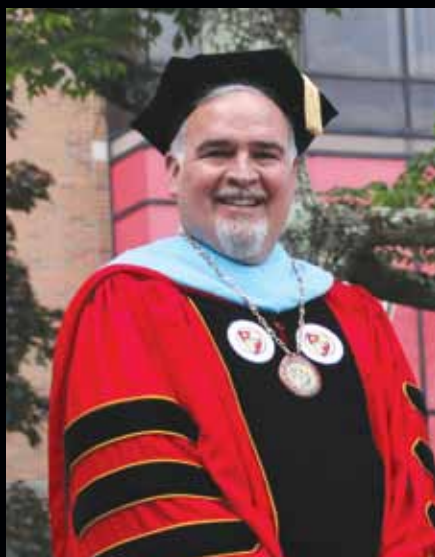


# CALDWELL

# UNIVERSITY

MAGAZINE



INSPIRED AND FORWARD-THINKING



ALSO INSIDE:

**NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART  
STUDENT LOUNGE**

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**STUDENT INTERNS AT  
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH  
BIOLOGY PROGRAM**





**Thanks to your support, our campus has reopened this fall and the Caldwell community is experiencing a long-awaited renewal.**

As we begin again, our students need, and rely upon, your support. You can help them get a jump start on this academic year by making a gift to the Annual Fund for current scholarship support.

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**CALDWELL UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE**  
**FALL 2021**

Caldwell University Magazine is produced for alumni and friends twice each year by the News and Media Relations Office at Caldwell University. Its goal is to provide news and information about Caldwell University's students, faculty, staff, alumni, and administration. We welcome your comments and suggestions! Please email us at [cumagazine@caldwell.edu](mailto:cumagazine@caldwell.edu).

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*Commencement 2021!*



*Financial economics student interns on Wall Street and is focused on giving back.*



*Meet Lucy the canine Cougar.*

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*Undergraduate commencement  
speaker Keith Kyewalabye*

# Hello, Caldwell family,

One day in July my wife Kathy and I were in the dining hall with faculty and staff at a lunch sponsored by the Office of Human Resources. Several students were on campus that day, too, for freshman orientation. I was grateful to be in a room face to face with so many people who had worked so hard over the last year and proved that we are “the little engine that could.” When larger universities could not withstand the headwinds of the pandemic, Caldwell’s faculty, staff and students showed up with resolve, adaptability and determination for teaching, learning and operations. And if necessary, we will do so again! I am grateful to all of you who persevered, and all of you who continue to support us as we honor the legacy of the Sisters of Saint Dominic by carrying out our educational mission.

In this issue of the magazine, you will read about inspirational members of our Caldwell community—chemistry student Yaman Thapa ’22, who worked in a lab this summer in a prestigious internship at MIT; business student Akwasi Osei-Du, who completed a highly selective internship at Credit Suisse; Dr. Jennifer Rhodes, who, like many professors in the School of Nursing and Public Health, has modeled excellence in nursing during the health crisis and been innovative in student engagement; and several of our 2021 great graduates, including undergraduate commencement speaker Keith Kyewalabye ’21, who has started working as a junior specialist at the University of California San Francisco Brain Tumor Center.

We showcase three inspirational alumnae who are living out our mission and values. Marcia Dukes ’05 is an advocate for racial equality and equity in education. Psychiatrist and professor, Olga Leib, M.D. ’06 is helping meet the mental health needs of children and adolescents. Children’s literature professional, Caroline Ward Romans ’68 is gifting the Jennings Library with a unique collection of children’s books, totaling hundreds of volumes that she has acquired throughout her career.

This fall, our beloved Sister Gerardine Mueller, O.P. ’54, founder of the Art Department, joins the club of centenarians! We have been celebrating Sister’s life during “The Year of Sister Gerardine.”

I hope you can join us at some of the activities during Inauguration Week including a lecture with History Professor Marie Mullaney, Ph.D., on “The History and Evolution of Catholic Women’s Colleges in the U.S.,” a panel discussion moderated by Theology and Philosophy Chairman Dr. Jim Flynn on “The Future of Catholic Universities and the Role of Liberal Arts in Higher



Education Today,” a faculty music concert, the Anne Goffin Smith Art Exhibit, reunion celebrations with the ’60, ’61, ’65, ’66, ’70, and ’71 classes, student activities including community service and much more. Several of these will be livestreamed.

We will launch two new sports this year—an acrobatics and tumbling program, an emerging NCAA sport (ours is the first collegiate-level program in New Jersey), and a rugby club team. Please come out to support our student-athletes in these or any of our 15 other sports. Our marching band performs at the home games for the sprint football team.

Each Sunday at 7 p.m. during the academic semesters, we have Mass in our Sister Mary Dominic Tweedus Chapel. Please join us if you can or tune into the livestream.

A warm welcome to Dr. Peter Ubertaino, our new vice president for academic affairs who came to us from Stonehill College, and Mr. Jorge Rodriguez, our new vice president for strategic initiatives, who had a long career at St. John’s University.

In closing, the worldwide Order of Preachers celebrated the 800th anniversary of St. Dominic’s death on August 6. What an amazing legacy of charity, preaching and the pursuit of truth he left us! That history has been carried down through the centuries by courageous women and men who answered the call including our beautiful founders, the Sisters of St. Dominic of Caldwell. One heroic Dominican was surely Saint Catherine of Siena, who said: “Love follows knowledge.” Knowledge and love. Sounds like a good combination to focus on as we start the new academic year and strive to carry forward the rich heritage that has been entrusted to us.

Best,

Matthew Whelan, Ed.D.  
President







CALDWELL  
UNIVERSITY

# HOMECOMING

AND FAMILY WEEKEND

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, AND SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

### 7 P.M.

Sprint football vs. St. Thomas Aquinas (James Caldwell HS)

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

### 11 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Registration (tent outside of Student Center)

### 11 A.M. – 4 P.M.

*Imago Dei: The Work and Legacy of Sister Gerardine Mueller Art Exhibit (Mueller Gallery)*

*The monumental body of work of this prolific and deeply gifted artist includes sculpture, stained glass, illumination and calligraphy, wood carvings and printmaking.*

### 11:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Party on the Plaza and Barbecue  
(Newman Center Plaza)

### NOON

Women's soccer match vs. Chestnut Hill College (Athletic Field)

### NOON – 2:30 P.M.

Campus tours (Depart from registration tent)

*Student ambassadors will lead campus tours. Golf carts available for those who need assistance.*

### 1:30 P.M.

Caldwell "Mini-University" – Faculty lecture

### 2:30 P.M.

Dr. Matthew Whelan's State of the University Address and Alumni Awards Ceremony (Westervelt Lecture Hall)

*Dr. Whelan will give an update on the University. The Peggy Harris Alumna/us of the Year Award will be presented.*

### 3 P.M.

Mingle with the Sisters of Saint Dominic (Werner Hall Lobby)

*Join us for wine and cheese and get to know the Sisters of Saint Dominic.*

### 3 P.M.

Women's volleyball match vs. Nyack College  
(Newman Center Gym)

### 4:30 P.M.

Homecoming and Family Weekend Liturgy  
(Sister Mary Dominic Tweedus Chapel)



# WELCOME BACK!

## COME ON IN. WE MISSED YOU!



Briana Salcedo '22

*The University is welcoming everyone back for the fall semester. As an undergraduate student, I've been waiting for this for a long time. I understand the struggles we faced with virtual learning. Not only does it feel impersonal, but the distractions outside of the University are immense and it can take a great toll on an individual's mental health. Thanks to our wonderful faculty and staff, the process of virtual learning was as smooth as it could have been.*

*The pandemic has affected the students, faculty and staff, but we are all still standing strong. While working on this story, I found it heartwarming to hear the perspectives of the Caldwell faculty and staff members and learn that they have been experiencing very much the same things we students have. No matter our official titles, at our core, we are all still quite alike. Here are a few faculty and staff perspectives on the pandemic and what it means for the upcoming fall semester:*



**DR. DONNA NATURALE, DNP,**  
associate dean and  
associate professor  
in the School of  
Nursing and  
Public Health:

"I think that energy and ability to collaborate face

to face helps to promote a better learning and work environment for all ... I look forward to the campus coming alive with the excitement and enthusiasm which comes along with students being on campus, while maintaining social distance and adhering to CDC and state COVID guidelines as required ... It's important to recognize that there may still be limitations on class size, ability to utilize clinical agencies and lab spaces ... However, we are headed in the right direction, and I think it is important that we continue to be flexible as we move through the pandemic to a new and improved normal."



**STEPHEN QUINN,**  
vice president  
for enrollment  
management and  
communications:

"Caldwell has always been an institution that prides itself on the personalized attention that our students receive, and that will be amplified by us all being back together this fall. We will be able to be there for one another again ... While we have had many successes in our virtual and hybrid settings over the last year and a half, so many great ideas, solutions and relationships have been sparked by the random interactions we have walking around campus, at events, going to or from meetings or in the dining hall. To have that back again will be great to see for faculty and staff."



**PATRICK J. SIME, PH.D.,**  
professor and chair  
of the Department  
of Mathematics  
and NCAA  
faculty athletics  
representative:

"Even though the current technology

does allow for remote learning and there is an increase in online courses, for most students, it is not an optimal substitute for traditional on-campus learning. I believe returning to campus fully benefits students ... the connections that a student makes with other students, studying together, making friends, involved in other activities, such as clubs or sporting events. For faculty, particularly myself ... I also missed the face-to-face interaction with colleagues.



**DR. LENA CAMPAGNA, PH.D.,**  
assistant professor  
in the Department  
of Sociology and  
Criminal Justice:

"I am excited to be back on campus in fall 2021 for many reasons. First

and foremost, I am looking forward to seeing both my colleagues and students in person. It will be exciting to welcome our incoming students to the campus and not through a computer screen! While remote learning has been a challenge, I can't wait to incorporate some of these new technologies and strategies learned over the past year to the physical classroom space. We can really get creative in our teaching and learning at CU!"



**MICHELLE STAUSS,**  
assistant vice  
president for human  
resources and deputy  
Title IX coordinator:

"The employees who work for Caldwell University are among some of the best people I know. We are

better when we are together. I look forward to the energy they will bring back to our campus now that we can resume regular in-person operations."







**DR. RANJIT NAIR, PH.D.,**  
assistant  
professor of  
business and  
computer  
science: “I can’t  
wait! Being back  
on our beautiful  
campus is going

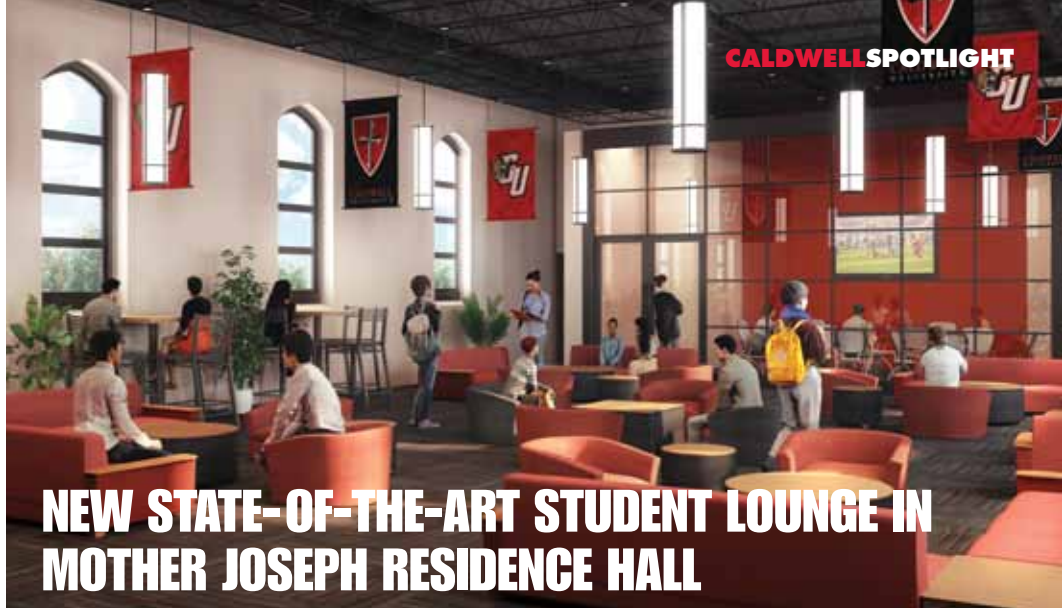
to be invigorating for me, and I’m sure it will be just as so for faculty, staff and especially our students. Wouldn’t it be nice to see people in person again and, most of all, making meaningful connections again? For our students and in particular for our freshmen, I have some advice—take full advantage of this renewed opportunity. Connecting with people is not only a recommendation to get ahead in work and career but a necessary component, frankly, for success in life. I can say for sure that networking can help you get where you want to go. What better place to do this than on our own beloved campus? So look forward to it, soak it up, revel in it and treasure every connection you make!”



