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Otterbein Towers

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FALL 2022

Welcoming the Class of 2026

NEW NATIONAL SYSTEM | INTRODUCING DEI LEADERS | CAMPUS CENTER RENOVATION

From the President.

Dear Friends,

“Second star to the right, and straight on till morning!”

– Directions to Neverland, J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*

I have always loved that quote, though I will confess I first heard it in a *Star Trek* movie, not *Peter Pan*. It is a call to the unknown, to the future, to boldness, and adventure. And it implies a freedom and creativity that only a blank canvas can provide.

That’s how I feel about Otterbein right now. While other institutions are hunkering down through the pandemic, economic downturns, and other challenges, we are moving forward. We are boldly going where no one has gone before. Sorry – I get carried away sometimes.

You will find in these pages some of our exciting new directions. While the destination is sometimes still a way off, we are racing to the horizon.

We are co-founding something entirely new in higher education – an independent university system. We can enhance the traditional undergraduate experience through the resources of a larger university, without sacrificing the intimacy of Otterbein’s campus community. We can widen our staffing network, providing more efficient services and a better employee experience in certain areas. And, most importantly, we can collaboratively serve tens of thousands of adult learners coast-to-coast in a way Otterbein never could alone. That is why our first partner is Antioch University, which already educates nearly 4,000 adult learners at five campus locations. And we have already heard from a dozen other institutions interested in joining the new venture.

We are picking up an even larger leadership role in creating the equitable community we all seek. Our new Chief Diversity Officer position will ensure Otterbein is a truly welcoming community and leverage our assets into meeting needs in our community and region.



President John Comerford, Ph.D., addressing the Class of 2026 at the New Student Convocation.

We are opening the first phase of the Campus Center (CC) renovation and planning for the next steps. The CC is beloved for a reason – it is the heart of our campus and we can make it even more central to our community through the new spaces and services it will offer.

And we are going to make sure every student is Otterbein READY through a new program that links the breadth of our academic program with hands-on practical experiences. Otterbein graduates will be more ready for success in their careers, communities, and individual lives.

All of this builds on what we have always been – a place that transforms students’ lives in service to all. Thank you for being a part of it!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Comerford".

John L. Comerford, Ph.D.

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FEATURE STORIES

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>6 Ensuring Every Student Will be READY
A new initiative provides career and professional development training to every Otterbein student.</p> <p>8 Collaborating for Opportunity and Justice for All
Otterbein and Antioch University announce plans for an innovative national system based on collaboration, not competition.</p> <p>10 Chief Diversity Officer Focuses on Community and Collaboration
Jeff King is ready to listen, collaborate, and celebrate the diversity of the Otterbein community as its first Chief Diversity Officer.</p> | <p>13 Faculty Explore Common Book Topics
Otterbein professors share their expertise about the subjects addressed in this year's Common Book.</p> <p>14 Homecoming and Family Weekend Celebrated
Homecoming and Family Weekend celebrates 175 years of Otterbein with a schedule of exciting and engaging activities.</p> <p>16 Campus Center Renovation Begins with Focus on Accessibility
Phase one of the Campus Center renovation creates a more accessible and welcoming space for all members of the Otterbein community.</p> |
|--|---|

IN EVERY ISSUE

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 Around the 'Bein | 18 Philanthropy | 22 Alumni Matters | 24 Class Notes |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|

Otterbein University 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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Read, hear, and experience more of these stories online.

www.otterbein.edu/towers

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Otterbein University is committed to providing a workplace that is free from discrimination. Otterbein does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, genetic information, military status, or veteran status in admissions, in access to, or in treatment within its educational programs or activities, in employment, recruiting, or policy administration.

New Center Offers Safe Space and Peer Advocates for Otterbein Students

Otterbein has established a new **Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Resource Center** with community space, a furnished safe room for any student living in an unsafe situation, and housing for Peer Advocates. Peer Advocates are students who have completed 40 hours of training including trauma informed crisis response, particularly trauma informed response for sexual violence victim/survivors and are qualified to help in many situations.



"We're the only school in the state of Ohio that we know of that has a trained peer advocate staff," said Associate Professor Tammy Birk, director of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program.

Learn more at: www.otterbein.edu/towers.

Nursing Certification Rates Outpace National Average

As the nation is facing a nursing shortage, Otterbein is graduating students who are prepared to immediately enter their field.

Otterbein's bachelor of science in nursing graduates achieved a **96.61% first-time pass rate** on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Exam (NCLEX-RN) in 2021.

Otterbein's rate is well above the Ohio rate of 79.07% and the national pass rate of 82.48%.

Additionally, nursing faculty at Otterbein University received an Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN)

Nurse Education grant of \$200,000 to address the nursing shortage within the State of Ohio.

This grant will support nurse education programs in

Ohio to increase enrollment capacity of nursing students and nursing educators.

Equine Teams Add Another Strong Season to Impressive Program



Otterbein University's equine teams were back in competition for the first time since 2019 due to the pandemic. All teams had impressive finishes. **The dressage team won the Intercollegiate Dressage Association's national championship** – the team's second consecutive title – and the hunt seat team completed their season as zone and region champions. The hunt seat team placed 13th in the national tournament.

Read more about individual riders' results at: www.otterbein.edu/towers.



Faculty Receive Awards for Excellence

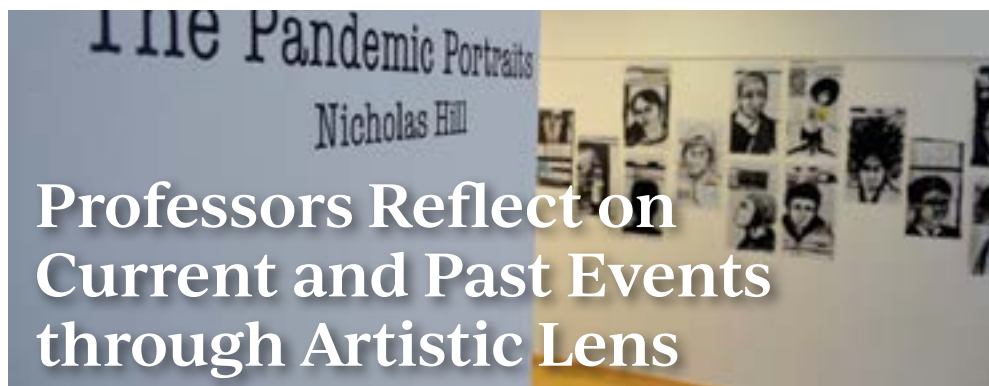


Left: Professor Jennifer Merkowitz
Right: Associate Professor Eric Jones

Each year, Otterbein honors outstanding teachers for their impact on their students, colleagues, and the University. **Professor of Music Jennifer Merkowitz, the recipient of this year's Teacher of the Year Award,** was recognized for striking a perfect balance between theory and application that leads her students to land jobs and careers they are passionate about.

Associate Professor of Communication Eric Jones received the Exemplary Teaching Award, a national honor sponsored by the United

Methodist Church's General Board of Higher Education. In addition to creating an inclusive, equitable, and understanding learning environment in his classes, he has offered his time and expertise to Otterbein's Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) Campus Center. He has mentored undergraduate TRHT Fellows as they collect and record oral histories from Otterbein alumni of color, a project at the center of TRHT's efforts to create narrative change and reckon honestly with the past.



Professors Reflect on Current and Past Events through Artistic Lens



Art Professor Emeritus Nicholas Hill has been visually chronicling the COVID-19 pandemic since it began, creating *The Pandemic Portraits Series (2020-present)*. An exhibition of the portraits premiered at Otterbein in spring 2021. Now a catalog containing 105 portraits from the series is available, with proceeds benefitting Otterbein's Frank Museum of Art. Order the book at www.otterbein.edu/order-for-spring-2022-the-pandemic-portraits.

An internationally acclaimed art exhibition that premiered at Otterbein co-created by **English Professor Patricia Frick and Director of Museum and Galleries Janice Glowski** is traveling to Chile for its next engagement in Valparaíso in Spring 2023. *Lands, Real and Imagined: Women Artists Respond to the Art and Travel Writings of Maria Graham*, features five female artists. It is based on Frick's research on Graham (1785-1842), an accomplished Victorian travel writer, historian, illustrator, and amateur scientist.

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Students Earn Top National Honor

During the 2022 spring semester, five Otterbein students — Evan Shelton '22, Lily Nichols '22, Dylan Gray '22, Lexie Sherman '22, and Antonieta van den Berg Monsalve '22 — were inducted into the national honor society of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB).



Only 33 students across the country were selected for membership in Chi Omega Lambda this year, so the five Cardinals represented 15% of the new class. Additionally, Hope Lewis '22 was inducted to the honor society in 2021.

Read more at www.otterbein.edu/towers.

Otterbein Continues to Climb in National Rankings

In the *U.S. News & World Report* 2022-2023 edition of “America’s Best Colleges,” Otterbein jumped from 12th place to 9th, placing it in the top 6% among 166 peers in the Regional Universities–Midwest category. In 2021, Otterbein was 21st overall in its category.

Additionally, Otterbein was recognized on the following lists:

MOST INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS

- Otterbein debuted at 9th in its category.

BEST UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING

- Otterbein jumped from 18th place to 7th, top 5% in its category.

BEST VALUE SCHOOL

- Otterbein ranked 37 in its category.

TOP PERFORMERS ON SOCIAL MOBILITY

- Otterbein jumped from 121 to 67 in its category.

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. Otterbein was also recognized for Equity and Inclusion.

Colleges of Distinction’s selection process consists of a review of each institution’s first-year experience and retention efforts alongside its general education programs, alumni success, strategic plan, student satisfaction, and more. Schools are accepted on the basis that they adhere to the four distinctions: engaged students, great teaching, vibrant community, and successful outcomes.

