

# COURIER

— SPRING 2024 —



COE COLLEGE



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## COVER

Docs Steve Feller and Kent Herron share stories from almost a century of combined experience teaching at Coe College.



Greetings from Coe College. As I write this letter, we are in the midst of a busy spring. The term offers expansive opportunities for our students to grow into well-rounded individuals prepared to impact the world around them. A Coe education is not confined to the classroom, and this issue of the Courier highlights the range of the full Coe experience. The academic program is enhanced by relationships with professors, off-campus study, volunteerism in our bustling Cedar Rapids community, experiential learning opportunities and much more.

We are continually striving to improve ourselves as a college and explore ways to innovate and expand the student experience. To that end, pending approval from the Higher Learning Commission, we are excited to introduce plans to offer a formal major in engineering physics. Not only will this meet the needs of students and a highly in-demand field, engineering will be a strong addition to diversify our academic offerings and capture new opportunities as part of Coe's dynamic, always-evolving nature.

Coe has always been a special place where things are made possible. Our students, faculty, staff and alumni are the ones who make it happen, each and every day. Two shining examples are the "Docs," Professor of Mathematics Kent Herron and Professor of Physics Steve Feller, living legends with 99 years of combined experience and impact. Testaments to their influence include not only the endowed chair positions named after them, but also the enduring stories and memories about their work. I encourage you to turn the page to read how the Docs have shaped the Coe experience for generations of students.

The experience of being a Kohawk remains a life-changing one. It encourages students to set aside what is familiar and learn new things about themselves and the world, like decades of students have done at the Wilderness Field Station (see page 16). It involves being supported and in turn supporting others, like the work centered on mental health at Tanager (see page 22). It allows students to seek connections and discover new pathways of engagement with the community (see page 24). Like alumna **Sally Meyers '64** on page 20 and the Kohawks-turned-Orangemen on page 28, it means being actively engaged in making a difference in the world.

Each of the following stories, and indeed every Kohawk's story beyond these pages, showcase how Coe provides an unparalleled education and college experience. More importantly, they are testaments to what your influence makes possible, as none of these opportunities exist without a strong community of support. Your enduring engagement allows us to continue life-changing work. Just like the two Docs have impacted innumerable Kohawks, so too can you make a difference. Save the date for our annual day of philanthropy on April 11, and learn about the myriad ways to stay engaged with Coe College as an alum, as a partner and as a friend.

Alma mater, hail, hail, hail.

**David Hayes '93**  
President

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Visit the Courier online at [www.coe.edu/courier](http://www.coe.edu/courier).



# TWO DOCS, A THOUSAND STORIES

*Doc Herron and Doc Feller. These two legends of Coe are instantly recognized by thousands of alumni and are beloved across campus. Between the two, they have been Coe faculty members for 99 academic years.*

*Both sat down to discuss their time at Coe — and to share stories. So many stories. It's clear both love Coe and possess a mutual admiration for each other.*

*The nearly two-hour conversation was full of laughs and reaching for names, so this version has been edited to fill this space.*

**Feller:** I'm Steve Feller, I'm the junior member of this duo. I arrived in 1979.

**Herron:** And I'm Kent Herron, the other half of the duo, and I arrived I think in 1968, so far as I can remember.

### *What does Coe mean to you?*

**Feller:** Well, it's been my main academic home. It's where I work with students by the hundreds. One of my daughters went to Coe. Barbara and I have spent most of our life here at Coe. It means a lot.

**Herron:** Well, Coe means everything to me, first of all. Just like Steve said, we've both spent virtually all of our lives here, certainly significant years of our lives. If I think of the many, many good friends that I have in my life — and I'm lucky to have maybe more than my fair share — they're virtually all Coe alumni or spouses of Coe alumni. So, Coe is, in a real sense, my family. I have my own wonderful family, too, but the Coe family that I have is absolutely central to my being.

### *What do you remember about your first year as a faculty member at Coe?*

**Herron:** I remember a couple of things. I remember that [former Coe College President] Leo Nussbaum really believed in faculty training, so we started the year with two full days out at Camp Wapsie. I remember being thrilled that I had an office and being really thrilled that I had a telephone. And I got paid \$9,000, so I was doing really well at that time!

**Feller:** I came directly because of an ad in the magazine *Physics Today*. I only knew Coe through my mother, who knew it as a three-letter college name for the *New York Times* crossword puzzle. I knew I wanted to teach at a school where teaching came first, so I interviewed around the country. I didn't know about the research side, I just assumed that came with the territory. Anyway, we arrived in early August of 1979. They put us up in Murray Hall. So we stayed there until we got a house. I do remember when school began, that we were instructed that we would meet our students in their home. I actually went to Murray Hall to meet my first-year students. I enjoyed it. I'm still in touch with some of those students from that first class in the fall of '79.

### *What kept you both at Coe all the years you've been here?*

**Feller:** That's an easy one for me. It's probably going to be the same answer for Kent. The students. What I like about the students here, our students are not fancy, but they're curious.

**Herron:** A lot of first-generation kids, the whole time we've been here.

**Feller:** A lot of first-generation students. Our students strive to get ahead. I like that.

**Herron:** If you could measure where we start with our students, and measure that against where they are when they leave, I don't think very many schools can do as well as we do. I think, if that's your measuring stick, we're a really good college. That's the exciting part of it.

**Feller:** I want to say a thing or two, also, about Kent and students. Do you know how many students that this guy has helped? Hundreds, maybe thousands, over the years. I'm not just saying that. It's the truth. Kent has literally driven students on his motorcycles — all over the place. Limited by the oceans, I guess, on either side. He has helped them by providing house painting jobs, including my house, in the summertime. In the winter there was his famous class, skiing in Colorado. That side, the non-classroom side, is extremely important. I share that view 100 percent. It's important to see and interact with students in different situations.

**Herron:** I think that what I have had as my goal in teaching, among many goals, in addition to learning a bit of mathematics along the way...is getting students to believe in themselves. And the kind of work you do, Steve, is the same thing. You take a student who's never been off the farm and all the sudden they're in London, and publishing a paper, and what that does for students — for any human being, really — is enormous.

**Feller:** Oh, they don't forget those things.

**Herron:** They don't forget those things, no.

## *How have you changed over all the years you've been teaching at Coe?*

**Feller:** That's a harder question. We're both student-centered, 100 percent, so what has changed? Planning a professional life...I knew I wanted to teach. But once I got here, I had no idea. I never really laid out, "Oh, I'm gonna do this, this, this, this." So as time has gone by, I use the metaphor, it's like an onion. When you keep peeling it, peeling it, and there are more and more layers, more and more projects. I got approached by groups I never would've imagined had an interest in the materials I work with. We publish our results, people come to us, and that leads to more projects, more papers. The onion is still being peeled back.

## *Would you consider the relationships you've built to be greater accomplishments than any paper you've published?*

**Feller:** Oh, of course. The people — when you change a life. It's much more important than the papers. The papers are nice, we do generate science, our results are used all over the world. But the most important thing, for sure, not even close, is the students.

## *Would you agree with all that, Kent?*

**Herron:** I would, yeah. I would.

## *Kent, did you ever think you'd be teaching for 55 years?*

**Herron:** No! No, the last time our department moved from one building to another, I had first choice of which office I wanted, and there were two larger offices and then there were a couple of smaller offices, so I took the smaller office. A bit of a noble gesture that I wasn't going to be here very long anyhow.

## *So, which one of you has more stories?*

**Feller:** Well, he has 11 years on me. But, I'll tell you a recent story, that has just a few parts. A few years ago — I'm active with the Society of Physics Students, which has given our students some opportunities — I was a co-president of the society, and then eventually I organized their conferences. Over the years, we have invited, and she has accepted, Jocelyn Bell Burnell as a speaker. She's the discoverer of neutron stars, or pulsars. I got the idea we should invite her to Coe College, since she became a friend. She came on the same day that the polar vortex came a few years ago. 30 below, actual temperature, not just windchill. She discussed with over 600 of us her discovery of neutron stars after she built her own radio telescope. She has never forgotten the cold in Iowa that day. Anyway, we both take students on trips, most recently I took students to England in September. As soon as I knew I was going to Cambridge, and I had some business to do in Oxford — we're making some glasses for a group there — I thought well, let me contact Jocelyn, she's a professor now at Oxford, and see if she'll have dinner with our students.

**Herron:** Yeah, why not?

**Feller:** She sent back an email saying, "I'd love to." So we had our own dinner with Jocelyn. I remember that the students didn't know where to sit, they were all excited, they were worried. She's a very down-to-earth person, but you know, world-class scientist. Her own Wikipedia page, that kind of thing. I made sure that I sat on the other side, and the students sat right next to her. To watch them have this meal with her, it was magical. That was pretty special.

## *Last chance to get one last word in about Coe. What comes to mind?*

**Feller:** I'll say this. Every so often, you might hear about the legends of the past, or comparison, say, of today's students to the students of the past. I happen to believe that the students today are as good as they were in the past. I don't think they're particularly better or worse. They're individuals, of course. Different backgrounds. But as I remember the students of the past, they have the same kind of personalities, desires in life. And many of them succeeded. Therefore, that's evidence that these students will succeed. If the past can predict the future, which I think is likely.

**Herron:** This is a really good example of how similarly you and I think. Because, a year ago I was asked — I went to the dinner for the 50 year reunion group — they had been first-year students when I came in '68 and they graduated in '72. One of the things they asked me, and it's always a loaded question because they always want to hear that the kids have gone downhill, and I started by

saying kids are kids. Yeah, they maybe look somewhat different, they maybe dress differently, certainly their social behavior has changed. They kind of still all are in the same sort of political spectrum, social spectrum that they were 50 years ago. What you said is exactly what I agree with, they aren't basically different at all.

***Kent, what would your reaction be to being called a legend of Coe?***

**Herron:** I'm not sure I have a reaction. You're right it's a compliment. I don't...I can't think of anything, really, that I want to say other than that. It's a nice compliment. I'm a little bit embarrassed by it, frankly. I see myself as somebody who's been here a long time, and I know I have people who think I've done okay. But, it's not something that I kind of need to hear, maybe?

**Feller:** But he is a legend. 55 years is something, Kent. Something that you can be proud of.

**Herron:** Oh, I'm definitely proud of that.

**Feller:** I like the term. That's really a compliment. It means I've been around a long time. Another way of saying it is: Kent is absolutely at the front of the line at graduation, and will remain so as long as he's here. Also, I'm now at the front of the line on the other side. So we're both at the front of the line. And that's one measure. Over time, we just watch the people going towards the front of the line. Those are the lifers. I'm a lifer.