**VIRGINIA H. RICH, J.D.,**  
associate dean  
of the School  
of Business  
and Computer  
Science: “I love  
the energy of a  
busy campus and  
active classroom,

and I’ve missed that in the remote and hybrid formats ... When we’re remote, it’s easy to multitask instead of focusing on the primary task in front of us ... As a teacher, I have even more appreciation now for the visual cues from my students that help me evaluate whether my students are understanding the material and our activities ... I think it’s easier for students to walk into an office in person and find the right people to help them succeed ... It’s fantastic to work in a place that truly has the students front and center of all that we do, especially emerging from our remote experience. ■

—Briana Salcedo ’22, student  
reporter, communication and  
media studies major



Senior Paul Iwarat is looking forward to seeing friends who were not on campus last year. Add to that a brand-new gathering space in Mother Joseph Residence Hall and 2021-22 is looking even better. “It will be a great way to kick off the year,” said Iwarat, a resident assistant in the dorms. Senior Steph Lopez is excited too; the lounge will be symbolic of “a new beginning for connections,” a place where she hopes faculty and staff will also spend time getting to know students.

The space includes a common room featuring a wide-open gathering area with comfortable seating, a study area behind a see-through glass wall with two large TV monitors, charging stations for devices, two bathrooms—one newly renovated and the other new and ADA compliant—and a butler’s pantry with a sink.

“A New York loft look juxtapositioned against the beautiful arched chapel windows.”

There is an industrial-style ceiling with “a New York loft look juxtapositioned against the beautiful arched chapel windows,” explained Sheila O’Rourke, vice president for operations, who along with Ray Williams, director of facilities, has overseen the construction. The windows were located in the old chapel for over five decades until the space was formally decommissioned in accordance with canon

law in April 2019 and the beautiful new Sister Mary Dominic Tweedus Chapel was built in the Newman Center. Much of the exquisite sacred art was moved to the new chapel, which is more centrally located on campus.

The chapel altar railings were too heavy to get up or down stairs, so Sister Kathleen Tuite, O.P., vice president for student life, and alumna Meg Poltorak Keyes ’75, the new chapel’s liturgical designer, made arrangements with the Archdiocese of Newark to have them taken apart, repurposed and given to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Newark.

President Matthew Whelan says the new lounge will provide students with a modern living-learning space that is critical to the “outside-the-classroom” learning experience. “They need this space. More importantly, they deserve it.” Crystal Lopez, assistant dean of residence life and conduct, agreed. “Lounge spaces on campuses are known to be places where lifelong memories are formed.”

Lopez and Tim Kessler-Cleary, assistant dean for student engagement and retention, and their teams are planning events for the fall. “It will be a versatile space for students to work individually or together and serve as a programming venue for institutional and student-driven programming,” said Kessler-Cleary.

The contractor for the construction is Fuscon Enterprises, Inc., and the architecture firm is Comito Associates.

The project is made possible by a New Jersey Manufacturers grant and a generous gift from John and Nancy (Ann) Larue ’69.

The improvement is the first of more to come, said Dr. Whelan. “We are reviewing the entire campus to make it one of the most beautiful in the region so that our students come here and not only get the very best experience in the classroom but outside the classroom as well.”

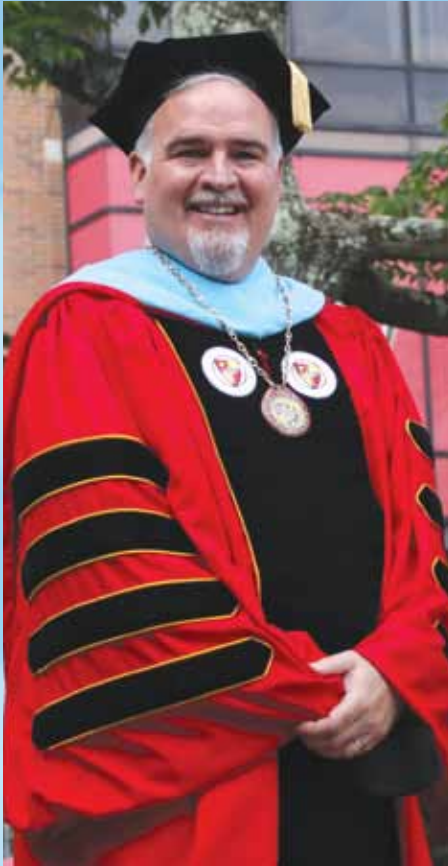
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# COMMENCEMENT

***Congratulations, Class of 2021!** The University celebrated its graduates at the 79th annual commencement May 23 with three separate ceremonies on an athletics field to honor its bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree-earners.*

## CALDWELL UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT MATTHEW WHELAN, ED.D.



"Get good at making mistakes ... nearly all of the famous success stories tell a tale of countless failures ... We all make mistakes. It's what we do with them that matters ... Take responsibility for them. Learn from them and remember you are one mistake away from success."

"Do not underestimate the magnitude of what you have just accomplished, not just now but throughout your life. To stay the course when the winds and torrential downpours of life, a monstrous storm, threatened to knock you off course, you withstood, you adjusted your sails and you were able to navigate your way through to your final destination. You'll learn that you have to do that in life. And it is worth it. Every second is worth it."

"Expect the unexpected. You can plan every second of every day only to have it upended by something out of your control. Don't worry about that. You've already proven you can do this."



"It is time to awaken the desire to achieve once more. Life, with its ebbs and flows, has given us another starting point just as we crossed the finish line ... This end is truly just a beginning for something new."

"Life, like a great art piece drawn out on several separate canvases, has offered us a fresh canvas onto which we will paint our dreams into existence for this coming season of our lives. And I could honestly not be more excited for what the future holds ... because, despite challenges and dark times, we will emerge as victors, just as we have today."

— **Keith Kyewalabye, undergraduate commencement speaker, Bachelor of Arts in Biology with a minor in music. He is working as a junior specialist at the University of California San Francisco Brain Tumor Center.**



"As the late Kobe Bryant once said, 'Great things come from hard work and perseverance. No excuses.'"

— **Lesley Elaine Chung, graduate commencement speaker, Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership**

"We each lived through a stressful year of working from home, which for some of us meant working from home with children, taking care of family members and adjusting to this new normal. All of these responsibilities continued while we completed our last full year of hybrid and virtual learning during the pandemic. This past school year taught us that we will indeed face trying times, for we have already done so. However, with hard work and perseverance, nothing can stop us. We are unbreakable, unbeatable, unstoppable and undefeated."



"I know that Shamkant would want me to tell you to keep kindness in your hearts and bring kindness to others. Every day. Through every action and every word."

— **Ujwala Mulgaonkar, M.D., receiving an honorary degree for herself and posthumously for her husband, Dr. Shamkant Mulgaonkar, for their support of the School of Nursing and Public Health**





2021



"As we enter the workforce and find jobs that we have always dreamed of, we know that God is looking out for us and He is always one step ahead of us. We have to be realistic and acknowledge that very few of us will land our dream job the minute we graduate from Caldwell, but no matter what, it is important to learn the job well and do it well. At any moment, you are exactly where God intended you to be and sometimes it's very hard for us to grasp, but if we trust that the Lord is in control, you will be filled with peace."

— **Brittany Rose Gaule, speaking at the baccalaureate Mass, Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a minor in human resource management**



"I want to shout out the professors in the School of Education for preparing me to be the teacher I have dreamed of being since I was 11 and to my professors in the History Department, especially my advisor Dr. Mullaney, for helping me grow as a student, for their constant support in all of my endeavors in my academic and teaching careers."

— **Molly Heller, Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Social Studies, Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, K-6 teaching certification, teacher of students with disabilities endorsement and special education aide in Pequannock Middle School**



"The people in the community are what makes this school special. You are treated as a part of the community the moment you step on the campus."

— **Nathan Dikwa-Nkrumah, Bachelor of Science in Sport Management**



"Caldwell has given me a chance to not only pursue my academic and athletic goals but also be able to serve others during my time. I was able to take advantage of various opportunities at Caldwell that I may not have been able to do at larger campuses."

— **Madison Perry '21, Bachelor of Arts in Biology with minors in psychology and theology, recipient of the Excellence in Leadership and Saint Catherine of Siena awards**



"Everyone from my freshman year to now has been so helpful and kind to me, and it is one of the most welcoming places. The University also has fantastic, caring staff and administrators who greet you with a smile and are always willing to help you no matter what."

— **Vincent Crisafi, B.A. in Criminal Justice**



"Some of my fondest memories of my young adulthood have been at Caldwell or with the people I have met from Caldwell ... I have 10 years of friendships from this institution."

— **Marcelle Boyd, Master of Science in Nursing in Population Health, first graduate research assistant and nursing tutor in the School of Nursing and Public Health, health equity nurse manager, Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Health System's Office of Diversity and Inclusion**



"I knew that University was never going to be easy, especially on the other side of the world to home, but I loved every minute of it and am so sad that it was cut short because of the pandemic. But despite the highest of highs and lowest of lows, I have learned so much from my time at Caldwell, have met some of the greatest people in the world and have memories that I know will last forever."

— **Sophie Hicks, Bachelor of Science in Psychology with minors in neuroscience and medical humanities and recipient of the Trustee Recognition and Saint Dominic awards**



## FACULTY FEATURE

# JENNIFER RHODES:

## FIGHTING COVID WITH COMPASSION AND CREATIVITY



While the world was shutting down, Professor Jennifer Rhodes was working harder than ever. As tough as the challenges of COVID-19 were, she knew that nurses could face the pandemic with hard work, compassion and creativity.

Rhodes began her first year as a full-time nursing professor at Caldwell University just months before the lockdown, coming armed with a strong background in the medical field. It wasn't long before she was putting her experience to good use as part of the University community.

The first opportunity for Rhodes to contribute to the fight against COVID-19 came in March 2020 when she saw friends and former colleagues in the medical field struggling to maintain stores of needed

supplies. She realized the contribution Caldwell University could make and began collecting personal protective equipment (PPE). The School of Nursing and Public Health donated everything it could and local families joined in, leading to a substantial amount of PPE being brought to Morristown Medical Center and Mountainside Hospital.

Rhodes would drive to the hospitals with her kids in the car, which was loaded with supplies like masks, baby monitors, gloves, cleaning supplies, shoes and even signs and cards made by children for the health care workers.

"We never made it past the entryway doors, but it was a beautiful thing for the kids to see," Rhodes said. "We did what we could."

Once classes started in the fall of 2020, with some students opting for in-person learning and others attending virtually, Rhodes knew she would have to get creative. "This created a huge challenge to engage both in person and those tuning in remotely from home," Rhodes said. "Workdays started early in the morning and lasted late into the night. There was not a moment to spare."

To encourage student engagement and focus, Rhodes pre-recorded all of her lectures so students could access them at times when they could best concentrate. In her pathophysiology course, she offered a hybrid plan that combined a pre-recorded lecture paired with a live portion that allowed the emphasis of key points, interaction with students and the opportunity to use creative learning methods. Rhodes incorporated case studies, flipped classroom, Jeopardy!, Kahoot and "anything else I could come up with."

When vaccination sites began opening up in New Jersey, she saw yet another opportunity to contribute.

"When I first heard about the vaccination sites opening in Essex County, the local police department told me they were looking for nurses to volunteer," Rhodes said. "I contacted them immediately to offer my time."

The School of Nursing and Public Health was already working to establish a partnership with the Board of Health. When Dr. Donna Naturale, associate dean of nursing and public health, and Dr. Aneesha Jean, assistant professor, saw Rhodes's enthusiasm for the project, they joined forces and showed up for the first day of vaccinations with what Rhodes described as "a small army of students."

"It was unforgettable and brought tears to my eyes that we were able to help and provide hope for better days to come."





Caldwell University nursing students jumped at the opportunity to serve, filling every volunteer position they were offered. Rhodes watched as they helped patients cope with anxiety and administered vaccines. Students even continued to serve over winter break, with support from other professors including Kathleen Boreale and Bettina Eulie. Rhodes said the whole experience was surreal and made her proud of her University community.

Rhodes's path to contributing to COVID-19 relief began long ago. Having known since childhood that she wanted a career helping others, she earned a Bachelor of Science and began working in the pharmaceutical industry. She returned to school to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and began working in the emergency department at Jersey City Medical Center. She then earned a Master of Nursing and moved on to work as a family nurse practitioner in the urgent care and primary care settings.

"I love having direct contact with patients and seeing the difference I can make by caring for them," Rhodes said.

With a wealth of knowledge in the nursing field, Rhodes taught at Caldwell University and Rutgers University as an adjunct for about six years. She received a Doctor of Nursing in 2017 and began working full time at Caldwell in fall 2019.