Otterbein Receives Choose Ohio First Grant to Promote Diversity in Math and Nursing

Otterbein received a Choose Ohio First (COF) grant of \$1,259,937 from the State of Ohio and the Department of Higher Education (ODHE) to support students from Ohio entering Otterbein University’s math and nursing programs with a focus on underrepresented groups in these fields.

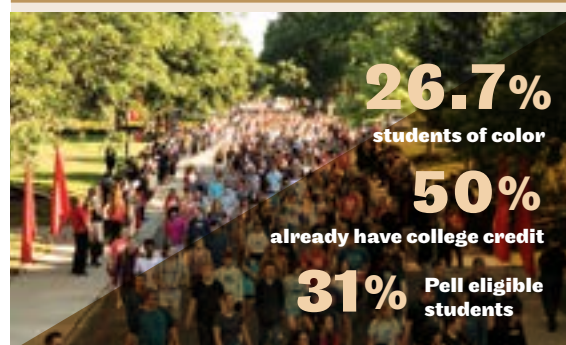
“We believe firmly that students who come to Otterbein will find exceptional jobs in central Ohio after graduation and contribute to the excellence of the state workforce,” said Assistant Professor Kirk Kayser, Department of Mathematics and Actuarial Science.

Read more at www.otterbein.edu/towers.



Otterbein welcomed
550 new first-year students
to campus this fall!

Here’s a look at the
Class of 2026



Men **37%** Women **63%**

Most popular majors for this class: STEM majors; Nursing; Business, Accounting, and Economics; HSS; Zoo and Conservation Science.

From **27** states + Puerto Rico

New Student Government Leaders Elected

Seniors **Timmy Wotring '23** (pictured right) and **Matthew Lanning '23** (pictured left)

are the new president and vice president, respectively, of the Otterbein University Student Government (OUSG). Wotring is a communication studies and public relations major from Columbus, and the first Black man to lead OUSG. Lanning is a communication studies and Spanish and Latin American studies major from Westerville. “We value feedback from all students on campus and hope to implement feedback we hear into change on campus,” Wotring said. “When it comes to transparency, we find it valuable that students know what is happening, especially when it will impact them. With all that in mind, we hope to bring change to this campus that the students are looking for!”



During this 175th milestone year,
we are asking our community to support these critical priorities
to celebrate Otterbein's history and build its future.

- *Campus Center* **RENOVATION**

Give new life to the heart of Otterbein's campus by upgrading the hub of student life.

- *Every Student* **WILL BE READY**

Ensure every student will be prepared for their future with advising, mentoring, immersive experiences, and a plan for career success.

- *Innovation* **FUND**

Fund creativity at an institution known for making history with its bold innovations.

- *Endowed* **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Build the next 175 years of success stories and ensure all students have access to an affordable education.

- *Otterbein* **FUND**

Make one gift to one fund to support every critical need on campus.

To make a gift to support
Otterbein's 175th milestone year, in honor or
memory of someone who impacted your life,
please visit WWW.OTTERBEIN.EDU/175.



Ensuring Every Student **WILL BE**



A new career and professional development program at Otterbein University will prepare students for their futures by promoting academic and career exploration; immersive, hands-on experiences; and professional development skills like networking and goal mapping.

Understanding how critical it is for students to make these connections between their academic studies and their career aspirations, Otterbein is making the commitment that every student will go through four years of exploration, advising, and planning.

“We want our students to be ready for life after graduation,” said Jennifer Bechtold, assistant provost and executive director of Student Success and Career Development. “This four-year plan will give them the confidence and the skills they’ll need after Otterbein.”

Keeping that commitment front and center is the reason behind its name: Every Student Will be READY.

Bechtold explained that Otterbein’s signature First Year Experience (FYE) seminar courses have been reimaged with a team approach. FYE faculty will continue to help students transition to college-level learning, and now an Otterbein staff coach will join the first-year team to help students navigate time management and explore personal interests, goals, and career paths.

But the big ideas don’t end there. In addition to classroom speakers, whether in person or virtual, Bechtold said that alumni and Otterbein friends can support this initiative by offering internships and opportunities to collaborate on projects. “This will add to the program and help serve the entire Class of 2026, the first class to be part of the new Otterbein Every Student Will be READY program,” Bechtold said.

Robin Grote, associate professor of chemistry and director of undergraduate research and creative work, taught an FYE pilot course last year with the new model. She said having a staff partner enhanced the classroom experience. Grote said the students saw a team in action and began to understand that Otterbein is a network with many people across its community who want to help. “It was very representative of what it is like to be at Otterbein,” she said.

Grote believes students will be more engaged earlier in their college experiences. “Some of the best classroom experiences are when students interact with speakers. Anytime we can have visitors share their experiences related

“We want our students to be

READY

to the subject or to life — and do that in real-time — it's much more interesting than just listening to a lecture from their professor.”

Otterbein leaders have seen first-hand how valuable immersive, hands-on experiences are to a student's career preparation. While some academic programs like nursing and education already include those opportunities, Otterbein wants all students to have at least one signature immersive experience before they graduate.

Those experiences will vary greatly and will include everything from leadership experience to internships and study abroad. There are some funds currently in place to offset the costs of studying abroad, working a summer internship, or volunteering for community service, but program organizers say more support will be needed as the program expands to the entire student body.

Alumni Jon '79 and Gretchen Freeman '77 Hargis understood the importance of the Every Student Will be READY program. The couple runs the Hargis Family Foundation and were early supporters. “We believe a very important part of a college education is to prepare students on how to maximize their ability to gain employment in the field of their studies post-graduation. This initiative will provide all students the opportunity to work on these skills throughout their time as an Otterbein University student.”

According to Leah Schuh '11, assistant director for experiential learning, the goal is to prepare students for post-graduation by increasing their access and creative focus.

“We want students to find meaning in what they did and how they can utilize that to be more prepared for employers and graduate schools,” she said. A dedicated team will help students to maximize their

time at Otterbein and show them how to communicate the experience outcomes.

Schuh explained that Otterbein has a long history of combining hands-on experiences with classroom learning. Getting students READY for their futures will formalize what Otterbein has already focused on: hands-on experiences, mentorship, and guidance.



Alumni and friends can help support this exciting program by supporting the READY Fund to assist with costs for students' immersive experiences. For more information on ways you or your company or organization could support this program or contribute to student success, please reach out to **Kathleen Bonte**, executive director of development, Institutional Advancement at **614.823.2707**.

for their Future

ready for life after graduation.”

—**Jennifer Bechtold**, assistant provost and executive director of Student Success and Career Development.

Opportunity &

There are not many university leaders who are willing to talk about the problems in American higher education, and even fewer willing to do something about it. On July 14, two leaders took the first step in doing the work of fixing a broken system, with a focus on contributing to society as a whole.

Otterbein University President John Comerford and Antioch University Chancellor Bill Groves, at an event livestreamed to both campuses, announced that

the two universities were partnering with the intention to form a first-of-its-kind system of affiliated, independent, not-for-profit universities focused on shared graduate and adult learner programs.

The foundation of the system, and the calling card for future member universities, is the universities' shared missions of providing access to an affordable, world-class education, while educating students to become engaged citizens advancing democracy; social, racial, and environmental justice; and the common good.

One advantage of the new system is that members will keep their distinctive undergraduate programs, branding, athletics, and student organizations. "Otterbein will always remain a residential undergraduate university built around meaningful faculty-student engagement and relationships," Comerford said. "But given ongoing demographic trends, with decreasing numbers of high school graduates nationally for the next 15 years at a minimum, focusing only on undergraduates is not a sustainable path."

Comerford noted that in Ohio alone more than two million adults have some college credit, but no degree.

"The system will additionally offer tailored workforce education programs with badges, certificates and other credentials to learners and business partners nationwide," stated Comerford. "These workforce education pro-

grams not only help to keep and generate jobs in our local communities, they are important on-ramps for adult learners to pursue higher education and advanced creden-

tials. Moreover, because the programs will be tailored to meet the specific needs of the employer, those businesses will ordinarily share in the cost of that education, improving access and affordability of higher education."

Comerford laments the growing competition within higher education, driven by universities striving for prestige and rankings. "One of the most terrible aspects of our current model is that rather than judging universities by how they change the lives of the students they enroll, most rankings value how difficult it is for students to be admitted," said



Left: Antioch University Chancellor William R. Groves, J.D.
Right: Otterbein University President John Comerford, Ph.D.

COLLABORATION
over
COMPETITION

Justice for All



Comerford. “The ‘most prestigious’ universities in the nation tend to admit a tiny percentage of the students who apply. Really? That’s how we share this incredible, life-changing resource, by closing the door on deserving students?”

The new system prioritizes collaboration over competition. This innovative system allows the universities to expand adult learner and

graduate degree offerings, to offer pro-

grams in more locations

nationwide, to provide

innovative learning

modalities including

online, low-residency,

and hybrid settings,

to create new oppor-

tunities for student

engagement across

institutions, and

to enhance capaci-

ties and contain

costs through

shared services

and improved

technologies.

The system also

gives Otterbein

programs a

national foot-

print. Antioch

University cur-

rently has loca-

tions in Los

Angeles, Santa

Barbara, Seattle,

Yellow Springs,

OH, and Keene,

NH (see full map of

locations, page 1). Faculty and staff teams are working to identify which Antioch University programs will be offered in central Ohio. They are also exploring which of Otterbein’s well-respected graduate nursing and health and sport sciences programs will be offered in these out-of-state locations.

