

# CALDWELL

# UNIVERSITY

MAGAZINE



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JEFFREY D. SENESE, PH.D. IS  
CALDWELL'S 10TH PRESIDENT

ATHLETICS HALL OF  
FAME INDUCTS FIVE

CU RECEIVES HISPANIC  
SERVING INSTITUTION AWARD

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**CALDWELL UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE**  
**FALL 2023**

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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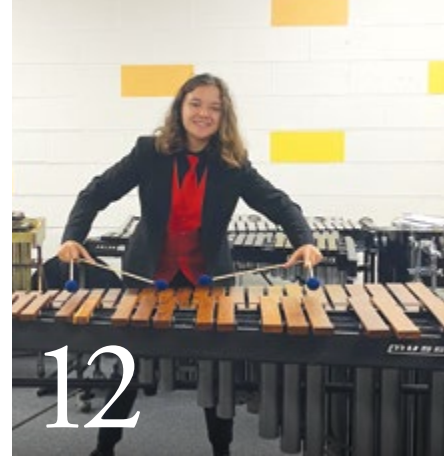
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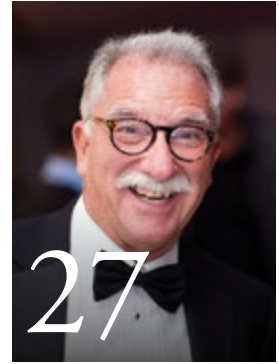
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*Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D.*





# Dear Friends,

As a faculty member for a decade and a higher education leader for more than 20 years, I have learned a thing or two about university communities and how they live and breathe, and some of the secrets of their success. Institutional communities make successful colleges and universities more than their buildings and grounds. Students know this, and faculty and staff do as well.

It is an honor to write to you as the 10th President of Caldwell University and to welcome you to the Fall 2023 issue of our magazine.

I write this letter of welcome having just completed a weekend full of events celebrating Caldwell alumni—from an Athletics Hall of Fame induction ceremony to a milestone anniversary Reunion Day. Hundreds of guests came together to celebrate Caldwell University and experience the institution of today as well as to hear a bit about the vision for the Caldwell of tomorrow. The past, present and future of this University are grounded firmly in the wonderful community that has been created here.

The feeling of community has been apparent to Alicia and me as we have gotten fully settled in here. We have encountered an incredibly warm, caring faculty and staff who have been excited to welcome us personally and sincerely to the University. We have met passionate alumni who are more than fond of their alma mater. We have met elected officials and civic leaders who view Caldwell with respect and appreciation for our decades-long role in service to the broader region. And in many ways, most importantly, we have met students who are excited to be part of the Caldwell story.

Caldwell University leads as a community. Congressman John Lewis used to tell people that we come together around a mission and that that mission must be grounded in a strong sense of community, and in so doing, we can together make the impossible possible. And so I feel that as my time here at the University begins, one of my most important initiatives for leadership, faculty, staff and me to focus upon is to work with others to strengthen and continuously reinforce the Caldwell community to pursue important possibilities. For example, one tradition we have added is a faculty-staff “Community Day” before the semester begins, which is an all-campus meeting and a State of the University conversation followed by a reception where we can talk with each other about issues and build deeper relationships. We also held a summer ice cream social designed to get employees out of their offices to enjoy each other’s company. New employees were recognized at a Welcome Breakfast and new employee orientation. And I am meeting with faculty, staff and student groups to listen and gather feedback as we put the finishing touches on a new University-wide strategic plan that was created—you guessed it—as a community.

In this issue, I hope you will see the theme of “community” as you read how we’ve accomplished much as a University. Faculty work with students to help them to achieve their learning goals and in producing amazing research as they aspire to their career goals. Student-athletes and coaches work together in the pursuit of success, and hopefully additional championships. Alumni and donors partner with the institution to ensure resources and connections are in place to make ideas come to life. And certainly our Trustees work collaboratively on the governance and



sustainability of the University and in countless other ways to help Caldwell move toward its aspirations and continued success.

All that Caldwell has achieved in her first 84 years has been as a community. All that distinguishes the University today is because of the work of this community. And all that Caldwell plans and prays to accomplish in the future will only be possible with a strong community.

Saint Francis of Assisi preached that God works through each of us. And so I ask that each of you consider yourselves as a full part of this University community, and indeed a valuable member of it. Now more than ever, we need to count upon your passion for the University, your participation and your prayers. While your University is certainly sound, and definitely healthy in many ways, we exist in a changing time for higher education generally. It will take all of us, working together as a community, and God’s grace, to ensure Caldwell University’s next decades are as meaningful and impactful as our first.

In closing, let me just reaffirm how grateful I am for the warm welcome I’ve received from so many of you and for your continued support of our beloved University. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you!

Go Cougars,

Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D.  
*President*





*Caldwell University*

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*Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D.*

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# Meet Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D., Caldwell University's 10th President

A new era began at Caldwell University on July 10, 2023, as Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D., joined the University community as our 10th president. Dr. Senese brings extensive higher education leadership experience, having served as president previously and as a provost and vice president for academic affairs at several institutions. President Senese was a faculty member at Indiana University South Bend and tenured faculty member at the University of Baltimore (where he taught for about a decade) and at Penn State. He has engaged in extensive nationally funded research and has been widely published.

Colette Liddy sat down with him for an interview.

## WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO COME TO CALDWELL UNIVERSITY?

I chose to come to Caldwell University for several reasons. I like and admire the values and charism of the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell. Their focus on education, peace and serving others is very attractive and admirable. Caldwell University's location in the country is, quite frankly, attractive to me. I'm from the Northeast, and my wife and I wanted to come home. We wanted to be in a place where restaurants, food and culture were consistent with what we like to do. Not that I'm going to have a whole lot of time for that, but when we do take the time, we want it accessible. I wanted to join a more close-knit, intimate higher education community that is focused on the needs of students and where education for students makes a true difference in their lives.

I think the University has an interesting mix of liberal arts and professional programs—from an ACBSP (Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs) accredited business program to a CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education) accredited nursing programs to counseling, art therapy and our

ABA programs—and many other programs including criminal justice, history, music and education. Business, health care and related professional studies are the types of programs in the higher education marketplace that are in demand at present. For an institution of our size, the range of both liberal arts and professional programs helps to make Caldwell an attractive place.

The campus location itself is attractive; it's got plenty of open space, old-growth trees and beautiful vistas. It is every bit as attractive as other campuses I have worked on, including in Florida, and it is in a very safe, cozy little town.

## WHERE DID YOU GROW UP AND WHAT WAS YOUR SCHOOLING?

I grew up in Kingston, Pennsylvania, in the Wilkes Barre-Scranton area. I went to Wyoming Valley West High School where I was captain of the wrestling team and a two-miler on the track team. I'm one of seven kids, and my father owned a small construction business. He would occasionally build houses, but he mostly did renovations and built furniture. I worked for him throughout high school and beyond. I also worked in restaurants, starting as a dishwasher and

then moving to become a cook. One of my friends and I leased a restaurant at the Jersey Shore (in South Jersey), and I paid for college in part by working in the summers cooking breakfast and lunch. The nice thing about that work, beyond loving the fast pace of it, is that I still know how to cook, and in fact my wife prefers it when I cook! During college and some of my graduate school work, I made enough money to live at the shore and pay for much of my college as an undergraduate. I stopped cooking when I was awarded an academic fellowship during my graduate work, and that fortunately paid for school. While I certainly missed the summers at the shore after that, because it was more

fun than spending all my time in the library or a computer lab as a research fellow for faculty, the trade-off was worth it.

## BEFORE YOU ARRIVED AT CALDWELL, YOU SAID YOU SAW THAT THE UNIVERSITY HAS AMAZING POTENTIAL. WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL YOU SEE?

I think the University's potential has a few areas that are particularly special. First, our international student population is great at a place like Caldwell, given we have solid footing in a couple of countries. Our proximity to New York City gives us huge potential over other universities seeking international enrollments since many international students know of it. The benefit for Caldwell in recruiting students from outside the country is that our learning community is enhanced by different cultures, ideas and societies.

Second, there is potential for the University to grow. We are just a bit smaller than we had been prior to the pandemic. We can grow, given facilities, our beautiful location, and programs, to just a bit larger than our historic highest enrollment. That said, I don't think the future for Caldwell on campus is really going to get too much larger than about 2,500 students—which also depends on online, transfer and graduate student enrollments. Our location in Essex County and in Caldwell is really wonderful, and we need to let more of the community know how nice it is here. We should partner more with government entities, other universities and colleges and businesses in the area.

Third, we have the potential to continue to create a special campus experience for students. For the University, the campus experience still matters a great deal. Faculty here are teacher-scholars and are very focused on helping students achieve their academic goals. There are plenty of students and families out there that still want that deep on-campus experience, a strong learning community and personal attention that we provide. Everything should not be online—although clearly online tools and technologies that can improve learning outcomes should be ubiquitous.

*“I like and admire the values and charism of the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell.”*







While some adult students want the convenience of online, that too is not the only solution to their educational needs. Caldwell can do online because we've got faculty who are great teachers and who can bring the content alive. That is a potential, and I think we have to focus on becoming distinctive through building understanding of our exceptional program niches rather than trying to be best at everything.

#### HOW ABOUT ACADEMIC PROGRAMS?

Programmatically, the health sciences present additional opportunities. We are solidly and consistently excellent in nursing; that's the biggest health science field nationally and there is significant demand there. There are other fields as well that we might consider. For example, athletic training has moved to a master's degree requirement for licensure nationally. We have athletic teams and hence the practical laboratory to do a great job at such a program. We have a physical location where that kind of program would be attractive, so we can be thinking about health sciences in a bit broader way. Caldwell is certainly a place that should think about nurse practitioners and even perhaps physical therapy, occupational therapy and, in the long term, possibly physician assistants. Over the long term, building out those first professional health care programs makes sense for us. Social work may also make sense. It fits very nicely with our counseling group of programs.

On the business side, thinking more deeply about analytics programs and computer sciences, perhaps even cybersecurity. I think there is potential there. The Bloomberg Capital Markets Lab and the finance focus we have in place give us advantages. We need to continue to develop that and invest in it. Thinking about analytics and how that will develop over time is an important focus as well. Additionally, because we have a computer science program, other related disciplines like software design and cybersecurity may be possible, and we're already in the midst of expansion of our artificial intelligence program capabilities.

It might also be good if we continued to think about the liberal arts in an even broader way. I tell people that the term "liberal" and "arts" means something other than what might come to mind when one sees those terms. That is, "liberal" is not a political ideology in this sense; it simply means an open consideration of many viewpoints, ideas and strategies. Similarly, "arts" in "liberal arts" means education from many different fields. For example, science is a traditional liberal art, as is math, and so on. I think about liberal arts in a way where we can help people understand the lifelong career advantages of such an education and especially when paired with a professional program. People who have English degrees, journalism

degrees or, for that matter, criminal justice degrees—which are liberal arts degrees—can enter many different fields. I'm a university president and I have a liberal arts degree, and many presidents do.

The liberal arts add a broad level of capabilities and understandings for students, from the ability to solve problems to thinking critically and developing communication skills to bring people together. The solution to the changeable and unpredictable future is more foundational learning that can be found in the liberal arts. The liberal arts should have opportunities for students to engage in application. Scholarship or research is an example of a liberal arts application. I think for Caldwell, the potential may exist for us to consider the next stage of liberal arts for our students. We can consider how we will capitalize on what the liberal arts accomplish for our students and how it might accommodate a career-minded focus. I think we have an opportunity to lead by saying "The liberal arts are important and relevant, and we are ready to demonstrate that importance in practical ways." We have the opportunity, in my opinion, to add additional experiential application components in whatever way the faculty think makes the most sense to our liberal arts courses.

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# Meet Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D.

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## WHAT WOULD BE YOUR INVITATION TO STUDENTS THIS YEAR?

I am used to routine and serendipitous meetings with students. These contacts occur everywhere, from meetings with the Student Government Association, to nursing students, to the marketing club, to resident assistants and orientation leaders, to athletes and many other groups of students. I look forward to saying hello wherever I am with students, including a selfie, although I will ask for them to take a selfie for me as well. Recently while at the volleyball game, a group of students sat with me and we were discussing the game and the University. That is exactly what I am used to experiencing with students. Anytime I am on campus and available, I love to engage students. I am working with the vice presidents to build a few student presidential advisory groups to help me understand the needs and desires of students. I can guarantee students that they will see my wife Alicia and me, if I'm not traveling, at every sporting context, event and musical production I can attend.

## ARE YOU ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE @CALDWELLPREZ INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT?

I ask students where they communicate on social media. They keep telling me to stay on Instagram, so that is what I'm doing. I currently have just under 30,000 followers on LinkedIn. For example, when I recently posted a picture of Vice President for Administration and Operations Sheila O'Rourke and me in one of our boiler rooms with a note about why I was doing a deep-dive campus tour, I had more than 7,500 people view that post. That helps the University in getting the Caldwell name out there, and that's how I should use social media, to get people to put their views on the University. Some students have been encouraging me to post on TikTok, and while I personally have been viewing the site, I have not been posting there. I am open to improving my social media presence to help communications at the University and to communicate with students.