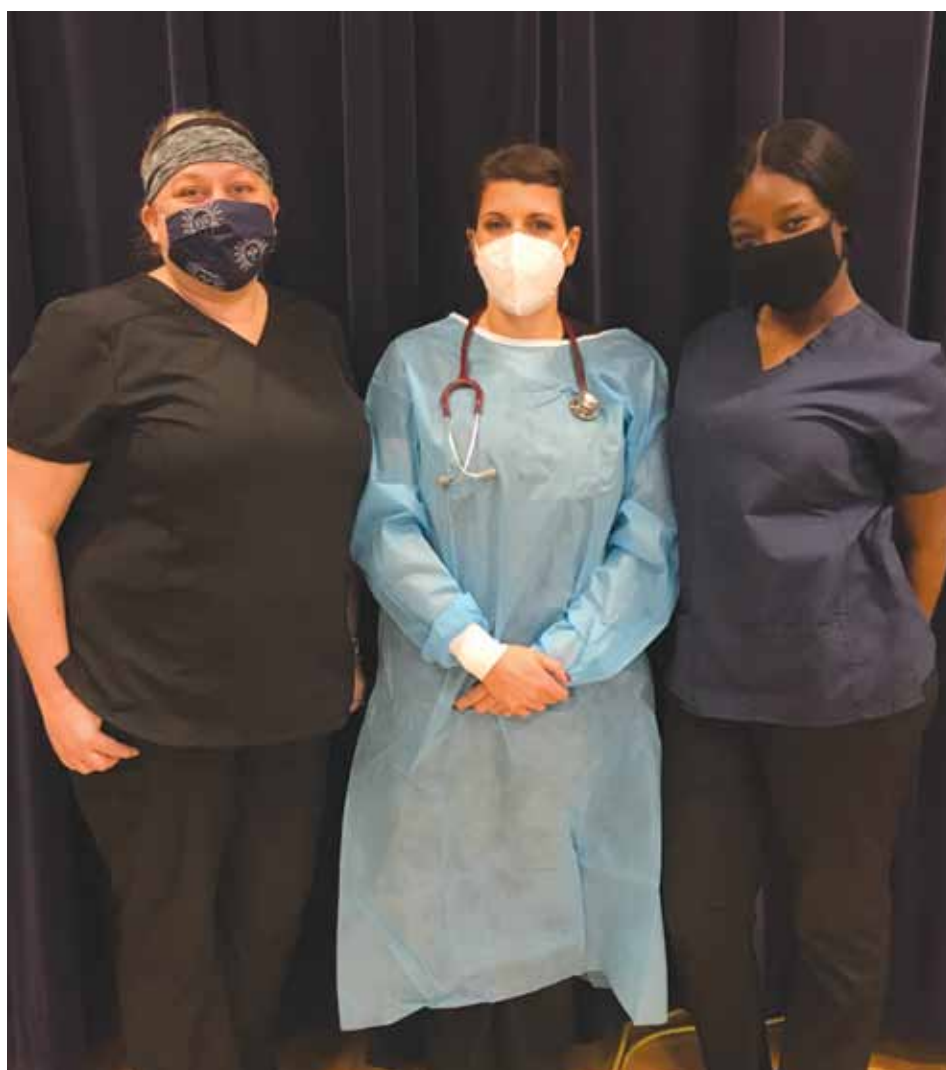
It is easy to see why Rhodes made such an impact at the University and in the greater community during her first full-time year at Caldwell. It is no surprise that other people took notice.

At the conclusion of the 2020-21 school year, Rhodes received the Excellence in Teaching Award at honors convocation.

"I was incredibly surprised to receive this award. I was so busy devising new lectures and keeping the students engaged that I did not even think about being acknowledged."

Today, she is sure to emphasize that she

*"I feel that Caldwell University did an amazing job keeping students moving forward on their career paths ... During this time, it is even more important that we are preparing our future nurses."*



Nursing Professor Jennifer Rhodes with nursing students Debra Ellsworth and Gina Joseph at an Essex County vaccination site.

accepts the award on behalf of the whole nursing school at Caldwell. With increased enrollment in the nursing program and the challenges of educating during a pandemic, everyone in the department worked extremely hard. Rhodes is grateful to Dr. Kathleen Kelley, associate professor and director of undergraduate nursing studies, for adapting and keeping the department on course when the curveballs of the pandemic came their way.

"I feel that Caldwell University did an amazing job keeping students moving forward on their career paths," Rhodes said. "During this time, it is even more important that we are preparing our future nurses."

Now with recent graduates working in an unprecedented environment, Rhodes keeps in touch with her former students, checking on their welfare and asking them to share their experiences with current students.

"They have gone through something that none of the faculty have experienced. Being a new nurse during uncertain times is beyond challenging," Rhodes said. "My best advice is remember that you are prepared with the knowledge you gained at Caldwell University and we are always here to support you day and night." ■

—Nicole Burrell '09



## Financial Economics Student Interns on Wall Street and Is Focused on Giving Back

When Akwasi Osei-Du logged on to start his internship for the global banking firm Credit Suisse each morning, he often learned that the day ahead would include meetings with team members, clients and executives in the United States, the United Kingdom, Latin American or Europe. “Live deals, bake-offs and pitches” were the main focuses of his work as an investment banking summer analyst, explained Osei-Du, a CU student with a double major in financial economics and computer information systems with a concentration in business systems.

His duties included “switching between various tasks on five or six concurrent deals,” furnishing the teams with information, researching companies’ financial statements for details for analysis, taking notes on meetings and designing PowerPoint presentations. Frequently, his work extended into the early morning hours. “It was a great learning experience because of the amount of responsibility and access I had learning directly from my team and senior investment bankers and also CEOs of various companies,” said Osei-Du, a native of Ghana.

He was helped in his work by the practical skills he acquired through his

Caldwell courses, including the classes “Principles of Finance,” which taught him the fundamentals of valuation and finance, and “Accounting Principles 1 and 2.” The skills he honed in “Business Communications” were essential, too, for responding to and framing emails and writing summaries. “They helped me with taking notes on ‘big calls’ and with my interpersonal skills.”

The final two weeks were the highlight, when interns lived at a hotel in Manhattan and had their working days “in-person.” He was happy to finally meet face-to-face with the other interns from schools like Wharton, Princeton and Middlebury. They would dine together; some nights were especially fun when they gathered for socials at rooftop restaurants.

Upon graduation this coming May, Akwasi hopes to work on Wall Street since he has been offered a full-time position at Credit Suisse and then possibly pursue his MBA. Long term, he would like to own his own firm in Ghana where he can focus on his country’s needs in health care, finance and agriculture.

As he thinks back over the past year, his mother, who passed away in February,



and his father are first and foremost on his mind. In the summer of 2020, when he was working through the intensity of the application process for internships and changing his major, it was his parents who helped him move forward. “They kept me grounded.”

Akwasi carries his mother in his heart with him every day. “Reflecting on her life and the gifts she gave so freely motivates me to work harder.” Among his dreams are to help young people in Ghana develop their passions, and to run for political office one day. He is grateful for the gifts he has received from his family, mentors and professors and is determined to carry them forward whether on Wall Street, in the Caldwell University community or with children who need good role models. “The three things that keep me grounded are faith, family and giving back.” ■

—CL

## UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES 14 NEW PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS



*Communication and Media Studies Professor Bob Mann, a veteran broadcaster, is spearheading the podcasting certificate program.*

The broad range of short-term programs focuses on specific career areas within the fields of business, computer science and communications. Classes are all hands-on, so you walk away with marketable skills as well as useful knowledge.

“Certificate programs are the ideal way to enhance existing career skills or to grow into a new role. Caldwell’s professional

certificates offer a small bundle of courses tailored to the student’s needs to respond to changing workplace demands,” said Virginia Rich, associate dean of the School of Business and Computer Science.

“You can complete a certificate to help you immediately excel in your industry or to stack your courses toward a degree. Either way, enrolling in a certificate program provides the jump start you need to bring your skills up to the needs of the workplace.”

The professional certificates are designed for working professionals with flexible course options, including evening and online classes. Many of the certificates require just six courses so they can be completed in one calendar year. Credits may be applied toward future degree programs. ■

—Matt Netter

### PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATES OFFERED INCLUDE:

- Actuarial Science
- Business Administration
- Communication and Media Studies
- Data Analytics
- Esports Management
- Healthcare Administration
- Human Resource Management
- Management Information Systems
- Marketing
- Media Production
- Organizational Leadership
- Podcasting
- Sport Management
- Supply Chain Management

Learn more at <https://www.caldwell.edu/professional-certificates/>





“I feel inspired and motivated every day. I still cannot believe that I’m here.”

# YAMAN THAPA INTERNS AT COMPETITIVE MIT PROGRAM

“I feel inspired and motivated every day. I still cannot believe that I’m here,” said Yaman Thapa when we connected in the summer while she was interning at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the premier educational institution located in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Thapa, a chemistry major with a neuroscience minor, was chosen for the Bernard S. and Sophie G. Gould MIT Summer Research Program in Biology, which is offered in collaboration with MIT’s Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences and is open to advanced sophomores and juniors who are not MIT students.

Thapa spent 10 weeks working in an advanced bioinformatics lab at the Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT. Her mentor closely supervised her during experiments and presentations, she met weekly with two or three MIT faculty members, scientists, deans and peers and she took a methods and logic class to enhance her skills for reading scientific papers. Her research project on “Three-dimensional intact tissue transcriptional analysis of mouse spinal cord” looked at where in the spinal cord specific genes are expressed.

“I learned a lot and met brilliant people every day,” said Thapa, an international student from Kathmandu, Nepal. “Meeting

different professors and understanding the possibilities of science was inspiring.”

While working in the labs, Thapa appreciated the strong foundation she received from the faculty in Caldwell’s Department of Natural Sciences including the research class with Dr. Agnes Berki; the experimentation in Dr. Daryl Aucoin’s biochemistry lab, which helped her understand biological phenomena; the analytical chemistry lab with Dr. Marjorie Squires, which helped her build confidence with handling chemicals; Dr. Xiaolei Gao’s lectures, which prepared her to understand chemical reactions that underlie synthesis and biochemical reactions, and psychology professor Dr. Jon Sigurjonsson’s class, which helped her understand the connection between interdisciplinary concepts.

During downtime Thapa and the other students took excursions around Boston and Cambridge, enjoying a boat cruise, dinner in Chinatown, a Fourth of July celebration, painting and fitness classes and more.

One of Thapa’s goals during her internship was to improve her presentation skills so she can communicate science clearly to

the general population. She was given that opportunity when she gave several presentations explaining a complex concept for different levels of understanding.

Thapa is pleased to know that students who have participated in the MIT program have done very well, with 85% being accepted into highly ranked graduate

programs within two years of their internships. When she graduates from Caldwell, she would like to study molecular and cellular neuroscience, starting right away in

a doctoral degree program or working as a research assistant for a few years before going to graduate school.

Beyond the science experiences, Thapa is grateful for the people she met and with whom she developed relationships. In particular, she enjoyed the social events with her MIT research peer groups, being on campus, having philosophical and scientific conversations and interacting with people from different backgrounds. “It has strengthened my desire to seek knowledge, understand the physical and biological world and make a contribution towards humanity.” ■

—CL

“I learned a lot and met brilliant people every day.”



# STUDENT Accolades



*Marching Band Director and Professor of Music Rebecca Vega and band members Alicia Santamaria and Amanda DeForne.*

Caldwell University marching band members **Amanda DeForne** and **Alicia Santamaria** and Professor of Music Rebecca Vega joined students and educators from across the country at a marching band camp conducted by nationally acclaimed experts. The forum was held at West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania, July 26-29, and workshops included rehearsal techniques, organization and administration, leadership, drill writing, conducting, literature, band pedagogy and technology.

Vega said it was a wonderful opportunity for her and the students to plan together for the fall semester and to think about marching and music fundamentals. “The girls learned so much ... It was also great for them to hear different band director perspectives since they both want to teach high school marching band.”

DeForne and Santamaria are excited to bring back the information they learned to members of Caldwell’s marching band so they can grow and improve.

They particularly appreciated learning from the professionals who were “insightful, inspiring and motivating,” said Santamaria, a music and secondary education major. DeForne, a music education major with a minor in communications, said the best

part was getting practical advice from the high school band directors so she knows what to expect when she becomes one.

Nursing students **Elizabeth Ann Chesney** and **Stephanie Zladivar**, Associate Dean of Nursing and Public Health Donna Naturale and Sister Joanne Beirne, O.P., writing tutor in the Academic Success Center, were interviewed by Global Sisters Report, a project of the National Catholic Reporter, for the article “Nursing students bring aid, community to retired Dominican sisters amid the pandemic.” The story spotlighted the students’ work as nursing assistants at St. Catherine’s Convent during the pandemic in the spring semester and the benefits they gained including practical fieldwork and a chance to learn from the Sisters of Saint Dominic about the history of the University and the roots of the Order of Preachers.