The benefits of the new system will not be limited to adult learners and graduate students. Several exciting undergraduate opportunities are under consideration, including guaranteed early admission pathways between Otterbein undergraduate programs and Antioch University’s graduate programs. Possibilities include pathways from Otterbein psychology and sociology degrees to Antioch University’s many community mental health counseling master’s programs, as well as a connection between Otterbein’s bachelor of fine arts in creative writing with Antioch University’s master of fine arts program.

Other ideas under consideration would allow Otterbein undergraduates to spend a semester or term studying at an Antioch University location, for instance, allowing an environmental studies major to spend a semester in Keene, NH, home of the environmental studies graduate program.

Otterbein faculty, staff, and administrators have been in discussions about the new system for many months. “Otterbein University and Antioch University saw a huge opportunity to be ahead of the curve, proactive, and forward thinking in what is often an antiquated, slow-to-change higher education system. They both also saw a need to do something different at a time when change is sorely needed in higher education,” said Otterbein Professor Joan Rocks, Department of Health and Sport Sciences.

— By **Jefferson Blackburn-Smith**, vice president for Enrollment Management and Marketing



Chief
Diversity
Officer
Jeff King
Focuses
on

Community & Collaboration

Jeff King has a lot of important work to do. As Otterbein's first chief diversity officer, he will provide leadership and vision to the strategies and policies of the institution in the crucial area of diversity, equity, and inclusion. To do so, he's ready to collaborate across campus.

Student Affairs wants to foster a campus culture that attracts and retains more diverse students. Academic Affairs wants to meaningfully incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curricula of more courses. Enrollment Management wants to provide opportunities for more students from underserved school districts. The list goes on.

King knows what it takes to improve in all of these areas. He came to Otterbein with more than three decades of higher education experience in the areas of diversity and inclusion, admission, and student life.

We talked to King as he begins his new role:

OTTERBEIN TOWERS: How does it feel to be Otterbein's first chief diversity officer?

JEFF KING: It is both an honor and a kind of a humbling experience to be the person chosen to lead the institution — an institution that's 175 years old — on to hopefully even greater heights, especially as it pertains to moving towards a more diverse and equitable campus community.

OT: What most interested you about joining Otterbein at this time in this role?

JK: I started my career at an institution that was part of the Underground Railroad, Wilberforce University. That was my first opportunity to work in an institution that was so integral in the Underground Railroad

and the freeing of enslaved Africans and African Americans. Coming to an institution that was so instrumental in that same movement sets the stage for the latter part of my career.

OT: From your standpoint, what does an inclusive and equitable campus look like?

JK: It looks like a place where you see representation of diversity everywhere you go, and diversity does not just have to be represented in the color of someone's skin or the way that person dresses or the gender of that person. If we are able to welcome and recognize that diversity on our campus and promote it, that's what we're looking for.

LISTENING
to students and
amplifying their
voices.

BRINGING
more voices
into important
conversations.

TEACHING
in ways that engage
students of different
backgrounds.

OT: How will you expand on the work that's already being done at Otterbein?

JK: There are a lot of good things that are already going on that just need to be expanded ... we just need to bring more voices to the table. It's a matter of making sure that we include everyone that wants to be included, in the way in which they want to be defined and included.

OT: How do you hope to engage with students?

JK: We have to meet students where they are to make sure that we're listening to the students and amplifying their voices and making sure those voices are heard. I think that's part of why you have a Chief Diversity Officer now — to make sure their voices are being heard at the level of the cabinet and the Board of Trustees, in the community, and with the alums so their needs are being met and addressed.

OT: What does culturally inclusive curricula look like and what is the benefit to students?

JK: The concept of culturally responsive teaching practices, as I call it, came from a colleague of mine at Vanderbilt University, Professor Rich Milnor, who wrote a book called *Start Where You Are But Don't Stay There*. If we're doing good things in the classroom, continue those things but don't just stay there. Make sure that you're taking on challenges, looking from different perspectives, and employing teaching practices that will hopefully engage students that may have a different background. We can know everything that we need to know about another person's culture but still not understand that person. And that's where the concept of not only culturally responsive teaching practice has become so important, but the concept of cultural humility. Cultural humility is the capacity for us, as faculty and staff members, to address our students

at an appropriate level where they understand that we're not that different from who they are becoming. They don't know that we've had some of the same hardships and experiences. Some of us failed calculus just like they did, some of us had difficulties getting to our 8 a.m. class just like they did. Once we can get to that concept of cultural humility, students start to understand us better and trust is built.

OT: Are there ways alumni can get involved or support the work that you are doing at Otterbein?

JK: I'm going to be reaching out to Otterbein alumni to talk to a group of students about your career path and what you did in your career to succeed. Talk about the obstacles that — in that same spirit of culturally responsive teaching and cultural humility — show these students that you had the same struggles that they have and now you're a lawyer or engineer. We want alumni encouraging our students, being a network for the students so they can catapult on to their successful careers.

OT: What do you want the Otterbein community to know that's a core part of who you are and how you like to do business?

JK: I hope that the faculty and administrators on this campus, as well as our students and the people of Otterbein, Westerville, and Columbus, understand that we want to work with you. If you want me to come to your class and speak to them about diversity or to have a dialogue, then I will come, I will bring others with me, and we will continue to work with you. If you decide you want to do a program, talk to my office about possible collaborations because that's the only way I will do business. You will hardly ever see a program sponsored by this one office or this one entity; it is going to be a litany of co-sponsors working in close association that support each other.

WELCOME to Campus



Frank E. Dobson Jr., Ph.D.,

is the new director of the Office of Social Justice and Activism. He has served in numerous capacities in higher education, teaching, and promoting campus diversity efforts nationwide. A published writer and scholar, he seeks to promote the "Beloved Community," and the African concept of Ubuntu: "I am, because we are." His novels, *Rendered Invisible* and *The Race is Not Given*, probe conflict and trauma due to racism, violence, and mental health.

Most recently, he has written on Black popular culture and film, including such diverse figures as Spike Lee, Clint Eastwood, Vin Diesel, and the legendary actor and athlete, Woody Strode. Dobson has served on several social justice boards, and he believes that social justice can be furthered through communication, empathy, and grace toward one another. Along with his daughter, Jasmin, he is coauthoring a series of children's books titled *Black Legacy Lessons*, highlighting African American trailblazers.



PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RACE

President John Comerford has formed an Advisory Council on Race to provide diverse perspectives on critical issues of race to strengthen our community, generate positive change, and attract and retain employees and students of color. The alumni, community, and business leaders on this council will help the University in many ways including:

IDENTIFYING
new and
important trends
in embracing and
understanding the
topic of
race relations.

EXAMINING
issues that affect
our campus
community, local
and extended
communities,
and overall higher
education.

PROVIDING
a valuable external
perspective to
help the university
look at itself more
constructively
and creatively.

HELPING
foster learning
opportunities that
create value-added
experiential
and classroom
experiences.

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rev. Vaughn Bell Senior Pastor, Triumphant Church; Board Member, Westerville City Schools Board of Education; President, Westerville Area Ministerial Association.

Doug Bennett Counselor, Otterbein University.

Tony Bishop '15, MSAH '18 White House Advisor, Office of the National Cyber Director, Executive Office of the President.

Mechelle Buys du Plessis P'20, P'22 Managing Director, Cloud First, Hybrid and Emerging Platforms, Accenture; Otterbein Trustee.

Karen Castro '12 Consul, U.S. Consulate Rio de Janeiro, U.S. Department of State.

Lilly Cavanaugh Executive Director, Ohio Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs.

Icilda Watkins Dickerson '88 Adjunct Professor, Franklin University.

Tracy Maxwell Heard Executive Director, Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence.

Eddie Harrell '94 Regional Vice President, Radio One.

Jeff King Chief Diversity Officer, Otterbein University.

Rhonda Talford Knight '96 Chief DEI Officer, Bricker & Eckler LLP.

Andre Lampkins '03, P'19 Senior Business Development Manager-HBCU, Amazon Web Services.

Michael McGreevey Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Otterbein University (staff liaison).

Stephanie Mizer '95 Senior Manager, Talent Acquisition, Office of Advancement, The Ohio State University.

Colleen Moidu Executive Director, Westerville Education Foundation; Founding Board Member, WeRISE for Greater Westerville.

Margenett Moore-Roberts '94 Chief DEI Officer and Leader of the Office of Business Relevance, Inclusion and Equity, IPG DXTRA.

Nancy Patel '03 Former Director, Design and Construction, Indus Hotels.

James Prysock '09, MBA'19 DEI Consultant, American Electric Power; Advisory Board Member, Ohio Diversity Council; Board President, WeRISE for Greater Westerville.

Matthew Quinn '15 Data Management, eFuse; Co-Founder and President, Black Tech Columbus.

Craig Robinson Executive Vice President, Chief Diversity Officer, NBC Universal.

Melissa Simkins '99 CEO, Velvet Suite, Inc.; Founder, The She-Suite.

Dr. Kyle R. Williams '07 Special Advisor to Senior Vice President and Dean of Campus Life, Emory University.

OTTERBEIN PROFESSORS' INSIGHTS INTO THE 2022 Common Book



In September 2015, pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha went public with her team's discovery of a human-made public health crisis in Flint, Michigan. Contaminated water exposed tens of thousands of Flint residents to dangerous levels of lead and caused the third-largest outbreak of Legionnaires' disease recorded in U.S. history, which killed at least 12 people and sickened dozens more.

This year's Common Book, *What the Eyes Don't See*, is Hanna-Attisha's first-hand account of her discovery and battle with her own government to expose the truth to the world.