## YOUR INVITATION TO ALUMNI AND THE COMMUNITY?

Please reach out. I have met with the Alumni Association. I am looking forward



President and Mrs. Senese enjoy Homecoming with the Sisters of St. Dominic.

to meeting as many alumni over the years as possible, so please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Come to events on campus and introduce yourself. I have attended a few alumni gatherings already, and I am looking forward to a few more that are scheduled. Please help the Development and Alumni Affairs team and me with developing relationships for the University.

## HOW CAN ALUMNI HELP US WITH RECRUITMENT?

That is another opportunity. Every institution I have been with was outside of the state of New Jersey. I have never worked at a New Jersey institution. At my former institutions we came to New Jersey to recruit students. New Jersey is the No. 1 export state for college students in the country because the students are excellent and the families can afford to send their students to another state. I believe Caldwell can help keep some of our New Jersey students here with their families and in the business communities, ultimately helping the communities from which they come.

It would be great if alumni could help the University, from promoting the advantages of a Caldwell education to providing internships and mentoring.

## WHY DO WE HAVE CATHOLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES?

The addition of the value systems, charisms and missions is a key and distinctive advantage of Catholic colleges and universities. Think about a secular institution that does great work, impressive research and groundbreaking stuff. That's all good. But it can be, in my humble opinion, a bit more shallow without the conviction of values, without saying "The Sisters' charism is focused

on environmental, economic issues, peace" and so forth. Catholic values are largely focused on serving others and serving people who are less fortunate or different. This is a key need in the world today, and Catholic universities educate people with

that world view and action orientation. A Catholic education is not only about content and research. That's all good,

*"I am looking forward to meeting as many alumni over the years as possible, so please do not hesitate to reach out to me."*





and we are an academic institution at our core, and we are Catholic at our core. When thinking about Caldwell's core values of respect, integrity, community and excellence, it is easy to see them as important human values. Given what is going on in the world, we should be more embracing of each other. We should strive for understanding and not difference. We are citizens of our community, state and country. Catholicism, our value system and our faith encourage us to do all those things, and that is the value additive layer that is here that is not at many institutions. That is the advantage of a Catholic institution.

#### ANYTHING ELSE?

I am thrilled to be here, as is my wife Alicia. I've already had interactions with the business community, members of the Legislature, alumni, donors, friends and, of course, the campus community. I look forward to working hard and doing good for Caldwell University. ■



*Dr. and Mrs. Senese (and Coop) enjoyed meeting members of the community at the Caldwell Street Fair Oct. 1.*



*Meet Norman Stanley and Enzo Angiolini Senese. They are happy to be new members of the Caldwell community.*

## MEET MRS. ALICIA SENESE



"I like how vibrant it is. I like seeing all the cultures together," said Alicia Senese about the Caldwell University campus. The spouse of Caldwell's 10th President, Jeff Senese, Ph.D., and I met on a beautiful sunny morning early in the semester as she was in between unpacking boxes. She and Dr. Senese had enjoyed dinner in the Student Center dining hall the night before and attended a Cougar volleyball match. "Jeff and I love going to sporting events. When the kids were younger, we would bring them," she said of their times with their son and daughter when Dr. Senese was working at other universities.

Mrs. Senese is excited about becoming part of the Caldwell campus community. A first-generation college graduate herself, she knows the value of quality higher education. She trained as an X-ray technician and earned her associate's degree at Gwynedd Mercy University and then her bachelor's degree at Philadelphia University, which is now part of Jefferson University. For more than 30 years she worked in radiology oncology at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. It is a tough field, Mrs. Senese said, but there were many rewarding moments, like when she saw families support cancer patients at vulnerable stages in their lives.

"A Philly girl," Mrs. Senese grew up in south Philadelphia and went to Catholic schools—St. Monica's for grammar school and then St. Maria Goretti High School. That foundation inspired her appreciation and awe for the dedicated men and women religious who have served at Catholic schools. "We had the Immaculata Sisters," she said of her high school. Later, she and Dr. Senese came to know and value the charisms of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi at Cardinal Stritch University, the Benedictine monks and sisters at St. Leo University and now the Sisters of St. Dominic of Caldwell, whose company she has already enjoyed at events.

Growing up with a father who worked for United Airlines for 40 years, Mrs. Senese was able to travel often. "When I met Jeff, he was a traveler." They have taken excursions off the beaten path, appreciate new adventures and learning about new cultures and have exposed their children to the world as well. Last year the family went on an African safari.

Two other members of the Senese family are happy to have joined the Caldwell community: Enzo, their 10-year-old English lab, and Norman, the younger Frenchy. "They both love people. Enzo is a people person. Norman is a little character. They've already become Cougars and you will see them walking around the campus," Mrs. Senese said.

Asked about the Dr. Senese we do not know yet, she quickly responded, "He is always running, always going, always thinking. He is always there for the students. He wants to help them move forward."

Alicia Senese certainly shares that sentiment. "We like the fast pace of university life. We are looking forward to good things to come." ■

— Colette Liddy





## THE MARY JO ROLLI CODEY CENTER SERVES COMMUNITY WITH COUNSELING ART THERAPY SERVICES

The Caldwell University counseling art therapy community treatment center has been in operation for nearly a year now. Named in honor of alumna Mary Jo Rolli Codey '77, the center offers group and individual sessions for adults and recently added services for children.

The wife of former governor Richard J. Codey was honored at the ribbon-cutting celebration ceremony on Caldwell's campus on March 11. "This is a deeply meaningful recognition for Mary Jo," said Codey, a state senator and the longest-serving member of the Legislature, who will retire from the Senate this year. "She has been a tireless advocate for mental health—as a teacher, a parent, in her public life and as a driving force behind the Codey Fund for Mental Health."

Mrs. Codey said she was very grateful to members of the Caldwell community for all they have given her throughout her life, not just the four years she was in college. She has previously shared her struggle with postpartum depression in order to help others, and she and her husband started the Codey Fund for Mental Health.

In delivering mental health services to the local community, the Mary Jo Rolli Codey Center provides graduate students in the counseling with art therapy specialization program excellent practical experiences to develop as practitioners; this includes partnering with community groups. This past year graduate students hosted an "Arts and Wellness" program for the local community, partnering with the West Caldwell Library, the Caldwell Public Library and other community groups.



*Governor Richard Codey and Mrs. Mary Jo Rolli Codey '77 celebrate the opening of the center.*

The center provides a unique program for people with aphasia, a language impairment that often results from a brain tumor, head trauma or infections. Cindy Concannon '19, director of Caldwell's center, said clients with aphasia have been traveling as much as two hours to attend the "Express It" open studio. It is important work because living with aphasia can affect everything from reading and writing and holding a job to socializing and family relationships. Since many mental health professionals are not trained to work with people with aphasia, Concannon is proud that Caldwell's graduate students in the center are working on that area. The graduate students provide supportive communication along with a safe space for expressing emotions, building skills, rebuilding identity and forming community. The reward for the graduate students is seeing the community develop and individuals living with aphasia "finding their voice and the autonomy to express what they want to," said Concannon. Caldwell graduate students also worked with the Adler Aphasia Center in West Orange through a partnership with the center.

### MORE ABOUT THE MARY JO ROLLI CODEY CENTER

Counseling art therapy services are available to the public on the University campus. These services have been used to enhance the lives of individuals and families through art-making and verbal processing. Services can help solve problems such as:

- stress due to physical and mental health
- career concerns
- relationship issues
- grief and loss
- life transition

The Mary Jo Rolli Codey Center provides the public with access to innovative, person-centered, clinical services provided by advanced master's students under the supervision of program faculty and licensed counselors with art therapy specialization, demonstrating the University's commitment to the larger community, and is open Wednesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays from 1 to 6 p.m. Fees are based on a sliding scale.

<https://www.caldwell.edu/counseling-art-therapy-treatment-services/>

### PROGRAMS IN COUNSELING WITH ART THERAPY SPECIALIZATION

Caldwell offers highly qualified undergraduate psychology and art majors a combined B.A. in Psychology/M.A. in Counseling with Art Therapy concentration.

Caldwell offers graduate programs in art therapy including an M.A. in Counseling with Art Therapy Specialization and a postgraduate M.A. in Art Therapy. ■





## FACULTY FEATURE

# PROFESSOR LENA CAMPAGNA:

## APPLYING RESEARCH FOR THE GREATER GOOD



**"AS LONG AS OUR WORK IS TOUCHING THE COMMUNITY AND OUR RESEARCH IS MAKING AN IMPACT."**

That matters most to Lena Campagna, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. She applies that standard not only to her projects but in her classroom as well.

Campagna began teaching at Caldwell University five years ago. She says the small size drew her to the institution. "I liked the fact that I wasn't going to be dealing with, say, 100 students as a professor. I liked that I would have close contact with students and hopefully make a difference," she says. "I would see how students were developing with their work, and I wanted to be an involved professor. I like to see the students grow."

Guest speakers, critiques of her own work, data sets and consent forms for research are some of the real-life elements she incorporates into her classes, which include

Research Methods I, Research Methods II and Criminology. She believes you can't just reiterate information. "I feel 10 times better when I'm in the classroom and can back up what I'm saying with what I'm doing."

Her students create their own research proposals and undergo peer reviews. She says this process teaches them not only to be critical thinkers but to accept feedback and constructive criticism. "I hope that students take away that they are able to make change, they're able to put what they learn in the classroom to good use," she says.

Campagna began her studies at Emerson College in Boston as a marketing

communications major. After graduating, she found a research opportunity. "I was doing more number crunching and marketing, looking at consumer behavior. But I still wanted that research-actionable side," she says. She then pursued her master's in American studies at UMass Boston. Campagna admits she had no idea she would go on to earn a Ph.D.

"I got a research assistantship while I was trying to pay my rent in grad school. It focused on re-entry individuals who were coming back from prison into society, who had both mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse disorders," she says. "I was the project coordinator for that particular grant, but I also helped with some data collection, like running focus groups. That got me really excited about research. I got to see the work that we do in the classroom being applied, and from there my interest took off."

Campagna knew she then wanted to get a doctorate so she could apply for grants and conduct her own research.

She also touts a few key mentors who helped inspire that journey through the hard work they were doing and by giving her little leeway. "There were no excuses and I liked that. I needed it. No excuses at all, which prepared me very well for academia," Campagna explains.

*"I hope that students take away that they are able to make change, they're able to put what they learn in the classroom to good use."*

During grad school, she also had an opportunity to teach. "I fell in love with teaching because I felt like I could apply what I was learning in the field into the classroom," she says. "I thought that was so fun in fields

like criminal justice and sociology. I could bring what the book says to life. Students appreciate that. I don't think there is any other way to teach it."

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# PROFESSOR LENA CAMPAGNA

*continued from page 9*

One of the features that attracted Campagna to teaching at Caldwell was its mission of social justice, which aligns with her own beliefs. “It’s something that has stuck with me, that whatever I do, I’m always thinking, ‘What is the applied aspect of this? What’s the utility in this and, as a sociologist at heart, how will this help society?’” she says. “I didn’t want to be in an institution that pushed just publishing for publishing’s sake, publishing to get tenure, publishing to get a promotion.”

In fact, Campagna’s current research conjures up similar work from her grad school days. It involves a community needs assessment and mapping of services for individuals over 65 who are coming out of prison and into the community in New Jersey. So far, she and her colleague Dr. Angela Murolo at St. Francis College in Brooklyn have surveyed more than 300 organizations in the Garden State to see what types of services they offer and if they would be willing to serve older individuals being released from prison or to collaborate with other organizations. “Our main goal is to create a hub or a pipeline of organizations in New Jersey so people who are coming out have a resource guide,” explains Campagna.

She says this population often struggles due to broken family ties, the deaths of family members, lack of Social Security benefits and ineligibility for SNAP benefits. She also notes that re-entry programs for this group are neglected despite research showing that when social supports are in place, a person is less likely to reoffend. “Those organizations that said yes they want to collaborate, we’re putting them together and we’re making it happen.”

Campagna admits she won’t solve all the world’s problems but is committed to using her analysis and sociology background to make a difference in her community, which she hopes inspires future researchers. ■

— Kelly Marsicano

## FACULTY FEATURE

# PROFESSOR VLAD VEKSLER:

## EXPANDING **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** RESEARCH AND **INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES**



To see students go from “zero to understanding ... to solve the logic puzzle” and get excited about computer science is like magic, says Vlad Veksler, who teaches computer science courses to majors and non-majors at Caldwell University. “We have many brilliant students,” says Veksler, assistant professor in the School of Business and Computer Science.

He gives examples of two students who presented their research at the 16th International Conference on Brain Informatics in August at Stevens Institute of Technology and another student who won a competition at DataFest at Vassar last semester. “There have been some really good success

stories ... they are expanding their résumés, applying for grad schools and internships,” says Veksler.

Veksler’s research and teaching focus on artificial intelligence and on human computer interaction, with a major emphasis on how humans interact with technology and computers and how to design software to make it easier for humans to learn and to use. He is excited to share that passion with students in the classroom and in the new computational research laboratory, CogAI. “We are working on bettering AI by making it more like human intelligence and by making it more accessible to humans as users of AI and technology,” says Veksler.





There is a growing demand in the field and in the Caldwell academic program, and Veksler and his colleagues in the School of Business and Computer Science are responding by modernizing the computer science curriculum and by adding new minors in human computer interaction and data analytics. “The marketplace is very technology-driven. Even jobs that didn’t used to be technology jobs are now technology jobs,” says Veksler.