*Nursing student Elizabeth Ann Chesney*



*Nursing student Stephanie Zladivar*



*Jamal Samuel Owen Douglas*

Graphic arts major **Jamal Samuel Owen Douglas** celebrated becoming an Eagle Scout, the highest rank a Scout can earn, July 16. Nearly two years after completing his project in support of Miss Pat’s Cats, a nonprofit that helps cats in the inner city, he and other Scouts from America Troop 6, West Orange, who had obtained the rank were applauded at the court of honor. Douglas, a member of the Caldwell esports team and marching band, says he sees how characteristics he learned in scouting, such as speaking up for himself and communicating with his teachers and peers, have helped him in his university career.

**Amira El-Boghdedy’s** applied behavior analysis (ABA) master’s thesis with Dr. Tina Sidener and Dr. Sharon Reeve, “A Comparison of Procedures for Maintaining On-Task Behavior in the Absence of an Instructor,” was accepted by the journal Behavior Analysis in Practice. Heather Pane’s ABA doctoral dissertation with Dr. Sidener and Dr. Sharon Reeve, “A Comparison of Development-Matched and Age-Matched Targets on Play Skills of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder,” was accepted by the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. Doctoral student Priya Patil published her master’s thesis with Dr. Sidener and Dr. Sharon Reeve, “Teaching children with autism spectrum disorder to mand, ‘why?’,” in the journal The Analysis of Verbal Behavior. ■





# CALDWELL LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO HELP STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES SOAR



## STUDENT OUTREACH AND ACADEMIC RESOURCES

A new program to help students with learning disabilities flourish in a university setting is kicking off this fall.

Student Outreach and Academic Resources (SOAR) is designed to help students with a diagnosed language-based learning and/or neurological disability achieve their full potential as undergraduates and after graduation when they go on to pursue their hopes and dreams.

“One of the most exciting aspects of SOAR is how it will help students learn to be independent and to self-advocate,” said Elizabeth Skinner, Caldwell’s director of accessibility services. The program is designed to offer support for the students by providing them with academic facilitators and peer mentors, and to give parents of students an opportunity to participate in educational workshops.

Caldwell was built on the welcoming atmosphere cultivated by the Sisters of St. Dominic and that quality of care continues today, making the University a perfect fit for SOAR. “We strive to provide our students with the best academic experiences possible, so we are pleased to offer an extra layer of support to help our students with learning differences earn a university education,” said Henrietta Genfi, Caldwell’s associate dean for academic support.

SOAR is focused on inclusivity. “We’re not altering curriculum. Nothing is separate,” said Skinner, “but students in SOAR will have the advantage of personalized academic services including tutoring, writing coaching, peer mentoring, outreach, career-building and leadership skills training and other resources.” During their college careers, as students

show academic success and gain independence, career development will become more of a focus.

Students in the national honor society for learning disabilities, Delta Alpha Pi, will provide peer mentoring. “They want to hear from other students, not just us,” said Skinner. Students in SOAR who demonstrate achievement may qualify for membership in Delta Alpha Pi as upperclassmen and even serve as student mentors for future members of the program.

Incoming students are excited to be part of the fledgling program. One student said he chose Caldwell because of SOAR, another said he looks forward to helping shape the program and a third said that she looks forward to developing independence under the guidance of her academic facilitator.

To be eligible, a student must be an incoming freshman or a transfer student accepted to Caldwell under the standard admissions process and have a documented diagnosis of a language-based and/or neurological learning disability including attention deficit disorders. As part of the application process to SOAR, students must submit a current IEP or 504 plan as well as evaluation testing reports and take part in an interview with the University program staff. ■



# Meet Dr. Peter Ubertaccio

## CALDWELL'S NEW VP FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



**DR. PETER UBERTACCIO JOINED CALDWELL UNIVERSITY AS VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ON JULY 1.** He comes to Caldwell from Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, where he was dean of the Thomas and Donna May School of Arts & Sciences and an associate professor of political science. He was previously director of the Joseph Martin Institute for Law & Society and the chair of the Department of Political Science and International Studies at Stonehill. He is chair of the John F. Kennedy Hyannis Museum Foundation in Hyannis, Massachusetts. Dr. Ubertaccio holds an undergraduate degree from the Catholic University of America and a Ph.D. in politics from Brandeis University. He is no stranger to New Jersey; he grew up in Morristown and

attended Morristown High School. Colette Liddy talked to him about his background and his hopes for the future at Caldwell.

### WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING IN THE GARDEN STATE?

It's great. I've spent a lot of time in New England and I'm getting a little reacquainted to the area. Caldwell is a beautiful town, and I have been trying to do my best to remind myself of what it means to live in New Jersey, so I've been listening to a lot of Bruce Springsteen and going to local diners when I can. It's really been great.

### WHAT IS REWARDING ABOUT WORKING WITH FACULTY?

The faculty in the classroom are the drivers of the most important aspects of what we do. Their ability to educate, to mentor,

to open up the eyes of our students to the world and its complexity is fundamental to our mission. One thing I loved about being dean was I got to learn about all these great disciplines and programs we offered. Now as a vice president I have a whole new raft of programs that I am learning about, and it's everything from literature and history and math to nursing labs and applied behavior analysis and all the amazing offerings here. I'm a faculty member by training, so it is kind of natural for me to really want to get to know my colleagues, to learn about their disciplines and to learn about what they need to be successful.

### WHAT DO YOU HOPE THAT OUR MISSION MEANS TO THE FACULTY?

Catholic institutions have a special calling for offering students a comprehensive view of intellectual life. And what we do well—Catholic institutions—really forces our students and ourselves to think about the world that we live in, our place in it, our ethical role as human beings, the contributions of the Church to our society. Those are the kinds of intellectual and spiritual questions that we ask ourselves that many institutions don't. And it is not a critique of them. It is just a unique and wonderful characteristic of Catholic higher ed. And so I think faculty, staff, students, we all have to be in a place where we are willing to engage those fundamental issues.

### WHAT HAS THE PANDEMIC TAUGHT US ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION, AND WHERE WILL THAT TAKE US AT CALDWELL?

We in higher ed can be more innovative, not just Caldwell, more quickly than we are used to. We as an industry need to figure out how we can institutionalize that, because we don't want to leave it to the online providers. They have their role, and it is a decent role, but it is not the right kind of institution for lots of students. We—the smaller institutions, which were forced into remote and online en masse—need to figure out how we can institutionalize that level of innovation and move things a little more quickly than we have had to in the past. I think at the same time, we, in Catholic higher ed space,





## Caldwell Welcomes Jorge Rodriguez as Vice President for Strategic Initiatives

need to figure out how we do that and make sure that our mission is prominent in our new programs and new modes of delivery. We need to think about how we are delivering the mission to an increasing number of students who will be accessing us online or via hybrid courses.

Having said all that, I think the pandemic has also demonstrated to us that there is a real desire to continue to pursue an education that focuses on the whole person, and as much as we will use technology and develop new programs in response to the kind of changing marketplace, we will still have students who want to study and need to be supported in our traditional programs, and we will still have students who want to be in residence and love to be student athletes and want to go to Mass in person. And so I think one thing that the pandemic has really reinforced to me is the sense of community that we missed and that people really are yearning for.

### GOALS AT CALDWELL?

My goal for this summer into the fall semester is to just get to know Caldwell. It is just a matter of getting to know this place and working with President Whelan on thinking about the future of the University, how we can strengthen some of our programs, how we can highlight the distinctiveness of a Caldwell education, what new programs we want to add to our portfolio and how we support the programs that we have.

Being at a comprehensive institution is a particular kind of charge for us to grow and innovate but then also continue to support and highlight that which we have had and has been part of our DNA for

a long time. I'd like to spend my time working with faculty, staff, students and friends of the University just to really get to know the institution.

### YOU HAVE TAKEN STUDENTS ON TRAVEL EXPERIENCES. IS THAT SOMETHING THAT INTERESTS YOU?

Very much. I think short-term, faculty-led travel is something we could do more of and would be really popular with students. We often just assume that travel means abroad, and I think there is a lot more we can do domestically. There's a lot of learning that needs to be done about our own country.

*“The faculty in the classroom are the drivers of the most important aspects of what we do. Their ability to educate, to mentor, to open up the eyes of our students to the world and its complexity is fundamental to our mission.”*

### DO YOU HAVE COLLEGE-AGE CHILDREN? HAVE YOU GONE THROUGH THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS?

Yes, both times during the pandemic. My oldest is going into her second year. My middle daughter is starting this fall. Our youngest son is going into his junior year of high school. We have not yet gotten one full cycle of a normal college admission experience because the first one was cut short, when we were trying to make a

decision, by COVID, and we couldn't do any follow-up visits. And then the second one was during COVID. Things felt a little off. But both of my daughters have made really good choices. It was a reminder to me as a parent, as an administrator, (of) the amazing work that colleges are doing during some pretty difficult circumstances. ■



The University welcomed Jorge Rodriguez this summer as vice president for strategic initiatives. He joined Caldwell after more than 37 years at St. John's University in financial leadership positions and as vice provost and chief enrollment officer. Rodriguez has extensive experience in undergraduate enrollment, graduate enrollment, international students, financial aid, net revenue analysis, scholarship development, bursar, advising, retention, housing and student affairs issues, global studies, marketing and communications, faculty/high school research, customer service and more. He has led projects on campuses across New York and in Rome. In his position at Caldwell, he will oversee new projects, directives and initiatives, working with President Matthew Whelan and the CU Board of Trustees. Rodriguez says he is excited to join Caldwell, "a premier Catholic University," with its dedicated team and "a vibrant community of students." He looks forward to assisting in providing an exceptional education to all students and sharing in the Dominican mission "that will truly help inspire students to change the world." ■



# Faculty & Staff Notes

**Kevin Barnes, Ed.D.,** associate dean of the School of Education; **Brian Bulger, Ed.D., CAEP,** co-coordinator for the School of Education; **Joanne Jasmine, Ed.D.,** professor of education, and **Edith Ries, Ed.D.,** professor of education, presented at the New Jersey Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's Day of Assessment. Their presentation was titled "Best Practices: Using Data to Inform Instruction in Education." **Ellina Chernobilsky, Ph.D.,** associate vice president for academic affairs, Ries and Jasmine had a chapter titled "Humanizing a Teacher Education Program in a Small Liberal Arts University" published in the book "International Perspectives on Innovative Approaches Towards Teaching and Learning: Humanizing Higher Education."

**Traci Bitondo, LPC, ATR-BC,** adjunct lecturer in art therapy in the School of Psychology and Counseling and professional art therapist, created a government affairs committee for the New Jersey Art Therapy Association with two art therapy alumni to advocate licensure for art therapists in New Jersey.

**Ellina Chernobilsky; Nan Childress-Orchard, DMA,** professor of music, and **Thomson Ling,** associate dean of the School of Psychology and Counseling, led a round-table discussion at the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities in January that focused on the place of liberal arts in program prioritization. Chernobilsky presented a professional development session titled "Action research as a form of professional development" to the faculty of the American University of Afghanistan in April.

**Christopher Cimorelli,** adjunct lecturer of theology and director of the National Institute for Newman Studies, was co-editor of the Festschrift volume "One Bread, One Body, One Church: Essays on the Ecclesia of Christ Today in Honor of Bernard P. Prusak" (Peeters Press, 2021). In addition, he recently had the article "Newman, Catholicity, and the Church Today: On the Development of Christian Principles through Dialogue with the

World" accepted for publication in the peer-reviewed, open-access journal Religions.

**Ruth DeBar, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA (NY),** professor in the Department of Applied Behavior Analysis and clinical supervisor of the Center for Autism and ABA, served as a site visitor for accreditation by the Association for Behavioral Analysis International for another institution's doctoral and master's programs in behavior analysis. DeBar; **Jason Vladescu, Ph.D., BCBA-D, NCSP, LBA (NY),** associate professor of applied behavior analysis, and **Sharon Reeve, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA,** professor of applied behavior analysis, had an article published in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis on the effects of video modeling on abduction-prevention skills by individuals with autism spectrum disorder. DeBar and **Professor Tina Sidener, Ph.D., BCBA-D,** chair of the Department of Applied Behavior Analysis, worked with doctoral student Jessica Amador on publishing her master's thesis on teaching practitioners to conduct a trial-based functional analysis in the Journal of Behavior Modification.

**Janet L. Fike, Ed.D., J.D.,** adjunct lecturer in the School of Education and superintendent of schools for the Morris-Union Jointure Commission, was selected as the Union County Superintendent of the Year by the Union County Superintendents' Roundtable.