As Otterbein's incoming class of students reads this harrowing story, Otterbein professors will be sharing their unique expertise about the subjects addressed in the book. Among those are Professor Kevin Svitana, director of the Sustainability Studies Program and Associate Professor Rob Braun of Health and Sport Science, who teaches public health at Otterbein.



A water quality expert with more than three decades of experience as a geologist and hydrogeologist, Svitana offers a look at how the crisis happened:

"One of the failures of those responsible for the Flint water crisis is attributed to their lack of understanding of a water delivery system and the chemical dynamics of the system. While the Flint River water may not have been toxic, the chemistry of the water caused it to be corrosive to the pipes delivering the water to residents.

The corrosivity may or may not be attributed to pollution, but rather natural conditions, such as regional bedrock and soils, which can contain minerals or naturally occurring organics that can affect the water chemistry causing it to become corrosive. If the source water is corrosive, and this isn't corrected by chemical adjustment prior to the water entering the distribution system, the corrosivity of the water begins to dissolve the pipes. If lead is part of the piping, whether it's the actual pipe or the solder used to join copper pipes, it is dissolved into the water and travels as a lead-containing solution to consumers. This is the condition that occurred in Flint."



In addition to how the crisis happened, the book examines why it happened. One of the main themes in the book is the environmental injustice the residents of Flint experienced. Associate Professor

Rob Braun teaches public health education at Otterbein. He offers this view:

"The Environmental Protection Agency defines environmental justice as 'the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.' However, that 'justice' did not occur in the case of the Flint water crisis. As you read this book and reflect on its content, I encourage you to think of all the examples Dr. Hanna-Attisha reveals that contradict the above statement."

To learn more about the themes in this year's Common Book, visit otterbein.edu/commonbook.



The band marches on.

OTTERBEIN
175
YEARS
UNIVERSITY

OTTERBEIN & HOMEcoming & family



Courtright Memorial Library 50th anniversary celebration. L-R: Mary Jane Stewart-Griffin '75, Karla Courtright Banning '70, Kristy Courtright '68, John Stewart, President Comerford.



175th celebratory moment.

Time to Celebrate

Otterbein University celebrated the 175th anniversary of its founding in 1847 with a variety of special events at this year's Homecoming and Family Weekend. The 50th Golden Reunion classes of 1971 and 1972 came back to campus to reconnect and take a walk down memory lane. The annual Alumni Awards ceremony and State of the University Address were held in Cowan Hall as part of the Celebration of



Homecoming Fun!



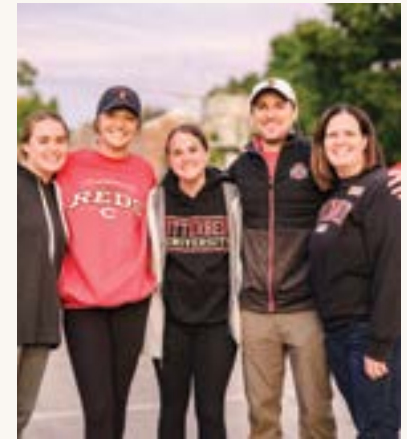
Equestrian team members and equine friends join the parade.



L-R: President Emerita Kathy Krendl, Professors Emeritae Beth Daugherty and Alison Prindle.



Class of 1971 Golden Reunion class photo.



Friends, family, and faculty celebrating Otterbein.

UNIVERSITY COMING weekend

Celebrate!

Otterbein. Students, alumni, faculty, staff, parents, and friends enjoyed the music of *The British Invasion* band, **Allison Asarch '18**, **Alex Toth '22**, and *The Blue Jays*, as well as food, fun, and festivities of OtterFest throughout the weekend.



View more photos from the weekend visit our Flickr gallery at [otterbein.edu/HCphotos](https://www.otterbein.edu/HCphotos) or scan the QR code.



Go Cards!



Otterbein Football beats Capital University, 35-28.



Time to celebrate Otterbein's 175th.



Alumni reunite at OtterFest.



Members of the African American Student Union.



Otterbein Cardinal Pride Alumni Table.



Jim Wagner '56, P'81, P'88, with President Comerford.



Class of 1972 Golden Reunion class photo.



Family weekend time.



BREAKING New Ground

By Catie Duzzny '21, MBA'23

Completing Phase One

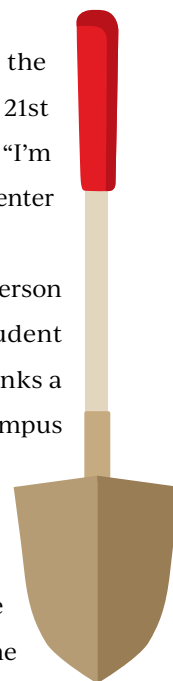
**The Campus
Center
renovation
begins by
creating
welcoming,
inclusive
spaces.**

The Campus Center renovation broke ground in March, and now phase one of this exciting project is nearly complete with many new features for our campus community.

“The Campus Center was initially constructed in 1964, so the renovations will modernize and bring the building into the 21st century,” said senior public relations major Hope Beverick '23. “I’m looking forward to seeing the new plaza in front of the Campus Center and the addition of the second-floor parlor.”

Associate Director of New Student Transitions Colette Masterson served for many years as the director of the Center for Student Involvement, which is housed in the Campus Center. She thinks a renovated Campus Center is important to student life. “The Campus Center is truly the living room of the campus and student experience. These renovations will allow us to enhance the student experience outside the classroom.”

The focus for the first phase of the renovation is to make the building more accessible and inviting for all members of the



“I see this project as an opportunity to create an inviting, collaborative space for students to use, socialize in, and enjoy all three levels of this building.”

—Patrick Siconolfi, executive director of facilities management and planning.

Otterbein community. To achieve this, major improvements were necessary, including a new elevator at the southwest corner of the building, a plaza in front of the building with improved ramps, and new restrooms on the second floor and lower level.

“I see this project as an opportunity to create an inviting, collaborative space for students to use, socialize in, and enjoy all three levels of this building,” said Patrick Siconolfi, executive director of facilities management and planning.

Additional upgrades include a redesigned bookstore, new second-floor parlor and entrance to the Cardinal's Nest dining hall, and new improvements to the lower-level theatre lobby and ticket booth.

“I think it will bring a renewed, invigorating spirit to the Campus Center. It shows the commitment of the University to invest in student spaces and make them places we want to congregate together, further enhancing the community feel of our campus. It makes me proud to be a student here,” said James Akers MBA’23, who is also the executive chef at Otterbein with Parkhurst Dining.

As phase one of the renovation nears completion, Otterbein is seeking additional support to launch phase two. To donate to the Campus Center Renovation, or discuss naming opportunities, please visit www.otterbein.edu/give or call the **Office of Institutional Advancement** at **614.823.1305** to learn more about this meaningful project.



Interior finishes in the new second-floor parlor.



Installation of new panels.



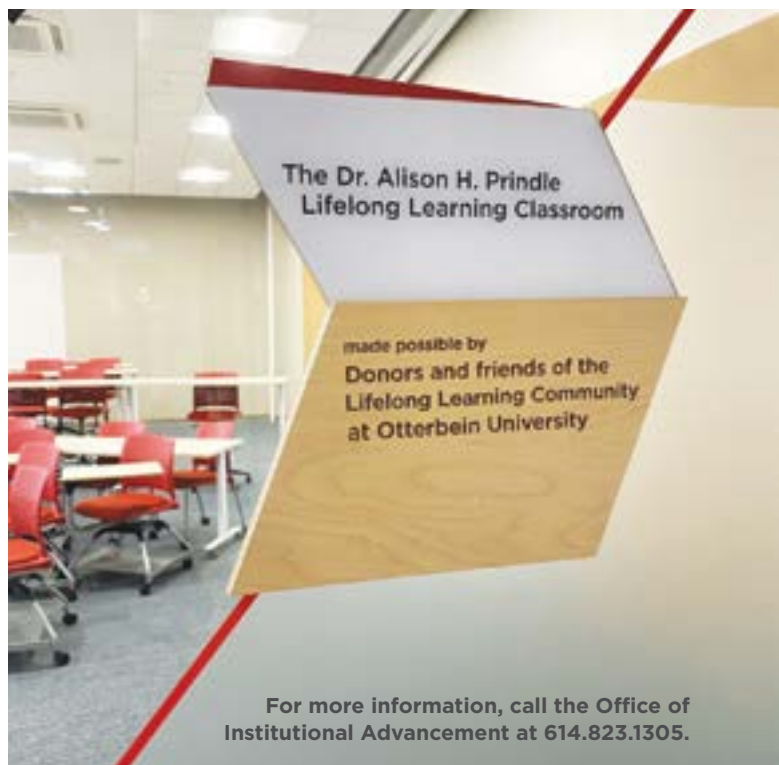
Putting the finishing touches on the front elevation and terrace.

Philanthropy in Action

Lifelong Learning Community Endowments Established

Generous anonymous donors have stepped forward to help create two endowments to support the **Lifelong Learning Community (LLC)** at Otterbein – one to assist with operations and programming and the other to support the **LLC Scholars Award**, which provides monetary assistance to Otterbein students during their final year of study.

In addition to the new endowments, the LLC recently dedicated a classroom at The Point as the **Dr. Alison H. Prindle Lifelong Learning Classroom**, to honor her lifetime commitment to learning and Otterbein.



Become a Member of the 1847 Society During Otterbein's 175th Anniversary



Otterbein's **1847 Society** recognizes individuals and couples who have established a planned gift to the University. During

Otterbein's 175th anniversary year, planned gifts are a meaningful way to ensure your legacy and commemorate this historic milestone. Planned gifts, at their core, are one of the best ways you can “pay it forward” to make an impact for future students and ensure that Otterbein remains a leader in higher education.