Research in computer science helps students advance in their careers and adds “to the body of knowledge that we as humans have,” says Veksler. He ticks off a number of AI’s benefits, such as how the technology could save lives—“just being able to recognize that there is a child that ran in the middle of the road and [being able to] stop the car. That is huge.” Or reducing minor annoyances by automatically stationing elevators at different floors or automatically changing traffic light signal patterns based on heavy-volume times and locations. AI will expedite routine tasks, “which frees up humans to do human things,” contends Veksler, who has also been working with professors in other academic fields to expand Caldwell’s vision in computer science.

The CogAI lab, housed in the back of the Jennings Library, will be a part of the new Interdisciplinary Center for Quantitative Research where students from across academic fields will work on collaborative research involving computation and artificial intelligence. The human computer interaction minor combines computer science, psychology and design courses, and the curriculum focuses on areas such as user interface, user experience (UI/UX) and human-centered design. There are many great jobs in that niche, which focuses on adding software features that are usable, frustration-free and aesthetically pleasing, says Veksler. “There is no big app that you use, not a single one,



that does not have UI/UX experts working on it.” The minor will include studies on responsible technology, cognitive psychology, digital art or design theory, data analysis and graphical user interface development/design.

Veksler’s interest in computer science began when he was a child after he and his family arrived in the U.S. from Ukraine in 1989.

“What I was interested in was video games,

but who has the money for those? You are not just buying all the video games that the kids want when you are an immigrant family.” But he had a little computer that was similar to a graphic calculator, and his mother was a programmer. She created a “guess a

number game,” and her son was enamored by it. “At the age of 14, I was writing code on the little thing ... I just kept going, and I knew I was going to be doing computer science work.”

In college he double majored in psychology and computer science at Rutgers, and he earned his Ph.D. at the renowned technological research university Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He worked in industry including at Telcordia (Bellcore), in government and academia and was self-employed. Today he is excited to bring that knowledge to students at Caldwell at a time when AI is rapidly advancing and jobs are plentiful for students graduating with a computer science degree.

This academic year Veksler is encouraging more students to engage in research. “They are going to participate in conferences and contribute to the human body of knowledge and science too at a fairly young age.” He is happy to be doing all this at Caldwell where he can expand his forward-thinking ideas and knowledge in machine learning while working in a community that values the human experience. “It’s noticeable how everybody [at Caldwell] knows each other. That’s not everywhere. It’s not just me saying it. It’s very personable, not like an industrial complex. And the students appreciate it.” ■

— Colette Liddy

“To see students go from “zero to understanding ... to solve the logic puzzle” and get excited about computer science is like magic.”





Samuel Annan '24

**Samuel Annan '24**, biology major, spent his summer in the competitive Novartis summer internship program in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He worked with professionals at the pharmaceutical company's research headquarters on radio-ligand therapy, a form of cancer therapy. The Novartis program provides research training opportunities for top-tier students who have had little exposure to industry research. The students gain research experience and prepare for careers in biomedical research and for application to prestigious graduate and professional programs.

**Annan** and **Abbas Wafa** presented their research titled "Green Synthesis of Gold Nanoparticles (GNPs) and Its Applications: A Modern Tale of Magical Golden Eggs" at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society in San Francisco in August. Their research mentor is Xiaolei Gao, Ph.D., assistant professor in the School of Natural Sciences. Their trip was made possible thanks to American Chemical Society travel grants and the support of the leadership at Caldwell including Ellina Chernobilsky, Ph.D. They earned several awards this year including at the 2023 Undergraduate Research Symposium last spring, at the poster presentation at the Senior Academy at the 68th New Jersey Academy of Science annual meeting in May and in nanochemistry at the William Paterson University Undergraduate Research Symposium as well as the top poster award at Caldwell Research and Creative Arts Day.

**Kayla Baca '24** interned with the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office this past summer. The criminal justice and political science major appreciated "getting to see first hand how the accused gets their right to a fair trial and all the steps to a trial that aren't common knowledge like jury selection and plea negotiations." She was grateful for the internship, which gave her a clearer vision of her academic and career plans; these include attending law school and becoming a civil rights or criminal defense attorney.

## STUDENT AND ALUMNI

## Accolades



Sonia Casiano

**Sonia Casiano**, a criminal justice major with minors in criminal forensics and psychology, performed an 18-minute marimba solo, completely by memory, with the percussion ensemble several times last spring. Casiano was drum captain of the marching band for two years and is the drum major this fall. She has performed with the wind ensemble, university chorale and brass and flute ensembles and is teaching music at Northern Valley and Morris Hills high schools. "Sonia is an outstanding musician who is extremely dedicated to the Music Department. We are very proud of her and her accomplishments," said Rebecca Vega, professor of music.

Computer science students **Nika Gedenidze** and **Rishikesh Yadav** presented their paper "Visual Cortex Doesn't Change, Why Should Convolutional Layers?" at the 16th International Conference on Brain Informatics in August at Stevens Institute of Technology.

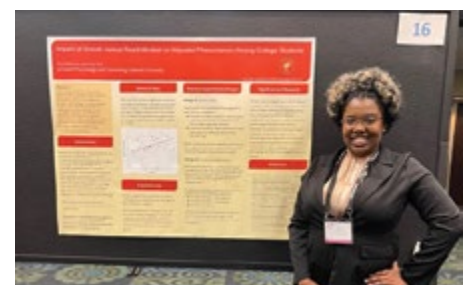
**Benjamin Fernandez's** new solo mixed media exhibition "Be Still" was shown at the Warren Township Library in the summer. In his description Fernandez '24, a senior and studio art major, wrote: "To be still is to be open to our senses, allowing ourselves to be released from the busyness of our daily lives. Stillness in body, mind and spirit can enable us to discover the beauty within ourselves and our surroundings. I hope that you experience moments in your day when you can find stillness in your own life."

**Adam Lasek**, a social studies education major, was one of nine students across the nation selected to receive a fall 2023 Father Fitzgerald Scholarship from Delta Epsilon Sigma, a national scholastic honor society recognizing academic excellence, service and leadership at Catholic colleges and universities.



Jannice Salazar

**Jannice Salazar**, a computer science major, was awarded a scholarship from the Hispanic Information Technology Executive Council (HITEC) Foundation. The scholarship recognizes Salazar's outstanding academic achievements, leadership potential and commitment to advancing technology and diversity within the field of computer science. Her scholarship from the HITEC Foundation will provide Salazar with financial support, access to the HITEC's extensive network of technology leaders, and mentorship opportunities to help her thrive in her academic and professional pursuits. The University is extremely grateful for the HITEC Foundation and to Ivonne Valdes '80, a Caldwell alumna, trustee and chair of the HITEC Foundation Board of Directors, for including Caldwell University and Jannice Salazar in this year's slate of scholarship recipients.



Tia Williams

**Tia Williams '23**, a psychology degree graduate, presented her research on impostor syndrome, inspired by her capstone course, at the Association for Psychological Science conference in Washington, D.C., in May. As one of the only undergraduate students there, she appreciated receiving quality advice and encouragement from Ph.D. students.





"After this experience in Washington, D.C., I'm not only looking forward to the next APS international conference but also my future plans of research and graduate school," said Williams. Her faculty advisor was Lily Tsoi, Ph.D. Williams's research has been made possible by a grant from the Sigma Xi Committee on Grants in Aid of Research.

In the Natural Sciences Department, ten students obtained internships to participate in the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) program at Rutgers University under the guidance of Kenneth McGuinness, Ph.D. They focused on bioinformatics, a new field at Caldwell University. The students received stipends and transportation thanks to the STEM Advance Project, funded by a grant from the Department of Education's Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) STEM and Articulation Program. The 10 students who took part in the SURE internships are **Rojan Basnat, Apekshya Bhattarai, Pratishna KC, Denielle Keenan, Nicolette Nabiryo, Alyssa Negron, Kamal Kumar Sah, Halim Salifu, Anshuraj Sedai** and **Yarelliz Valentin**.

In addition to the Rutgers internships, two math majors, **Anish Poudel** and **Janmajay Subba**, received stipends to participate in the Polymath Jr. Program, which provides math students with a unique opportunity to engage in advanced research in STEM fields, work with experienced researchers and mentors, and gain valuable experience in collaborative research, publishing and networking.



*Halim Salifu*

**Salifu**, a biology major with a minor in healthcare administration, worked in the Center for Advanced Biotechnology at RWJ-Rutgers and SURE, studying protein evolution using bioinformatics tools and software programs to analyze protein structure. He placed second for his poster presentation at a symposium at the end of

the summer. Salifu said it was a privilege to immerse himself in the "intricate world of proteins, delving into the complexities and structural changes with the help of high resolution computers."

**Mariam Haroun**, a biology major, was awarded a full stipend to attend the Research Intensive Summer Experience (RISE) at Rutgers, which covered her funding and housing. She focused on the effects of dopamine on specific proteins, contributing to the understanding of neurological conditions.

**Nabiryo**, also a biology major, participated in RISE and conducted research in cellular biology. She explored how certain proteins influence cell movement and shape, which is critical for understanding diseases like cancer. Her experience solidified her desire to pursue an M.D./Ph.D. "I absolutely loved the research, and it's made me even more excited about my future in medicine and science." ■

## CALDWELL STUDIES ABROAD

Art History Professor Jennifer Noonan, Ph.D., and History Professor Benjamin Lammers, Ph.D., hosted a Paris study-abroad program during spring break. They explored numerous sites including the Louvre, Versailles, the Musée d'Orsay, the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, Montmartre and Sainte-Chapelle. Reese Sherwood, a nursing major, said the trip was a great opportunity "to explore Paris and the rich art and architecture of the city! Experiencing Paris as a college student is such a privilege and this trip allowed us to see so much of the city over spring break."

Rosa Sanchez, Ph.D., OPA, Caldwell's study-abroad advisor and associate professor of Spanish language, literature and culture, said study abroad is a life-changing experience. "It gives students perspective and exposure to other cultures and ways of thinking—all while they continue to pursue their academic interests."

This fall Caldwell students Jacquelyn Gualpa and Brady Kells are studying at Wroxton College in England at a campus run by Fairleigh Dickinson University as part of a partnership Caldwell has with FDU.

Annette Vaccaro, Ed.D., associate professor and program coordinator in the graduate clinical mental health counseling with art therapy specialization program; Dan Summer, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Psychology and Counseling, and Maria Lupo, Ph.D., adjunct lecturer, are heading to Ireland with



*Paris spring study abroad: Students and faculty on the Pont des Arts Bridge in Paris during their spring break study-abroad adventure. Art History Professor Jennifer Noonan, Ph.D. (far right), and History Professor Benjamin Lammers, Ph.D. (far left back row), hosted the Paris study-abroad program.*

students on spring break for an art therapy study-abroad course. They will lead students in exploring Irish culture with an emphasis on the psychological impact of traumatic stress and resilience factors such as art and myth in mental health during historical events such as the Great Irish Famine and Bloody Sunday. A study in Spain program is being planned for the summer of 2025. ■



2023

## COMMENCEMENT

**CBS2'S JOHN ELLIOTT RECEIVES HONORARY DEGREE, ENCOURAGES GRADUATES TO REFINE THE HABITS THAT HELPED THEM SUCCEED**


*John Elliott delivers a commencement address at the undergraduate ceremony.*

"Your destiny is waiting. We need you, so do us a favor, get there, and matter," CBS2 New York meteorologist John Elliott told graduates at Caldwell University's 81st commencement ceremony May 21.

**Sister Donna Ciangio, O.P.**, vice chair of the Board of Trustees, presented an honorary degree to Elliott on behalf of the University.

"When you're born you look like your parents; when you die you look like your habits ... habits will form you, so I want to encourage you to keep and help refine the habits that helped you succeed," said Elliott.

The Emmy award-winning host shared with graduates some lessons he learned outside the classroom. "Don't beat up on yourself if you don't know what you want to do right now. Pray every day; keep moving in the direction of your dreams ... Pivots can be painful, but strive to make them productive. Embrace them and remember them. They can make you very

interesting at parties ... Don't let people put you into boxes ... Keep an open mind ... and never stop learning."

**President Matthew Whelan, Ed.D.**, encouraged the graduates to seek personal and vocational fulfillment. "Do not be defined by what you do. Instead, be defined by who you are. Don't just have a job. Have a vocation, a craft, a calling."

Graduating senior **Raul Gonzalez** delivered the undergraduate speech, reflecting on how it has become "second nature" for Caldwell students to care about giving back while uplifting one another along the way. "From volunteering at Caldwell Day of Service, rubbing elbows while packing meals, to taking pride in our school's history on Founder's Day and learning about the ministry that shaped the lives of so many here at Caldwell, we the students value civic and service leadership." Caldwell "is a melting pot of various kinds of students who unquestionably will be the leaders of tomorrow," said Gonzalez, who received a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology and was the Student Government Association president.