**Jaz Graf,** adjunct lecturer in the Department of Visual Art and Design, had her work featured in the Newark Museum of Art's 2021 New Jersey Arts Annual: ReVision and Respond exhibition. Graf was awarded a Newark Creative Catalyst grant and an Artist Book residency at the Women's Studio Workshop.



**Tara Harney-Mahajan, Ph.D.,** assistant professor of English, co-edited a book that includes a chapter written by her. "Post-Celtic Tiger

Ireland and Contemporary Women's Writing: Feminist Interventions and Imaginings" was published by Routledge in May. For the second year in a row, she was invited to serve as a member of the American Conference for Irish Studies committee that awarded the annual Michael J. Durkan Book Prize for Language and Culture. As co-editor of the literary and cultural studies journal LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory, under the Taylor & Francis imprint, Harney-Mahajan worked on publishing the special issue "Religion, Criticism, and the Postcritical."



**Jim Kelly,** athletics administrator and head sprint football coach, and former Nutley High School coach, was enshrined in the Essex County Football Coaches Hall of Fame.

**Harry Maisch IV,** adjunct lecturer in the School of Natural Sciences, published a peer-reviewed journal article on a self-collected assemblage of fossil fish remains from Monmouth County, New Jersey, titled "Osteichthyans from the Shark River Formation (middle Eocene) and Kirkwood Formation (early Miocene)."

**Neil Malvone,** assistant professor of sports management, had his article "Athletes and Depression: A Historical Review and the COVID-19 Impact" published in the International Journal of Education and Social Science.



**Rob Middleton,** adjunct lecturer in the Department of Music; **Nan Childress-Orchard, DMA,** professor of music, and **Rebecca Vega,** professor

of music, made a studio recording of Middleton's piece "Miracles" in late May. The piece was inspired by illuminations in





The Saint John's Bible, which the campus hosted in 2019. The commissioning and the recording were funded with faculty development grants.

**Jennifer Noonan, Ph.D., Alvin R. Calman Professor of Art History**, has been selected as a 2021-22 Tyson Scholar at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas, and will be in residence for this short-term fellowship from December 2021 to January 2022 to conduct research in the University of Arkansas's special collections and at Crystal Bridges. The fellowship will support research for her book project, "Printmaking, U.S. Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The International Art Program's Graphic Arts Workshop," which is under contract with Routledge. Noonan gave a paper titled "Lois Bingham: An Active Proponent of Advanced U.S. Visual Art" at the Popular Culture/American Culture Association's annual conference in June. She is the guest editor and contributor to a special edition of the international Journal on Biennials and Other Exhibitions, forthcoming in November 2021.

**Megan Pennington, BSN, RN, clinical affiliation/simulation lab coordinator in the School of Nursing and Public Health**, received a 2021 Arthur P. Gold Champions of Humanistic Care award. The honor was presented to physicians, nurses and health care team members who were selected by their health care institutions for compassion and courage during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**David Petriello, Ph.D., adjunct instructor in the Department of History and Political Science**, presented a paper at the Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science titled "Magic, Mephistopheles, and Medicine: Disease and Demonology in the Testament of Solomon."

**Kenneth F. Reeve, Ph.D., BCBA-D, professor of applied behavior analysis**, co-authored a paper with his former doctoral student Emily Gallant and his ABA department colleagues investigating how to teach logical thinking to college students. The paper was published in the journal Behavioral Interventions. Reeve was a co-author on four additional

research papers published in other behavior analysis journals. He was also a co-author with his students and ABA colleagues on two concept formation research paper presentations at the 47th annual convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis International. He served as a research paper reviewer for the journals The Psychological Record, Behavioral Interventions and Journal of Experimental Analysis of Behavior.

**Sharon A. Reeve, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA, professor of applied behavior analysis**, was a co-author on six recently published behavior analysis research papers addressing concept formation, play skills, staff training and questions asking. Reeve was a co-author on 10 research paper presentations at the 47th annual convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis International. She co-authored eight research paper presentations at the 16th annual conference of the New Jersey Association for Behavior Analysis during which she also served as the chair of a symposium on teaching social and safety skills to individuals with autism spectrum disorder and developmental disabilities. Reeve served as an article reviewer and associate editor for multiple behavior analysis journals. In spring of 2021, she appeared on a CBS2 story with students and staff of the Center for Autism and Applied Behavior Analysis discussing their work training first responders to interact with people with autism spectrum disorder.



**John T. Yurko, professor of communication and media studies and director of the Media Educators Association in New York**, interviewed

Michael Lembeck and Harrison Powell, director and producer, respectively, for "Queen Bees," a film starring Ellen Burstyn, James Caan, Ann-Margaret, Loretta Devine and Jane Curtain.

**To watch the interview, go here:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ndexJmxbJI>

## FACULTY AND STAFF HONORS



**Sister Kathleen Tuite, O.P., vice president for student life**, received the 2021 Caldwell Cup, awarded to

an employee who has made a unique contribution to the campus. The honoree is someone who has exhibited a superior professional approach that goes beyond mere job description, that uniquely benefits Caldwell University, and whose positive influence demonstrably improves the University community. Sister Kathleen said it was special to be recognized during this time, the year of the pandemic. "This has been a year, very difficult, but we rose above it and we've all done that together." She especially wanted to thank Dr. Matthew Whelan "because he came in and really helped us." Caldwell is a special place, said Sister. "I just love our students ... that's why I'm here."

The Excellence in Teaching Award was presented to **Jennifer Rhodes, assistant professor in the School of Nursing and Public Health**, for exhibiting excellence in teaching, passion and enthusiasm for learning, and concern for students' academic and personal growth.

The Mission in Action Award was presented to **Heather Arabitg, head athletic trainer**. This award recognizes the extraordinary contributions and quality service of staff members and acknowledges their role in advancing the mission of Caldwell University.

The Graduate Faculty Mentorship Award was presented to **Anne Marie Callahan, professor in the School of Business and Computer Science**, for exhibiting excellence in mentoring graduate students.

**Sally Jo Weber, professor in the Department of Modern Languages**, was recognized as professor emerita, a title conferred upon former faculty members who have distinguished themselves as outstanding teachers, researchers, administrators or professional leaders.



# Dominican Connection

## STUDENTS FIND HOPE & JOY

### IN RCIA JOURNEY TO RECEIVING CATHOLIC SACRAMENTS

When Cindy Herrera saw the message pop up in her campus emails inviting members of the campus community to consider taking a step in faith to receive the Catholic sacraments, she felt inspired to respond. “It definitely was a blessing in disguise ... I was like ‘I might as well do it,’” said Herrera, who was confirmed on April 11, Divine Mercy Sunday, at St. Aloysius Church in Caldwell after going through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA).

Herrera had long wanted to receive confirmation. When she was a child, her family went to church, but “by the time I graduated middle school, we just kind of stopped ... I was supposed to make my confirmation in high school and we just never got around to it.” Herrera was one of four students who went through the RCIA process in the 2020-21 academic year, led by Campus Ministry Director Colleen O’Brien.

After the normal initial uneasiness, Herrera said that by the end of the second meeting she knew she was doing the right thing. The gatherings became a place where the students met new friends and shared the joy of journeying with like-minded people who wanted to follow the Lord. The decision was such a big one that she did not tell her mom until the end of the fall semester. “She was really, really proud of me. And the fact that I did this for myself, not for anyone else, really says a lot,” said



*Student De-Jane Grant being baptized by Msgr. Robert Emery, pastor of St. Aloysius, during the Easter Vigil.*

Herrera. If Caldwell had not offered the program, “I don’t think I would have done it ever.”

Benjamin Fernandez received his first Holy Communion and confirmation at the Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday after going through RCIA. “I’m extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of Christianity and a closer relationship with Jesus. I’m excited to continue my faith journey with my family and as a member of the Catholic community.”

Students De-Jane Grant and Otis Tellez also went through RCIA and were baptized and received their first Holy Communion and confirmations during the Easter Vigil at St. Al’s.

O’Brien finds it a joy to journey with students through RCIA. “In our world today we hear about so many people turning away from faith, yet I get to work with 18- to 22-year-olds who are actively choosing ‘yes’ to their faith. They want to come to know God deeper, to know Jesus in a deeper way through the Catholic faith.” When candidates join RCIA, they commit to meeting weekly for at least an hour over many months. They talk about all aspects of faith including the Bible, what it means to be Catholic, and the sacraments. “Of course there never feels like there is enough time to do everything, but that’s where even I have to trust that the Holy Spirit takes over and fills in the rest,” said O’Brien.

Herrera encourages other students who are interested in exploring their faith more deeply to “take a chance; you never know ... it is going to lead to a whole variety of opportunities.”

Fernandez, a graphic design major and honors student, has become more inspired to instill deeper spiritual meaning into his work. He hopes to pursue education to guide students in discovering their artistic and creative potential.

Herrera, a criminal justice major with three minors—pre-law, psychology and criminal forensics—thinks she wants to pursue a career in investigations. “I want to be able to help people and serve justice.”

The sacraments were administered by Msgr. Robert Emery, pastor of St. Aloysius.

Wherever life takes them, the students are strengthened in knowing God will always be right by their sides. “I feel like I’ve grown to be an entirely new person, especially during the pandemic,” said Herrera. “I feel like I have better trust in Him that things are going to be okay, that I’m not going to be alone anymore.” ■

—CL



*L to R: Campus Ministry Director Colleen O’Brien and students De-Jane Grant and Otis Tellez at the Easter Vigil after Grant and Tellez were received in the Catholic faith.*



*L to R: Student Benjamin Fernandez, Campus Ministry Director Colleen O’Brien and Cindy Herrera on Divine Mercy Sunday at St. Aloysius when Fernandez received his first Holy Communion and he and Herrera were confirmed.*





## Remembering a Day We Can Never Forget

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks that took nearly 3,000 lives. On that day we will pray for all in the Caldwell University family who lost loved ones, friends, colleagues and neighbors. We will say a prayer of thanks for the courageous first responders, our local and national leaders, and all those who bravely and selflessly helped our grieving nation emerge with renewed hope and resilience.

*May we never forget.*

# #neverforget

## University Welcomes New Board of Trustees Members

The University is pleased to welcome new board members—**Osbert Orduña**, CEO and founder of M&C Venture Group, and **Dr. Leon Smith, Jr.**, director of maternal/fetal medicine in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology at Saint Barnabas Medical Center. In addition, **Robert Purdy**, president of the Specialty Workers Compensation Division and senior vice president of Domestic Brokerage Group for the American International Group (AIG), has rejoined the Caldwell team.



Orduña says he is humbled to join the board. “I am happy to have the opportunity to bring to Caldwell the knowledge and experience of coming from

a diverse background and the perspective that has provided me.” M&C Venture Group, LLC, specializes exclusively in government contracting at the federal, state and local levels. The company holds multiple socioeconomic certifications at state and city levels including the Federal Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Business, the Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Business, Minority Business Enterprise and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise certifications.

Orduña served in various roles in law enforcement: He was a federal agent and task force officer and was the first Latino in the New York Field Office promoted to the rank of group supervisor (GS-14). He was appointed by DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano as a Department of Homeland Security building design subject matter expert and advisor to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the New York City Police Department on the Freedom Tower and Ground Zero construction projects. A service-disabled veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, he served honorably with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force of the United States Marine Corps. Military recognitions include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (2nd Award), the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and a Presidential Unit Citation.



Smith is very enthusiastic about joining Caldwell’s board. “I’m really into this school; it is a local, noble cause. President Whelan is wonderful. The people couldn’t be nicer.” A member of the New Jersey Perinatal Associates, he is board-

certified in obstetrics and gynecology and maternal-fetal medicine and has been named a Top Doctor by Castle Connolly, New York Magazine, New Jersey Monthly and Inside Jersey.



Purdy says he is blessed to be back on the board where he previously spent “12 wonderful years.” “Intentions bring zero results unless you

turn these intentions into goals that are accomplished,” says Purdy. “Caldwell University builds tomorrow’s leaders by faith, desire to learn, superb faculty teaching, and administration leadership.” He has been with AIG for over 20 years and has held several senior management positions. Purdy previously worked for the Cigna Corporation, holding various management opportunities. He also worked in the education field in special education and as a reading specialist.

Under the leadership of Board Chair Linda Luciano, Ed.D., and Governance Committee Chair Kathleen Barabas, the Board of Trustees’ by-laws and committee charters were completely vetted and revised during the 2020-21 academic year. ■





### GROTTO OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes has been on the grounds since 1915. This past spring the Sisters of St. Dominic undertook a project to renovate the grotto. For more than 100 years, it has been a place of prayer, peace and natural beauty for all to visit.

To learn the unique history of the grotto, go to <https://caldwellop.org/giving/the-grotto-of-our-lady-of-lourdes/>

# LANDMARKS



### BLUE EARTH

"Blue Earth," by Sister Gerardine Mueller, O.P., which hangs above the doorway at the back entrance to Rosary Hall.

