earn my master's degree in information science.

I thought my aerospace career was over until last year on my 80th birthday at their annual banquet, the Canadian Aeronautics and Space Institute surprised me by presenting their Above and Beyond Award, bestowed only once before in their 65-year history.

The people at Otterbein and ROTC shaped my life for good, which I shall never forget. When I think of Pi Beta Sigma's generosity, I remember the decency they showed towards me, with such subtlety. They, too, deserve the Above and Beyond honor.

### ALUMNI PROFILE



**Idris Ben-Tahir (center)** in his ROTC uniform in front of Cowan Hall.

**Andrea Rohr '19** is the assistant manager at the Westerville Grill.

**Alex Schaeffer '19** is studying for a master of science in television writing and producing at Boston University with a target graduation date of December 2021.

**Mackenzie Siebert '19** is a talent acquisition coordinator for Worthington Industries, Worthington, OH.

**Jenny McFarland '20** is the African Journey animal care associate at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, Fort Wayne, IN. She is working

with African primates and small carnivores.

**Sarah Short '20** is working for Habitat of Humanity in Columbus as part of a year-long Ameri-Corp service commitment, coordinating volunteers for the local habitat chapter.

**Do you have news to share?**

Submit your updates to [classnotes@otterbein.edu](mailto:classnotes@otterbein.edu)

# Milestones.

## Marriages

**1 Joy Barney '97 to Neal O'Brien '87**, June 27, 2020.



**2 Jaimie Knittle '02 to Justin Greathouse**, Aug. 21, 2020. **Angela Kiser Miller '02** attended.



**3 Rachel Amey '08 to Neeraj Edward**, May 23, 2020. Photo credit **Janelle Riddle Guirrerri '08**.



**4 Margaret Murray '11 to Jacob Davis**, Feb. 29, 2020. In the wedding party were **Lisa Shoemaker '12** and **Sammi Birri Frobose '14**.



**5 Monica Begazo '13 to Flint Garrabrant '09**, June 13, 2020. Maid of honor was **Patricia Begazo '11**.



**6 Sara Homko '16 to Alex Wynn**, July 26, 2020. **Heidi Olander '16** was a bridesmaid.



**7 Brittany Barta '17 to Logan Armstrong '19**, July 14, 2018. In attendance were **Chase Moyer '17**, **Adam Sullivan '18**, **Jared Conn '17**, **Hogan Marshall '18**, **Larson Johnson '19**, **Ayden Howell '18**, **Victoria Morin '17**, **Ashley Fox '17** and **Emma Reed '17**.



**8 Hannah Tucky '17 to Thomas Jarvis '17**, May 5, 2017. Maid of Honor was **Emma Tucky '22**.





## Births



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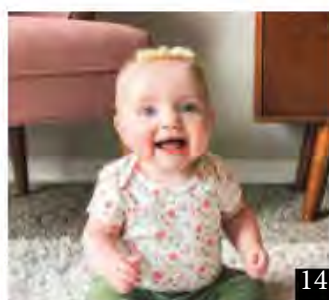
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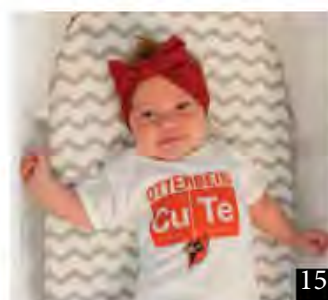
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15

**1 Lisa Levine Sires '04** and Chip Sires, a son, Caden Charles.

**2 Janel Iden Blankespoor '07** and Mitch Blankespoor, a daughter, Jesalyn Loy.

**3 Lauren Thompson Brown '07** and **Matt Brown '08**, a daughter, Olivia Anne.

**4 Lucas Buck '08** and Monica Buck, a son, Thomas William.

**5 Erin Sites Ensign '08** and **Chris Ensign '08**, a daughter, Miriam Sable.

**6 Adam Kirchner '08** and Amber Kirchner, a daughter, Kenzie Nicole.

**7 Kelli Wallenhorst Erdman '09** and Jeff Erdman, a daughter, Aubrey Jo.

**8 Andrea Howard Drago '10** and David Drago, a son, Harrison James.

**9 Kara Cover Miller '11** and **Matt Miller '11**, a daughter, Melody Ryan.

**10 Karissa Dahdah Longo '12** and **Brad Longo '12**, a daughter, Camryn Victoria.

**11 Jonna Stewart Raffel '12** and Nathan Raffel, a son, Holden John.

**12 Sara McGaughey Lord '13** and **Oscar Lord '13**, a daughter, Charlotte.

**13 Samantha Stolarz Webster '13** and **Zach Webster '12**, a son, Theodore James.

**14 Brittany Barta Armstrong '17** and **Logan Armstrong '19**, a daughter, Elliana Grace.

**15 Hannah Tucky Jarvis '17** and **Thomas '17 Jarvis**, a daughter, Theodosia Petra.

# Milestones.

## In Memoriam

Long form obituaries can be found at: [otterbein.edu/alumni/classnotes/obituaries](http://otterbein.edu/alumni/classnotes/obituaries)  
If you would like a copy of an obituary, email [alumniinfo@otterbein.edu](mailto:alumniinfo@otterbein.edu) or call 614-823-1650.