# First-ever U.S. chief data scientist headlines 20th Contemporary Issues Forum

On February 8, Dr. DJ Patil started his day at the Pentagon and ended it in front of a captivated audience inside Sinclair Auditorium as the featured speaker at the 20th K. Raymond Clark Contemporary Issues Forum. Patil invited the Coe College and Corridor communities to a conversation of “lessons learned,” as he titled his remarks, and helped them to understand the background of data science and what enabled data to have such world-changing power that impacts society.

Patil began by dispelling the notion that data science is a relatively new field — rather, it has shown up across centuries, in the Mayans’ complex mathematics and Indus Valley astronomical

calculations, with the women who gathered and computed messages at Bletchley Park during World War II and throughout the 9/11 Commission Report which highlighted our nation’s inability to connect data to action.

He also shared the story of Johnathan Goldman, who brought data science to the public in a massive way: social media. He introduced the “people you may know” feature of LinkedIn, which engaged users on a large-scale by utilizing data to expand their social networks. Just one person transformed the way entire social media platforms functioned.



Patil himself has an impressive history. In graduate school, he got his start working on weather forecasting, which impacts over six billion lives daily. He also has been part of building the social media site LinkedIn as COO and served at the forefront of California's and the nation's COVID-19 response. Not only that, Patil was appointed by President Barack Obama as the first U.S. chief data scientist, which is a position meant to serve all presidents going forward with the mission to "responsibly unleash the power of data to benefit all Americans." In this role, he helped establish nearly 40 chief data officer roles, health care programs like the Precision Medicine Initiative and the Cancer Moonshot, criminal justice reforms and policy efforts related to national data.

"None of these projects are an 'I' thing — they are all a 'we' thing. I have had the opportunity to work with incredible teams of people, and I could rattle off all their names," said Patil. "It's because of the 'we' that these projects are able to have the impact they do."

Even after being positioned at high levels of government, receiving the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service and working on innovative projects that affect billions of lives, Patil remains incredibly down to earth, valuing conversation, connection and learning above all.

His own work history has centered around talking and working with others in group settings, advice which he imparted to his audience. One of his "lessons learned" was the power of getting the right people in the room, whether it's solving problems in a startup company or policymaking on a national level.

"Why has data science taken off like it has? Honestly, it's because no one knows what it means," said Patil. "Data scientists are invited to meetings, and because you're in a meeting you have context, and because you have context and you're an awesome nerd, you can do great things and get into more rooms. Don't allow society to put you in a box. Define yourself by the value you are able to create, not the label on your LinkedIn profile."

Patil put his words into action as the host of a roundtable discussion about data science, AI and the future with Corridor business leaders in the afternoon before his speaking engagement.

"The roundtable session with DJ was incredibly valuable. The ability to ask questions in that type of setting to an individual with that caliber of intelligence, experience and impact on the world is truly a rare opportunity," said **Kevin Baranowski '11**, senior treasury analyst at GreatAmerica Financial Services. "The insights and guidance he provided



on the broader state of data science and AI in combination with the specific recommendations on how we can and should think about this technology in our community has given Coe alumni business leaders a unique opportunity to be key stakeholders that profoundly change our businesses and community for the better."

Being committed to learning is another important lesson Patil imparted throughout his visit. "Learn how to iterate," he specified. "Prioritize iteration speed in your building process, and you'll get things done better and more efficiently. It's how we build in the government, in medical institutions, in the space network. You gain learning and expertise throughout the process."

If there's any population that knows how to learn, it's students. The other part of Patil's pre-event afternoon was a conversation with students, where he learned about their stories and goals, shared his own and offered advice to aid Kohawks on their journeys, no matter their year or area of study.

"I believed the experience to be super valuable because not only were we thinking about his role in society, but he was asking us about what we can do to change lives and participate in a greater capacity as Americans," said **Cameron Lay '25**, a business administration and economics major. "He shared an African proverb with us: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.' It's something I want to keep in mind making post-graduate decisions, and it's even making me more present with the decisions I'm making now."

“I was amazed at the immediate linkage between Dr. Patil and the Coe College students, who were hungry to learn how they could leverage AI and big data to have an impact on the biggest challenges — environmental, climate change, equity, housing, poverty, education — that our world is facing today,” added **Bill Schmarzo '79**.

Patil emphasized one asset time and again, one that Kohawks know well: the power of a liberal arts education. His largest piece of advice to students was to take the weirdest classes they can, the courses outside of their skillset and direct path, because those are where the most learning happens.

“Every data scientist needs a deep understanding of humanity,” said Patil, “and what better place to get that than through the humanities? Literature, theatre, ethics... these are how you connect to people.”

Keeping human connection and dialogue at the center contributes to how we can collectively face the problems ahead. Issues of data privacy, artificial intelligence, inequity,

transparency and more are complicated and wide-reaching situations, and having open conversations are an essential part of solving the puzzle.

“The most important thing to remember is that data points have names,” Patil continued. “It is essential for us to understand the people behind the data, connect with them and know their stories so we can learn how to solve their problems with data.”

He raised a few such names and stories to the attention of his rapt audience. Jennifer Bitner, a mother and wife with stage IV breast cancer, wrote a letter to President Obama, which led to the Precision Medicine and Cancer Moonshot initiatives to help human lives across the nation. Mike Might brought the internet together with a blog post and used AI to search for treatment for his son’s unknown medical condition. Crisis Text Line, an organization for which Patil was a founding board member, reaches the demand of a text generation and connects people to a volunteer counselor force in real time.

Data science is something affecting everyone’s life, as evidenced by an audience member raising the query to Patil during the event’s Q&A portion: are our phones really listening to us? The answer was a mix of psychological factors and a complex ad ecosystem, but it highlighted something greater. Everyone has a stake in data science, and everyone always has something to learn.

For 20 years, the Contemporary Issues Forum speaker series has addressed the most pressing, intriguing topics that are incredibly relevant to not only our society, but to humanity. DJ Patil’s presence and expertise on data science, AI and its applications to our lives has only added to the robust history of this event and the Coe community asking thought-provoking, critical questions.

**“The most important thing to remember is that data points have names. It is essential for us to understand the people behind the data, connect with them and know their stories so we can learn how to solve their problems with data.”**

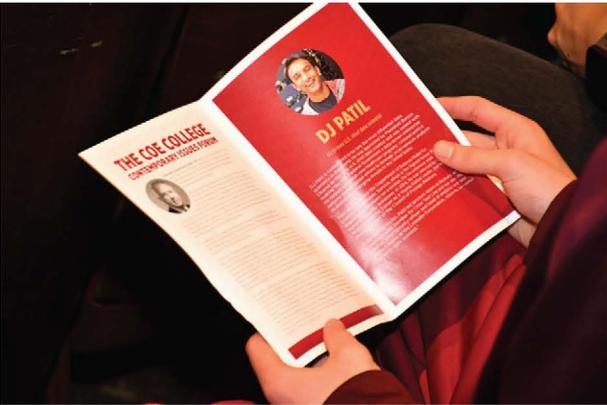
— *Dr. DJ Patil*



#### **CAPTIONS**

- 1. “Dean of Big Data” and Coe Research Fellow Bill Schmarzo '79, Contemporary Issues Forum Speaker DJ Patil and Coe President David Hayes '93.**
- 2. Patil answers questions from the Contemporary Issues Forum audience of business leaders, community members, faculty, staff and students.**
- 3. Patil sits with over a dozen Coe College students, after sharing advice and getting to know one another at the afternoon student roundtable.**
- 4. Patil connects with Provost & Dean of the Faculty Angela Ziskowski following the Contemporary Issues Forum.**

3



4





# FOOTBALL

**REACHES NCAA DIII PLAYOFF FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 2016**

The Kohawk football season began in familiar fashion, taking down local rival Cornell College 56-6 to extend Coe's current winning streak to 23 over the Rams. The opener featured a career afternoon for wide receiver **Dominic Shepardson '24**

who tied the school record with four touchdown catches. In addition, the Kohawk offense had the third-highest yardage total (725 yards) in program history and its most yards in almost 30 years. The emphatic win over Cornell set the table for

what would be a special season full of highlight reel moments.

The Kohawks rolled to a big win in their next matchup against non-conference University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire, taking down the Blugolds 44-14. The Kohawk defense, which

proved to be a valuable asset throughout the season, set the tone in the win, allowing just 170 yards in the air and 92 on the ground. The defense again led the efforts in Coe's first American Rivers Conference (A-R-C) contest of the season in Pella, taking down Central College 19-11 as Defensive Coordinator Cody Baethke's unit forced four turnovers including a game-clinching interception from **Ben Ridenour '24** in the final minutes. Coe picked up a dominant win in its next A-R-C game against Nebraska Wesleyan University, flexing its muscles on both the offensive and defensive side of the ball en route to a 56-6 victory. The Kohawks had 627 total yards in the game and held the opponents to less than 300 yards for the third time in 2023.

A highly-anticipated matchup awaited Coe in its next contest, traveling to Waverly to face 2022 national semifinalist Wartburg College. The Kohawks took the Knights to the wire, forcing third-ranked Wartburg to come from behind in the final quarter with a pair of touchdowns. The team, led by Head Coach **Tyler Staker '06**, returned to its winning ways for the remainder of the regular season, picking up a trio of dominant wins over Buena Vista University, Simpson College and Luther College before its last true test of the conference schedule. Coe hit the road again for a matchup against the University of Dubuque and narrowly escaped with victory, pulling out a 23-20 win in overtime as quarterback **Carter Maske '24** scampered for a game-winning score after his defense held the Spartans to a field goal.



**“ I am grateful for the many memories shared and the lifelong friendships that are forged through this great game. ”**

**Tyler Staker '06**  
Head Football Coach/Offensive Coordinator

The final game of the regular season was another impressive victory for the Kohawks, dismantling Loras College 54-14 in the seniors' final game at Clark Field. Shepardson posted single-game career highs with 13 catches and 223 yards and solidified his number-two spot on Coe's all-time career receiving yards list. The Kohawks had their name called on Selection Sunday, earning the team's first trip to the NCAA DIII Playoffs since 2016.

The team packed their bags to take on Aurora University, a team that boasted one of the nation's top offensive units. Coe put up a tough fight in the playoff matchup at Aurora, holding the Spartans to just 20 points, but seven turnovers and a season-low 250 yards of offense resulted in a 20-7 defeat. Following the season, fifth-year senior **Jack Shaw '24** became the first Kohawk to earn numerous All-American honors since 2016, securing AP All-American honors and American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) DIII All-American honors.

“The 2023 football season was a great success and a lot of fun. Finishing 9-2 and earning a NCAA playoff bid were outstanding achievements for our players, coaches and support staff, but nothing worthwhile comes easy. It was the result of great team chemistry, dedicated coaches and a year-round commitment to excellence. I am grateful for the many memories shared and the lifelong friendships that are forged through this great game,” Staker said.