“Now that I’m retired, I’m looking at new possibilities for planned giving. I can make Otterbein a partial beneficiary of my Individual Retirement Account (IRA), and my estate will receive a charitable deduction. I’m forever grateful to Otterbein for



Peggy Ruhlin '79 supported Otterbein through a life insurance planned gift.

the opportunity to complete my college degree,” said **Peggy Ruhlin '79**. Ruhlin, who served on the Board of Trustees, made a generous unrestricted gift through a life insurance policy during Otterbein's **Where We STAND Matters** campaign.

Planned gifts offer a way to leave assets to Otterbein that provide current and future benefits for you, and the University. Often, these gifts allow donors to make larger gifts than they may be able to make through their discretionary income. Common planned gifts include bequests, charitable gift annuities, trusts, and retirement assets.

Learn more about how you can leave a legacy at Otterbein at www.plannedgiving.otterbein.edu. Be sure to sign up for the free monthly eNewsletter.



Thank you to the following donors who are making a difference at Otterbein

Grace Rohrer Rymer '48 has generously supported Otterbein through a gift to the **Grace Rohrer Rymer '48 and Richard Rymer Scholarship**. She also continues to support the **Otterbein Fund** — Grace has been a donor for almost 40 years and is a member of our **Cardinal Loyalty Society**.

Douglas Knight '63 and his wife, Mary Pat Knight H'00, have donated nearly \$30,000 over the past year to support the **Every Student Will initiative, Lifelong Learning Community, Otterbein Fund**, and the **Knight Family Fund for International Study**, which was created in 2008 with funding provided by the estate of Robert '28 and Gertrude Knight.

Pamela Hill Lorr '75 donated a generous gift to support the **Pamela Hill Lorr Theatre Endowment Fund**, which helps students with short-term financial need and assists the Department of Theatre and Dance with expenses related to the practice of theatre directing for student projects and works and/or support of guest directors for masterclasses or seminars.

Thomas Bromeley '51, chair emeritus of the Board of Trustees, recently made a generous gift in support of Otterbein and has been a loyal donor and champion for the University for 31 years.

The **Campus Center Renovation Fund** and the **Otterbein Fund** have received additional support from **President's Society** member Robert Woodruff '67, who committed \$75,000 to advance these two important University priorities.

Donna Kerr H'71 continues to show her kindness and generosity to the University through her recent support in memory of her late husband and former president of Otterbein, **Dr. Thomas Kerr**. She recently contributed a generous gift to the **Campus Center Renovation Fund**, in addition to supporting the **Thomas J. Kerr IV Scholarship, Donna L. Kerr Scholarship**, and the **Otterbein Fund**.

Otterbein men's basketball alumnus **Eric Wagenbrenner '91** recently donated \$10,000 to support the men's basketball program. During Wagenbrenner's tenure on the team from 1987-1991, the Cardinals had some of their most successful seasons, reaching the NCAA Division III Final Four and landing the team in the Cardinals Hall of Champions.



Otterbein Men's Basketball team from 1991.

Otterbein is grateful to **Richard '54 and Carolyn Brown '53 Sherrick** for their generous support over the past year for the **Otterbein Fund**, along with the **Sherrick Nativity Collection Endowment**.



Top: A soapstone and bone crèche from Alaska. Bottom: A ceramic crèche from Cameroon in the Sherrick Nativity Collection.

The **Otterbein Fund** received significant support over the past year from Trustee Emeritus **Michael Ducey '70** and his wife, Pattie Black-Ducey. The Duceys have been loyal supporters of Otterbein for the past 36 years.

Mary B. Thomas '28 Commitment to Otterbein Award Honorees

Otterbein's highest honor, the Mary B. Thomas '28 Commitment to Otterbein Award, was given to two deserving recipients at this year's Celebration of Otterbein ceremony on Oct. 1. The award was established in 2011 by President Emerita Kathy A. Krendl and the Board of Trustees to recognize the remarkable commitment of investors to the University.



The 2022 Mary B. Thomas '28 Commitment to Otterbein Award honorees: **Mark '78 and Deb Scott '77 Thresher, P'05** (front row) and members of the Otterbein "O" Club including (left to right) past president **Ron Jones '61**, current president **Mark Granger '79**, and past president **Jack Pietila '62**. A recording of the Alumni Awards program is available online at www.otterbein.edu/towers.

Grants, Corporate, and Foundation Support

Grants help to provide essential funding for new programs, research, and other areas that directly impact our students at Otterbein.

Our faculty and staff have recently been awarded grants from several organizations, including:

Martha Holden Jennings Foundation

AMOUNT: \$31,926



Supports the conversion of art-integrated chemistry lessons and activities developed for our Integrative Studies Chemistry in Art course.

Ohio Department of Higher Education

AMOUNT: \$1,259,937



Funds scholarships for Ohio students who enter majors including nursing, math, math education, and actuarial science.

This year's Mary B. Thomas '28 Commitment to Otterbein Award honorees are:

Mark '78 and Deb Scott '77 Thresher P'05

Former Board of Trustees Chair **Mark Thresher '78 P'05** and his wife, **Deb Scott '77 Thresher P'05**, met at an Otterbein football game in the fall of 1975 when Mark was a sophomore and Deb was a junior. The two began dating shortly thereafter and Deb, a music education major, selected Mark, an accounting major, as her escort when she was elected Homecoming Queen in 1976. Deb was a member of Epsilon Kappa Tau sorority and participated in choir and band while at Otterbein. Mark played basketball and was a member of Torch and Key and Tau Pi Phi honoraries. They married four months after Mark's graduation in 1978.



The Threshers have never forgotten how their experiences at Otterbein helped prepare them for life, which has become the catalyst for their incredible support of the University over the years. The impact of their generosity can be seen in gifts to establish a scholarship fund for music education majors (**Deborah and Mark Thresher Family Scholarship**), a fellowship that will support experiential learning at Otterbein (**Mark and Deborah Thresher Fellowship**), and annual support of the **Otterbein Fund**. In total, the Threshers have donated a significant amount in support of Otterbein over the past 31 years.

Otterbein "O" Club Foundation

Established in 1955, the **Otterbein "O" Club** aids and assists Otterbein University by contributing to our athletic programs and students. That year, **Robert "Moe" Agler '48** was appointed head football coach and along with his friends, former football teammates, **Edwin "Dubbs" Roush '47** and **Francis "Red" Bailey '43**, the trio received permission to establish a Varsity "O" Alumni Club. In addition to Roush, who served as the organization's first president, and Bailey, who served as its first vice president, the original board of directors also included **John Zezech '44**, **Harold Augspurger '41**, and **Dwight "Smokey" Ballenger '39**.



Over the last 60 years, the "O" Club has partnered with Otterbein to enhance its athletic program in countless ways. Supported by the donations of individuals, businesses, trusts, and foundations, the "O" Club has been a transformational force in improving Otterbein's athletic facilities, benefiting not only its student-athletes but the entire campus and extended Westerville community as well. In 1981, the club created its own foundation and to date has donated significantly to support athletics programs and facilities. Major projects benefiting from their support include the Rike Center weight room in 2008, Memorial Stadium renovations in 2005, the new track and turf in 2014, and repairs to the pole vault area of the track.

Otterbein remains deeply grateful for the ongoing support of the **Threshers** and the **"O" Club Foundation** and extends congratulations to these outstanding recipients of the **2022 Mary B. Thomas '28 Commitment to Otterbein Award**.

State Library of Ohio

AMOUNT: \$46,399



Supported the installation of touchless lockers in the Courtright Memorial Library as well as the installation of a contactless book drop.

Ohio Board of Nursing

AMOUNT: \$200,000



Supports efforts to address the nursing shortage within the State of Ohio. This two-year program will allow Otterbein to increase the number of clinical precepting placement positions and the number of clinical preceptors at IHA Sunbury Urgent Care Center.

SWACO

AMOUNT: \$16,900



Supports the creation of a zero-waste plan for Otterbein University in conjunction with RRS Consulting Services. SWACO, RRS Consulting, and Otterbein will work together to identify opportunities across campus to implement zero waste strategies for external events held on campus.



Front row (left to right): Tonya M. Milligan '90, MAE'98, James Wagner '56, P'81, P'88, and Karen Castro '12. Back row (left to right): Jodi West Zellers '96, Brooke Wilson '10, Hilary Stone MBA'20, Alicia D. Caudill '95, and Debbie Horn, accepting on behalf of her brother, Theodore Lloyd Jones '70.

Celebrating Excellence

The Cardinal community is filled with high achievers, both in the professional workplace and in service to the community. During Homecoming & Family Weekend, we were honored to recognize 11 outstanding individuals for their ongoing accomplishments and one organization for its commitment to Otterbein athletics.

Stephen Rossman H'22, (left) a staff member in Otterbein's Department of Communication, receives the Honorary Alumni award from President Comerford (right).



Learn more about the 2022 award recipients at www.otterbein.edu/alumni.



Rising Star Award

Karen Castro '12
Hilary Stone MBA'20
Brooke Wilson '10

Otterbein Alumni Award

Alicia D. Caudill '95
Theodore Lloyd Jones '70
Tonya M. Milligan '90, MAE'98
James Wagner '56, P'81, P'88
Jodi West Zellers '96

Honorary Alumni

Stephen Rossman H'22

Mary B. Thomas '28 Commitment to Otterbein Award

Otterbein "O" Club
Mark '78 & Deb Scott '77 Thresher P'05

Find the Perfect Way to Get Involved!

The Otterbein community has a rich tradition of giving back. You can see that today in the actions of our current students; just look at the great work they've done at the Promise House and Community Garden, to give two examples.