'39 Jessie June Snyder	01/25/19	'54 Phyllis Palmere Bailey	10/16/19	'70 Delmer Dodrill	06/01/20
'43 James Eby	09/27/20	'54 Tom Sefton	08/01/20	'70 David Wood	09/23/20
'45 Elizabeth Bowman Burns	01/09/20	'55 Donald Rapp	08/24/20	'71 William Fridley	08/20/20
'45 Anna Walters Flood	07/16/20	'56 Ann Brentlinger Bragg	08/05/20	'71 Lorenzo Hunt	08/05/20
'47 Marilyn Shuck Beattie	10/27/18	'56 Shirley Griesmeyer Omietanski	09/16/20	'71 Donald Snider	06/09/20
'48 Grace Coleman Braque	10/06/19	'56 Mary Westervelt Slicker	01/10/20	'72 G. Paine Hade	05/19/20
'48 Esther Wilson Buehler	05/29/20	'57 Carol Peterson Carter	05/01/20	'72 Marcus Smythe	08/20/20
'48 Eileen Hill Smart	08/27/18	'58 George Freese	04/01/20	'73 Bradley Brown	09/15/20
'48 Arthur Spafford	07/02/20	'58 William Hughes	09/01/20	'73 Kathy Brown Reynolds	01/16/20
'48 John Wilms	07/23/20	'58 Lewis Taylor	10/10/20	'74 Ronald Davison	06/29/20
'49 Edward Gorsuch	05/09/20	'58 Amelia Hammond Watkins	12/06/19	'75 Craig Charleston	07/06/20
'49 Gerald Ridinger	04/12/20	'60 Duane Dillman	03/19/20	'75 Kathleen Sachs Crawford	03/18/20
'50 Paul Gibson	10/01/19	'61 James Shackson	10/25/20	'76 James West	05/30/20
'50 George Schreckengost	05/08/20	'62 Brenda Evans Holzapfel	08/11/20	'79 Timothy Riley	09/01/19
'50 Kay Turner Truitt	09/03/20	'63 Richard Graf	08/28/20	'80 Timothy O'Flynn	09/14/20
'50 Luther Wimberly	07/22/20	'63 Philip Johnson	03/17/20	'83 Bradley Keiser	06/26/20
'51 Bill Detamore	09/20/20	'64 Leta Johnson Palm	07/28/20	'87 Stephen Wilson	05/24/20
'51 Ruth Mugridge Snodgrass	07/30/20	'64 Carol Sheaffer	06/05/20	'88 Thomas Baker	06/07/20
'52 Glenn Borkosky	12/04/19	'65 Douglas Hammond	05/18/20	'93 William Timmins III	09/11/20
'52 Jack Coberly	06/08/20	'65 Ronald Marks	10/01/20	'95 Elizabeth Marie Bradley	05/28/20
'52 Glen Cole	10/09/20	'65 Ann Barnes Packer	10/07/18	'06 Benjamin Stewart	08/21/19
'52 Paul Greene	10/14/20	'66 Ruth Wigginton Millisor	02/26/20	'08 Margaret Louise Kovach	09/10/20
'52 Richard Rosensteel	08/13/20	'67 Jane Arnold Olson	07/01/20	'18 Heather Renee Walker	07/21/20
'53 James Pletz	06/01/20	'68 Daniel Weston	07/23/20		
'54 Edward Axline	10/04/20				



## Together we make a difference.

Since July 1, 1,294 members of the Cardinal Community have provided critical support to every area of the University amid the COVID-19 pandemic through the Otterbein Fund.

Donors are providing support for:

- > **scholarships and emergency funding for students,**
- > **enhanced technology for teaching and learning,**
- > **additional cleaning and sanitizing efforts,**
- > **socially distanced student activities and much more.**

### C.A.R.E.S. Act Giving

This year any taxpayer can take an above-the-line \$300 charitable deduction. Donors can also deduct up to 100% of AGI. Please consult your tax advisor for more information and please consider supporting Otterbein with this special incentive!

**Will you join them with your gift to Otterbein during these uncertain times?**



**MAKE YOUR GIFT TO THE OTTERBEIN FUND**

**SCAN the QR code** with your smartphone camera or visit [otterbein.edu/give](http://otterbein.edu/give) or call **614.823.1400**.

To ensure your tax-deductible gift arrives on time, please postmark your check by Dec. 31. Credit card gifts sent via mail may not be received in time to be eligible for a 2020 tax deduction. Please make your credit card gift online instead by midnight on Dec. 31.