# VOLLEYBALL PUNCHES TICKET

## TO NCAA TOURNAMENT FOR SECOND-STRAIGHT SEASON

The expectations were high ahead of Coe's 2023 volleyball season, being one year removed from a pair of American Rivers Conference (A-R-C) trophies as the 2022 Kohawk team swept the regular season and postseason title. The 2023 campaign proved to be more difficult for Head Coach DeAnn Akins' squad, but things turned a corner later on as her team made an impromptu run in the A-R-C tournament to punch their ticket to the NCAA tournament for the second year running.

The 2023 schedule featured numerous top teams from around the region, with Coe taking on four ranked teams in its first 10 matchups. The tough start was reflected in Coe's record but the team gained valuable experience and knowledge. The Kohawks responded with a strong stretch in mid-September, winning four of five matches including their first two A-R-C contests against Luther College and Wartburg College. Coe hit a skid following the impressive run, dropping three straight matches to Wisconsin — Eau Claire, Cornell College and Nebraska Wesleyan University, losing its top spot in the conference standings. Akins' team got back to winning ways to close out the regular season, picking up wins in eight of its final 10 games to bring their regular season record to 18-11.

The Kohawks finished third in the league but excelled during the A-R-C tournament, ripping off three wins in a

row including wins over No. 2 Nebraska Wesleyan and No. 1 University of Dubuque, avenging regular season losses to the Prairie Wolves and Spartans. Coe earned its spot in the NCAA tournament for the second-straight season and didn't have to travel far, playing in the Mount Vernon regional hosted by Cornell College. The postseason run came to an end as the Kohawks faced fourth-ranked University of Wisconsin — Whitewater, falling 3-1 to the Warhawks who dropped the regional championship to University of Northwestern — St. Paul. Kohawks earned numerous All-American selections for the second-straight year following the up-and-down season with **Maddy Maahs '26** and **Grace Lueken '24** earning American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) honorable mention All-American status.

"It was fun to see our team battle this season, playing a highly competitive schedule. I'm proud of our student-athletes' resilience and striving to achieve our mission each week, focusing on the process instead of just results. Ultimately, this approach helped us stay on track with our goals, and it was awesome to see their hard work and determination be rewarded. We are looking forward to building off of this momentum going into next fall," Akins said.



**“ I’m proud of our student-athletes’ resilience and striving to achieve our mission each week, focusing on the process instead of just results. ”**

**DeAnn Akins**  
Head Volleyball Coach / Senior Woman Administrator



Kohawk men's basketball alumni gathered for a January alumni basketball game in Kohawk Arena.



Current and former Kohawk tennis players gathered for a January men's tennis alumni match inside the Clark Racquet Center.



Kohawk women's basketball alumnae and supporters of young, old and legendary status gathered for an alumnae basketball game in Kohawk Arena.

# WILDERNESS FIELD STATION

MEMORIES



## LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

and gaining real-world experience is a pillar of the liberal arts approach at Coe College. One of the college's most unique and memorable opportunities for hundreds of alumni is the **Wilderness Field Station (WFS)**.

Originally operated by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) and located at a lumbering camp on Basswood Lake Island, the first classes were offered during the summer of 1962.

Mary Walter, an alumna of Ripon College and field station attendee during that first summer, remembered the anticipation leading up to their arrival. “Everyone piled into the bus that bumped and rattled northward where adventure and discovery, mosquitoes and blackflies awaited us,” she said.

Another Basswood attendee, **Ken Zichal '71**, recalled it was home to “pristine beauty, clean air, silence, solitude and the most ravenous mosquitoes in North America.”

The field station was moved to Low Lake in 1977 after the federal government established the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), which encompassed the Basswood site. When the ACM decided to close the field station after the summer program of 2002, Coe College assumed its operation with Professor of Biology Emeritus Harlo Hadow as director. In 2016, the WFS shifted once more into the hands of Associate Professor of Biology Jesse Ellis as the new program director. A native of St. Paul, Minnesota, Ellis’ summers growing up involved spending time in various parts of Northern Minnesota, including the Boundary Waters, and the environment contributed to his scientific interest of studying the ecology and behavior of birds and other animals. As program director, he was excited to share such a place with students, and to continue doing so in the summers since.

Located about five miles north of Ely, Minnesota, in the 2.5-million-acre Superior National Forest, the WFS program offers two month-long sessions of classes each summer, where students take one course at a time and focus on content in the context of exploring the wilderness.

“As a biology and chemistry major, the WFS was the best experience of my liberal arts education! Taking classes at the field station taught me beyond the classroom,” said **Wendy Ochi '82**. She remembers the daily routine of living among nature: “Portaging a canoe, carrying a backpack and canoe that were the weight of me, fishing bass and trout and eating the catch for breakfast, picking fresh blueberries in the early morning then later having blueberry pancakes.”

Appreciating the great outdoors as one’s classroom was an enduring sentiment across the decades of alumni who have spent time at the field station.

“I loved the ability to be outside, almost all day, every day for an entire month,” said **Ann Virden Balvanz '08**, who took an ornithology course in June 2004. “I was able to study a family of hairy woodpeckers in a tree for hours during the course and to this day, I still stop and watch woodpeckers when I see them.”

“This was the first time in my life I had camped in a tent, canoed for an extended period of time and portaged a canoe,” said Balvanz. Portaging, or carrying a canoe over land, is a skill students developed quickly.

One hallmark of the WFS experience was canoeing — a lot. Groups could paddle directly from the field station to the edge of the BWCAW in about two hours and to Ontario’s Quetico Provincial Park in about eight hours, adding 2 million more acres to the field station “classroom.” Most classes required an extended, eight- or nine-day trip into the Boundary Waters as a centerpiece of students’ time at the field station.

Classes at the field station also instilled useful skills of how to conduct fieldwork across a variety of disciplines. In any given summer, students sampled water quality to study aquatic ecology, executed social science research methods, implemented nature writing techniques, tracked mammals and birds in the woods, measured phytoplankton populations and more. These practical applications directly contributed to future experiences, and even careers.

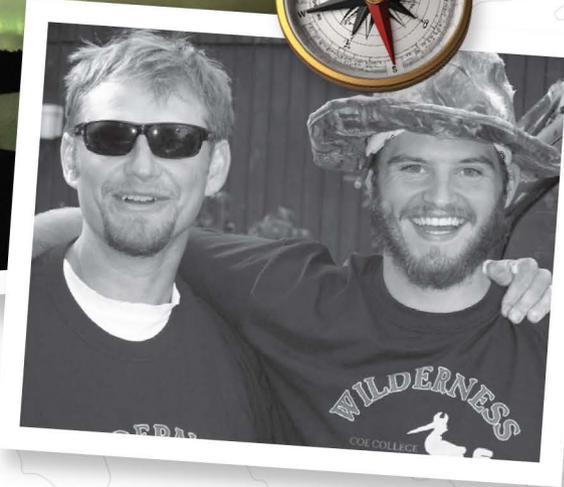
**Marshall “Mort” Mortenson '66** spent both sessions of the 1964 summer at the field station. “It was a wonderful experience that had a major impact on my life. I became a biology, environmental and earth science teacher at a junior high school for 13 years, and into high school for 24 years. I was able to incorporate techniques learned at the field station into many of the classes that I taught,” he said.

**Alex Michaud '05** likewise took advantage of the opportunities the WFS provided. “I had the joy of taking a mammalogy class, leading incoming first-year student trips, working as the program assistant and teaching an environmental microbiology course at the WFS. Each provided a different experience, but they were all of great importance to my growth as a person and scientist,” said Michaud. He currently serves as an assistant professor at Ohio State University in the School of Earth Sciences and the Byrd Polar and Climate Research Center. He started this position earlier this year after studying marine sediments for a season in Antarctica.



**Tanner Brossart '16** got up close and personal with nature during his course on ornithology, the study of birds.





Beyond developing technical skills, the Northwoods were also the setting behind lifelong friendships and intense personal growth for many WFS alumni.

“As a field station leader, I saw many people become a truer version of themselves after going to the WFS,” said **Kyla Tripp ’11**. “Also, there’s no quicker way to find best friends than to stick them in a canoe together for eight hours.”

For **Mitch Moon ’14**, his experience up north was precisely this life-changing nature. “The Wilderness Field Station, and the Boundary Waters in particular, helped me overcome major grief and tremendous challenges and has shaped me into the man I am today,” said Moon.

Since stepping into his role as program director, Ellis was continually impressed by just how much students change during their time at the station. “Students might arrive nervous, not knowing what they’re getting into, with no canoeing or camping experience. By the last week, they’re going out for night paddles to look for stars, or aurora borealis,” he said. “They’re getting to experience things I myself haven’t seen, and I get to see that growth every session, twice a summer.”

The students and the station exhibit the resilience and determination emblematic of Coe. Ellis described experiencing a derecho at the field station during the summer of 2016. Similar to the derecho that passed through Coe’s own campus in summer 2020, the community of students,

Then-professor **David Hayes ’93** and **Mitch Moon ’14** in 2011 at the field station. Hayes regularly taught classes at the field station during the summers, as well as directed Coe’s environmental studies program prior to shifting to his roles as Vice President for Advancement and later College President.

staff and faculty joined together, helped out and kept going. The forest has already recovered significantly during the intervening years.

Whether Kohawks spent a month, a summer or multiple at the field station, the wilderness environment allowed the time and space to pause, breathe and take in nature to the fullest extent.

For some, that included rare encounters with wildlife. “It was easily the best summer I ever had during college. I met a lot of great people and saw some incredible wildlife, both during classes and on my own excursions,” said **Tanner Brossart ’16**. “One of my favorites was when we saw a great gray owl perched along the river one morning, though our instructor wasn’t with us. He spent the next week out in the woods at night trying to lure it out with owl recordings!”

For others, it was connecting with water and the sky, untarnished by excessive human involvement or light pollution. “The companionship of sharing this field experience was wonderful. I remember lying in a canoe one night, staring at the stars in a very dark summer sky,” said **Donna Oetjen Farley ’65**.

For most, the beauty of the field station was rejuvenating and inspiring. “I have never felt more at peace and connected to the earth than I did in the Northwoods. It was an unforgettable experience that I would recommend to anyone in love with learning or nature,” said **Palmer Hoegh ’14**.

Those who love learning and nature continue to find the WFS, as they have for over 60 years. “The way that we’ve been doing these programs is really valuable, and we’re trying to replicate the experience many of our alumni had,” said Ellis. “We’re getting students out there and into the woods, and they’re learning a lot from it.”

Ellis looks forward to continuing to develop the program, from making the station as sustainable as possible to becoming more present in the various communities surrounding the area. No matter how the Wilderness Field Station has shifted throughout the years, one takeaway remains for all who take the journey: it will change your life.