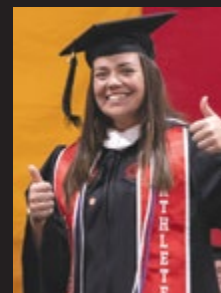
**Henrietta K. Genfi, Ph.D.**, associate dean of academic support at the University, delivered the graduate ceremony remarks. She recalled the unexpected difficulties she faced during her graduate studies including the pandemic and the death of her beloved mother. Other graduates, she said, also had to "endure competing priorities," but they



*Undergraduate ceremony commencement speaker Raul Gonzalez '23; Vice chair of the University's Board of Trustees, Sister Donna Ciangio, O.P. and CBS2's John Elliott celebrate Caldwell's 81st Commencement.*

overcame obstacles and completed their degrees. During her studies, she relied on a support system of several people including her husband and mother, who she said "is in heaven telling all her heaven friends that her daughter is a doctor." Genfi received a doctoral degree in educational leadership. She shared her life lessons including that things don't always go according to plan, that you should never underestimate what you are capable of and that you should "surround yourself with people who actively root for your success ... obstacles do not need to be dead ends ... and once you have finished your degree, all of a sudden, you are expected to contribute to household chores again."

Dr. Whelan presented doctoral students with their Ph.D.s and Ed.D.s, graduate students with their Master of Arts, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science and Master of Science in Nursing degrees, and undergraduates with their Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees. ■



*Caroline Hastings '23, women's lacrosse student-athlete, received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Elementary Education.*

*Your destiny is waiting ...*





# Master of Nursing in Population Health Receives Accreditation, Equips Grads to Work with High-Risk, Vulnerable Patients



*L to R: MSN in population health graduates at their 2023 commencement, Debra Molloy, Miriam Ogala-Lebron, Indiana Ynoa and Icella Alvarez.*

The Master of Nursing in Population Health has received accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education Board of Commissioners.

The fully online program is the first of its kind in New Jersey, equipping graduates to work in a wide variety of health care systems with patients in high-risk, vulnerable populations. Nursing faculty members are pleased with word of the accreditation and the work students and recent graduates are doing to improve the health of vulnerable populations in the tristate area. This work is particularly evident in the final-outcomes-assessment Capstone projects, the culmination of the students' Caldwell learning journey in which they develop strategies to address a problem in a high-risk, vulnerable population. The work of graduates has focused on addressing a multitude of health care issues across the lifespan. Students work in a variety of nursing specialties including case management, school nursing, maternal child health and adult health nursing and information technology.

Cristina Lu '23 worked as a graduate assistant with Caldwell professors while studying for her master's. She worked

side by side with outstanding educators and said she was grateful to acquire valuable teaching skills and contribute to the education of students. This semester she is working as a clinical instructor in psychiatric mental health nursing under the direction of nursing faculty member Catherine Monetti, Ph.D., and she recently started in a position as a population health registered nurse with the Somerset County Office of the Aging and Disability Services.

Marchell Boyd '21/MSN '22 is a health equity nurse manager for the corporate office of diversity and inclusion and director of diversity, equity and inclusion at RWJUH Rahway Hospital. Studying in the MSN program helped her with her work. "I'm able to provide my clinical and population health skills into DEI work at the local hospital and corporate level," said Boyd, who also holds a BSN from Caldwell.

Lu appreciated how Caldwell nursing professors worked hard to develop close, nurturing relationships with students, even within the virtual aspect of the courses. "Despite the online format, students have the opportunity to interact closely with professors who are not only academically rigorous but also compassionate and

supportive." Boyd said that the small program size provides "the benefits of connecting with your peers and teachers" and that any challenges could be resolved quickly.

For her Capstone project, Lu investigated the inclusion of cognitive-behavioral therapy in the multitiered system of supports for school-based mental health services. She used qualitative methods including conducting a focus group with counseling specialization students at Caldwell University and employing latent content analysis, an interpretive study technique. Her aim was to contribute to the understanding of enabling factors and barriers in this area.

Caldwell's MSN program has inspired her to want to continue to educate the next generation of nurses for the changing health care landscape. "By sharing my expertise and guiding aspiring nurses, I am driven to make a significant impact on improving health care outcomes and enhancing patient well-being." ■



*Nursing faculty member Meghan Ryan and Miriam Ogala-Lebron, MSN in population health graduate, at commencement.*



# FACULTY & STAFF NOTES

**Michael Allen, adjunct lecturer in the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department**, was selected for a one-week residency at the New York Public Library's Center for Educators and Schools in July. A cultural anthropologist and enrolled tribal citizen of the Cherokee Nation (Oklahoma), Allen teaches in a dual-enrollment program at two public high schools in Newark and was selected as part of a 16-member cohort from a nationwide competition for high school humanities teachers. The residency focused on the histories of the future.



Kendall Baker's "Threshold of Unknowing" installation consists of the primary elements of a stone doorway marked with the outlines of paper sheets that had "mapped" the doorway and the paper "map" suspended in the central atrium.

**Kendall Baker, professor of art**, was an artist-in-residence at the Konrad Lorenz Institute near Vienna, Austria, where he developed "Threshold of Unknowing," a site-specific sculpture and video installation. The institute is a small research community dedicated to the pursuit of interdisciplinary knowledge in the domains of evolution, cognition and philosophy of science. What stood out most for Baker was the experience of "working every day in a centrally located public studio as an artist embedded in a research institute, explicitly supported and encouraged by leadership and welcomed by the Fellows and staff for extensive interviews and active participation in an experientially stimulating setting full of historical and metaphor-rich architectural attributes."

**Traci Bitondo, Ph.D., LPC, adjunct lecturer of art therapy**, was named president of the New Jersey Art Therapy Association.

**John Chorazy, adjunct lecturer in the English Department**, was invited by the

College Board to the 2023 AP Reading in Tampa, Florida, as a reader for AP language and composition.



**Cindy Concannon, clinical director of the Mary Jo Rolli Codey Center for Counseling Art Therapy**, received

professional counseling licensure from the New Jersey Board of Marriage and Family Examiners. In June she was a panelist at the Adler Aphasia Center's "Getting the Word Out" event, providing information about mental health, art and wellness and the impact counseling art therapy can have on people living with aphasia and on their families.



**Benahir Crespo, academic coach**, was accepted into the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities inaugural cohort

of its *Enlace* Mid-level Leadership program. The six-month leadership development program is for mid-level college and university professionals and is designed to increase the number, variety and quality of Latino/a talent in leadership positions at Hispanic-Serving Institutions and in higher education overall.

**Jeffrey Egnatovich, Ed.D., director of graduate studies and healthcare administration program coordinator**, presented his research on the perceived necessity of college degrees in paramedicine at the 19th annual International Roundtable of Community Paramedicine in Nottingham, United Kingdom. He was joined by researchers from Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany and the Netherlands.

**Tara Harney-Mahajan, Ph.D., associate professor of English and co-director of the honors program**, presented a paper at the roundtable "Tramp Press: Ireland's Maverick Publisher" at the American

Conference for Irish Studies at San José State University in San José, California. The topic of the conference was "Global Ireland: Transnational Networks of Migration and Belonging." Harney-Mahajan is co-editor with Amanda Smith, Ph.D., of Southwestern Oklahoma State University, of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, a double-blind, peer-reviewed literary and cultural studies journal. Their special issue this year was titled "Emerging Trends in Twenty-First-Century Horror" and was guest edited by Karen J. Renner, Ph.D., from Northern Arizona University.

**The Rev. Dr. Miguel A. Hernandez, an adjunct lecturer in the Mathematics Department** and a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, New Jersey, did mission work in El Salvador in the spring. He presented candidates to the diaconate in the Episcopal Anglican Church in El Salvador and participated in an ecological walk with religious leaders from the Catholic and Lutheran churches and civic organizations.

**Joanne Jasmine, Ed.D., professor of education; Edith Ries, Ed.D., professor emerita of education, and Julianne Meletta, Ph.D., assistant professor of education**, presented "Global Literature and Primary Source Documents" at the National Council of Social Studies conference and at the New Jersey Council of Teachers of English conference.

**Valerie Lewis-Mosley, Ph.D., adjunct lecturer in the Department of Theology and Philosophy**, is the recipient of the 2023 St. Katherine Drexel National Justice Award from the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Social Justice Committee. The award honors a recipient for ongoing work with marginalized groups, for appreciating racial and cultural heritages and for having a national impact on religious and moral values.

**Mary Lindroth, professor of English**, presented a paper titled "Fantastic Resistance in the Fantasy Novel *Elatsoe*" at the "Pippi to Ripley" Fantasy/Science Fiction Conference at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, in April.







Professor Stephen Meawad signing his book at Caldwell's Research and Creative Arts Day.

**Stephen Meawad, Ph.D., assistant professor of theology**, had his book "Beyond Virtue Ethics: A Contemporary Ethic of Ancient Spiritual Struggle" published by Georgetown University Press, Moral Traditions series. He presented on "'Unethical' Ethics: Towards an Ethical Transliteration of Coptic Orthodox Praxis" and was on the panel "Coptic Literary Production, Ethics, and Identity: New Currents in Coptic Studies" in the Middle Eastern Christianity Unit at the American Academy of Religion's annual meeting in San Antonio. As part of the Moral Theology and Theological Anthropology Group, he presented on "Orthodox Christian Acquiescence to Pseudo-Deontological Ethics" in a panel on "Law and Legality in Orthodox Christian Ethics" at the International Orthodox Theological Association in Greece in January. He gave the keynote address at Caldwell's 2023 Research and Creative Arts Day on "How to Conduct Good Research: The Sciences and the Humanities."

**Ranjit Nair, Ph.D., associate professor in the School of Business and Computer Science**, was honored with the Outstanding Leadership Award for Innovation in Education at the Education 2.0 conference in July. He was recognized for his contributions to the field of education and learning as an advocate and leader of change and for enriching the global learning community. He is the founder and CEO of Potluck Culture Solutions, an organizational leadership consultancy.

**David Petriello, adjunct lecturer in the Department of History and Political Science**, presented the paper "Climatic Conquest: The Destruction of the Americas Before the Arrival of Columbus" at the conference of the Southern Association

of Historians of Medicine and Science at Emory University.

**Kenneth F. Reeve, Ph.D., BCBA-D, professor of applied behavior analysis (ABA)**, co-authored a research paper with his doctoral student Christopher Colasurdo, along with ABA department colleagues **Jason C. Vladescu, Ph.D., BCBA-D, professor of applied behavior analysis**, and **Sharon Reeve, Ph.D., BCBA-D, professor and graduate program coordinator of ABA**, which was published in the European Journal of Behavior Analysis on the effects of single versus compound stimuli on the formation of concepts with adults. Kenneth Reeve co-authored another research paper with his former M.A. in ABA student Danielle Staropoli regarding the effects of error correction procedures in concept formation that was published in the European Journal of Behavior Analysis. He served as an invited discussant in a symposium on concept formation research at the annual convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis International.

**Sonia I. Rios, adjunct lecturer in modern languages**, presented on "Motivational Factors of Students Learning Spanish at a Community College Level" at the 30th International Conference on Learning at the University of São Paulo-Auditório Nicolau Sevcenko, São Paulo, Brazil.

**Stephanie Sitnick, Ph.D., interim associate dean of psychology and counseling**, presented a poster titled "I need a hero: The impact of representation in superhero print and film" at the Association for Psychological Science convention in Washington, D.C.



**Lily Tsoi, Ph.D., assistant professor in the School of Psychology and Counseling**, was selected as a 2023 fellow for the

Rutgers Center for Minority Serving Institutions' Elevate Program.

**Rebecca Vega, professor of music**, and her UpTown Flutes ensemble, performed a full-hour showcase at the National Flute Association convention in Phoenix in August. An alumna of California State University, Long Beach, Vega attended the university's Pacific Flute Ensemble.

**Jason C. Vladescu, Ph.D., BCBA-D, professor of applied behavior analysis**, co-authored a book to be published by Elsevier titled "Statistics for applied behavior analysis practitioners and researchers."



## CALDWELL JUMPS 13 SPOTS IN U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT "BEST COLLEGES" LIST

Caldwell University jumped 13 spots in one year among the top 100 Best Regional Universities in the North, according to U.S. News & World Report's 2024 higher education rankings. The upward movement is a terrific ascent in a category in which Caldwell has been ranked multiple times before.

The University is also listed as a top 100 Best Value School among northern regional universities, ranking 13th, and as a Top Performer on Social Mobility, 13th, among all northern regional institutions, two accolades the University has earned in previous years. The social mobility ranking is based on how universities and colleges enroll and graduate economically disadvantaged students who are awarded federal Pell grants.

"Recognition in the U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings is always gratifying and is the result of the Caldwell University community's collective efforts," said President Jeffrey D. Senese, Ph.D. "Dedicated faculty, caring staff, supportive alumni and committed trustees all come together to propel Caldwell forward. I'm particularly pleased to see Caldwell acknowledged so highly as a Best Value institution, reflective of the many ways we strive to offer the highest quality education in the Catholic Dominican tradition at the most affordable price possible."





## Dominican Connection

# Caldwell Goes to World Youth Day in Lisbon



Marcia Vidal (above) and Fatima Martinez (top) wearing their World Youth Day pilgrim T-shirts.

Sophomores Fatima Martinez and Marcia Vidal were two of the 1.5 million people who attended World Youth Day (WYD) in Lisbon in August.

Both students traveled with youth groups and the Neocatechumenal Way—Martinez with Saint Agnes Parish in Paterson and Vidal with Saint Francis de Sales in Lodi. They were very happy to feel the support of young people who shared the same ideals and faith in Jesus Christ and who wanted to share that joy with others.

Martinez and her traveling companions walked 2.5 miles to get to the outdoor park, Campo da Graca, where Pope Francis presided over the Eucharistic Adoration Vigil Saturday evening, Aug. 5. “As we were walking ... everyone was singing hymns and psalms, and it brought joy



Approximately 1.5 million people from around the globe attended World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal in August.