But volunteering doesn't stop at graduation. Each year hundreds of Otterbein alumni, family members, and friends make it a priority to share a precious commodity with our campus community and beyond: their time.

Whether as a member of one of our alumni group boards, an admissions volunteer, a guest lecturer in the classroom, or one of a dozen other ways, the Otterbein community steps up for our students in incredible numbers.

Now we're making it even easier for volunteers — and would-be volunteers — to find the right opportunity for themselves. Visit www.otterbein.edu/alumni/volunteer-give to find the



volunteer role that suits you based on your interests and the time you have to devote to the experience.

We hope you'll join us in supporting Otterbein students in ways that allow you to share the gifts of experience, energy, and expertise that each of you has to offer. Our students and the entire Cardinal family thank you!

Volunteer Opportunities

- Reunion Committee
- Admissions Volunteer
- Career Development
- Fundraising
- Community Engagement
- Special Events
- Social Media Ambassador
- Alumni Group Boards

TRAVEL PLANS

Visit www.otterbein.edu/alumni/alumni-travel for more details.

Travel with Otterbein to Ireland in 2023

Join us for a trip to Ireland Sept. 19–30, 2023. Space is limited for this tour.

Register today with Otterbein's official travel partner, Warther Tours: call (330) 556-4535 or email mark@travelwarther.com.



Upcoming Events

We're always planning new and exciting in-person and virtual events for the Otterbein community. From lectures to happy hours and everything in between, you can find it by visiting www.otterbein.edu/alumni/events-travel.





Pictured L to R: Beth Kreider Marchant '77, Jane Nichols Wonnell '77, Melanie Costine Moon '77, and Sandi Walrafen Jarvis '77

1970s

Sandi Walrafen Jarvis '77 retired from teaching in central Wisconsin after 38 years. She returned to Ohio, where she can visit with her Sigma Alpha Tau sorority sisters, **Beth Kreider Marchant '77**, **Jane Nichols Wonnell '77**, and **Melanie Costine Moon '77** more often. These four Otterbein alumnae were roomies from 1973 to 1977 and will celebrate their 50th year of friendship in 2023.

1980s

Nancy Binzel Brown '85 was recently elected as vice president of the Stow-Munroe Falls Board of Education for 2022. She is the admissions and marketing director at The Arbors at Stow, a long-term care facility for Alzheimer's and dementia care.

Dan Bravard '88 is a senior business analyst at Magellan Health, St. Louis, MO.

Lisa Collins Huston '88 is the district administrator of the Western Reserve District of the United Methodist Church in Painesville, OH.

1990s

Volkan Berksoy '90 is the owner of VB Real Estate Investment Company.

Kevin Youskievicz '90 retired after 28 years of service with the Sandusky Police Department as a detective sergeant in June 2021.



Barbara Cabot Luke '91

Barbara Cabot Luke '91 is running for State Representative in the 86th House District, which covers Union County and part of Marion County. She is the founding principal of Luke Lawyers Co., located in Marysville, OH, serving people who are injured through no fault of their own.

Lucy Longhenry Jones '93 is the daycare director at Mansfield Christian School. She started several new programs including a summer kids camp program for K-6th grade, a daycare for children aged 18 months-4 years old, and an after-school care program.

Tamarine Thompson Foreman '95 was promoted from assistant to associate professor with tenure at Ohio University, Athens.

Todd Tucker '95 returned to his hometown, Logan, OH, after 18 years in Arizona, to manage the new Hocking Hills State Park Lodge and Conference Center.

Shannon Sayre '97 was named principal of Westerville Central High School in June 2022. She was formerly that district's director of career and college pathways.

2000s

Christine Abraham Pepper '01 received her doctorate degree from Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, May 2021.

Brian Baker '02 is the principal at Liberty Middle School, Olentangy Schools System, Delaware County, OH.

Jessica Hand Watters '05 is working for Dublin City Schools as a para-professional/instructional special education aide.

Judith Stinolis Converse '06 was named the first-ever public information

officer for the Ohio Traffic Safety Office under the Ohio Department of Public Safety, April 2022.



Greg Cooper '07

Greg Cooper '07 joined Heidelberg University in May 2022 as the new director of athletics.

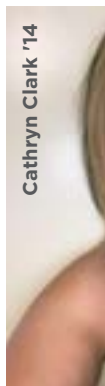
Kate Mock Elliott '08 is the director of public relations and communications for the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati. She continues to perform, appearing this summer in the Cincinnati Fringe Festival and with The Carnegie in Covington, KY.

Peter Sichko '08 won two Emmy awards for his work as engineer in chief with Broadcast Sports International, one for College Football National Championships and one for the Super Bowl Pregame Show on NBC.

Chelsea Hamons Nichols '09 is a planner in the New Albany, OH, community development department.

2010s

Sam Watson '10 is the principal at Milton-Union Exempted Village Schools, West Milton, OH.



Cathryn Clark '14



Garth Weithman '11

Garth Weithman '11 was named the chief of staff for Central Ohio Transit Authority in January.

Tyler Harris '12 was hired by Columbus State Community College to be one of the subject control instructors for the law enforcement programs in February.

Michelle Dippold '13 is working for WorldStrides as the assistant director, curriculum and academics. WorldStrides facilitates travel experiences and experiential learning for students worldwide.

Sydney Tammarine '13 is an associate professor of English at New Mexico Military Institute, Roswell, NM.

Cassidy Brauner '14 is an assistant professor of teaching and photography area coordinator at Ohio University, Athens.

Cathryn Clark '14 is chief executive officer and president of the board at Columbus Mattress Wholesale. She joined Columbus Mattress Wholesale in 2017 when the local Columbus business was just launching. She succeeds founder Christopher Robbins.



Alumnus Creates Trailers for the Entertainment Industry

BY JACKIE ADLER '24

Brian Dollenmayer '89 feels it can be therapeutic to feel uncomfortable. That may be why the founding co-partner and chief creative officer for Catalytic Creative always had a goal to move to Los Angeles. Both literally and figuratively, it's a long, strange trip from Otterbein to L.A.

Catalytic Creative is an innovative advertising agency that specializes in marketing for the entertainment industry. Creating trailers and digital art, Catalytic Creative helps kick-start and promote awareness for movies and series watched by millions of fans.

"Don't be afraid to leave home, to try something that makes you a little uncomfortable," Dollenmayer said. "I always want my career to be learning and growing."



Originally from Gahanna, Ohio, Dollenmayer attended Otterbein to study broadcast communication. His first venture was to complete an internship at the National Academy of Arts and Sciences as a post-production intern. He immediately gained valuable experience in how professionals edited promos and TV shows.

His break in TV began with a part-time job as a master control operator for Channel 28, a FOX affiliate in Columbus.

"I knew I had to make it to a bigger market," Dollenmayer said. He moved to Indianapolis to work for an independent station for a bit but found an ad in the back of a magazine with a job opening at Fox Network in L.A. He applied and waited. And waited.

Five months later, Dollenmayer received a call from FOX. He was offered a position and took the job. The hours proved to be long and Dollenmayer was completing the work no one else wanted to perform, but it paid off.

"I had no idea, but I just wanted to work at my big break, so you do whatever you can," Dollenmayer said.

From manager positions to directing, to vice president, to senior vice president, to executive vice president, Dollenmayer climbed the ranks at FOX.

But by the end of 2019, Dollenmayer decided to become uncomfortable again. He decided to take all his years of experience and the connections he made, and he and his colleague, Heather Porter, partnered to open Catalytic Creative.

Dollenmayer and Porter now successfully manage 25-30 clients. Movie and series fans have most likely seen a Catalytic Creative trailer.

Despite the long road and hard work, Dollenmayer's comfort level is finally fairly even-keel.

"Don't chase the money," Dollenmayer said. "If you chase the money, you won't be happy. Do great work and the money will follow you."

That's a comfort level that everyone can appreciate.

Alumnus Built His Business on Helping Others

BY BRIDGET ODER '22

"God gave me a servant heart, and my company's purpose is to serve people who have disabilities, who are living homeless or in poverty, have a history of addiction, or have been formerly incarcerated," said **Jim Nichols '93**, Founder of iHn Creations (www.ihncreations.com) in Toledo, Ohio.

Nichols created his business back in 2017 and his first new product (the HelpMeHand) was brought to market in 2022, the same year its first patent was officially granted. The HelpMeHand is a multipurpose signage assembly used to indicate when a motorist requires roadside assistance. The company uses the sales from this product (at www.helpmehand.com) to help those who are struggling, marginalized, dismissed, or disadvantaged.



Nichols majored in business administration and marketing at Otterbein. He completed two key internships that helped prepare him for his career, one at Sterling Software and the other at Grant Development Foundation. The exposure to these workplaces was invaluable.

After graduation, Nichols began his career at Intek as a marketing assistant. He left in 1997 and continued his career at multiple businesses in the sales and technology area fields. The knowledge he gained from these positions prepared him to create a business of his own.

"In my four years at Intek, I had to learn the specifics of how flow meters functioned and how they were applied in various industries," Nichols said. "This exposed me to various principles of physics, as well as electrical, mechanical, and industrial engineering disciplines."

Nichols is still growing his business and, "as a faithful Christian," he says, is very excited to see where "God takes it in the years to come."

Nichols thrives on giving back to others, and has advice for up-and-coming business owners. "No matter what you do, always be willing to receive input from anyone who is willing to give it," he said. "Use all situations and experiences as learning opportunities. If planning to start a business, seek out all the available resources that can help ensure your success."

For current students, Nichols suggests that all students take a speech or public speaking class no matter what your major is. He believes that these classes build a student's self-confidence and interpersonal communication skills.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Andrew Beers '15 is the media arts teacher at Johnstown-Monroe Local Schools, Johnstown, OH.