**“The way that we’ve been doing these programs is really valuable, and we’re trying to replicate the experience many of our alumni had.”**

Associate Professor of Biology Jesse Ellis





# WILDERNESS FIELD STATION

• Over 60 Years of Memories •



## LEGENDS OF COE



# Coe: The birthplace of a lifelong commitment to SERVING OTHERS

For the past 33 years, **Sally Fels Meyers '64** has thrived as the children's librarian for the Tom Green County Library System in San Angelo, Texas. She has been recognized multiple times for her immense contributions to making the library a diverse, welcoming and fun environment for children and their families. Her work building the library, however, is just one piece of a long and storied life dedicated to creating equality for others — and for Sally, an idealistic girl from Amana, Iowa, this lifelong commitment to equality started during her time at Coe College as she pursued a degree in Christian education.

While attending Coe, Meyers heard Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speak on campus in 1961. His words resonated with her. The year after, she visited Mississippi as part of the Coe Christian Council and was shocked when her group was asked to leave a Howard Johnson's restaurant because one member was a Black woman. She'd seen "whites only" signs on the drinking fountains and was deeply hurt to see her friend treated so unjustly. Later, she took part in a service trip to Puerto Rico, where she witnessed impoverished communities in need of support. "I would not have had these experiences had I not been a Coe

student and chosen to go on the service project trips,” said Meyers. “These experiences and images still influence what I do with my time and my resources.”

In fact, those experiences impacted her so much that Meyers changed her career path. “Opportunities that were open to me at Coe prepared me to become a contributing citizen. Though I was focused on becoming a music teacher, my involvement with the Coe Christian Council, the Kappa Delta sorority, two years as dorm counselor and two service projects — one to Puerto Rico and one to Jackson, Mississippi — opened my mind and heart to many new notions as to where my life might lead,” said Meyers.

Meyers followed this new passion for equality and service, and with the help of former Coe President Joseph McCabe, attended McCormack Theological Seminary in Chicago, where she earned a degree in social work. In 1966, she married Craig Meyers, a pastor who shared the same passion for equality and activism, and they moved to Indiana to serve their first church. “We adopted three children, two of them biracial. Then, when we moved to San Angelo, Texas in 1983, we found friends in the NAACP and African American churches which led to becoming active in community revitalization efforts and issues of justice and equality,” Meyers recalled.

The two Presbyterian churches the Meyers family served for over 40 years in San Angelo were among the most culturally diverse churches in West Texas.

Her activity has not slowed down, either. She is a lifetime member of the NAACP and has served as a member of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee since 1990. In 1991, Sally accepted the position as children’s librarian for the Tom Green County Library System.

“My love of books and prior experiences in teaching through the years allowed me to take this position to new levels, building an environment and a collection reflecting the cultures and ethnicities of all children and their

families. Serving on Texas State Library Reading committees gave me the opportunity to make my beliefs evident in book selections and programming,” Meyers noted. “Again, this focus was a result of my experiences at Coe College.”

Meyers’ time spent in the library hasn’t gone unnoticed. She’s a recipient of the Texas Library Association award for Library Project of the Year due to her incredible work renovating and revitalizing the Dunbar Library, which served the Black community of San Angelo during segregation. Meyers rebuilt the space into a multicultural collection of children’s and adult literature including civil rights history, and now offers workshops and tours within the space. In March 2023, Meyers also received the Remarkable Women Award from the Nexstar Network and, in November 2023, she earned Citizen of the Year from the Le Coterie Society.

Reflecting on her time at Coe, Meyers said, “Relationships with Dr. Paul Ray and Alma Turechek, both music professors, were kind and understanding of a rather naive and inexperienced student. Being in their presence taught me the art of teaching with sensitivity, listening to people, reaching out to others, as well as voice and piano. I stayed in touch through cards and visits with Miss Turechek until she passed. Her support and love reached far beyond my college years.”

When asked what advice she has for current students, Meyers kept it simple: “Have an open mind when pursuing your career, be honest to yourself about your strengths and weaknesses. Be mindful and aware of who you are and those around you. Be willing to take risks for what you believe.”

For Meyers, those risks have paid off — her impact on the Tom Green County Library System has created a legacy that will continue to educate and empower children for generations to come.

# Common goals: Coe and Tanager

It's a whirlwind, the days leading up to moving to college. The anticipation, packing, hugging and tying up loose ends all lead to one last night in your childhood bed before you're a college student. You stare, toss and turn, knowing the next night you'll be in a new bed, with a new ceiling to stare at and a new person suddenly in startling proximity as your roommate.

It's all new and it's not always easy. But it is exciting, and with the right support systems, any rough patches can be smoothed.

"These students are starting from the ground up looking to establish support systems, keep up with more intense academic demands, follow through on first-time responsibilities, all while trying to figure out how to live as an independent person for the first time," said Heather Ward, a licensed mental health counselor with Tanager.

To help with the sometimes stressful transition to college, Coe is at the forefront of increasing access and reducing stigma surrounding mental health resources among the college population. As part of those efforts, Coe has proactively secured additional counselors by partnering with Tanager. Ward, along with fellow Tanager counselor Tara Wheatley McLaughlin, spends time each week on Coe's campus to supplement the resources full-time Coe staff members provide.



Coe and Tanager have been growing their partnership throughout the years, beyond integrating counselors on campus. Staff members from Tanager attend Coe's annual activity fest and career fair, Kohawks work at Tanager as interns or volunteers and, this past year, Tanager CEO Okpara Rice joined Coe's Board of Trustees.

On campus, the Tanager presence is welcomed. As licensed counselors, Assistant Dean of Health and Wellness **Emily Crook** Barnard '02 and Student Care

Coordinator **Cathy Schilling** Muller '10 serve students by offering counseling sessions and referrals. Tanager staff complement their availability with additional counseling appointments each week on campus. Each student can engage in six sessions of free short-term, solution-focused counseling. If further treatment is needed, either Coe staff or Tanager staff offer a referral.

Barnard said, statistically speaking, the first onset of mental health conditions typically present in childhood or adolescence with many delaying treatment or intervention until years later, with approximately 75% of lifetime conditions presenting in the mid-20s. Because of this, and many contributing and secondary factors, the college population tends to experience a higher prevalence of mental health conditions and why access to services on campus and partnerships like Tanager are critical to the success, persistence and well-being of students. Some of the most common reasons college students across the country seek counseling are stress, anxiety, relationship issues, concerns related to academic performance and past or present trauma. Tanager specializes in care for children and young adults facing these and similar issues.

"This is the exact time and space where therapy can be such a significant help. Therapy allows people to process their feelings, curiosities and experiences in a nonjudgmental space with a professional who is trained to support them in their journey of wellbeing. College can be a wonderful time for students to gain insight into themselves, learn new habits and build skills for managing the stressors of life as a young adult," said Joella Gerber, the clinic program manager at Tanager.

"Tanager is fantastic to work with. They have been a pillar in our community providing services to youth and young adults, and we are very thankful to have them as part of our campus. Our partnership brings additional options to our Coe students for short-term counseling as well as an immediate opportunity to be connected to longer-term, specialized care and services," Barnard said.

Previous generations of college students haven't had the additional stressors today's students encounter, said **Maggie Vickers** Hartzler '08, the clinical services director at Tanager and a fellow Kohawk. She said the pandemic and social media have created a more

difficult atmosphere, but at the same time, she has seen an increase in empathy as well.

“The wellness and success of one of us impacts the wellness and success of all of us. That is why partnerships like this are so important. We believe that when we can improve the lives of young people, it puts out into the world this ripple effect of those young people improving the lives of others,” Hartzler said.

A vision for serving student and community needs and improving the lives of others remains the core of the partnership. While mental health counselors from Tanager assist Kohawks as they adjust to newfound independence, Kohawks have assisted Tanager as interns, volunteers, work-study students and even part-time employees. Hartzler herself started as a part-time employee with Tanager when she was pursuing her undergraduate degree.

The human services agency focuses on children, teens and young adults, supporting more than 4,000 youth and families per year — primarily in Linn and Johnson counties in southeast Iowa. Tanager creates and runs programming and services aimed at prevention, treatment and outreach for young people in difficult circumstances. The Coe community has supported these efforts engaging as servant leaders and youth service workers.

“I still remember my first day walking in the door of the cottage [at Tanager]. I was overwhelmed by the warmth and brightness the space held for kids. And since that day, I have continued to feel like every service we have provided is truly done in ways that are best for the people we are serving,” Hartzler said.

Hartzler pursued a psychology degree at Coe, and her volunteer story is similar to others. She said having that lived experience working with children and realizing her potential impact led her to grasp some of her classroom concepts in a deeper way. In the end, she was confident her educational path was in alignment with her career path.

It’s a common story for many Kohawks who engage with C3: Creativity, Careers, Community, regardless of field of study,

according to C3 Director Joe Demarest. Gaining experience in the field is critical to being confident in your career choice.

“Tanager is a strong community partner, particularly for students in the social sciences. They can gain hands-on experience working with a range of students and truly determine if youth counseling and the related fields are viable career paths,” said Demarest. “It’s also a place where our students can feel like they are making a difference.”

In 2023, Coe’s partnership with Tanager grew even stronger. To continue to enable support and opportunities for Kohawks, Rice joined the Coe College Board of Trustees. As the Tanager CEO since 2015, he has utilized his extensive experience in mental health, child welfare and human services to provide direction for the organization. Throughout his professional career, he has demonstrated a history of advocacy, coalition building, collaboration and goal attainment. His leadership skills are valued throughout the Corridor, as he holds various positions outside of Tanager. In 2020 Okpara was honored as an Iowa History Maker by the African American Museum of Iowa and was named to the Corridor Business Journal’s Most Influential Leaders List.

“Okpara has been a wonderful addition in a multitude of ways,” said Coe College President **David Hayes ’93**. “This includes, of course, strengthening our connection with Tanager. In the long run, we have similar missions and to be able to share resources with such an important organization in the Corridor and eastern Iowa is a blessing.”

“Tanager is a strong community partner, particularly for students in the social sciences. They can gain hands-on experience working with a range of students and truly determine if youth counseling and the related fields are viable career paths ... It’s also a place where our students can feel like they are making a difference.”

**JOE DEMAREST, C3 DIRECTOR**





# Out and About, THAT'S THE KOHAWK WAY



▲ *Assistant Professor of Psychology and Faculty Co-Director of C3 Samantha Brown advising a student in C3: Creativity, Careers, Community.*

**For decades, the people, businesses and organizations of Cedar Rapids have welcomed Kohawks to their new hometown. And, for decades, Kohawks have strived to give back to the Cedar Rapids community. While the importance of community building and involvement remains, the manner in which the Coe community reaches beyond the physical space of the campus is always evolving...**

## NETVUE

Going out to give back always starts from within.