[to me] which was unexplainable,” said Martinez, an English and education major. She camped out in the park as did thousands of the attendees, a tradition of World Youth Days, and then attended the Missioning Mass the next day celebrated by the Holy Father. “This was a day that I personally will never forget,” said Martinez. It was a fascinating experience to “not only see the Pope but also to receive this love of God ... everyone should experience [it] at one point in their life.”

Vidal, a psychology major, was thrilled to see Pope Francis up close in Lisbon when he passed by. “I admire and look up to the pope, not only for what he represents but also for how he speaks and speaks to the youth.” What resonated most with her was when Pope Francis told the young people to “be not afraid,” to not fear failing and that if they do fail, to get back up again.

The trip took fortitude and faith since the students were not always sure what their accommodations would be like. This, said Vidal, helped her to learn patience and trust in God. The experience gave her a broader perspective on life. “I am no longer afraid. I’m at peace and so because of this I can enjoy life ... this beautiful life that God has gifted me with.”

*“Obrigado to you,  
Lord Jesus, and  
obrigado to you,  
Blessed Mary  
our Mother.”*

Vidal and Martinez’s groups also visited shrines and holy sites including at Fatima where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three children in 1917. Martinez, whose parents named her Fatima in honor of Our Lady of Fatima,

said the experience helped her grow as a young woman and in her faith. “It was an immaculate and unforgettable experience.”

Paula Vieira, Caldwell University staff member in the Campus Safety and Security





Department, grew up in Portugal and came to the U.S. at 15. She was thrilled to see her homeland center stage for such a historic event. Vieira woke up early to watch many of the events live in Lisbon time, particularly the Holy Father's closing Missioning Mass. "It was overwhelming to see so many youth so happy. As a Catholic, I believe it is important to bring the youth back to their faith. They are our future." She appreciated how the pope mentioned the importance of grandparents in the lives of the young people. Those who attended, Vieira said, "will take a seed from World Youth Day for the rest of their lives."

Colette Liddy, director of news and media relations, was one of 25,000 volunteers blessed to have the experience to serve at WYD. She assisted at Reconciliation Park in the City of Joy in the Belem section of Lisbon where confessions were heard by priests from around the world in multiple languages. The 150 confessionals were made by prisoners in Portugal. Liddy worked with the team that signed out the priests after they had heard confessions. "It was a gift to meet so many holy priests from many countries and witness the teamwork of the organizers, led by a priest and several young people. This was the same park where Pope Francis heard confessions a few days later," explained Liddy.

"What stayed with me most was the spirit of World Youth Day and how the young leaders witnessed all that we had learned in the trainings, the importance

of communicating to others with a clean heart—not to get exasperated by problems but to try to focus on the heart of the other," said Liddy.

The theme for WYD Lisbon 2023 was "Mary Went in Haste," inspired by the Blessed Mother's journey as a pregnant teen to meet her older cousin Elizabeth, who was carrying her baby, John the Baptist. The theme song "Há Pressa no Ar" (There's a Rush in the Air) communicated that sentiment in an array of languages. The message of "Rise Up" in the catechesis sessions, held all over the city of Lisbon during the week, focused on three themes

*"I admire and look up to the pope, not only for what he represents but also for how he speaks and speaks to the youth."*

Pope Francis thanked everyone and most especially Jesus and Mary—"Obrigado to you, Lord Jesus, and obrigado to you, Blessed Mary our Mother." ■

of discussion for the young people—integral ecology, social friendship and mercy.

At the closing Mass, Pope Francis invited the young people to Rome for the Jubilee Year and to the next WYD. "I count on your presence in 2025 to celebrate together the jubilee of young people." He announced the location of the 2027 WYD, which will be in Seoul, South Korea.

Paula Vieira was proud to watch her native country of Portugal host World Youth Day.



## DOMINICAN PREACHING IN ACTION CONFERENCE



Caldwell student Leo Leberatto, Director of Campus Ministry Christina Bryant and Caldwell student Anthony Del Debbio at the Dominican Preaching in Action Conference at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. They joined students, faculty and staff from Dominican institutions across the United States at the conference in May. Student delegates identified their spiritual gifts and unique talents and explored how to live out the Dominican charism on their campuses. "The conference taught me different ways of being a leader and how you can lead through art, speech, service" and other areas, said Del Debbio.





# COACH DEAN JOHNSON LEADS COUGAR SOFTBALL TO ANOTHER NCAA REGIONAL

*Caldwell softball team celebrates Dean Johnson's 900th win on March 29.*

**RESIGNS AS SOFTBALL COACH, REMAINS AS HEAD MEN'S BASKETBALL COACH, ASSOCIATE ATHLETICS DIRECTOR**



*Coach Johnson instructs his team at the 2023 NCAA Division II Regional in Garden City, N.Y.*

It was quite a year for **Dean Johnson**, who for three decades has been an integral part of the Caldwell Athletics Department in various capacities. When he was asked to take over the helm of the softball team in 1995 following the departure of the previous coach, Johnson probably didn't think he'd rack up 29 years and 924 wins before finally turning over the keys to the batter's box. And that the team's 16th NCAA Regional appearance in 19 years at the Division II level would come weeks after he led the men's basketball team to its second such trip in his first year as head coach, one seat over from the assistant coaching chair he occupied under **Mark A. Corino** for nearly three decades.

And while the softball team's magical 2023 run ended with a heartbreaking defeat in the East Regional, the squad's 35-19 mark—which included a landmark 900th win, an 18-0 whitewashing of CACC foe

Dominican on March 29—was a fitting conclusion to the softball coaching career of the 2019 Caldwell Athletics Hall of Famer.

"For nearly three decades I have had the privilege of coaching so many outstanding young women who have made this program so successful," said Johnson. "It was by no means an easy decision, but I feel that this is the right time to allow someone else to take the reins. I look forward to watching the team continue to reach great heights moving forward."

"Dean Johnson's legacy at Caldwell is far-reaching throughout the softball world and the collegiate athletics community," said Corino, who serves as assistant vice president and director of athletics. "His commitment to Caldwell softball student-athletes and to the University at large has made a huge difference in hundreds of young women in his program. We are pleased that his efforts in men's basketball and the entirety of the athletics program continues in his roles as men's basketball coach and associate athletics director."

Johnson's final softball squad had plenty of offense, hitting a combined .328, good for 28th in the country, and averaging 5.5 runs per game. All-Region selection senior 2B **Courtney Grundhauser** led the squad at .395. Her six triples (28th in the NCAA) and the 19 doubles by sophomore SS **Ashleigh Tavaska** (15th in the NCAA) both ranked in the top 30. Grundhauser's

14 career triples are 16th among active players, and senior 1B **Maya Rodriguez**, in addition to securing the national Rawlings Gold Glove award, finished her Cougar career 11th among active players in batting (.373), 12th in at-bats (705), 29th in games played (218) and 33rd in RBI (145).

But it was the pitching that really shined, as the foursome of graduate **Madison Burns** (1.78 ERA, 52nd in the NCAA), freshman **Olivia Kennedy** (1.81, 55th), senior **Mariah Culver** (1.85, 61st) and graduate **Kayla Daly** (1.91, 69th) ranked in the top 70, helping the Cougars to a No. 14 ERA ranking. The team also finished with a composite 1.12 WHIP (walks + hits per inning), good for 20th in the country, paced by Kennedy's stellar 0.95 mark, which was 26th best individually.

New head coach **Lindsay Mayer** takes control, coming to us from Arcadia University in Pennsylvania after a standout career at Fordham and three Division I assistant coaching stops. Read more about her in the article on Page 22. ■

— *Jerry Milani*



*Courtney Grundhauser and Maya Rodriguez plan strategy between innings at the NCAA East Regional.*





# SPRING RECAP

## HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF THE OTHER CALDWELL SPRING SPORTS:



Kaytence Vining (3) lifted by Cougars Acrobatics & Tumbling including Arianna Ardilla (1).

The acrobatics & tumbling team finished its first year of competition flying high, showing improvement as the season went on and the program found its footing. The season was highlighted by the first-ever home event on

March 7 vs. Augustana (South Dakota). Some of the top performers were freshmen **Jill Riggio**, **Kaytence Vining**, **Rosemary Casteneda**, **Chrissy Baptiste**, **Isabella Garcia** and **LaCaiya Hill-Dewitt**, who excelled in six element, turning in their season-best performance in the final match of the year at Quinnipiac on April 14. Other standouts included freshman **Mickennah Lanza** and juniors **Alyssa Gonzalez** and **Amanda Osmolowski**. And the future is bright indeed with the naming of **Amirah Boyd** as the program's head coach on May 28.



Christopher Bayo readies for the pitch.

The baseball team finished fast, nearly rallying to a CACC tournament berth with a late-season flurry that saw Head Coach and Caldwell Athletics Hall of Famer **Hasani Whitfield's** charges win five of their last six. Five Cougars were named to the league's All-Academic squad (**Michael Deusch**, **Ryan Opak**, **Zach Saunders**, **Brandon Scalisi** and **Connor Woods**), and

senior **Kyle Richards** capped his brilliant Caldwell career by signing a pro contract with the Sussex County Miners. Freshmen **Christopher Bayo** (.349) and **Michael Cruz** (.319) were the team's leading hitters, and classmate **John Rigas** won five games as the top pitcher.



Kelsey Maxwell carries toward goal.

41 goals and 47 points led the way, while Lasko contributed 19 goals and a team-best 20 assists, and freshman **Megan Molinelli** showed flashes of a bright Cougar future with 14 goals and 14 assists to rank near the top newcomers in the CACC.

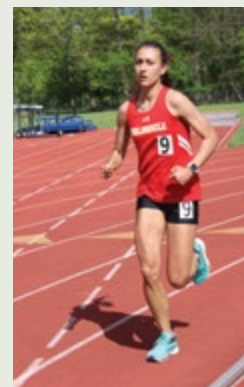


Tim Livingston (14) concentrates in goal.

takes over as head coach in 2023-24. **Owen Healy** and **Jayden Paladino** ranked among the CACC's best scorers with 28 and 24 goals, respectively, while **Jason Staudte** had a team-best 21 assists. Senior **Tim Livingston** had his best year in net, twice earning CACC Goalkeeper of the Week and posting a GAA of under 14 per contest.

The women's lacrosse team saw some of its most prolific all-time scorers in action. The trio of **Madison Ellis**, **Emily Lasko** and **Kelsey Maxwell** added to their goal totals, which rank fifth through seventh at Caldwell, respectively. Ellis's

The men's lacrosse team continued to make strides in the young program's fourth year, graduating a group of seniors who were there from the start and pulling in talent from across the region as assistant coach **Blase Mantineo**



Ana Gonzales Martin competes at the CACC championships.

The women's track and field team saved its best for last at the CACC championships, riding a pair of school-record performances from graduate **Ana Gonzalez Martin** in the 3,000-meter steeplechase and junior **Alexis Byfield** in the

triple jump to a seventh-place standing overall. Gonzalez Martin, who also placed third in the 10,000-meter run, earned her second medal, passing two runners in the latter stages of the race to take silver. Byfield also scored in the long jump and high jump. Freshman sprinters **Chennaya Tschopp** and **Isabella Pollock** were among head coach **Kyle Price's** top performers.



Gerald Volcy speeds through the relay at the CACC championships.

The men's track and field team was at its best at the CACC championships, erasing four school records en route to a fifth-place finish. Freshman **Gerald Volcy**, among the league's top sprinters, shattered the 400-meter dash mark, joining **Rayhan Issah** (long jump), sophomore **Ethan Edwards** (100-meter hurdles) and freshman **Andrew Scopel** (javelin) in the new-record book. Volcy, Edwards and freshman **Kevin Campen** were double scorers as well, and junior thrower **Kyle Kuren** broke his own school records numerous times during the season. ■

— Jerry Milani



## WE SAY "WELCOME TO CALDWELL" TO FOUR NEW COACHES AND "WELCOME BACK" TO A FIFTH AS THE ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT ENTERS THE 2023-24 SEASON WITH NEW LEADERSHIP FOR SEVERAL INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORTS

Acrobatics and tumbling, now in its second year at Caldwell as the sport continues its rapid ascent toward NCAA designation, has a charismatic young head coach in **Amirah Boyd**. The Atlanta native, at 22 among the youngest coaches in the country in any collegiate sport, took over a few weeks after graduating from Presbyterian

records and was a two-time Honorable Mention All-American.

The women's soccer team should see a smooth transition with the addition of **Sammy Adjei**, who comes to Caldwell from 5.1 miles away at Bloomfield College, where he led the CACC member Bears for

athletics director. A 2017 graduate of Fordham University, Mayer earned All-Region, Atlantic-10 Player of the Year and Academic All-America honors for the Rams and comes to Caldwell following stints as head coach at Arcadia University in Pennsylvania and assistant at Division I College of the Holy Cross, Hofstra University and Wagner College.