Megan Foust '15 is the assistant director of the Alumni Annual Fund at Carleton College, Northfield, MN.

Kerry Magorien '16 is a sixth-grade teacher at Kualapu'u School in Hawaii, a dual-language school with a language immersion program and a focus on integrating Hawaiian culture into the curriculum. She earned her master's degree in elementary education from the American College of Education, November 2021.

Abigail Hall Haynes '17 is an elementary music teacher at Southwest Licking Schools in Pataskala, OH.

Lydia Crannell '18 is a college planning advisor at IN - The College Planning Experts, Powell, OH.

Samantha Eau Claire '18 moved to Sydney, Australia, in May for a job at Klarna, an online shopping service, as a service delivery specialist.

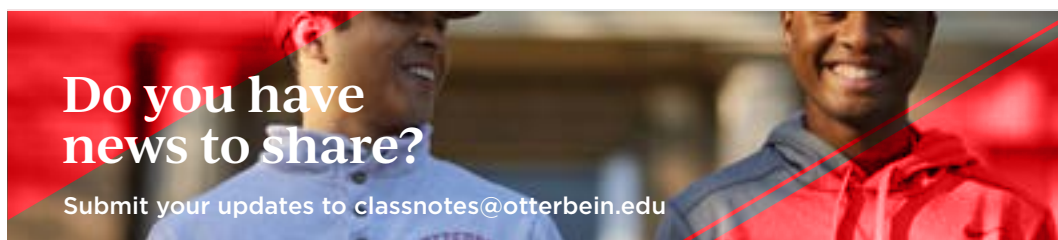
Jacob Strous '18 was the designer of the catalog for *The Pandemic Portraits* by Nicholas Hill. Proceeds from the book support The Frank Museum of Art at Otterbein.

Madison Hookfin '20



Do you have news to share?

Submit your updates to classnotes@otterbein.edu



2020s

Danielle Burden '20 is now the primary African bird zookeeper at the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo. She provides

husbandry to African gray parrots, ostrich, marabou and white storks, pelicans, vultures, hornbills, eagle-owls, wattled cranes, wildebeest, zebra, sitatunga, and giraffe.

Madison Hookfin '20 is the Columbus Symphony's youth orchestras manager, overseeing all four youth ensembles, starting at the third-grade level up to high school students, assisting the conductors and group leaders. She also plays violin for the New Albany Symphony Orchestra.

Jenny McFarland '20 was elected as the president and treasurer for Little Turtle AAZK (American Association of Zookeepers) in Fort Wayne, IN, in January.

Bryn Mangold '21 was named the first-ever assistant commissioner of the Ohio Athletic Conference in August.

Alex Natividad '21 landed his dream job as a Columbus City Schools Spanish teacher in August 2021. He credits Otterbein, and specifically Associate Professor Bethany Vosburg-Bluem, for preparing him well for his first job.



Alex Natividad '21 greeted the Class of 2021 at the Commencement ceremony and is now working for Columbus City Schools.

Caitlyn Ryan Pauley '21 received her master of science degree in healthcare administration from Oklahoma State University, Tulsa, July 2022.

Eleni Teegarden '21 is the marketing and communications coordinator for Moelis & Company, Park Avenue, New York City.



Cassidy Rader '22

Cassidy Rader '22 is a full-time human resources coordinator at Worthington Industries, after a successful internship there her senior year.

Entertainment

Jim Cooney '00 joined the national tour of *My Fair Lady* as the associate choreographer. He also launched his new podcast, *Theatre Life Uncensored*, a behind-the-curtain look at the theatre industry.

Lindsay Chambers '02 has been cast in *The Griswold's Broadway Vacation*, a new musical which began its pre-Broadway engagement at Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre in September.

Bethany Broadfoot Schoeff '02 directed the Noël Coward play *Present Laughter* at Curtain Players in Galena, OH, this past spring.

Steve Czarnecki '09 was in the ensemble of the Muny's production of *Sweeney Todd* in St. Louis in July.

Liz Shivener '09 was Lauren in Maine State Music Theatre's production of *Kinky Boots* in August. She also joined Steve Czarnecki in *Sweeney Todd* in St. Louis in July.

Cory Michael Smith '09 will lead Netflix's new drama, *Transatlantic*. The show, a limited series set during the 1940 refugee crisis in Marseille, France, will likely be released late 2023.

Cesar Villavicencio '09, also known as Pixie Aventura, released their first single, *All In My Head*.

Nathan Keen '10 was in the ensemble of Ogunquit Playhouse's production of *The Cher* last summer in Maine.

Kolby Kindle '10 played Marty in Arrow Rock Lyceum's production of *Dreamgirls* last summer in Missouri.

Barbara Jo Bednarczuk '11 joined the national tour of *My Fair Lady* as a swing, a position that fills in for any member of the ensemble who is not able to take the stage for a given performance, sometimes at a moment's notice without benefit of a rehearsal.

Daniel Lopez '11 played Troubadour in Asolo Repertory Theatre's production of *Hood* last summer in Sarasota, FL. The new musical is the real story of Robin Hood.

Evan Zimmerman '13 has his first Broadway ad campaign in Times Square. He is an associate photographer for MurphyMade, specializing in production photography and actor headshots.

Corinne Munsch '14 was in the ensemble of *The Nutty Professor* at Ogunquit Playhouse in Maine last summer.

Marina Pires '14 played Conchita in Barrington Stage Company's production of *Anna in the Tropics*, Pittsfield, MA.

Entertainment Corner *continued*

James Scully '14 played Charlie in Searchlight's new film, *Fire Island*, on Hulu. Set in the iconic Pines, the film is a modern-day romcom showcasing a diverse, multicultural examination of queerness and romance.

Jared Howelton '15 made his Broadway debut in *Hamilton* as Hercules Mulligan/James Madison in July 2022. He served as the principal standby for a week.

Jordan Donica '16 returned to *Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway. He made his Broadway debut in 2016 as Raoul and reprised his role for a limited engagement this past summer.

Lauren Kent '17 spent her summer playing Enid in Mason Street Warehouse's Production of *Legally Blonde*. The musical played at the Saugatuck Center for the Arts in Michigan.

Jenna Leigh Miller '17 headed to Tennessee this summer to play Tammy and serve as the dance captain in Cumberland County Playhouse's production of *Escape to Margaritaville*.

Natalie Szczerba '17 starred as Maria in Totem Pole Playhouse's summer production of *The Sound of Music* this summer in Fayetteville, PA. **Colin Robertson '20** starred as Rolf. Totem Pole is run by artistic director and Otterbein favorite guest director, **David Caldwell '86**.

Julianne Graffeo '18 is a production coordinator for Atlantic Theatre Company and is currently acting as a substitute stage management production assistant on the production of *The Bedwetter* by Sarah Silverman.

Daria Pilar Redus '18 starred as Maria in *The Sound of Music* at the Utah Shakespeare Festival in Cedar City, Utah.

Morgan Anita Wood '18 was in *Kinky Boots* at the Hollywood Bowl.

Abigail Isom '19 spent their summer in the ensemble of both *Mary Poppins* and *Legally Blonde* at the Muny in St. Louis.

Kathryn Lee '19 spent her summer with Lyric Repertory Company in Logan, UT, as Savannah in *Freaky Friday: The Musical* and Ida Green in *Into the Breeches*.

Allison Mogle '19 was recently hired as the fabric dyer at Parsons Meares LTD. Parsons Meares is responsible for costumes in shows such as *Hamilton*, *Lion King*, *Hadestown*, *Moulin Rouge*, and many more. She previously worked as a dresser on The Public Theatre's production of *Suffs*.

Christian Heinemann '20 sailed the high seas aboard the ship Disney Magic. He performed on the main

stage in shows such as *Tangled*, *Twice Charmed*, and *Dreams* throughout the summer.

Savannah Schakett '20 played Lulu in Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* at The City Garage Theatre in Los Angeles.

Cecilia Trippiedi '20 was cast as a vacation swing for the National Tour of *Hadestown*.

Ava Arkin '22 spent her summer at Shenandoah Summer Music Theatre in Virginia as Anytime Annie in *42nd Street* and in the ensemble of *Cinderella*.

Stephen Blauch '22 played Dennis Sanders in the Hackmatack (Maine) Playhouse summer production of *Smoke on the Mountain*, in which all actors play their own instruments.

Ashton Lambert '22 spent August as a Cagelle/dance captain in Little Theatre on the Square's production of *La Cage Aux Folles*.

Sarah Simmons '22 played Gifty in Hangar Theatre's production of *School Girls: Or the African Mean Girls Play*, in Ithaca, NY, this past summer.

Authors

Imodale Caulker-Burnett '63 has written her second book, *Raised By A Village, My Story*. Her book is dedicated to all those who played a role in her life, including her Otterbein housemates, the Clippers, whose enthusiasm for the project spurred her on.

John Schafer '82 published a book, *Hope is a Salesperson's Currency*, about his 30-year journey in sales.

Phyllis Magold '88 published her second book, *The Treasured Egg*, continuing the story of the characters from her first novel, *A Beast No More*.



Alumna's Career Path Goes from Music to Microsoft

BY BLAINE BISHOP '25

When **Leondra Gonzalez '13** graduated from Otterbein with a degree in music and business, she had no idea her career path would lead her to work in the tech industry.



As a student at Otterbein, Gonzalez played violin with the Otterbein String Orchestra and was involved in the Music Entertainment Industry Student Association (MEISA). After graduating she attended The Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh for a master's degree in entertainment industry management. She began taking mathematics and economics courses, which would later open

opportunities to her in marketing analytics.