For five years, Coe has secured grants from the Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE). The grants have impacted the curriculum and created seminar, practicum and professional development opportunities for Kohawk students, faculty and staff to explore meaning and purpose within vocation.

Intentionally cultivating discussion around finding satisfaction personally and professionally leads many to question how they can contribute in the community and help others. In short, the NetVUE programs proactively instill a community-centric mindset on campus.

“The conversations that occur inherently compel people to consider what is needed in the world and how they, given their set of gifts, interests and skills, can make the world better,” said Assistant Professor of Psychology and Faculty Co-Director of C3 Samantha Brown.

Brown’s background in vocational psychology centers on researching the career development of adolescents and young adults. She has helped integrate the NetVUE concepts into campus activities.

Currently, NetVUE grants have enabled Coe to build conversations and education around pursuing meaning and purpose into First-Year Seminar curriculum, establish a sophomore experiential opportunity practicum and create faculty and staff professional development retreats.

The collaboration with NetVUE also aligns with the mission of C3: Creativity, Careers, Community. The C3 staff specializes in getting students out of the classroom and into real-world experiences. These opportunities are emphasized through volunteering, community engagement and internships.



▲ *Assistant Professor of Accounting and CJ Lynch Outstanding Teacher recipient Amy Perry guides students through a class exercise.*

## NEWBoCo

There is such a concept as a win-win-win scenario, and students in Assistant Professor of Accounting Amy Perry's Advanced Managerial Accounting course have been at the forefront of creating wins for themselves, local businesses and Coe.

Perry and her students have partnered with NewBoCo, and more specifically a company called Kiva, for a few years. Kiva is a global non-profit organization whose mission is to provide capital to small businesses, particularly those owned by women and minorities. Kiva is a featured program of NewBoCo, which began as a business startup accelerator in 2014, located in Cedar Rapids' New Bohemia neighborhood.

The students in the managerial accounting course are matched with small businesses which could benefit from the skills and deliverables students provide. Some examples are profit/loss statements, more efficient accounting processes, inventory tracking and implementation of point-of-sale systems.

"It is a perfect fit to partner with small local businesses who could use some help in the areas of accounting functions and business acumen. It's really a win for the students who are learning, a win for the small businesses in getting help with their business and a win for Coe with the enhanced footprint we get with our connection to our local community," Perry said.

Since fall of 2022, students have assisted coffee shops, an ethnic grocery store, hair salon and a mobile pet grooming service.

"One of the best things about this project is that no company is the same, so each student group is getting a unique experience. This partnership often stretches students outside of their comfort zones because they are used to class problems where there is always a right way to calculate a problem to get to a correct answer. This mindset is challenging and has so much potential for growth and understanding for students," Perry added.

In addition to business scenarios that have real-world applications and consequences, Kohawks are also cultivating valuable soft skills as they communicate with business owners and use time management, problem solving and critical thinking to approach solutions.

Students rave about the experience, even if it is challenging in the moment. A lot of the satisfaction is derived from helping someone who is in need and ultimately making the world a better place.

"I believe we each have a light to shine, and when we shine that light, we light the world. In this project, students are truly shining their lights and skills onto our local community, helping to brighten the experience of our small businesses. This in turn shines back to our students as they continue their journey here at Coe, and beyond as they begin their careers," Perry said.



▲ *Prison Learning Initiative is lead by Social and Criminal Justice Professor and program chair Neal McNabb, John William King Professor of Literature and Creative Writing Gina Hausknecht and Associate Professor of Sociology Katie Rodgers '03.*

## PRISON LEARNING INITIATIVE

Among the intentional opportunities for Kohawks to be involved in the community, one of the most unique is Coe's Prison Learning Initiative (PLI). The goal of PLI is to provide a range of hands-on, high-impact experiences for students and community members to learn about and get involved with the criminal legal system. More specifically, PLI seeks to focus on the challenges of incarcerated individuals reentering society, reduce the long-term consequences of incarceration and build welcoming communities to support returning citizens and their families.

The initiative can be a profound experience for those involved.

**Yennifer Salgado '24** helps organize PLI events as a work-study student and often participates in the events in varying capacities. She is considering a career in either law enforcement or the legal field and will carry a heightened sense of empathy into her profession.

"I want to help those in the community, including those recently released from prison that need help to get back on their feet. Through PLI, it's become clear those recently released are just expected

to be 'better,' but in reality they don't have the opportunities to do better," Salgado said.

Community events are critical to the PLI mission, and one of the most impactful is an annual reentry simulation. Members of the campus and Cedar Rapids communities role-play the part of an individual recently released from incarceration. They have to

navigate a simulated month post-release and attempt to successfully meet all the mandated steps like counseling and parole meetings. To accomplish everything is a challenge and the exercise is an eye-opener for participants. Reentering society is not easy — in many more ways than anticipated.

Salgado sees hope in the exercise, though.

"To see people from all over Cedar Rapids come together and participate was amazing. They all were trying to help each other out. Events like this remind me there is still humanity throughout this world," Salgado said.

***"Events like this remind me there is still humanity throughout this world."***

— Yennifer Salgado



▲ *Reentry simulation event hosted by Prison Learning Initiative.*



▲ *ArtLinks event hosted by Prison Learning Initiative.*

## UNITED WAY BOLD PROGRAM



**C3: Creativity, Careers, Community Director Joe Demarest**

The backbone of any organization is its board of directors, and a collaboration between Coe and the United Way of East Central Iowa is inspiring and equipping emerging Kohawk leaders to serve on boards and lead positive change.

The Board Orientation & Leadership Development (BOLD) program has aided 17 Coe students in the past three years to prepare for board service. Kohawks collaborate with community leaders, are assigned a BOLD program mentor, audit board meetings and participate in an experiential learning component on top of attending a monthly two-hour course for six months. Overall, the education series is designed to instill the basics of what board membership entails as far as skills needed, responsibilities and expectations.

Kohawk graduates of the BOLD program have continued their engagement both on campus and in the community through internships, research, community-based service projects and as AmeriCorps members.

“There are a multitude of reasons why this experience is important for students,” said C3: Creativity, Careers, Community Director Joe Demarest. “But beyond the opportunity to learn about the basics of board operations, functions and responsibilities, participants gain a deeper understanding of how boards can help shape the direction of an organization in order to meet the needs of the community members they serve. That is the ultimate goal.”

Participants are also able to proactively broaden their professional networks as a natural effect of the hands-on training. This benefit is familiar to Kohawks who are often set up for networking success between C3 events and the robust local alumni network.

“The BOLD program is also an excellent opportunity to gain insight or introduction to career paths and connections to professionals that may align with a student’s long-term goals,” Demarest noted.

Over the past two years, the BOLD program has gained enough popularity that there is a college student-only path. In the beginning, students were blended with young professionals. Either way, there is a growing number of Kohawks who are interested and ready to serve their communities from a leadership perspective.



ZACH HUITINK '09



PIPER COOPER '22



LUKE VANDERSCHAFF '22

# *Kohawks excelling in* **TOP-RANKED** **PUBLIC AFFAIRS COLLEGE POST-COE**

One dressed as a politician for Halloween. Another thought she wouldn't be able to cut it in grad school. The other had his sights set on the Navy. All are Coe College graduates, with an interesting intersection at the top-ranked public affairs college in the country, the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

**Z**ach Huitink '09, Piper Cooper '22 and Luke VanderSchaaff '22 are all representing Coe at Maxwell. And it's not just being present, they're excelling in the competitive education environment.

Huitink is a professor at the school, in his sixth year teaching courses on public

policy and public management. He was honored by the Maxwell School with the Birkhead-Burkhead Teaching Excellence Award and Professorship. The annual honor recognizes outstanding teaching, and recipients are nominated by current students and selected by a committee of former award winners. He is currently nominated for

a university-wide excellence in teaching award as well.

Cooper graduated this past spring, earning her Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in just one year. She had Huitink in class this past spring term and was awarded a prestigious New York State

“ The training and tools I gained at Coe helped me to hit the ground running in my master’s program. The intellectual curiosity that was cultivated stuck with me. I felt really well prepared to do a Ph.D. in an interdisciplinary social science field. ”

Zach Huitink ’09

Excelsior Service Fellowship, which is a two-year fellowship program that creates opportunities for graduates of professional programs to work within the New York state government.

VanderSchaaff is pursuing his MPA and is attending Maxwell as a national Phi Kappa Phi fellow after he was nominated to compete for the fellowship by Coe’s chapter. He also plans to finish his MPA on an accelerated timeline and graduate in 12 months.

All three trace their ability to excel back to their time at Coe.

“I can say — without a doubt — that I would not have been admitted or successful in the program without the expert instruction in my undergraduate education,” VanderSchaaff said.

He cites multiple professors, including Professor of Political Science Dr. Kimberly Lanegran, Professor of Philosophy Jeffrey Hoover and Associate Professor of Economics **Drew Westberg ’05**, who helped him grow his confidence and steered him toward graduate school. They wrote letters of recommendation and remain as sources of encouragement and advice to this day, even after VanderSchaaff graduated.

For Cooper, it took some convincing from Coe faculty to realize her potential. She initially battled imposter syndrome and had doubts about her ability to go to graduate school. However, she realized Coe faculty were truly invested in her and were ready to help her transform her begrudging self into a person of engagement and action.

“As silly as it may seem, Coe did make it possible for me. It made it possible for me to learn advanced topics that some of my colleagues in my master’s program only got to glance over. It allowed me to try everything and be a part of amazing experiences, meeting lifelong friends and incredible mentors along the way. It made it possible for me to fail and fail again. I learned how to pick myself back up and gain the confidence and skills to be the person I am today, and a lot of that has to do with the community I found at Coe,” Cooper said.

She also cited Westberg, as well as the rest of the economics department, political science department and philosophy department as sources of inspiration.

Huitink was initially bound for the Naval Academy, but a physical condition kept him out. Even though his three older brothers went to Central

College, he chose Coe, and distinctly remembers his first professor — current Coe President **David Hayes ’93** who he describes as “really enriching and really fun.” He also took courses from many others in the economics department, including Professor of Economics Emeritus Mickey Wu, with whom he collaborated on his senior thesis. Eventually he concentrated on economics and the social sciences, but was quick to cite classes from Professor of Humanities Emeritus Ed Burke and Henrietta Arnold Associate Professor of History **David Nordmann ’87** in history and other courses across the humanities and natural sciences as reasons why he thoroughly enjoyed Coe and the broad exposure to the liberal arts.

“Coe opened my eyes to what’s possible in terms of public service and solving public problems,” Huitink said.

As Huitink involved himself on Coe’s campus as a student, including completing Spellman Summer Research and contributing to the Birkey Investment Fund, Wu pulled him aside and said, “You should really consider a career in academics.” With that guidance, Huitink began pursuing his current career.

“The training and tools I gained at Coe helped me to hit the ground

“Coe challenged me a lot, and changed a lot about my life, and looking back I would do it over again and choose Coe.”