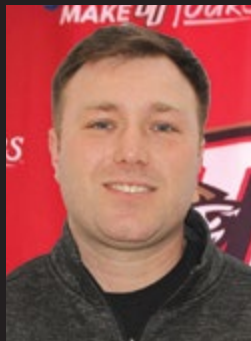
The volleyball team begins this fall with former Concordia College head coach **Sttefany Oliveira** at the helm. Oliveira led the Clippers to appearances in the CACC



# TEAMS BEGIN 2023-24 WITH NEW LEADERS



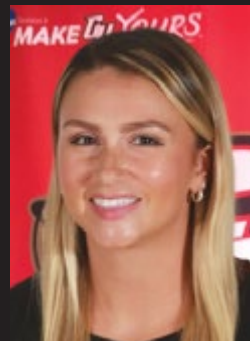
*Amirah Boyd*



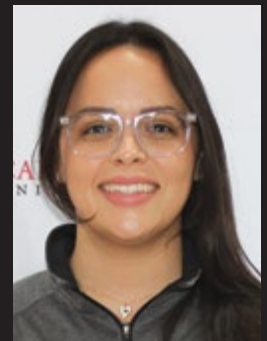
*Blase Mantineo*



*Sammy Adjei*



*Lindsay Mayer*



*Sttefany Oliveira*

College in South Carolina, where she was a standout member of the Blue Hose squad and an NCATA Academic Honor Roll member.

The men's lacrosse program has built a strong foundation, and a big part of that resurgence is **Blase Mantineo**, who moves from assistant to head coach for 2023-24. Mantineo, who coached at Division I NJIT for five years before taking to the Cougar sidelines as top assistant last year, is a 2017 graduate of nearby Montclair State University, where he holds several lacrosse

three years. The Iona University (bachelor's) and Rider University (MBA) graduate also has extensive professional playing experience, having competed for the MLS New York Red Bulls and Danish Naestved Boldklub after representing the U.S. at the youth national team level and his native Ghana on its U-20 national squad.

The softball team sees its first coaching change in three decades as **Lindsay Mayer** replaces **Dean Johnson**, who remains as men's basketball head coach and associate

tournament in both of her years there, earning CACC Coach of the Year honors in her second season as she engineered a fantastic turnaround of the program. The SUNY Buffalo graduate also coached three All-Conference players at Concordia and brings an infectious enthusiasm and strong coaching credentials to Caldwell. ■

— *Jerry Milani*





# COUGARS HIT THE BOOKS:

## ACADEMIC HONORS ABOUND FOR SPRING STUDENT-ATHLETES

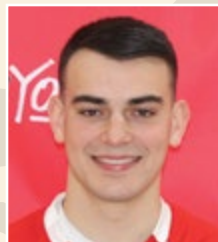
NCAA Division II represents academics and athletics in a balance: The competitions are important, but academics have at least equal prominence as the division celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2023. With that in mind, achievements in the classroom are measured with awards at the national, regional and conference levels and, as usual, Caldwell's student-athletes were up to the task and feted accordingly.

Most recently, the Division II Athletic Directors Association produced its list of Academic Achievement Awards, and the Cougars ranked near the top of the region with 84 total awards, including eight who claimed the honor in multiple sports. That designation covered the entire 2022-23 academic year, though it did not include acrobatics & tumbling and sprint football student-athletes as it is limited to sports in which Caldwell competes in Division II.

### SPRING HONORS ABOUNDED AS EVERY SQUAD HAD NUMEROUS ATHLETES EARNING AWARDS:

**ACROBATICS & TUMBLING:** Seven Cougars gained National Collegiate Acrobatics & Tumbling Association Academic Honor Roll status, including **Arianna Ardilla** (3.48 GPA, nursing), **Rosemary Castaneda** (3.76, criminal justice), **Baylie Daniels** (3.83, biology), **Isabella Garcia** (3.32, business administration), **Mickannah Lanza** (3.95, biology), **Jill Riggio** (4.00, psychology) and **Britney Solano** (3.45, nursing).

**BASEBALL:** **Michael Deusch** (3.85, business administration), **Ryan Opak** (3.57, business administration), **Zach Saunders** (3.51, sport management), **Brandon Scalisi** (3.90, criminal justice) and **Connor Woods** (3.70, financial economics) were named to the CACC All-Academic Team. Saunders, Scalisi, Woods, **Waldy Arias** (3.50, sport management) and **Kyle Richards** (3.50, MBA) were selected to the College Sports Communicators (CSC) All-District team. Opak, Saunders, Scalisi and Woods were joined by Deusch on the CACC All-Academic Team.



Matthew Bronico



Emma Cooney



Baylie Daniels



Caroline Hastings



Rayhan Issah



Sabina Neupane



Zach Saunders

**WOMEN'S LACROSSE:** Three Cougars qualified for the IWLCA Division II Academic Honor Roll: **Caroline Hastings** (3.69, psychology), **Kelsey Maxwell** (3.90, healthcare administration) and **Reese Sherwood** (3.66, nursing). The trio also were selected to the CACC Women's Lacrosse All-Academic Team. In addition, graduate attacker **Emily Lasko** was chosen to the CSC Academic All-District team.

**MEN'S LACROSSE:** Five Cougars were selected to the CACC All-Academic Team: **Cory Barrera** (3.70, accounting), **Matthew Bronico** (3.61, elementary education/social studies), **Angelo Drake** (3.73, exercise science), **Nicholas Mele** (3.53, communications) and **Shane Murphy** (3.79, communications/business administration).

**SOFTBALL:** Primary among the many honors gained by the softball squad were selections to the CSC Academic All-District team for **Courtney Grundhauser** (3.66, nursing), **Maya Rodriguez** (3.85, criminal justice/sociology/psychology), **Emma Cooney** (3.55, English/criminal justice), **Madison Burns** (3.68, MA, counseling) and **Kayla Daly** (3.65, MBA). The CACC All-Academic Team featured Grundhauser, Rodriguez, Cooney, **Brooke Martin** (3.92, biology), **Paige Silvia** (3.80, biology), **Allison Winters** (3.61, criminal justice), **Taylor Mischler** (3.60, criminal justice) and **Chloe Poceschi** (3.57, nursing).

**WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD:** Nine Caldwell student-athletes were named to the CACC All-Academic Team: **Kalya Baca** (3.58, criminal justice), **Shamica Carey** (3.80, accounting), **Sonia Casiano** (3.67, criminal justice), **Ana Gonzalez Martin** (4.00, business administration), **KJ Gordon** (3.51, sport management), **Suzanne Hamzah** (3.67, biology), **Gabriela Lopez** (3.77, health science), **Sabina Neupane** (3.82, accounting/mathematics) and **Jalisa Smith** (3.62, criminal justice).

**MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD:** **Ervin Chaush** (3.91, psychology), **Rayhan Issah** (3.80, accounting) and **Alfredo Oidor** (3.70, psychology) were named to the CSC Academic All-District Men's Track and Field Team. The trio, plus **Alex Geddes** (3.93, accounting/financial economics), **Anthony Gola** (3.64, communications) and **Devin Males** (3.75, criminal justice), earned CACC All-Academic Team honors.

Softball's Grundhauser and track and field's Gonzalez Martin were also the Caldwell nominees for NCAA Woman of the Year, an honor for which academic success and community service weigh heavily in the selection process. And, in May, bowler **Rhianna Smith** (3.95, criminal justice) was selected to the CSC Academic All-District At-Large Team. ■

— Jerry Milani



# Caldwell University Inducts Five Student-Athletes into Athletics Hall of Fame

**BASEBALL'S CASAL, SOCCER'S DELUCCA, VOLLEYBALL'S MCDONOUGH, BASKETBALL'S PEREZ, SOFTBALL'S VELARDI GAIN ULTIMATE STUDENT-ATHLETE HONORS**



*Caldwell Athletics Hall of Famers celebrate with University President Jeff Senese, Ph.D., at the induction ceremony on Sept. 22 at The Highlawn. L to R: Manny Perez '09, Susan McDonough '14, Brook DeLucca '08, Mary and Vic Basile, Dr. Senese, Robert Casal '10, Jackie Velardi '08.*

On Sept. 22, Caldwell University named five former student-athletes from five different teams as members of the CU Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2023 and honored two Cougar Pride Recognition Award recipients at the Caldwell University Athletics Hall of Fame Dinner at The Highlawn in West Orange, New Jersey.

## THE CALDWELL UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023 INDUCTEES ARE:

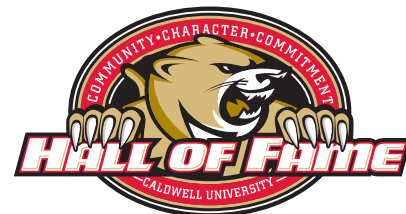
- **Robert Casal**, baseball, class of 2010
- **Brook DeLucca**, women's soccer, class of 2007
- **Susan McDonough**, volleyball, class of 2013
- **Manny Perez**, men's basketball, class of 2009
- **Jackie Velardi**, softball, class of 2008

## THE COUGAR PRIDE RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS:

- **Vic and Mary Basile**, contributors

The inductees, nominated at large by administrators, coaches, alumni and friends of the program, were elected by a panel that includes University and Athletics Department staff, coaches and distinguished alumni. All proceeds from the ninth annual event went to the Cougar Pride General Fund, which supports the Degree Completion Scholarship and enhancements for the University's intercollegiate athletic programs; the induction dinner is a fundraising event for Cougar Pride, the official support organization of Caldwell Athletics.

"We had not been able to hold a Hall of Fame induction since 2019, but this class was worth the wait," said **Mark A. Corino**, assistant vice president and director of athletics. "The student-athletes represent a cross-section of sports, and all were high achievers in the classrooms and the playing fields. We couldn't be more proud of what they have accomplished."



"Additionally, the Basiles welcomed our program with open arms when I arrived at Caldwell," Corino said. "They are representative of how the Caldwell community has embraced the school and supported our student-athletes and coaches."

**Casal** pitched from 2007 to 2010 for coaches **Chris Reardon** and **Jay Messina**. He is the school's all-time leader in wins (23), strikeouts (266) and innings (258⅓) and second in ERA (3.24). As a freshman in 2007, he posted a 10-1 record and 3.75 ERA with 75 strikeouts and followed up in 2008 by earning CACC Pitcher of the Year honors (9-4, 1.89, school-record 106 strikeouts). He helped the Cougars advance to the NCAA regional in 2007 and 2008, including a CACC title in 2008.

**DeLucca** competed from 2004 to 2007 under four head coaches, including her last year for Coach **Nate Guagliardi**. She was the CACC Player of the Year in 2005, scoring 10 goals and adding seven assists, and earned two All-CACC honors. DeLucca was a CACC All-Tournament selection in 2004 and scored 62 career points.

**McDonough** starred from 2009 to 2012 for coaches **Megan (Hrbek) Bratkovich** and **John Titus**. She was a two-time all-CACC First Team and AVCA all-East Region selection, registering 373 kills and 516 digs in her senior year, and helped Caldwell win CACC tournament titles in 2010 and 2011, earning tournament MVP honors both seasons. A four-year starter, McDonough was the CACC Co-Rookie of the Year in 2009 and CACC and ECAC Player of the Year in 2011. She graduated as the Cougars' all-time leader in kills with 1,226 and second with 1,472 digs.

**Perez** was Caldwell's first all-region men's basketball player in the NCAA Division II era. Perez, who played from 2004 to 2009





after missing most of the 2005-06 season with an injury, ranks second all-time at Caldwell with 1,859 career points and was a four-time all-CACC selection. As a senior he averaged 18.8 points per game and 7.8 rebounds per game, earning an invitation to compete in the prestigious NABC/ NCAA Division II All-Star Game. He was voted the 2005 CACC Newcomer of the year, eclipsing the 1,000- point mark in his second season.

**Velardi**, who played from 2004 to 2007 for Coach **Dean Johnson**, played a significant role in Caldwell's run to the 2004 College World Series, batting .336 with three home runs and 20 RBI. Velardi turned in her best season as a senior in 2007 when she hit .340 with 27 runs and 25 RBI while earning a spot on the CACC

All-Tournament team. During her four seasons at Caldwell, the Cougars won four CACC regular-season titles, three CACC tournament crowns and an NCAA Northeast Region championship while compiling an overall record of 156-51. An all-league first team selection in 2005, Velardi batted .299 and amassed 162 hits and 95 RBI in 203 career games. She also served as Johnson's assistant coach for more than a decade, helping a new generation of Cougars reach NCAA regionals.

The **Basiles** are longtime Caldwell residents who began attending Cougars games around the time Corino became head basketball coach and athletic director in the late 1980s. They formed a special bond with administrators, coaches and, in particular, student-athletes, supporting the teams in

a variety of ways. In addition to attending nearly every home game for years, they traveled to many away games and eventually started the first Caldwell athletics booster club, which they called Cougar Pride, the name the entity still goes by today.

The Caldwell University Athletics Hall of Fame was established in 2010 to honor student-athletes, coaches and contributors who have played significant roles in the success of the intercollegiate athletic programs at Caldwell University. With this year's class, there are now 51 members in the Hall of Fame. The Caldwell Athletics Hall of Fame room is located on the first floor of the George R. Newman Center. ■

— *Jerry Milani*



The schedule of a Division II student-athlete is pretty full: classes, practice, games, study hall and everything else that "regular students" go through day in and day out, on and off campus. So what did junior nursing major and standout Caldwell soccer midfielder **Presley Anderson** decide to add to her plate? How about a full marathon, in the form of the 2023 Jersey City Marathon, held on April 23 in the state's second-largest city.

Once the Cougars' season concluded in November, the Denville native, a

## Soccer Standout Anderson Completes Jersey City Marathon

high-achiever in and out of the classroom, decided to challenge herself further and began training for the full 26.2-mile marathon.