## Office of Alumni and Family Engagement

**New name, same great care and services**



Check out the new family website at [otterbein.edu/family](https://otterbein.edu/family).

As we begin a new calendar year, the Office of Alumni Relations has updated its name to the **Office of Alumni and Family Engagement** to reflect its expanded commitment to serving Otterbein families, too. Alumni will not see a change in the programming and volunteer opportunities available. The team still will coordinate virtual and in-person events, work with 50th class reunions, and send regular communications crafted toward alumni.

Parents and families of current students, though, will receive more targeted e-communications, experience an updated social media presence and see programs geared toward families.

Why the change? Otterbein values the opportunity to work with families and students throughout the entire university experience and beyond. Our goal is to create a partnership with parents and families that enhances students' success.

### Fun Getaway to the Finger Lakes

Not ready for overseas travel? Join us for a four-day tour of the beautiful New York Finger Lakes region of New York state, July 12-15, 2021.

If you are an outdoor recreation enthusiast, a nature lover, a foodie, a wine or beer lover, or just enjoy being on the water, the Finger Lakes are a perfect destination for you!

Highlights include the Bully Hill Winery, Corning Glass Museum, Belhurst Castle and Winery and the Sonnenberg Gardens and Mansion.

**For more information on either of these trips, please visit [otterbein.edu/alumni](https://otterbein.edu/alumni).**



## Experience Ireland with Otterbein

Join fellow Otterbein alumni as we tour the Castles & Legends of Ireland, Sept. 21-Oct. 2, 2021. Spend 10 nights in Irish castles while experiencing the breathtaking beauty of the Cliffs of Moher, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the Trinity College Book of Kells and so much more.

Once again, we have partnered with our travel expert, Warther Tours, to provide you with a coast to coast luxury tour. The trip is limited to 30 participants, and deposits currently are being accepted.

Otterbein and Warther Tours will continue to monitor the safety of traveling overseas, and the health of our travelers remains paramount. Full refunds are available if cancelled by June 21, 2021.



**More details about the trip can be found at [otterbein.edu/alumni](https://otterbein.edu/alumni).**

# Congratulations to the 2020 Alumni Award Honorees

Otterbein is pleased to recognize the 2020 Alumni Award recipients. These honorees made a remarkable impact within their professions and demonstrated a steadfast dedication to Otterbein. Their exceptional achievements in the arts, medicine, business and service to Otterbein make us proud to call them fellow Cardinals.



**Tony Bishop III**  
'15, MSAH '18



**Andrea Drago**  
'10



**Jonathan Hill**  
'15



**Joyce Ray**  
'00



**Crystal Kelley**  
'05



**Jeremy Young**  
'00



To learn more  
about each recipient,  
please visit:  
[otterbein.edu/  
alumniawards](http://otterbein.edu/alumniawards)



**David Robinson**  
'78



**Karl Niederer**  
'73



**Mina Makary**  
'09



**Joan Rocks**  
H'20



**Jim and Kathy Rutherford**  
H'99



## Board of Trustees.

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Theresa Harris	Alan Varrasso '11
Cheryl L. Herbert	Alan Waterhouse '82

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Mark Curtis '91	Rhonda Talford Knight '96
Icilda Watkins Dickerson '88	Dom Porretta '13
Maggie Ellison '10, MBA'19	Mary Kruila Somyak '07
Erin Sites Ensign '08	Nancy Case Struble '79
Eric Farnbauch '90	Jean Sylvester MBA'10
Christy Boyd Farnbauch '88	Jack Whalen '66
Daniel C. Gifford '88, P'21, P'23	Karen Persson Whalen '68
Lindy Gilkey '06	



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## Join the STEP UP FOR STUDENTS CHALLENGE

Be a part of Otterbein's largest philanthropic scholarship initiative for students. Take the challenge and make a difference today.

## PLANNING FORWARD *In Times of Uncertainty*

**We thank the members of our 1847 Society, who have a firm understanding of their legacy at Otterbein.**

*Each has made an investment in Otterbein's future through a planned estate gift. Estate gifts are a bridge to the future for Otterbein University and its students.*

*With their commitments, our 1847 Society members ensure that Otterbein's educational mission will not only endure, but flourish. We celebrate their generosity and foresight.*

For questions about the 1847 Society, or to share your plans with Otterbein, please contact us.

[www.plannedgiving.otterbein.edu](http://www.plannedgiving.otterbein.edu)



**Kathleen Bonte**  
Executive Director, Development

(614) 823-2707  
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*The light of learning continues  
to shine brightly at Otterbein.*

*May it always illuminate hope,  
discovery and opportunity.*

*Your friends at Otterbein wish  
you peace and good health in  
the new year!*

The cupola is intended to serve as a source of light. As Otterbein remains attentive to the needs of the immediate and global communities it serves, this light reminds us that knowledge, intellect and compassion guide us in serving and supporting a greater, public good.