"The second year of my grad program was in Los Angeles. After I graduated, I just kind of stayed here," said Gonzalez, who completed internships at Sony Music Publishing, NBCUniversal, and Amazon Prime Video.

She currently works as a senior data and applied scientist for Microsoft Commercial Solutions, where she is a member of the business insights team focused on optimizing global sales enablement and go-to-market strategy.

In addition to her job, Gonzalez is a talent acquisition chair for Blacks at Microsoft (BAM), which is dedicated to supporting the continued growth and development of Black employees and encouraging students to pursue a career in technology. She also is a member of Technical Women at Microsoft and has led workshops in central Ohio for Women in Analytics and Blacks in Tech.

Gonzalez recalled only having two Black women as professors, and said that she may have pursued actuarial science if there were more role models in the field.

"Diversity starts in school," she said. "It's hard to improve diversity at a company when the pool of diverse candidates you're getting is already significantly smaller because they didn't study STEM because they weren't exposed to it."

In July, Gonzalez joined the Otterbein Alumni Council to bring her perspective as a Black woman in STEM to benefit Otterbein, where she appreciates that DEI and affordable access to higher education are a "cognizant priority."

ALUMNI PROFILE



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Marriages.

- 1 Tom Snyder '05** to Amanda Fark, Dec. 31, 2021. The wedding party included **Scott Bacon '05** and **Tom Prenoveau '01**.
- 2 Tyler Green '12** to Alexandra Ellerbrock, Feb. 28, 2020.
- 3 Sydney Tammarine '13** to Ian McElhone, Oct. 3, 2021. The wedding party included **Joseph Lucas '15**.
- 4 Joshua Hartley '13** to Jeffrey Tice II, May 28, 2022. The wedding party included **Audra Kohler '14**.
- 5 Abigail Hall '17** to Cameron Haynes, July 14, 2018.
- 6 Haley Wasserman '19** to Chance Bailey '19, Oct. 10, 2021.



Do you have wedding or baby news to share?

Please send news to classnotes@otterbein.edu.





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7

- 1** Luna Maeve, born to **Becca Rossiter Lachman '04** and Michael Lachman.
- 2** Isabella Page, born to **Jessica Hand Watters '05** and Steve Watters.
- 3** Nicholas Matthew, born to **Kacy Walton Bielozer '06** and Matthew Bielozer.
- 4** Charlotte Danielle, born to **Jessica Rugh Harding '08** and Michael Harding.
- 5** Emmett James, born to **Elizabeth Freshley Coy '10** and **Stephen Coy '08**.
- 6** Emersyn Mae, born to **Tyler Green '12** and Alexandra Green.
- 7** Piper Marie, born to **Megan Gray Eberhard '14** and Stephen Eberhard.
- 8** Sawyer Dean, born to **Taylor Ellis '16**.
- 9** Avery Emersyn, born to **Abigail Hall Haynes '17**, and Cameron Haynes.

NOT PICTURED

Lydia Mae, born to **Stefanie Campbell Ragase '08** and Trey Ragase.

Otterbein honors the memory of the alumni and friends we have lost.

1930s

Rhea Bachtell Hornyak '36, Aug. 5, 2021.

1940s

Eileen Blake Jennens '42, May 24, 2014.

Sarah Weimer Koegle '42, May 19, 2003.

Elizabeth Mills Coughlin '47, Feb. 18, 2022.

1950s

Muriel Starbecker Maginniss '50,
Feb. 16, 2022.

Helen Fagley Skinner '52, June 14, 2022.

Daniel A. Mariniello '53, May 6, 2022.

Charlayne Huggins Phillips '53,
March 24, 2022.

Evelyn Mujais Mitchell '54, April 29, 2022.

Richard T. Castle '56, April 19, 2022.

Jacqueline Cooper Comito '56, Feb. 18, 2022.
Dorothy Niemeyer Kroggel '56,
Nov. 29, 2021.

Gerald L. McCormick '56, Sept. 19, 2014.

William A. Replogle '56, Aug. 24, 2022.

Gertrude Wiley Ruehle '56, April 5, 2022.

David E. Dietzel '57, June 23, 2022.

Jerry B. Lingrel '57, Feb. 22, 2020.

Charles E. Selby '57, June 26, 2022.

Judith Lumbatis Lewis '58, April 23, 2020.

Dale H. Crawford '59, June 1, 2022.

Mary Sue Webner Smith '59, June 30, 2022.

Gary N. Termeer '59, March 16, 2021.

1960s

Jean Pruett Compton '61, Feb. 9, 2022.

Bruce O. Hickin '61, May 2, 2022.

Alan B. Hall '62, April 7, 2021.

Thomas L. Jenkins '62, Feb. 13, 2022.

David L. Fodor '64, July 27, 2022.

Esther Swartz Kester '64, Aug. 3, 2022.

George E. Christ Jr. '65, Dec. 27, 2021.

Michael J. R. Fensler '66, Feb. 12, 2022.

Alice-Kay Jenkins Hilderbrand '67,
June 7, 2022.

Linda Sue Cooper '69, June 23, 2022.

Forrest D. Rice '69, June 2, 2022.

1970s

Candace Scott Simms '71, Aug. 26, 2022.

David K. Slater '71, Oct. 21, 2021.

Kathryn Lee Cobb '72, March 11, 2020.

Karen Dalrymple Curtin '75, April 5, 2022.

1980s

Terri C. Jones '84, March 16, 2022.

2000s

Sharon Ann Ricker '08, June 28, 2022.

2010s

Zachary J. Kloeb '17, April 28, 2022.

Friends

James V. Miller, Nov. 4, 2021.

Shirley Seymour, Aug. 2, 2022.

Pamela S. Verne H'92, March 22, 2022.

Remembering our Fellow Cardinals

The family of Ruth "Petie" Dodrill H'94 hosted a memorial service for her in Cowan Hall during Otterbein's Homecoming and Family Weekend. Dodrill passed away in August 2021 and was well known for introducing children's theatre to Westerville, directing 26 children's productions, and overseeing the costuming of more than 100 productions.



Above: Ruth "Petie" Dodrill's H'94 children, Tracy Foster, Brad Dodrill, and Trish Garrison, sharing their thoughts about their mother at the memorial held in Cowan Hall.

Gus Van Sant Sr. died Jan. 13, 2022. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy. Starting his career as a traveling menswear salesman, he became a regional manager; and later, president of McGregor-Doniger Sportswear, the largest U.S. company at that time. Van Sant is survived by his daughter, Malinda Van Sant, and son, Gus, Jr., a filmmaker. He was preceded in death by his sister, Joanne Van Sant H'70, dean emerita at Otterbein. Gus was a loyal supporter of Otterbein over many years continuing his sister's legacy.

Officers of the University

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Vice-chair	William E. Harrell Jr. '94
Secretary	Alan Waterhouse '82
Assistant Secretary	Theresa Harris
President	John L. Comerford, Ph.D

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Alumni Council

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Erin Sites Ensign '08	Mary Kruila Somyak '07
Lindy Gilkey '06	Kathryn Felsenthal Stephens '97
Leondra James Gonzalez '13	Sheronda Whitner '12
Matt Lofy '08	Kyle Williams '07, Ed.D.



175 YEARS OF TRIBUTES

In celebration of Otterbein's 175th anniversary, the following Otterbein leaders, teachers, and friends were recognized through tribute gifts made by alumni and friends.

Robert Agler '48	Judith Lovejoy Foote '58	Elizabeth Johnson Lingrel '58	Shirley Seymour P'85, P'92
Dr. Peter M. Allaman '63	Dr. Robert S. Fortner '70	Phyllis Bench Litton '60	Col. Charles W. Shackson '65
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Braydon S. Au '25	Linda Francis	Paul B. Maibach '34	Anna D. Shultz '19
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Barbara Cheney Buttermore '65	Earl C. Hassenpflug P'79,	Ruth E. Pifer	Dr. Joanne F. Van Sant H'70
Helen Haines Carlisle '53, P'80	P'86, P'89, P'94	Dr. Robert Price	Joan Eckard Vargo '50
Dr. Norman R. Chaney	Dr. Wendy Sherman Heckler	Kenzie Prickett '24	Dr. James K. Wagner '56, P'81, P'88
Rev. Michael W. Christian '61	Catherine Hawkins Hickin '62	Dr. Alison H. Prindle H'10. P'07	Dr. Gayle A. Walker
Edmond L. Conard '85	Bruce O. Hickin '61	Eugene E. Purdy '57	David B. Warner '56, P'88
Lily E. Cowie '24	Alice-Kay Jenkins Hilderbrand '67	Kristine Heston Puskarich '88	Joyce Shannon Warner '58, P'88
Dr. Beth Rigel Daugherty	Terri C. Jones '84	Evan J. Radecki '25	Mildred Wharton P'61
Dr. Marilyn E. Day '53	Rebecca Keck P'00 P'02	Brigitte Lisabeth Ramos	Dr. E. Jeanne Willis
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Dr. Charles W. Dodrill	Dr. Kathy A. Krendl H'18	Richard E. Reynolds '65, P'90, P'93	Abigail N. Yates '23
Ruth "Petie" J. Dodrill H'94	Gerald C. Lang '71	Forrest D. Rice '69	Dr. Elmer W. Yoest '53, P'77, P'80
Colleen R. Dunston-Carroll '71, P'02	David E. Lehman '70. P'07	Guido T. Ricevuto H'11, P'80, P'88	Dr. David S. Yohn '51, P'73, P'78
Dr. Joan Marie Esson	Marilyn Wiles Leitschuh '58	Henry E. Roberson '48	Olivetta McCoy Yohn '51, P'73, P'78

Tributes received as of Sept. 23, 2022.

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