"One day after soccer I decided to go for a run. I thought I'd do two or three miles, and I ended up doing five," said the 2022 CACC All-Academic and Collegiate Sports Communicators All-Academic Team member. "And I thought, 'I could run more. Why not challenge myself mentally and physically and set a goal to run a full marathon?'"

And though she had to put foot to pavement for many miles by herself to prepare, Anderson had an army of teammates, family and friends supporting her literally every step of the way.

"Six of my teammates and my mom were able to come see me finish the race and were there to cheer me on as I ran through the finish line," she said. "I was beyond happy to be able to share this special

moment with them after having achieved this goal."

And for a first-time marathoner, Anderson's time of four hours, 56 minutes was quite impressive. In addition to her built-in Caldwell rooting section, the Morris Knolls High School graduate and two-year starter for Coach **Nate Guagliardi's** squad was buoyed by the support across the entire course.

"The atmosphere of the race was incredible with there being over 5,000 runners total and supporters along the course," the popular Anderson added. "It was an amazing experience having people you did not even know supporting you and cheering you on throughout the 26.2 miles."

This year, she's back in action as one of the key returners for the squad now coached by **Sammy Adjei**, looking for goals of another kind: those that find the back of the net on the soccer pitch. ■

— *Jerry Milani*



## Caldwell Honored with Prestigious Hispanic-Serving Institution Award



Caldwell University was honored as a recipient of the Angeles Investors' HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution) Impact Award for its work in serving

Hispanic students. The award was presented at a celebration and investors conference in Chicago on August 18.

The University was honored to receive such an important award. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, Caldwell is proud to support students from many Hispanic cultures and backgrounds in their educational endeavors and to be among a group of prestigious universities that are leading in supporting Hispanic leadership and forward-thinking ventures.

The HSI awards are given by Angeles Investors to find, fund and grow the most promising Hispanic and Latinx ventures. Angeles Investors supports the most exciting startups driven by Hispanic or Latinx entrepreneurs, investors and board members.

Ivonne Valdes '80, a member of the University's Board of Trustees, nominated Caldwell for an HSI Impact Award. "I am excited to have my alma mater recognized. Caldwell University is an institution that encourages critical thinking, a global mindset and community and social involvement." ■

# Caldwell University Welcomes Global Business Leader and Alumna to Its Board of Trustees

Global business leader and Caldwell alumna Ivonne Valdes '79 joined Caldwell University's Board of Trustees July 1.

Valdes is chief product officer and executive vice president of business development for Sorenson Communications, a leading provider of American Sign Language interpreting and phone captioning services. She serves as chair of the Hispanic Technology Executive Council (HITEC) Foundation, the Conectado Inc. board and the sales advisory board for CATO.

Named a 2020 Silicon Valley Woman of Influence, Valdes comes to the Caldwell board with a wealth of experience in global leadership, technology, communications and marketing for profit and nonprofit companies including Schneider Electric, Hewlett Packard Enterprise and Sun Rapid Solutions/Strategic Alliances.

"We are grateful to Ivonne for desiring to share her profit and nonprofit leadership experience with our board. In continuing to enhance the diversity of our board, we will benefit from her experience as a champion for inclusion, diversity and education. We are delighted that she has a zeal and commitment for helping our students achieve their dreams and goals and make a difference in the world," said Chair of the Board of Trustees Brian Aloia, Esq.



Valdes was recently honored with the 2023 HITEC Member of the Year Award. Among the other recognitions Valdes has received are the Infrastructure Masons 2019 Global Diversity and Inclusion Champion Award, the 2020 HITEC Hall of Fame Award, the 2016 CRN Power 100: The Most Powerful Women of the Channel recognition, the 2015 Top 10 Latina Executives of the Year Award and the 2015/2014 CRN Women of the Channel recognition. ■



**CALDWELL DAY** of service was held Sept. 22. Director of Campus Ministry Christina Bryant, Ph.D., said it is day to put "faith and mission into action." Referencing the scripture verse "Love your neighbor," in Matthew 22, Caldwell President Jeffrey Senese, Ph.D., said Caldwell Day is "a demonstration of loving our neighbors." As a Catholic and Dominican university, said Dr. Senese, the University has a moral obligation to serve others and it is important to demonstrate "how humans work together for the common good." More than 250 students, faculty and staff volunteered to help out nonprofits benefiting our neighbors in Caldwell, Essex County, the state and around the world.





# JOE QUINLAN

## Joins Development and Alumni Affairs Team

### *'University Life Means Community Life'*



"In most of the places I've worked, it's a community of students, faculty and staff, and the goal is to collaborate for the benefit of the students," said Joe Quinlan, who recently joined Caldwell University as major gifts officer. He brings a wealth of intercollegiate

athletics and philanthropy experience to Caldwell, having served at some of the highest levels in collegiate athletics including at Seton Hall, Saint Peter's, Rutgers, Columbia and at organizations like the NCAA and the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority. "At all of the places, there is a customer service component—that you want people to have a positive experience at your institution," said Quinlan.

He is excited to be working with the Development and Alumni Affairs team and with Assistant Vice President and Director of Athletics Mark Corino in leading Cougar Pride, the official fundraising arm for the University's NCAA Division II athletics program, along with sprint football. "It is important for all of us to support athletics the way we do other components of the University," Quinlan said. He explained that the support they provide to student-athletes goes well beyond the actual playing of the sport. That includes comprehensive student-athlete development in areas such as academic and career services and physical, social and emotional support. "Mark Corino and I share the same philosophy. Neither one of us would say athletics should usurp or jump over academic priority ... but it is a part of the University mission."

The University is thrilled that Quinlan has joined the team as a proven leader in the community who brings many connections and new potential relationships. He is a representative of the University's core values and his character and style have been warmly received by alumni and donors. ■

— Colette Liddy

## University Establishes Endowed Scholarship in Memory of Beloved Professor, Alvin Neiman



Leonardo da Vinci wrote, "As a well spent day brings happy sleep, a life well used brings happy death."

Caldwell University accounting professor Alvin M. Neiman, who tragically died while driving with his wife earlier this year, brought so much happiness to students and colleagues

with his caring manner and inquisitive nature. He was a loving husband and nurturing father and grandfather. A scholar, teacher and mentor.

Professor Neiman's door was always open for students. His mind was always open for new thoughts and new ideas, and his focus and his depth of field were amazing. He represented – and practiced – in the field of accounting with vigor. Truly, his love for Caldwell was boundless. Professor Neiman helped the academic and professional careers of so many Caldwell students and graduates through his advice and warm support, and many of his peer professors had become equally as indebted to him.

In tribute to his life and the relationship between the family and the University, Professor Neiman's memorial service was held before a capacity crowd in Alumni Theatre on campus. Three overflow rooms were filled to the brim for a live stream of the service.

In the midst of our academic community losing a brilliant mind, Professor Neiman's legacy at the University will be remembered in perpetuity. Shortly after his death, the Development and Alumni Affairs Office worked with Al's widow Audrey, son Blake, daughter Sara (also a Caldwell alumna) and son-in-law Bill Ceni to establish the Alvin Neiman Endowed Memorial Scholarship, awarded to an accounting major who best demonstrates Neiman's passion for the career field and for learning – as well as his sense of humor and love for life and adventure.

The University received several hundred gifts from former students, accounting industry colleagues, family friends and those in Neiman's network down the shore. Thanks to them, and to the support of the Neiman Family, Caldwell was able to begin awarding a scholarship to a student right away. "It was the life of goodness, the witness of compassion, the belief in every individual student's ability to succeed, and the profound professional and personal encounters that led people to respond with generosity in recognizing the authenticity of Professor Al Neiman," said Sister Kathleen Tuite, O.P., assistant to the President for mission integration. "When someone leaves that kind of mark on your life, you want to give it back and pass it on. As the Prophet Isaiah states, 'Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest forever.' Thank you, Professor Neiman, for lighting the way," said Sister. ■

**FOR JOE QUINLAN, UNIVERSITY LIFE MEANS COMMUNITY LIFE.**



## CELEBRATING THE CAROLINE WARD ROMANS '68 CHILDREN'S LITERATURE COLLECTION

A dedication of the Caroline Ward Romans '68 Children's Literature Collection was held Sept. 24 during Homecoming and Reunion Weekend. Romans '68, a children's literature expert, gifted Caldwell with the collection featuring 1,000 books. It is now showcased in Jennings Library. L to R: Victoria Swanson, Jennings Library director; Juliann Meletta, assistant professor, School of Education and coordinator, M.A. in Literacy Instruction Program; Caroline Ward Romans, and Caldwell President Jeffrey Senese, Ph.D.



## ELAINE BAUER ZABRISKIE '73 RECEIVES PEGGY HARRIS '53 ALUMNA OF THE YEAR AWARD

Elaine Bauer Zabriskie '73 was the recipient of the Peggy Harris '53 Alumna of the Year Award at the University's Homecoming and Reunion celebration Sept. 24. She is pictured here with James R. Stark '14, Alumni Association Board president, and Caldwell President Jeffrey Senese, Ph.D.



# alumni events

## BUSINESS AND BASKETBALL

Graduates of the School of Business and Computer Science enjoyed a Cougars basketball game and reconnecting with old friends.

L to R: Omar Trimino '06, Professor Ann Marie Callahan of the School of Business and Computer Science and Efrain Velazquez '07.



## CALDWELL DOWN THE SHORE – BAR-A

Over 50 alumni and friends attended the annual Caldwell Down the Shore alumni and friends event in Lake Como, New Jersey.

L to R: Breanna Walker '21, Marisa Amoresano '21, Ashley Williams '21 and Dana Stephens '21.



L to R: Bob Mann, professor and chair of the Communication and Media Studies Department; Jeffrey Senese, Ph.D., Caldwell University's 10th president, and Nick Amabile '00, technical production and operations manager for the Communication and Media Studies Department.

# Shore





## CU VERITAS AWARD 2023

The 36th June Dwyer Castano Veritas Award honorees are L to R: Board of Trustees member Mary Selliitto-Curcio '83, who received the Excellence in Humanitarian Endeavors Award; Sister Mary John Kearney, O.P. '62, who received the Excellence in Higher Education Award; Nancy Hurtz-Soyka '71, who received the Excellence in International Relations Award, and Roger Monel '00, who received the Excellence in Community Activism Award.



## SUPER SATURDAY ALUMNI EVENT

In honor of the 50th anniversary of Title IX, the Caldwell Athletics Department recognized the University's top 50 female student-athletes over the last 50 years, along with current and former trailblazers who have championed and advanced women's athletics at Caldwell. The ceremony took place between the women's and men's basketball games at the Super Saturday Alumni Event.



◀ L to R: Dean Johnson, associate director of athletics and head men's basketball coach, and Title IX honoree Sister Kathleen Tuite, O.P. '92.

Title IX honoree and former women's basketball player Carole Dwyer Collins '57 celebrated with her family during the Super Saturday Alumni Event.



## GOLF CLASSIC

The 34th annual Golf Classic, presented by Uplevel Entrepreneur, was held June 12 at the Essex Fells Country Club. Proceeds from this event benefit the Caldwell University Scholarship Fund and the Bruce Gallagher Memorial Scholarship.



◀ Golfers taking practice putts before teeing off for the 34th annual Golf Classic.

L to R: Head Baseball Coach Hasani Whitfield '05, Kyle Richards '22, Assistant Baseball Coach Mike Kolesar '05 and Joe Giacchi '13, assistant athletics director and assistant women's basketball coach.



▲ L to R: Sean McCaffrey and Board of Trustees member John Crawford.

## CALDWELL COUPLES

The first-ever Caldwell Couples cocktail reception was held in February.

L to R: Melissa Brady-Petrillo '14/M.A. '18, Christopher Petrillo '14, Jan Marco Jiras '10, Nicole Laureigh Jiras '10, Paul Hirsch '05 and Luisa Witter Hirsch '03.



# Learn by Doing, Teach by Example



*One thing I appreciate about retirement is having the freedom to do the things I love most with those I love most. For me, one of those things is spending more time with family and friends. Another is teaching.*

*I enjoyed a highly successful 40-year career working in large global companies. What brought me the most joy in my role as a leader was helping my colleagues grow, develop and thrive. Knowing I played a role in their success and made a difference in their lives is what drives me to want to continue to teach. But, what kind of teacher do I want to be, and what do I teach?*

First, I thought about the teachers I admired most throughout my life, including my professors at Caldwell University, and why I felt that way about them. The most admired teachers have a similar approach to how they teach. Here's what Caldwell taught me by example, leading me to be the kind of teacher I strive to be.

1. **CHALLENGE THEM.** Assign challenging work. Encourage people to push themselves beyond what they think they can accomplish. Guide them, cheer them on, but let them do the work, so they learn by doing.
2. **BE RELATABLE.** Use real-life examples. Draw on your own experiences, so others see you as a real person, with real challenges, successes and failures, who does ordinary things just like them. The more relatable you are, the more likely people will listen to you.
3. **SET HIGH STANDARDS.** Set the bar high and hold people accountable to those high standards. Mediocrity is not good enough if you want to be your best. It's possible to be tough and demanding while being equitable, fair and understanding.
4. **BE AUTHENTIC.** Demonstrate who you are, what you know and what you stand for. Don't just tell people, show them and be consistent regardless of the situation you're in.
5. **BE KIND.** Treat people with kindness and respect. Apply the Golden Rule. Think back to how it felt when you were treated badly; don't be the person who makes other people feel like that.
6. **DO MORE.** Go above and beyond what's expected. The teachers I admired most were a teacher and ... a coach, an advisor, a sponsor, a volunteer at the concession stand. Doing more gets noticed and provides another way to connect with people.