### HALL OF FLAGS

The Hall of Flags features the countries of origin of international students past and present. When a new student comes to Caldwell from a country not yet represented with a flag, a flag raising ceremony featuring history and culture is held in the hall.



### COAT OF ARMS ON PLAZA

The University coat of arms is engraved on the plaza. It captures the significance of a Caldwell University education in its colors, motto and symbols. The red indicates the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the gold points to His kingship. Imprinted on the seal is the motto "Sapientia et Scientia," which means "wisdom and knowledge" and is derived from the Litany of the Sacred Heart. The motto appears on an open book, which symbolizes Caldwell University as an institution of learning. The cross, which divides the whole into four parts, is taken from the coat of arms of the Order of Preachers and shows the relationship of the Sisters of St. Dominic as members of the order to Caldwell University. The golden sun in the upper left quarter is the symbol of St. Thomas Aquinas, patron of all Catholic schools and particular patron of Caldwell University. 1939, appearing at the bottom of the image, marks the year the Sisters founded the University. The stone carving was donated by alumna Marge Curley and her husband Gary Ballerini.





# Meet Lucy the Canine Cougar!

If you've been on campus in the past year, you've probably met or seen Lucy, AKA Lucy Whelan, AKA Lucy the Wonder Dog, AKA Lucy the Canine Cougar. She goes by many names, but this five-year-old border collie/lab is a Cougar fan through and through. Caldwell University President Matthew Whelan, Ed.D., and his wife, Mrs. Kathy Whelan, are the proud parents of this playful pooch, but Lucy considers all of us her family.

Lucy is a big fan of Caldwell sports, clubs and activities and loves to take walks on campus and around the neighborhood. She has also been known to take road trips to visit her favorite parks and even cheer on some Caldwell teams. You might well find her hanging out near the cafeteria hoping for a snack. (Cheese is her favorite.) Follow her on Instagram @lucythecaninecougar. ■

—Matt Netter



## REUNION

CELEBRATING CLASS YEARS

1960 | 1961 | 1965 | 1966 | 1970 | 1971

**OCTOBER 23, 2021**

For information about the reunion, contact  
Meghan Moran [MMoran@caldwell.edu](mailto:MMoran@caldwell.edu) or 973-618-3352.





# Caldwell University Athletics Adds Acrobatics and Tumbling and Men's Rugby



New acrobatics & tumbling head coach Jenna Adams (middle).

Caldwell becomes the first institution in New Jersey to add acrobatics and tumbling as a varsity sport. It is classified as an NCAA emerging sport with fewer than 40 programs across the nation.

The acrobatics and tumbling team will compete in the National Collegiate Acrobatics & Tumbling Association. Caldwell is among 37 NCAA institutions to sponsor acrobatics and tumbling and the 39th school nationally.

Acrobatics and tumbling is the evolution of different disciplines of gymnastics, including the athletic aspects of competitive cheerleading. The format was created at the collegiate level to address the interest and abilities of young women competing in this skill set. Individuals and small groups execute acrobatic lifts, tosses and tumbling. Meets include six events, all on the floor and in varying group sizes.

For men's rugby, Caldwell will kick off with rugby sevens competition, growing to full 15s competition as the roster expands. The Cougars will compete in the Tri-State Rugby Conference, which includes institutions from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

Coaches for both sports were hired in the spring. **Jenna Adams** was named the acrobatics and tumbling head coach, while **Kisset Chirengende** was hired as head coach of the men's rugby club.

Adams comes to Caldwell from the Encore Performing Arts Center where she has worked as a tumbling instructor for the past two years. She previously served as a volunteer assistant coach at her alma mater, Quinnipiac University, for one year. Adams was a fourth-grade teacher at Saint Joseph Regional School in Somers Point, New Jersey.

Adams was a four-year starter on the acrobatics and tumbling team at Quinnipiac from 2014 to 2018. In her senior year, she was the Eastern College Athletic Conference Player of the Year, a member of the ECAC All-Academic Team, a dean's list honoree and team captain.

Adams graduated from Quinnipiac with a bachelor's degree in psychology in 2018 and went on to earn a master's degree in teaching in elementary education in 2019.

Chirengende comes to Caldwell from William Paterson University where he



New men's rugby head coach Kisset Chirengende.

served as the assistant head coach for the men's rugby club from 2016 to 2018 and as head coach from 2018 to 2021. He guided his team to three straight sevens tri-state championships and finished with the highest national ranking during the three years at sixth in 2019. Chirengende also led the William Paterson 15s team to tri-state championships in 2018 and 2019. His 2018 team qualified for the national tournament and finished fifth in the national rankings.

Prior to his time at William Paterson, Chirengende was the founder and coach for the Zambezi Steelers, an invitational rugby team. He led the program to a Tropical U18 7s Elite Division championship in Orlando in 2018 and participated in the 2019 U19 World Schools Festival in Cape Town, South Africa.

Chirengende graduated from Leeds Beckett University in Leeds, United Kingdom, in 2012 with a degree in sport business management. While at Leeds Beckett, Chirengende was a member of the rugby team. ■

—JT







## Christie Conforti Selected to Lead Women's Basketball Program

Caldwell University Athletics has selected **Christie Conforti** as the next women's basketball head coach and assistant director of athletics.

Conforti comes to Caldwell from fellow Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference institution Concordia College, where she served as the women's basketball head coach for seven seasons. She previously served as an assistant coach for the Clippers for one-plus seasons before taking over as the interim head coach in the middle of the 2013-14 season. Conforti's first full season as head coach was in 2014-15, and in her third season, 2016-17, she led the Clippers to their first CACC championship tournament appearance.

The past season, Concordia forged new milestones under Conforti's leadership. The Clippers reached the semifinals of the CACC championship tournament for the first time and earned the program's first bid to the NCAA Division II championship tournament.

Conforti was a member of the Pace University Setters for two seasons, earning recognition on the Northeast-10 Conference Commissioner's Honor Roll for the 2007-08 season. Conforti, along with her husband, Joseph, hails from Staten Island, New York, where she attended St. John Villa Academy. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Pace in 2010. ■

—JT



## MARK A. CORINO HONORED FOR A THIRD TIME AS CACC AD

Caldwell Assistant Vice President/Director of Athletics Mark A. Corino was voted by his peers as the 2020-21 Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (CACC) AD of the Year. The announcement was made by CACC Commissioner Dan Mara. The voting was conducted by the league's 14 athletic directors, who honored Corino for his hard work in helping to lead the conference during the pandemic with his fellow administrators. This is Corino's third CACC AD of the Year honor as he was recognized in 1999-2000 and 2016-17.

"I have worked with Mark Corino for more than two decades, and this is a tremendous honor that recognizes his hard work in helping to shape the CACC as one of the finest conferences in Division II," said Mara. "The past 12 months have been trying for all of our administrators, and Mark has led by example in taking part in a myriad of meetings at the conference and national levels. There has been a lot of information that he has had to process, but he has made sure that his fellow athletic directors are kept up to date with the latest developments to help them make the most informed decision during the pandemic."

Corino, who is chairman of the CACC Directors Council, has guided dozens of virtual meetings with conference athletic directors over the past 12 months. He helped the league craft guidance and rules for conducting intercollegiate athletic competition in a safe and responsible manner during the 2020-21 season.

"It is truly an honor to be recognized by my peers in the conference as the CACC AD of the Year," said Corino. "I am fortunate to work with a great group of athletic directors and conference staff. It has been a challenging year but rewarding to work with my peers for the betterment of our student-athletes. I am thankful for our university president, Dr. Matthew Whelan, the board of trustees and the cabinet for the opportunity to have had our student-athletes compete during this difficult year."

In addition to his myriad duties as chairman, Corino serves on the prestigious NCAA Division II Management Council, which helps chart the course of the national organization at the D2 level. In his role on the council, Corino has taken part in dozens of virtual meetings to help guarantee student-athletes have the opportunity to compete this season in a safe way while navigating through the pandemic.

When he hasn't been part of virtual meetings for the league, NCAA and his own institution, Corino serves as Caldwell's men's basketball head coach. Under his guidance this winter, the Cougars finished their abbreviated season at 6-5, qualifying for the NCAA Division II East Region tournament for the second time in program history and gaining their first NCAA D2 tournament victory.

Caldwell is also among the league leaders in academic achievement. During the 2019-20 academic year, 13 Caldwell teams that compete in the CACC posted team-wide grade point averages of 3.0 or better. In November 2020, the NCAA announced its latest Academic Success Rate scores, and Caldwell ranked among the top third in NCAA Division II with a 90 percent average. ■

—JT





*Two-time IWLC A all-region honoree Arden Kassaleh.*

With the postponement of the fall 2020 contests due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference opted to play traditional fall and winter sports in the spring semester on a limited game schedule. The spring teams competed as scheduled during their traditional seasons.

The **men's and women's basketball teams** started their seasons in late January with a limited schedule. The women's team finished with a 3-7 record, reaching the CACC tournament as the fifth seed. Junior Paula Dits (Alicante, Spain) was a CACC First Team All-Conference selection and a Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association (MBWA) First Team All-Met pick. The women's team was recognized with the CACC Team Sportsmanship Award.

The **men's basketball team** finished its abbreviated season at 6-5, qualifying for the NCAA Division II East Region tournament for the second time in program history. The Cougars earned their first NCAA DII tournament victory with a 65-62 win over Dominican College in the opening round. Junior Anthony Cooper (Ashburn, Virginia) was a CACC First Team All-Conference selection and an MBWA First Team All-Met pick. He was also named to the National Association of Basketball

Coaches Division II East Region All-District Second Team and to the NCAA DII East Region All-Tournament Team.

The **men's soccer team** competed in the spring season and qualified for the CACC tournament as the seventh seed. Sophomore Andre Vieira (Union, New Jersey) won CACC First Team All-Conference honors, while the Cougars earned the CACC Team Sportsmanship Award.

The **women's soccer team** finished its spring season with a 2-3-1 record and reached the CACC tournament as the fourth seed. The Cougars earned four all-conference selections as junior goalkeeper Jamie-Lee Bamford (Braintree, United Kingdom), sophomore forward Sarah Costanza (Morris Plains, New Jersey), senior midfielder Teaghan Darling (Forked River, New Jersey) and junior defender Brianna Lewis (Tucson, Arizona) were recognized for their achievements.

The **women's volleyball team** finished its shortened season at 3-4 overall and took fourth place in the CACC with a 3-3 conference record. The Cougars reached the quarterfinals of the CACC tournament. Senior Elise Smith (O'Fallon, Illinois) was named to the CACC First Team All-Conference.

The **women's bowling team** finished in third place in the qualifying round of the East Coast Conference championship, advancing to the ECC semifinals. Junior Jenna Rapach (Hazleton, Pennsylvania) was selected to the ECC First Team All-Conference, while senior Madison Perry (Hawthorne, New Jersey) earned ECC Second Team honors. Rapach was also honored as the ECC Women's Bowling Scholar Athlete of the Year.

The **men's track and field team** took seventh place at the CACC championships this spring. Freshman Ervin Chaush (Wallington, New Jersey) set the school record in the discus, while freshman Michael Lehman (Wayne, New Jersey) set a school record in the shot put event. The women's team came in ninth at the conference championships. Freshman Alexis Byfield (Hawthorne, New Jersey) set school records in the 100-meter hurdles and triple jump. Freshman Victoria Pardi (Totowa, New Jersey) set the school record in the shot put, while junior Ana Gonzalez Martin (Toledo, Spain) earned the bronze medal in the 5,000-meter run.

The **men's lacrosse team** posted a 5-6 record this spring, competing in its first full season after its 2020 inaugural season was cut short. The Cougars earned the program's first trip to the CACC tournament as they hosted their first postseason contest, finishing in fourth place with a 3-3 conference record. Sophomore Kevin Albright (Mays Landing, New Jersey) earned CACC First Team All-Conference honors.

The **women's lacrosse team** posted a 3-4 record in conference play, finishing in fifth place in the CACC. The Cougars qualified for the CACC tournament as they reached the first round. Graduate Arden Kassaleh (Pompton Plains, New Jersey) was selected as the CACC Player of the Year and won First Team All-Conference honors at midfield, while junior Emily Lasko (Jackson, New Jersey) was named to the CACC Second Team at attack. Kassaleh won Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association Atlantic Region Second Team honors for the second time in her career. She earned CoSIDA Academic All-District honors on the Women's At-Large Team for her success in the classroom.

The **softball team** posted a 20-11-1 record and finished in sixth place in the CACC tournament with a 16-10 conference







Baseball's Tavis Brunson, All-American

conference record. The Cougars won their opening game in the tournament and advanced to the quarterfinals. Junior pitcher Mariah Culver (Owego, New York) and sophomore second baseman Taylor Mischler (Endicott, New York) earned CACC First Team All-Conference honors, while senior outfielder Anyssia Ramirez (Brentwood, California) was named to the CACC Second Team. Mischler and Ramirez earned National Fastpitch Coaches Association Second Team All-East Region honors. Mischler was selected to the Division II Conference Commissioner's Association East Region First Team, while Ramirez was named to the East Region Second Team. Ramirez also earned CoSIDA Academic All-District honors.