Piper Cooper '22

running in my master's program. The intellectual curiosity that was cultivated stuck with me. I felt really well prepared to do a Ph.D. in an interdisciplinary social science field,” he said.

Now, as Wu foresaw, Huitink is excelling in academia. The Birkhead-Burkhead award was an affirming point in his career, but his daily joy still stems from being in the classroom and working with students who are driven to be meaningful and impactful in their own careers.

“Getting to work with really bright and motivated students is my favorite part of the job,” he said.

Both Cooper and VanderSchaaff certainly fall into the “bright and motivated” category.

VanderSchaaff's interest in public service was apparent from an early age — he dressed as a politician for Halloween in seventh grade. That passion was affirmed at Coe during his first term with his Introduction to Politics course and a seat in student senate. Now, he is concentrating his studies on non-profit and public management and government financial management and analysis. The two concentration areas will help him develop the skills necessary to build effective public programming via budgeting.

“[At Coe] I learned how to write and think critically. However, another component many people overlook is that Coe's professors prepared me by instilling the confidence and security to ask for help when I need it, advocate for myself as a student and work with peers most effectively on projects. Coe really delivered on its liberal arts

promise by providing me with an education that resulted in me becoming a well-rounded student and person,” VanderSchaaff said.

Cooper has determined her ideal professional role to be in a position as a community development director or economic development director for a city or state. She wants to be able to support communities' needs in innovative ways, making government accessible for everyone and connecting private and public stakeholders to elevate quality of life for all.

“I have always been attracted to how things work in the world and why society is so different in some places, or how different people interact with one another. Seeing how you can make so many changes and influence the daily actions of someone's life is fascinating to me, and why I've wanted to know how to be a part of that change,” Cooper said.

“At Coe, I was able to expand my interests and skills greatly.

Since my undergrad experience, I've been passionate about rural/urban development, healthcare accessibility, government accountability as well as economic development,” she added.

While at Maxwell, she concentrated on data analytics, building on the skillset she began to develop at Coe. It helped that, in her move to Syracuse, Huitink was one of the first people she spoke with. They bonded over Coe stories and how their time as Kohawks prepared them for new challenges and lofty academic goals.

“Coe challenged me a lot, and changed a lot about my life, and looking back I would do it over again and choose Coe,” Cooper said.

That love for Coe is just one more similarity between Huitink, VanderSchaaff and Cooper, all Kohawks turned Orangemen. After all, if you mix crimson and gold, you will get a shade of orange.



**Zach Huitink '09** accepts the Birkhead-Burkhead Teaching Excellence Award and Professorship.

# Top Ten Ways to Continue Your Coe Experience

It's easier than ever to stay involved with Coe College — no matter where you are! Try starting with Coe Connect ([alumni.coe.edu](http://alumni.coe.edu)) to see how other alumni and students are connecting with the college.



**Volunteer virtually or in-person.** Not only is volunteering a great way to give back to Coe with your time and talent, it allows you to affect the lives of students.



**Share your story now.** Your story is inspiring, so share it in Class News. You can also stay in the know by reading alumni news and keeping your contact information updated.



**Wear your Coe gear with pride.** Rock your alma mater's swag no matter the season with the Kohawk Shop, where new deals and items are continually being updated.



**Support the college financially.** Your investments support Coe and have a direct impact on the college experience for generations of students.



**Attend events and watch Coe online.** There's always something going on, and alumni can get in on the action, whether it's signing up for alumni events like Homecoming, attending campus events or watching music and athletic happenings virtually.



**Refer future Kohawks.** If you have college-going people in your life, make sure they consider Coe by sharing their names with the Office of Admission at [www.coe.edu/recommend\\_a\\_student](http://www.coe.edu/recommend_a_student).



**Leave a legacy.** Do you feel the need to make a difference? Talk to a development officer about how to leave a lasting impact and help build a secure future for Coe College. Call 319.399.8555 to get connected.



**Bring the Coe spirit wherever you are.** Kohawk Event Kits are made to bring Coe to you and your fellow Kohawks, no matter where you are in the country — or the world. Order yours today!



**Include Coe in your summer travel plans.** Bring your fondest memories back to life when you come home and visit the nest. The Office of Alumni Engagement loves to chat about your memories, stories and all things Coe, so let us know when you're on your way.



**Be a Coe influencer.** Everyone has a role to play in sharing Coe with the world. Follow Coe College and Coe Alumni on social media, make posts and tag the college to share your love.



Get involved in all these ways and more by visiting Coe Connect at [alumni.coe.edu](http://alumni.coe.edu).



# CLASS NOTES

NOT FOUR YEARS...FOR LIFE. STAYING CONNECTED TO THE COE FAMILY.



**2 '75 Russ Balch** of Auburn, Alabama, left the full-time practice of law after 45 years, with a detour through radio station ownership in Michigan from 1987 to 1994. He practiced in Washington, D.C. in communications law after law school at Michigan, and for the last 30 years he has been senior partner in a five-lawyer firm in Auburn, Alabama, where his practice was mostly in real property, land title, leasing and commercial development. Russ is currently an officer and board member of CARE Humane Society in Lee County, Alabama, and still acts as outside counsel for Chicken Salad Chick and several other clients. He continues to listen to radio stations every day, and he and his wife, Jill, travel as much as possible, with trips to Copenhagen, Rome, Berlin, Helsinki, Hamburg, Vienna and Bratislava in the last few years.

## 1980s

**'81 Cindy Zinn** Ball of Chicago, Illinois, has started a private practice, Embodied Sanctuary LLC, to provide grief massage and wellness to those who have suffered loss through bereavement or caring for an ailing loved one.

## 1960s

**'62 Antoinette Grey** Carson of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Bill Carson established the Bill & Toni (Grey) Carson Endowed Scholarship to assist two elementary education majors.

**'62 John Havick** of Stone Mountain, Georgia, has added his book, "Ghosts of NASCAR" to the audiobook collection of Tantor, a division of Recorded Books.

## 1970s

**1 '73 William Graff** of Livermore, California, has concluded his full-time working career after 57 years, with 28 years as an engineer in the FCC/TCB Equipment Authorization program. He lived in Taipei for nearly seven years and was able to travel along East Asia from Seoul to Singapore giving seminars to manufacturers, laboratories and government regulators on the basic rules for transmitters. He was directly responsible for the issuance of over 2,000 U.S. and Canadian certifications. He has seen the radio arts evolve from analog narrowband technology to a broadband digital world. Currently Bill lives in California with his wife Mandy and makes frequent trips to Taiwan.

**Kenneth McMartin** of Shreveport, Louisiana, has been a faculty member and researcher at the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at Louisiana

State University Health Sciences Center since 1980. He attended the North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology (NACCT) in Montreal, Canada, and received the Career Achievement Award from the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology (AACT), which is the highest honor bestowed by the society. Kenneth's productive research career investigates the mechanisms by which certain clinical poisons produce their toxicity. This has led to enhanced understanding of the toxic effects of methanol, ethylene glycol and diethylene glycol, and he discovered and helped develop the drug fomepizole, which is now the standard of care treatment for these poisonings across the world.



**3 '81 Colonel (Retired) Dr. Mark Bowyer** of Fairfax, Virginia, was inducted as an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Thailand. A trauma and combat surgeon, Dr. Bowyer is the Ben Eisman Professor of Surgery at the Uniformed Services University (USU) and the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. He is the "face" of advanced trauma life support, internationally known for his work in trauma and surgical education. As one of the principal architects of the Advanced Surgical Skills Exposures for Trauma course and past chair of the Surgical Skills Subcommittee of the Committee on Trauma, he has conducted the course at over 180 sites in 22 countries, training thousands of surgeons. As the surgical director of the Val

G. Hemming Simulation Center at USU, he is on the forefront of developing, validating and fielding new simulation technologies and curricula.

'84 **Peter Xiao** of Bettendorf, Iowa, had a retrospective show at Augustana College, "Sighting at Augie," through March 2024. His solo show, "A Room that One is in," at the Figge Art Museum in Davenport, Iowa, is running from December 2023 to April 2024. He is a professor in painting and drawing at Augustana College, co-chairs Asian studies and has been the Anderson Endowed Chair for the Arts for two terms. He has been taking students to Siena, Amsterdam and Barcelona for art collections he had seen as a junior at Coe on the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) program.

1990s

'91 **Kelly Wylie** Weak of Fruita, Colorado, retired after 16 years as a senior accountant for Gunnison County, Gunnison, Colorado.

2000s

'05 **Leah Kiser** of Casa Grande, Arizona, had her book "There Will Be Nonsense" win the Best Independent Book Award (BIBA) for Illustration for 2023.



'07 **Katie Becker** Colón of Omaha, Nebraska, was recently promoted to senior operations manager with Conference Catalysts in June 2023. She started with the company in January 2022 as a junior operations

manager. Katie coordinates annual meetings for technical professional societies in locations across the globe. In her new role, she will oversee a pod of operations managers to support three clients.

'08 **Jane Poynter** of Las Vegas, Nevada, recently worked at Meow Wolf Omega Mart in Las Vegas ([meowwolf.com/visit/las-vegas](http://meowwolf.com/visit/las-vegas)) as an artist for various exhibits.

2010s

'10 **Brad O'Neil** of Centerville, Minnesota, graduated magna cum laude from Mitchell Hamline School of Law. He subsequently passed the Minnesota bar exam and was sworn in to the practice of law on October 27, 2023. He is currently a civil court clerk to the Honorable Franklin Reed in Minnesota's Fourth Judicial District.



'13 **Reid Galbraith** of Greenwood Village, Colorado, was promoted to shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP. Reid is an adept dealmaker with a diverse background in a variety of real estate asset classes. He is a trusted advisor to some of the nation's most sophisticated real estate and hospitality companies in their most complex transactions. Focusing principally on the hospitality industry, Galbraith represents clients in connection with acquisition, disposition, finance, management, franchising and development.



'17 **Lisa McDonald** of Columbus, Ohio, was promoted to editor of The American Ceramic Society membership magazine, the ACerS Bulletin, after five years as a member of the organization. In this new role, she assumes creative leadership over the Bulletin, as well as the society industry magazine, podcast and online news blog.

2020s

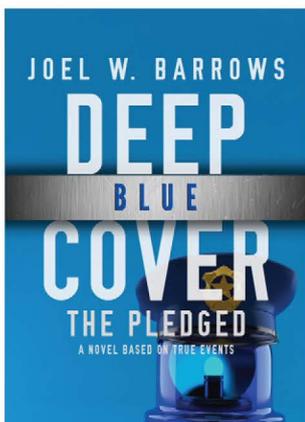


'21 **Peyton McGuire** of Clemson, South Carolina, passed his second and final examination to become a Ph.D. candidate within Clemson University's Materials Science and Engineering Department. His planned dissertation, "Optimizing Tin Fluorophosphate for the Immobilization of Dehalogenated Nuclear Salt Waste," outlines his investigation into the structural, chemical and thermal properties of said material system to serve as an improved alternative to industry standards for the safe disposal of high-level radioactive waste. Peyton considers his success a result of the wide range of skills he obtained as a Coe student.