Next, what to teach? As I was considering this question, I recalled the 4C's Framework, a successful approach I created to lead large transformational-change communications programs at Bayer. I have used the 4C's Framework (and still do) to change my personal situation and lead a prosperous life. That was the answer. These days, I teach the 4C's Framework to others so they can make change work in their lives and prosper, too! The 4C's are:

- **CLARITY:** Know and stick to your goal.
- **CONNECTION:** Engage and involve others in your pursuit.
- **CARING:** Care about the impact you have on others.
- **COURAGE:** Take the risk, do what's right.

The first three C's are not useful if you don't do anything with them. Nothing happens if nothing happens; you need to act, and do so ethically, legally and with integrity.

Now, how does the 4C's Framework relate to my experience at Caldwell University? Retrospectively, I realized that my professors used the elements of this framework without even knowing it. For example, my professors:

- Had **CLARITY** about their goal, which was to help me not only learn the subject matter but how to apply that knowledge in my work and life.
- Showed a keen ability to **CONNECT** with me personally, relating their professional experience in a meaningful, engaging way.
- **CARED** about myself personally, what I was looking to get out of my education, what my aspirations were, and how they could help me attain them.
- **COURAGEOUSLY** faced me and other students in the classroom every week and took risks on how to get me to pay attention and care about what they taught.

Using this approach, my professors helped this student become a productive, prosperous professional, making a difference in not only my life but every life they touch. For that, I am profoundly grateful.

One of the most important things I learned during my experience at Caldwell is the best way to learn is by doing, and the best way to teach is by example. It's my turn now — and an honor and a privilege — to pay it forward. ■

— Mary Lou Panzano '94  
Founder and Chief Enlightenment Officer,  
Panzano Enterprises LLC





# CLASS NOTES

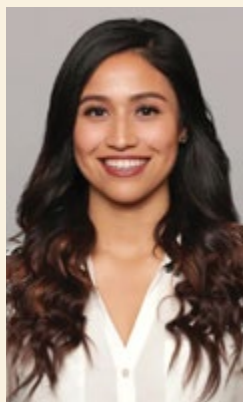
**Deborah Balthazar '17** has begun her fellowship with the award-winning health, science and medicine publication STAT in Boston. She is a recipient of the 2023-24 Sharon Begley Science Reporting Fellowship from STAT and the Knight Science Journalism Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Balthazar holds a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and minors in English and chemistry from Caldwell and a master's in science journalism from NYU. Balthazar says she is excited to continue to follow her passion for communicating science, which started at Caldwell University. Her biology professor at Caldwell, William A. Velhagen Jr., Ph.D., associate dean, said, "Sharon Begley was a great science journalist; I enjoyed reading her work. I am glad Deborah received this fellowship, and I look forward to reading more of what she will write."



**Quin DeLaRosa '20**, who holds a Bachelor of Arts in History with minors in political science and music from Caldwell, has accepted a

position as an archivist at Yale's Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. DeLaRosa recently received an M.A. in Archives and Public History from NYU and completed the seasonal Dulles Fellowship for Princeton University Library Special Collections during the summer of 2022. "I can say with confidence that my B.A. in History and minor in political science have aided me enormously in my post-baccalaureate endeavors," said DeLaRosa. Writing to his former professor, Dr. Marie Mullaney, he said, "I feel that I frequently rely on the critical thinking skills from your classes and particularly those from the outcomes assessment process."

**Sarina Soriano '16**, senior producer for the San Francisco 49ers and 49ers Studios, has won two Emmys: "Best in Craft Achievement Photographer/Editor Spanish: Sarina Soriano" and "Best Sport's Program Live or Post-Produced: 49 Hours." The



alumna holds bachelor's degrees from Caldwell in communication and media studies, Spanish and sport management. A former member of the Caldwell women's soccer team, she returned to her

alma mater last February as a panelist for "A Review and Discussion on the Impact of Title IX and Women in Athletics" hosted by the Athletics Department. The first female and first Latina senior producer for the San Francisco 49ers at 49ers Studio, Soriano is proud to have helped build the 49ers Spanish broadcast team and to have worked with the team to create Spanish content. "Through my art, I strive to capture the beauty and resiliency of the human spirit," said Soriano.

**Paul Higgins**, who holds a master's in educational administration from Caldwell, is the advisor to the Hoboken High School debate program, which took 12 awards, the most of any institution, at the Harvard Model Congress Conference in Madrid, Spain, in March.

**Tara Barrow and Jennifer Le Pelusa**, graduates of Caldwell's post-baccalaureate education program, received Caldwell's 2022-23 Clinical Intern of the Year awards. Presenting the awards were New Jersey Commissioner of Education Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan and Dr. Amy Kline, president of the New Jersey Association for Colleges for Teacher Education.

**Jennifer Donnelly** was named 2023-24 Hudson County Teacher of the Year by the New Jersey Department of Education. A science teacher at Jose Marti STEM Academy in Union City, Donnelly holds certifications as a teacher of biological science and elementary school teacher K-6 from Caldwell. A graduate of Lacordaire Academy, Donnelly is proud of her Dominican education. "It is because of this foundation and the Sisters' dedication to educational excellence that I am so

successful in my career, not only in the delivery of the content but in the values that I strive for as an educator." Donnelly said the Sisters taught her to work hard, to value education and to "be giving and loving to each and every individual that comes into your classroom."



**Shamsadeen Mayers '22**, who holds a master's in educational administration from Caldwell, has been named 2023-24 Essex County Teacher of the Year. He was recently appointed by the Bloomfield Board of Education as the principal of Watsessing School in Bloomfield. He replaced retiring principal Gina Rosamilia, also a graduate of Caldwell's educational administration program. While at Caldwell, Mayers was the recipient of the Sister Mary John Kearney Award for Best Thesis in Educational Administration for 2022 for his research on "Exploring the Benefits of Advanced Placement Programs." "The educational leadership at Caldwell University prepared me with the tools necessary to make a real impact in my community," said Mayers. ■

## WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU MATTERS TO US

Let your fellow Cougars know what is happening in your life! Submit a class note. It will be considered for publication in Caldwell University's next magazine.

[www.caldwell.edu/alumni/submit-class-notes/](http://www.caldwell.edu/alumni/submit-class-notes/)



# THROWBACK

**Photos:**

Carillon Yearbooks. Caldwell University Archives, Jennings Library, Caldwell University, Caldwell, New Jersey.



*Students moving into dorms, 1960.*



*The "Carillon" Harvest Dance (one of the first post-World War II dances), November 1946.*

## FREEWILL



### CREATE A SECURE FUTURE FOR YOUR FAMILY



Our Caldwell University community has done a lot to support students through their academic journeys, and now it's your turn to support your future through your will. Caldwell is excited to announce our new partnership with FreeWill to aid you in this important task. In case you're still on the fence about creating a plan, here's what it can achieve:



**Security:** Creating your will and estate plan allows you to communicate important financial and healthcare decisions so you and your loved ones are prepared.



**Peace of mind:** A will allows you to provide for the people and causes you love, so they're always supported.



**Impact:** Planned gifts in your will make a lifetime of impact for the next generation of Caldwell students.



Visit [freewill.com/caldwell](https://freewill.com/caldwell) to get started.

For more information on including Caldwell University as part of your legacy, contact Scott Koskoski - Vice President for Philanthropy and Engagement at [skoskoski@caldwell.edu](mailto:skoskoski@caldwell.edu) or (973) 618-3225



**CALDWELL**  
UNIVERSITY





# Alumni President's Letter



**Dear Fellow Alumni,**

Welcome new students and alumni to another academic year at Caldwell University!

I'd like to introduce myself as the new President of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. For those who are not familiar with me, I am a Class of 2014 graduate of the School of Business and Computer Science and have been a member of the Alumni Association Board for several years in various positions. I have many fond memories of my time as an undergraduate. I was very blessed to be able to further my education at such an amazing institution. This fall starts my journey as President, and I could not be more excited to lead our wonderful organization and continue our legacy of fundraising, networking and student scholarship.

Fall is the start of a new school year and new beginnings. For many of you, this may have been your first time walking onto campus as a student or a new alumnus. We were very happy to welcome so many of you to campus this year for Homecoming and Reunion Weekend.

Fall is also the start of the Alumni Association Board's initiatives for the new school year. I am happy to say the Board is currently working on several fun and engaging events for this year. These events are not only socially fun for our alumni but also help the Board's ability to award scholarships to some of our most deserving students, one of our most important initiatives! Please keep an eye out for upcoming Alumni Association events.

We are always looking forward to interacting with our alumni and hearing about noteworthy news. Please reach out to me with anything you would like to share with the community or if you have an interest in volunteering for an alumni function.

I cannot wait to see familiar and new faces on campus this season and again. I take pride in welcoming you all back to Caldwell University!

Best Wishes and Go Cougars!

**James R. Stark '14**

*President*

*Caldwell University Alumni Association Board of Directors*

## *in memory of...*

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

**Marion Largey Alexander '51**

**Mary "Susan" Fogarty Bland '63**

**Sister Lois Curry, O.P. '65**

**Kristen Lynn Daley**

*Niece of Mary Sellitto-Curcio '83,  
secretary, Board of Trustees*

**Father Ciarán Fergus, O.P.**

*Longtime adjunct faculty,  
Department of Theology and Philosophy*

**Danielle Lauren Fusco '11**

**Kenneth Kunzman**

*Trustee emeritus, Caldwell University  
Husband of Anne Degnan Kunzman '60*

**Marjorie J. Lee '59**

**Phyllis Bonanno Loria '65**

**Florence Yesville Maclearie '56**

*Mother of Michelle Maclearie Wood '79*

**William Morrison (Mory) Charle**

*Longtime dining service employee at  
Caldwell University*

**Mary Ann Bainbridge Norton '85**

**Mary Theresa Lepore Varricchio '73**

**James T. Wixtead**

*Husband of Monica Devlin Larzelere Wixtead '67*

**Patricia "Pat" McCormack Zeiss '65**

*These are the deceased we have received notice of since publication of the last magazine. If you would like to have a loved one remembered in our next issue, please notify us at [alumni@caldwell.edu](mailto:alumni@caldwell.edu).*

## 2023-24 CALDWELL UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **PRESIDENT**

James Stark '14

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

Kaitlyn Kazalunas-Lieber '16

### **SECRETARY**

Anna Nelson '88

### **TREASURER**

Roxanne Knott-Kuczborski '03

### **LIAISON TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Mary Sellitto-Curcio '83

### **MEMBERS**

Rosemary Hilbert '96

Marisa Juliano '17

Jonni Lucas '96

Lynne Giachetti Machtemes, Esq. '98

Sundra Murray '04

Megan Norton '22

Noel Ruane '70

Joe Testa '20 MBA

Elaine Bauer Zabriskie '73

## GRADUATES OF THE LAST DECADE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Marisa Amoresano '20

Melissa Cook '18

Roman Diduch '16

Meghan Forte '13

Ashleigh Greci '13

Toni Genuario '19

Franco Iacovo '23

Caitlin McCready '16

Shyam Sharma '17



# SAVE THE DATE

## FALL SEMESTER CONCERTS

OPERA WORKSHOP - CHILDREN'S OPERA  
SATURDAY, NOV. 18, 2 P.M. • ALUMNI THEATRE

JULIE WHITE RECITAL  
SUNDAY, NOV. 19, 4:30 P.M. • ALUMNI THEATRE

SOLO & CHAMBER CONCERT  
TUESDAY, NOV. 28, 7 P.M. • ALUMNI THEATRE

CHRISTMAS CONCERT  
FRIDAY, DEC. 8, 7 P.M. • STUDENT CENTER GYM

GENERAL ADMISSION \$10

## CHRISTMAS EVENTS

SHORE CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY  
SUNDAY, DEC. 3

ADVENT LITURGY/CHRISTMAS AT CALDWELL  
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 6

PRESIDENT'S SOCIETY COCKTAIL RECEPTION  
FRIDAY, DEC. 8

CHRISTMAS CONCERT  
FRIDAY, DEC. 8 • 7 P.M.

### GIVING TUESDAY/SEASON OF

HOPE BEGINS . . . . . **TUESDAY, NOV. 28**

SUPER SATURDAY ALUMNI EVENT . . . **SATURDAY, FEB. 3, 2024**

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. GEORGIAN COURT • 1 P.M.

MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. GEORGIAN COURT • 3 P.M.

CALDWELL COUPLES • COUGAR DEN . . **FRIDAY, FEB. 9, 2024**

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CACC CHAMPIONSHIP AT NEWMAN  
CENTER . . . . . **SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, MARCH 9-10, 2024**

INAUGURATION AND  
FOUNDER'S DAY . . . . . **THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2024**

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE  
ARTS DAY . . . . . **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024**

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP  
GALA • 6 P.M. . . . . **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024**

HONORS CONVOCATION . . . . . **WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2024**

COMMENCEMENT LITURGY . . . . . **SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2024**

COMMENCEMENT  
WEEKEND . . . . . **SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, MAY 18-19, 2024**

## MASSES

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS MASS • WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31, 2024 | ASH WEDNESDAY MASS • WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14, 2024