The **baseball team** finished at 15-15 overall and placed second in the CACC North Division with a 12-12 record. The Cougars qualified for the postseason and advanced to the CACC semifinals. Senior outfielder Tavis Brunson (Westfield, New Jersey) earned CACC First Team All-Conference honors, while graduate relief pitcher Michael Hess (Valley Cottage, New York) was named to the CACC Second Team All-Conference. Brunson earned D2CCA, ABCA/Rawlings and NCBWA First Team All-Region honors. He was selected to the NCBWA and ABCA/Rawlings Second Team All-American teams while earning D2CCA Third Team All-American honors. ■

—JT

# FALL 2021 HOME ATHLETICS EVENTS

## SPRINT FOOTBALL

SEPT. 24 VS. SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

OCT. 9 VS. CHESTNUT HILL

OCT. 16 VS. ALDERSON BROADDUS

OCT. 29 VS. ARMY

\*HOME GAMES PLAYED AT JAMES CALDWELL HS

## VOLLEYBALL

SEPT. 7 VS. QUEENS

SEPT. 14 VS. SOUTHERN CONN. STATE

SEPT. 15 VS. BLOOMFIELD

SEPT. 23 VS. DOMINICAN

SEPT. 25 VS. NYACK

OCT. 5 VS. NEW HAVEN

OCT. 7 VS. POST

OCT. 16 VS. CHESTNUT HILL

OCT. 25 VS. HOLY FAMILY

OCT. 31 VS. JEFFERSON

NOV. 10 VS. FELICIAN

## MEN'S SOCCER

SEPT. 15 VS. AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL

SEPT. 26 VS. CHESTNUT HILL

OCT. 5 VS. FELICIAN

OCT. 13 VS. DOMINICAN

OCT. 19 VS. NYACK

OCT. 30 VS. WILMINGTON

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

SEPT. 11 VS. LE MOYNE

SEPT. 25 VS. CHESTNUT HILL

OCT. 6 VS. FELICIAN

OCT. 12 VS. DOMINICAN

OCT. 26 VS. NYACK

OCT. 30 VS. WILMINGTON





# Sprint Football Head Coach Jim Kelly Inducted Into Essex County Football Coaches Hall of Fame



L to R: Ken Trimmer, Jim Kelly, Maryann Kelly and Mike Carter.  
Photo courtesy Joe Stefanelli.

Head Sprint Football Coach and Athletic Administrator Jim Kelly joined an elite group as he was inducted into the Essex County Football Coaches Hall of Fame this spring. The Essex County native coached at the high school and college levels in the county for over 30 years.

Mike Carter, chairman of the Essex County Football Coaches Hall of Fame Committee, said, "On behalf of the Essex County Football Coaches Hall of Fame, I am pleased to welcome Jim Kelly for induction. I have known Jim for many years, had the opportunity to coach against him and always found his teams to be well prepared. Jim is a consummate professional, works hard to better his players and is representative of all that is the best of Essex County football."

Kelly got his start on the gridiron, playing at Nutley High School, and went on to compete for the Red Hawks at Montclair State University.

"It means a great deal," said Kelly. "To be inducted into a hall of fame, with so many tremendous coaches from Essex County, is very special. I am humbled and grateful. No doubt, that time with (Montclair State head coach) Rick Giancola and (Montclair State assistant) Rich O'Connor was very good for

me. It had a big influence in my coaching career and was important as I got the chance to coach at Caldwell University."

Kelly started his football coaching experience as a successful head coach for Clifton High School. He spent two seasons as an assistant at Clifton before becoming the Mustangs' head coach in 1992. In his fourth season at Clifton, Kelly led his team to the NJSIAA playoffs, the first for the school in 13 years. Kelly went on to be named the All-Area Coach of the Year by the Herald News. During his tenure at Clifton, Kelly coached a future Academic All-American and Doak Walker Award candidate, Joe Haro, a running back for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Kelly returned to his high school alma mater, Nutley, in 1997 and coached there until 2003. He led Nutley to an undefeated record against the school's biggest rival, Belleville, and received All-Area Coach of the Year honors in his first season.

Kelly is the only public school head football coach to defeat public school power Montclair High in consecutive seasons while at the helm at two different schools. At Nutley, he was recognized by the Nutley Board of Education for his work in reaching the \$1 million plateau in student athletic scholarship grants. Kelly placed over 85 student-athletes in college football programs while a head coach. In addition to his successful coaching, Kelly was a television station manager and instructor for 20 years at Nutley High School. In 2014, he received the Governor's Educator of the Year Award. Kelly's efforts in the classroom were recognized again in 2016 as he was honored with the NJ JAM Award for the best-produced campus sports talk show.

After leaving Nutley, Kelly headed to the college ranks, returning to his alma mater, Montclair State, where he was an assistant coach for eight years. During his time with the Red Hawks, Kelly coached the tight ends, wide receivers and fullbacks and participated in offense meetings.

Kelly briefly returned to high school coaching, leading Queen of Peace High School in North Arlington, New Jersey,

in 2015 before taking over the Cougars' sprint football program in 2018. Entering his fourth season as head coach, he has continued the program's growth. Caldwell won two games in his second season in 2019, with the

Cougars playing competitive games against league powerhouses, the United States Naval Academy and the University of Pennsylvania.

Kelly is looking to lead the Cougars back to success on the field this fall after their 2020 season was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ■

—JT

*"It means a great deal. To be inducted into a hall of fame, with so many tremendous coaches from Essex County, is very special. I am humbled and grateful."*







## Caldwell University

ANNOUNCES A CELEBRATION HONORING THE INAUGURATION OF

*Matthew Whelan, Ed.D.*

AS THE NINTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

We are honored to announce that the Inauguration and Installation Ceremony for Caldwell University's ninth President, Matthew Whelan, Ed.D., will take place on Friday, October 22, 2021. To celebrate the spirit of community, honor our history, and commemorate this special occasion, a series of events will be held in the days leading up to the Inauguration. A schedule follows below. We hope you will join us as we celebrate the future of Caldwell University!

**ALL EVENTS ARE OPEN TO FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS AND ALUMNI UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

#### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14

Anne Goffin Smith Art Exhibit Opening Reception |  
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

*Mueller Gallery / Hall of Flags*

#### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

Admissions Open House | 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Sprint Football Game | 1:00 p.m.

Caldwell University v. Alderson Broaddus University

*Bonnel Field, West Caldwell, NJ*

#### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17

Faculty Concert with Students and Alumni | 4:00 p.m.

*Alumni Theatre*

Dinner in the Den | 5:30 p.m.

*Student Center Dining Hall*

Weekly Campus Mass | 7:00 p.m.

*Sister Mary Dominic Tweedus Chapel*

#### MONDAY, OCTOBER 18

Cougar Campfire | 9:00 p.m.

*Faculty Parking Lot*

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19

Service Experience | 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

*Community FoodBank of New Jersey*

"The History and Evolution of Catholic  
Women's Colleges in the U.S."

Lecture by Marie Mullaney | 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

(In-person and Livestream)

*Westervelt Lecture Hall*

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20

Party on the Plaza | 12 noon – 3:00 p.m.

*Newman Center Courtyard*

#### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21

"The Future of Catholic Universities and the Role of Liberal  
Arts in Higher Education Today"

Panel Moderated by James Flynn | 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

(In-person and Livestream)

*Alumni Theatre*

Faces of Caldwell Cultural Showcase | 8:00 p.m.

*Student Center Gym*

#### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22

Inaugural Mass | 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

(In-person and Livestream)

*Newman Center*

Brunch | 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

*Student Center Gym*

Installation Ceremony | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

(In-person and Livestream)

*Newman Center*

#### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23

Reunion 2021 – Classes of '60, '61, '65, '66, '70, and '71

*Event locations to be announced*

Welcome and State of the University Address

Dr. Matthew Whelan | 11:30 a.m.

Reunion Lunch | 12 noon

Campus Tours | 1:30 p.m.

50th Reunion Toast | 3:00 p.m.

Reunion Liturgy | 4:30 p.m.

Cocktail Hour and Buffet Dinner | 5:30 p.m.

**EVENT TIMES AND LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

jsheldon@caldwell.edu | 973.618.3242





*Rhonda Graber, co-chair of the Golf Committee and member of the Board of Trustees, and Mary Sellitto-Curio '83, member of the Board of Trustees, pose for a photo with a foursome at dinner.*



*L to R: Glenn Carroll; President Matthew Whelan, Ed.D.; Harry Beatty, Esq., and Dan Pasternak.*



*L to R: Dimitri Grant '12 and Brett Parisi from Bleakley Financial Group head out for the day.*

## GOLF OUTING RAISES \$110K+

The 32nd annual Caldwell University Golf Outing at the Essex Fells Country Club raised over \$110,000. Proceeds from the sold-out event on June 21 will benefit the Caldwell University Scholarship Fund. The event was made possible by the generous support of corporate sponsors and Caldwell alumni.



*L to R: Mrs. Kathy Whelan, President Whelan and Sister Kathleen Tuite, O.P.*



*CU Board of Trustees members, Sisters of Saint Dominic, staff and friends gather for a photo during dinner.*





# A GIFT FROM THE HEART: A CHERISHED COLLECTION COMES TO CALDWELL

CAROLINE ROMANS '68



*Romans in her home library.*

The classic children's book "Where the Wild Things Are" poses a question to readers: Does Max enjoy being a king? What's the answer? Ask Caroline Ward Romans '68, who will enthusiastically explain why generations of children and their parents love this book while pointing out the deeper themes included in its pages—the value of self-discipline and the importance of imagination.

Romans, a nationally recognized expert in the world of children's literature, has enjoyed a career of nearly 50 years in various roles, including public library youth services librarian, consultant in youth literature and adjunct professor of children's literature, the latter at several universities. For many years she has served as a member of the Caldecott Medal and the John Newbery Medal selection committees, the most prestigious children's book awards. She has also participated on the Children's Book Council committee to select the National Ambassador for Children's Literature.

During her lifetime, Romans has amassed a carefully curated personal collection of nearly 2,000 children's books in all formats and genres, from books for toddlers to teens, including picture books, works of fiction and nonfiction and reference books. Her collection, symbolic of her life's work, is the embodiment of her passion for the written word and a career spent in dedication to children's education. Therefore, it is a distinct honor for Caldwell University to be named the recipient of the Caroline Ward Romans '68 Children's Literature Collection, a legacy gift that speaks to her connection to Caldwell.

Romans is providing funding to shelve, catalogue and ship her collection to the Jennings Library. She hopes it will help current and prospective teachers at Caldwell and those at local colleges and universities with access to Caldwell's library through a cooperative exchange. A dedication event in honor of Romans will be held 2:15 to 2:45 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 23, in the Jennings Library.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COLLECTION INCLUDE:

- Many award-winning books including "The Lion & The Mouse," winner of the 2009 Caldecott Medal and signed by author Jerry Pinkney.
- A signed first-edition copy of Neil Gaiman's "The Graveyard Book," winner of the Newbery Award in 2008.
- Books about children's literature including biographies of such authors as Margaret Wise Brown ("Good Night, Moon") and Tomie dePaola, an American writer and illustrator of more than 260 children's books ("Strega Nona").
- An extensive collection of folklore including multiple editions of folk and fairy tales that can be used for comparison and research purposes.
- Many books that reflect the diversity of children's literature, including examples of winners of the Ezra Jack Keats Award such as "Thank You, Omu!"

When she's not consulting, Romans focuses on her other interests, including sailboat racing and traveling the globe. In January she will spend three weeks on a cruise to Antarctica. Later next year she will travel to Africa. While she's away in distant lands she'll be glad to know her treasured collection has a new home at Caldwell. ■

—Christina Hall



# “Your Path Will Appear”

## Marcia Dukes '05



*Marcia Dukes and her husband Kjell Dukes surrounded by their three children.*

When you first speak with Marcia Dukes, you immediately hear the authenticity and dynamism in her voice. You also get the sense she is a woman on a profound mission, which happens to be true: Dukes has devoted her life and career to fighting for social justice and educational equity.

Her journey, she says, includes “many starts and stops.” Married by the time she enrolled at Caldwell, she had to leave school when her daughter was born. By the time she returned and completed her degree, she was pregnant with a son; she graduated in December, and he was born in May of the following year. She was able to take online classes, and credits Caldwell for being “ahead of its time.” Caldwell, for Dukes, is also a family affair: Her brother and sister are both graduates.