WRITTEN ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF COE'S ALUMNI

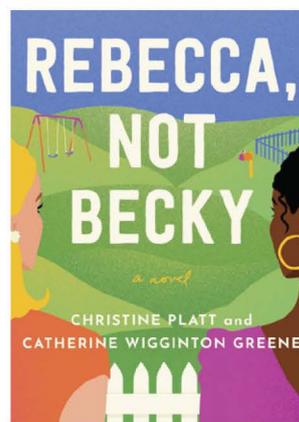
**PUSHA DA PEN**

1980s



'83 **Joel Barrows** of Bettendorf, Iowa, published his fifth book in the Deep Cover thriller series "Deep Blue Cover: The Pledged." When the death of a deputy hits a wall, Sheriff Eli Coe enlists an outside investigator to go undercover. The investigation uncovers larger systemic troubles and has tentacles that reach beyond a single death. This book published by Down & Out Books is available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble and [downandoutbooks.com](http://downandoutbooks.com). All five Deep Cover books are also available for free to Kindle Unlimited subscribers.

1990s



'99 **Catherine Wigginton** Greene of Washington, D.C., co-authored "Rebecca, Not Becky" with friend Christine Platt. It's the story of two suburban women learning from each other and navigating their way to healing through frank, and sometimes funny, talk about racial relations. The book is available at local bookstores and through Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Target and Walmart.

# WEDDING BELLS

CONGRATULATIONS, KOHAWKS

## 1980s

'81 **Jerry Goehring** and Catherine Elder of Ketchikan, Alaska, on November 28, 2023.

## 2010s

1 '15 **Lindsay Meade** and Nathan Hopp of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on August 5, 2023.

2 '19 **Danielle Dahl** and **Zach Kammin '20** of Marion, Iowa, on October 13, 2023.

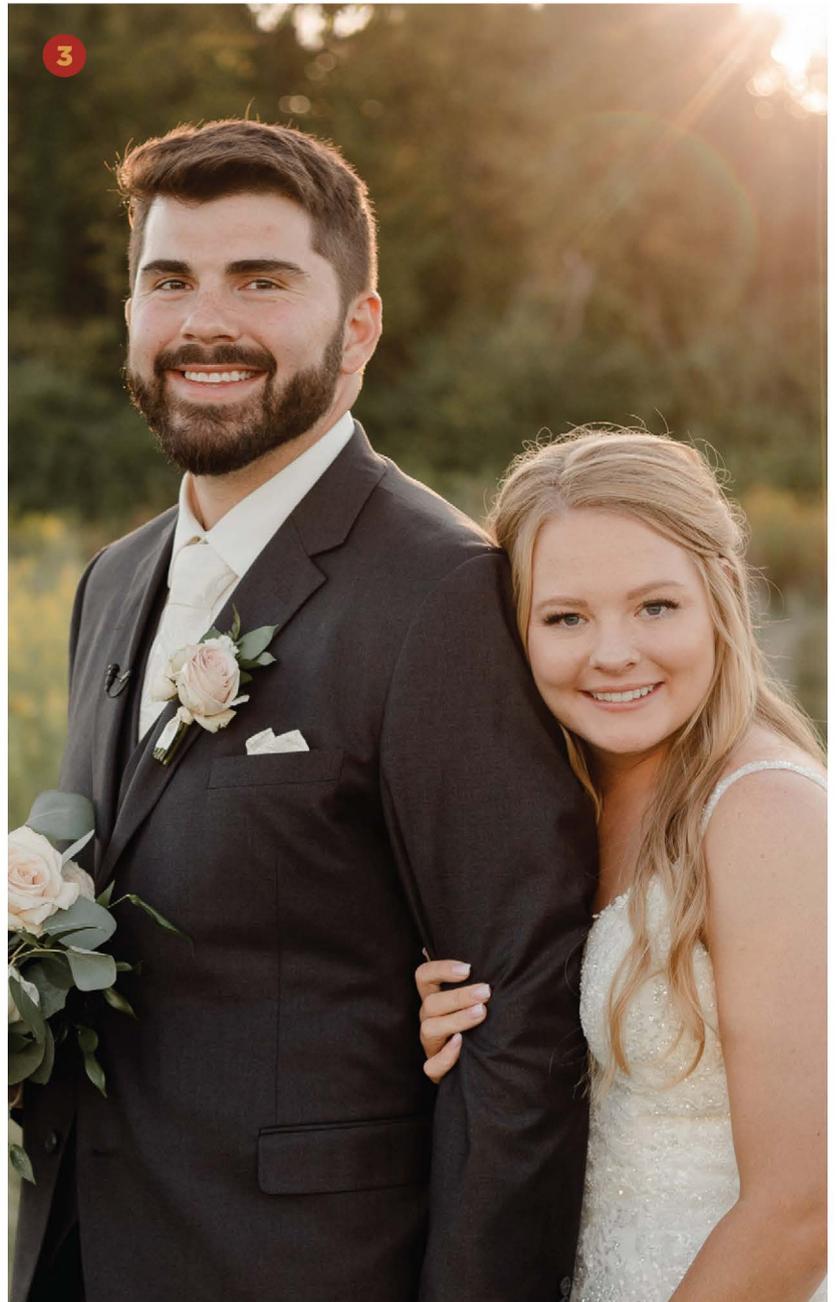
3 '19 **Daniel Vega** and **Erica Kelly '19** of Lake Park, Iowa, on September 8, 2023.

## 2020s

4 '20 **Jordan Challis** and Bailey Newell of Marion, Iowa, on April 29, 2023. Kohawk wrestling teammates from 2017-2023 were in attendance at the wedding.

5 '20 **Constance Schlitter** and Andrew "AJ" Losch of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 14, 2023. The wedding party included the following Kohawks: **Riley Fonck '20**, **Jordan Challis '20**, **Andrew Holladay '18**, **Brady Ruden '18** and **Romello Hidalgo-Monjaras '18**.

6 '22 **Olivia Griggs** and **Diedrich Swetlik '23** of Columbia, Maryland, on October 28, 2023.





 Indicates decedent was a member of the Coe College Heritage Club

 Served on the Alumni Council

For information, contact Director of Planned Giving Debbie Green at 319.399.8592 or [dgreen@coe.edu](mailto:dgreen@coe.edu).

Full obituaries for all decedents can be found at [www.coe.edu/courier](http://www.coe.edu/courier).

## 1940s

**1942 Barbara Platt** Hughes, 102, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 8, 2023.

**1943 Rose Marie Blomquist** Kohl, 101, of Kalamazoo, Michigan, on September 28, 2023.

**1949 Charles “Chuck” Shafer**, 96, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on November 12, 2023.

## 1950s

 **1953 Geraldine “Jerry” Hendryx** Healy, 100, of Belle Plaine, Iowa, on October 2, 2023.

**John “Jack” Stewart**, 92, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on August 23, 2023.

**1955 Austin “Woody” Fernow**, 90, of Grundy Center, Iowa, on September 22, 2023.

**1956 Barbara “Barb” Hayes** Egland, 88, of Mason, Ohio, on April 9, 2023.

**Robert “Bud” Vail**, 89, of Spokane, Washington, on October 10, 2023.

**1959 Garlene Spichal** Knight, 86, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 4, 2023.

 **Dimis “Dee” Ehninger** Wyman, 85, of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, on August 28, 2023.

## 1960s

**1960 Susan Hummel** Anderson, 84, of Raleigh, North Carolina, on January 13, 2023.

**Lorraine Lundgren** Ferrell, 85, of Des Moines, Iowa, on March 27, 2023.

**1961 Gordon Russell**, 84, of Carroll Valley, Pennsylvania, on October 27, 2023.

**1962 Larry Fink**, 82, of Martin’s Creek, Pennsylvania, on November 25, 2023.

**Jean Johnson** Sidner, 83, of Tehachapi, California, on October 2, 2023.

**Marion “Mimi” Wright** Stang, 82, of Salem, Oregon, on September 16, 2023.

**Walter White**, 82, of Xenia, Ohio, on June 14, 2023.

**1963 Frank Bonvino**, 81, of Naples, Florida, on November 22, 2023. Frank attended Coe College, where he served as president of the Phi Kappa Tau fraternity and met **Margo Russ ‘65**, the love of his life and wife for over 60 years. They married in 1963. Upon graduation, he attended law school at the University of Minnesota and later William Mitchell College of Law. He worked as an attorney and served as general counsel for the International Multifoods Corporation. He received numerous awards as an attorney, took great pride in mentoring young professionals, coached baseball and helped the careers of many young athletes. He also served as president of the Wilderness Golf Community, where he has resided for the past 20 years. In 2005, he received the Alumni Award of Merit from Coe College. Frank is survived by his wife; children, Chris (Trudy) and Tracy (Rob) Black; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Robert “Bob” Turpin**, 82, of Phoenix, Arizona, on September 7, 2023. Bob attended Coe College, where he met his wife, **Alleene “Polly” Pollitz ‘64**. While at Coe, he sang in the choir, played football and was a member of the Sigma Nu fraternity. He earned his degree in both history and business administration and earned his master’s degree at San Diego State College. After graduating from Coe, Bob joined the U.S. Navy and spent three tours in the coastal waters of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. He continued his 31-year Naval career in the Navy Reserve and was promoted to Captain in 1980, retiring in 1994. Bob joined the Harris Bank in Chicago as a portfolio manager in 1970 and opened the Harris Trust Company of Arizona as president. After leaving in 1982, he co-started Turpin-Fischer Investment Advisors. Bob was involved in Valley Presbyterian Church, and starting in 1987, he served as a member of the Coe College Board of Trustees for five years. Bob received the Coe Alumni Award of Merit in 2003, and he was inducted into the Arizona Veterans’ Hall of Fame in 2015. Bob is survived by his wife of over 58 years, Polly, children Julie and Scott (Hannah), his sister Ann, Becky and Mike Pollitz and four grandchildren.