Dukes earned a bachelor’s degree in communication arts at Caldwell. Although she says she initially felt unclear about her direction, her life experiences and each job promotion she earned helped bring her path into focus. She believes that students who ask themselves, “What makes me thrive?” may find it easier to think meaningfully about their career and life aspirations. “Don’t worry,” she advises. “Eventually your path will appear.”

One of Dukes’s early childhood memories is of a fateful day in elementary school when she was denied permission to use the restroom. She went home and told her uncle and grandmother, who rushed to the school the following day and resolved the matter. For the first time she witnessed the power of advocacy, Dukes says; that memory continues to inspire her work.

Many years later, Dukes discovered that her first child, a daughter, had been identified as having a learning disability. When Dukes found that her daughter had been labeled and was being marginalized in school, she jumped in, taking charge of the situation to ensure her child got the help she needed to succeed. Her daughter will soon graduate from college.

Once parents in Dukes’s community of West Orange began hearing about the self-described “mother hen” with a talent for intervening on behalf of others, her phone started ringing, and it hasn’t stopped since. She is known as the go-to person for children in her community who need an advocate. She has also led several campaigns to help ensure diversity among those elected to the West Orange Board of Education.

Prudential, Dukes’s employer of more than 15 years, eventually became aware of her community work and selected her for a corporate development program. It was an important acknowledgment that dovetailed with the corporation’s mission to improve local communities. Dukes became even more of a local hero when she helped secure funding from Prudential that paid for technology upgrades in Mount Pleasant Elementary School in West Orange, New Jersey. As a past president of the Mount Pleasant PTA, she leveraged the leadership skills she developed at Prudential, creating and enhancing communication that helped educate parents and engage the community in the PTA’s work.

As director of diversity and inclusion at Prudential, Dukes has been honored by the company as a #ForceforChange2020 winner, a public acknowledgment of her unwavering commitment to racial equality and creating access to education and opportunity. She is a leader who brings down barriers while welcoming and respecting all points of view. Her courage, compassion and innovative spirit continue to create positive change in her community, her workplace and beyond. This world needs more people like Dukes. ■

—Christina Hall







# The Making of a Mental Health Hero:

Olga Leibu '06, M.D.

During the pandemic, social isolation, remote learning and generalized boredom posed an ongoing and often overwhelming struggle for children, adolescents and families. For children with ADHD or who are on the autism spectrum, as well as those dealing with depression, anxiety or an eating disorder, the pandemic has proved a relentlessly challenging time, worsening negative symptoms and behaviors, notes Dr. Olga Leibu '06. Her answer for anyone struggling with a mental health issue: "Say yes to help."

As a psychiatrist working with children and adolescents daily, Leibu sees the manifestation of the pandemic in the behavior of her patients, whether it is a decline in motivation, increasing social disconnection, depression or a sense of hopelessness about the future. Leibu's clinical expertise, compassion, humor and the techniques of free association and art therapy help support her patients in developing essential coping skills.

When she speaks of her patients, it's clear she has great love for each of them; her relationships with some patients may last for decades, even a lifetime.

Leibu's journey to Caldwell College is one of triumph over odds. Two years after she was born, in the northern region of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster occurred near her family's home. The spread of radioactive materials resulted in the evacuation of more than 100,000 residents, and thousands of related deaths occurred over time. Eventually she and her family emigrated to the United States, settling in Livingston, New Jersey, where Leibu entered the public school system. In her senior year of high school, she was delighted to be accepted by New York University, but her family could not afford the tuition. Caldwell College had offered Leibu a full, four-year Presidential Scholarship, so there was no question that she would enroll. It turned out to be the best thing that could have happened, she says.

"I had wonderful professors," she says, several of whom served as mentors, including former faculty member Dr. Sook Choi, who encouraged Leibu to pursue

a career in medicine. Leibu had been considering a career in endocrinology, prompted by the aftermath of Chernobyl and a resulting surge in thyroid disease-related deaths. Then she took philosophy at Caldwell, which, she says, "opened my mind to thinking about the mind."

During her study of psychology, in the second semester of her senior year, she began to consider the field of mental health, which her husband, a psychiatrist, encouraged her to explore. But she had to overcome a stigma: Soviet Jewish culture views care of the mentally ill with apprehension; in fact, people warned Leibu that such a career could cause her to "catch a mental illness." Nevertheless, she persevered: Today she serves patients through her private practice, maintaining an assistant clinical professorship at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in Manhattan.

Leibu says she is grateful to Caldwell, where she was given the freedom to explore her intellectual interests, the financial support needed to pursue her education, and the encouragement to achieve. "I'm so grateful Caldwell chose me," she says. ■

—Christina Hall



The University community extends birthday wishes to Georgia Dragoo, pictured at age 99. Dragoo enrolled at Caldwell College as an adult student, graduating in 1980 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. In her early adult life she worked as a beautician and owned a salon. After graduating with her BFA, Dragoo opened an art supply and framing shop in the borough of Caldwell and taught art lessons to children. She relocated to West Virginia in the early 2000s.

On Sept. 17, Dragoo will celebrate her 100th birthday, joining Sister Gerardine Mueller as an esteemed Caldwell centenarian. The two became friends at Caldwell and have maintained a correspondence for more than 40 years.

100



# GET READY TO TOAST OUR OWN LIVING LEGEND!



This is “The Year of Sister Gerardine” during which Caldwell University is honoring Sister Gerardine Mueller, O.P. '54, professor emerita and Caldwell’s beloved teacher, artist-in-residence, mentor and friend, in advance of her centennial birthday on Sept. 16.

## HERE ARE WAYS TO JOIN IN CELEBRATING THIS MILESTONE:

- **Birthday toasts** are scheduled for Sept. 8 and 9 at noon via Zoom. Prior to the toasts a previously recorded interview, led by Linda Sue Galate, Ph.D. '66, will be shown. Please email Jill Sheldon at [jsheldon@caldwell.edu](mailto:jsheldon@caldwell.edu) to receive the Zoom link so you can congratulate Sister Gerardine on this momentous occasion.
- Due to popular demand, the biopic “**A Soul’s Work**” can be found on the CU YouTube channel. The film is a fascinating look into Sister Gerardine’s life and work.
- From Sept. 16 to 23, the Mueller Gallery will feature a special exhibition of **Sister Gerardine’s work**.
- To further honor Sister Gerardine and her incredible legacy to Caldwell University, an **endowed scholarship** is being established in her honor. To learn more or to make a gift, visit [www.caldwell.edu/muellerscholarship](http://www.caldwell.edu/muellerscholarship).

# What You Do Today Can Help Secure Her Tomorrow

Members of the Saint Catherine of Siena Circle are special benefactors who choose to include the University in their plan through a bequest, through life-income gifts or by designating the University as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Commitments of this kind help strengthen and ensure the future for Caldwell University.

Your legacy gift is a meaningful way to ensure that future generations can benefit from a Caldwell education. For more information, please get in touch with Sharon Dwyer, Director of Special Giving Initiatives, Development and Alumni Affairs by phone at 973-618-3207 or via email: [sdwyer@caldwell.edu](mailto:sdwyer@caldwell.edu).



To learn more about ways you can support Caldwell through your will or plan, visit <http://plannedgiving.caldwell.edu> or contact Sharon Dwyer at [sdwyer@caldwell.edu](mailto:sdwyer@caldwell.edu) or 973-618-3207.

The Saint Catherine of Siena Circle gratefully recognizes Caldwell University alumni and friends who have supported the University through their will or plan.





# Alumni President

## LETTER FROM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD PRESIDENT ELAINE BAUER ZABRISKIE '73



Dear Fellow Alumni,

Welcome back to Caldwell, to renewal, and the beauty of everyday living!

I would like to recognize the Class of 2021 for their achievements and inclusion into the Caldwell University Alumni Association. We look forward to seeing you at various events and encourage your participation.

We are finally all back on campus for fall 2021. As we move forward, we look to renew and embrace the spirit of Caldwell as it evolves into a more invigorated, vital, and appreciative energy after our long absence.

We continue our celebration of Sister Gerardine and her 100th birthday, her legacy as a Sister of Saint Dominic and the joy that her artwork has brought to the world.

We hope to see all of our Alumni at Homecoming in September and at the various events we have scheduled for the upcoming academic year.

We have the Inauguration of our new president, Dr. Matthew Whelan, and Reunion 2021 in October to look forward to with weeklong events. We also are planning a key fundraising event in November with a return of Singing Florist, who brought success and much fun two years ago to our community.

We encourage our Alums to keep in touch with our Alumni Office and keep us updated on their lives post Caldwell.

Check out past fall magazines here: <https://www.caldwell.edu/article-category/> if you need inspiration!

We look forward to welcoming you back on campus. Have a great fall!

**Elaine Bauer Zabriskie '73**  
*President, Alumni Association*

### 2021-22 CALDWELL UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES

#### PRESIDENT

Elaine Bauer Zabriskie '73

#### VICE PRESIDENT

James Stark '14

#### SECRETARY

Anna Nelson '88

#### TREASURER

Roxanne Knott-Kuczborski '03

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Javier Lewis '14

Jonni Lucas '96

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Sundra Murray '04

Noel Ruane '70

Lamar Shea-Chang '20

#### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Megan Norton '22

## *in memory of...*

*Please remember these  
deceased alumni and family  
members in your prayers.*

Mary Angela Kunst

*Sister of Charlotte M. Kunst '47*

Jean McNally Allatta '49

Helene Willenborg Sullivan '50

Marianne McDermott Ruane '51

Margaret Moriarty Monaghan '52

Yu Kwen "Miriam" Lee Davis '55

Arlene Eager Muller '56

Dolores Carracino '58

Dolores Tomasina Corona '58

Dolores Dielmann Allen '60

Shirley Chan Wu '60

Margaret "Peggy" Coppinger '61

Sister Genevieve Marie Long, O.P. '62

Emalene Renna '62

Sister Patricia O'Donnell, O.P. '64

Christine Walker Spedding '65

Maryanne Barrett Conroy '66

Sister Joan Spingler, O.P. '67

Judith Moglia '68

David Reamer

*Son of Joan Galla Reamer '69*

Richard Morrill

*Husband of Linda Hazlin Morrill '70*

Harriet Banks Armstead '73

Joan Marie Motley Olstein '79

Judith Durant Zichelli '90

Carolyn Denise Nelson '02

William H. Connolly Jr.

*Longtime friend and benefactor of  
Caldwell University*



# SAVE THE DATE

## SPECIAL EVENT

**SISTER GERARDINE MUELLER TURNS 100!**  
**BIRTHDAY TOASTS**  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 8, AND**  
**THURSDAY, SEPT. 9 • NOON, ON ZOOM**

**RSVP TO JILL SHELDON: JSHELDON@CALDWELL.EDU**  
**OR 973-618-3242**

## MASS

**MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 15 • NOON**

## SHORE SOCIAL

**THURSDAY, SEPT. 16 • NOON**  
**SPRING LAKE MANOR**

**CONTACT: MEGHAN MORAN**  
**MMORAN@CALDWELL.EDU OR 973-618-3352**

## HOMECOMING AND FAMILY WEEKEND

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 24 – SATURDAY, SEPT. 25**

## CELEBRATING THE 1980s

**ALUMNI RECEPTION FOR GRADUATES FROM 1980-89**  
**FRIDAY, OCT. 8 • 6:30 P.M.**

**CONTACT: SHARON DWYER**  
**SDWYER@CALDWELL.EDU OR 973-618-3207**

## INAUGURATION

**INAUGURATION AND INSTALLATION CEREMONY**  
**FOR PRESIDENT MATTHEW WHELAN, ED.D.**  
**FRIDAY, OCT. 22 • 1 P.M.**

**A SERIES OF EVENTS WILL BE HELD IN THE DAYS LEADING UP TO**  
**AND FOLLOWING THE INAUGURATION.**  
**SEE PAGE 27 FOR A SCHEDULE.**

## REUNION

**SATURDAY, OCT. 23**

**CONTACT: MEGHAN MORAN**  
**MMORAN@CALDWELL.EDU OR 973-618-3352**

## ALL SAINTS' DAY

**ALL SAINTS' DAY MASS OF REMEMBRANCE**  
**MONDAY, NOV. 1, 2021 • LUNCHEON TO FOLLOW.**

**CONTACT: MEGHAN MORAN**  
**MMORAN@CALDWELL.EDU OR 973-618-3352**

## ADVENT LITURGY

**DEC. 8 • NOON**

**MASS WILL BE HELD MOST SUNDAYS AT 7 P.M.**  
**IN THE SISTER MARY DOMINIC TWEEDUS CHAPEL,**  
**NEWMAN CENTER**

**YOU CAN ALSO WATCH IT LIVE ON THE CAMPUS MINISTRY**  
**YOUTUBE CHANNEL**

## OPEN HOUSE

**SATURDAY, OCT. 16 • 11 A.M. – 2 P.M.**