**1965 Dorothy Perry** Blazek, 81, of Grinnell, Iowa, on October 6, 2023.

**Sandra “Sandy” Swearingen** Bockman, 78, of Elgin, Illinois, on July 25, 2022.

**Robert “Bob” Brizzolara**, 80, of Huntley, Illinois, on October 26, 2023.

**Gene Knight**, 81, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 3, 2023.

**1966 Sherlyn Shupe** Hunter, 79, of Pasadena, California, on July 9, 2023.

**Margaret “Peggy” Shank**, 79, of Wheat Ridge, Colorado, on November 17, 2023.

**1967 Katherine “Kathy” Bihl**, 78, of Lexington, Kentucky, on November 14, 2023.

**Richard Durning**, 78, of Chicago, Illinois, on July 23, 2023.

**1969 Mary Ziegler** Hill, 76, of Tinton Falls, New Jersey, on November 17, 2023.

**Louis Rodl**, 75, of Phoenix, Arizona, on August 12, 2023.

 **Judith “Judy” Blake** Thompson, 76, of Spotsylvania, Virginia, on August 31, 2023.

## 1970s

**1974 Dennis Fox**, 71, of Ankeny, Iowa, on November 25, 2023.

## 1980s

**1986 Paul Duncan**, 58, of Lawrence, Kansas, on November 13, 2023.

**1987 John Burgess**, 71, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 4, 2023.

## 1990s

**1990 Barbara Coppock**, 83, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 1, 2023.

**1992 Sean Clancy**, 57, of Washington Island, Wisconsin, on November 14, 2023.

## 2010s

**2013 Kathleen “Katie” Gibson-Young**, 32, of Bonne Terre, Missouri, on November 9, 2023.

## FACULTY/STAFF

 Professor of History Emerita Dr. **Rosemary Carroll**, 87, of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, on September 15, 2023. Rosemary earned her bachelor's degree at Brown University in 1957; her master's degree at Wesleyan University in 1962 and her Ph.D. in history at Rutgers University in 1968. She concluded her education in 1983 at the University of Iowa College of Law with a Doctor of Jurisprudence. Rosemary taught at Coe College for 30 years, beginning in 1971, and was a mentor and inspiration to decades of Coe students until her retirement in 2001. Rosemary was recognized as one of the 2,000 outstanding scholars of the 20th century, and she imparted her excitement about learning, her spirit of fairness and her high standards of academic discipline to her students. Rosemary served as chair of Coe's history department, an affirmative action officer, pre-law advisor and faculty representative for the Truman Foundation, Rhodes Scholarship Trust and British Marshall Scholarship. She also was involved in the Cedar Rapids community through her service as board of directors member for the Mental Health Associates, president of the Women's Leadership Training Institute and volunteer legal counsel to help the poor in Cedar Rapids. She is survived by caring cousins and loving friends.

Professor of Business Administration and Economics Emeritus **C. Michael "Mike" McDonald**, 79, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on November 15, 2023. Mike graduated from the University of Iowa in 1966 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. He completed two years of law school before being drafted into the army during the Vietnam War. Mike later returned to the University of Iowa and received his master's degree in business as well as his CPA in 1981, before beginning his career as a college professor at Coe College in the business department. He retired in 2005 after

almost 25 years of teaching. Mike was united in marriage to Lucinda Ritenour in 1966, and their union was blessed with three children. He was a devoted father, an avid reader, volunteer treasurer of Foundation 2 Crisis Services and loved being a grandpa. Mike is survived by his children, **J.P. (Sue) McDonald '92**, **Katie McDonald Chism '95** and Josh (Lauren) McDonald; seven grandchildren and three nephews.

Professor of Chemistry Emeritus **Peter Wickham**, 88, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 6, 2023. Peter graduated from Amherst College and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, earning a bachelor's and Ph.D. in Chemistry. He married Louise Vail. After working as a pharmaceutical researcher in Albany, New York, for several years, he found his true calling as a professor of chemistry at Coe College. Pete taught from 1969 until his retirement in 2000, helping countless students on their way to careers in science and medicine. In 1987, he was honored with the Charles J. Lynch Outstanding Teacher Award, which is awarded by students. In 1998, he was granted an endowed chair and was named the Henry and Margaret Haegg Distinguished Professor of Chemistry. He also served as the chemistry department chair for nine years. Pete enjoyed birding and hiking in the woods in eastern Iowa, and he was known for his kindness, optimism and hilarious sense of humor, which frequently centered around puns. He is survived by his longtime special friend Eva Stark; siblings Virginia (Tom), Sarah (Lou) and Chris (Stephanie); children Mark (Amy) and Nancy; three grandsons and many nephews, nieces and cousins.

## Share your news!

Information compiled in "Class Notes" comes from a variety of sources, including direct correspondence from alumni, clipping services and news releases. The college received these class notes by December 1. **The deadline for the Summer 2024 issue is April 1.** Announcements older than one year at the time they are submitted will not be published.

Please follow these basic guidelines when submitting information:

 **NEWS**

At least the following basic information should be provided with any submission: name and class year, spouse name and class year if Coe alum, city and state of residence and your

news. Please spell out acronyms. Milestones (anniversaries, birthdays, etc.) will be noted only in five-year increments (25th, 30th, etc.).

 **MARRIAGES & ANNIVERSARIES**

Include both spouses' full names (including birth/maiden names, where applicable) and complete date. Please notify us after your wedding; we cannot publish based on an engagement announcement.

 **BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS**

Include child's first name, legal names of parents (mother's birth/maiden name will be published if Coe alum) and complete date.

 **DEATHS**

Include full name, complete date and city/state of residence at time of death. Please include a newspaper obituary, if possible.

 **PHOTOS**

Digital photos must be at least 300 dpi when sized to 3.75 inches wide. Please save the file as a TIFF or JPEG file. We must have the photographer's permission to print a copyrighted photo. Please indicate if you would like prints returned.

Submit information via email to [courier@coe.edu](mailto:courier@coe.edu) or mail to Coe College Courier at 1220 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. Information also may be submitted online at [www.alumni.coe.edu](http://www.alumni.coe.edu).

## 2000s

'06 **Page Fineran** Humphrey and her husband, Ben, of Des Moines, Iowa, a daughter, Elizabeth Blake, on June 19, 2023. She is welcomed by big brothers Lane and Miles.

1 '07 **Andrew Hinds** and **Beth Curley** Hinds '13 of Fridley, Minnesota, a second child, Alex Andrew, on August 2, 2023.

2 '07 **Sagnik Saha** and his wife, Priya Bhakat, of Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, a son, Kiaan, on July 21, 2023.



# FACULTY & STAFF

# UPDATES AND ACCOLADES

Professor of Physics **Ugur Akgun** presented his research, "Novel high-density glass scintillators for proton radiography," with Coe students in Spain at Proton Therapy Co-Operative Group's 2023 conference. He also presented research, titled "High-density scintillating glasses for integrating-mode particle radiography," in Boston at the 2023 meeting of OPTICA Radiographic Imaging and Tomography. The research is a collaborative effort with the Mayo Clinic, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, University College London and Coe College. Akgun also gave a well-received colloquium titled "Medical Device Development Projects with Undergraduates" in the University of Iowa Department of Radiation Oncology in September 2023.

Assistant Professor of Music **Abbie Brewer** received a grant from the Iowa Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts to support a series of concerts she performed in small venues across the state of Iowa in fall 2023.

Alma A. Turechek Professor of Music **William Carson** conducted concerts and performed as a jazz clarinetist with the concert band of the Iowa Ambassadors of Music in the United States, Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Germany and Austria in summer 2023. This is in addition to conducting the Coe Touring Wind Ensemble in concerts in the U.S., the Netherlands and Belgium. He has also been selected as a Paris city coordinator for the national Ambassadors of Music program for summer 2024. He will live in Paris

for over two months and guide student musicians from throughout the U.S. as they experience the City of Lights as part of a European concert tour.

Associate Professor of Physics **Firdevs Duru** had the research article "Local Electron Density Depletions in the Martian Upper Ionosphere obtained from MARSIS: Comparison with ASPERA-3 and MAVEN, and the Connection with Crustal Magnetic Fields" (with **Tim Caplice '22**) published in the Journal of Geophysical Research (JGR) Space Physics.

Professor of Music and Associate Dean for Faculty Development **Marc Falk** co-presented the paper, "Peer Review of Teaching: Should It Be the Gold Standard?" at the American Conference of Academic Deans' (ACAD) annual meeting. The paper was later accepted for publication in The ACAD Leader.

B. D. Silliman Professor of Physics **Steve Feller** published the following papers in 2023: "Application of Topological Constraint Theory to Alkali Borate and Silicate Glass Systems" (with **Nate Kenginger '23**) and "Structural investigation of lithium borate glasses by Raman spectroscopy: Quantitative evaluation of structural units and its correlation with density" in Journal of Non-Crystalline Solids; "Unveiling the structure of calcium borate glass by neutron diffraction, MAS-NMR and first-principles calculations" (with **Harry Hawbaker '25**) in Ceramics International; "Extending the Glass Formation of Alkali Tellurites" (with **Yi Wei '24, Aaron Phillips '24, Nils Empen**

**'24, Ethan Frana '24, Lauren Meyer '24** and Assistant Professor of Physics **Caio Bragatto**) and the archive paper "A Neutron Diffraction Investigation of the Structure of Sodium Borosilicate Glasses" (with **T.J. Kiczanski '99** and **Heidi Feller Berger '02**) in Physics and Chemistry of Glasses: European Journal of Glass Science and Technology Part B; "A Great Isle of Man Discover" in The MPC Gram Series; "Two Camps in Hay, Australia Issued Camp Currency for Jews" in The Shekel; "Paper Money of the Sefton Internment Camp on the Isle of Man" in Paper Money; "The Phoenix Rises for MPCFest 24" in Journal of East Asian Numismatics and "Flag over Richmond" in The Gobrecht Journal.

John William King Professor of Literature and Creative Writing **Gina Hausknecht**, Assistant Professor of Social and Criminal Justice **Neal McNabb** and Associate Professor of Sociology **Katie Rodgers '03** presented "Closing the Distance Through Community Engagement" about Coe's Prison Learning Initiative at the National Conference for Higher Education in Prison (NCHEP) in November 2023.

Assistant Professor of Education **Stacy Haynes-Moore** presented research at the 2023 Iowa Council Teachers of English to share study findings about ELA teachers' responses to state law SF496 and to discuss Iowa districts' varying approaches to implement the law that led some to restrict or remove books in school curriculum, classrooms or libraries.

Assistant Professor of Nursing **Aleesa Kittrell** presented a poster titled “Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Classroom - Think Like a Nurse, Not Like a Bot” at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) 2023 Transform Conference. She also presented posters titled “Creating Virtual Escape Rooms” and “AI in the Classroom” at the 2023 Faculty Leadership Network (FLN) Conference.

Assistant Professor of Art History **Ranelle Knight-Lueth** will speak at Southeastern Art Conference (SECAC) on art opportunities and education for soldiers during and shortly after World War I.

Knight-Lueth, Bragatto, Assistant Professor of Business Administration and Economics **Rob Kuennen**, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies **Oluwadamilola Opayemi** and Assistant Professor of

Rhetoric and Communication Studies **Antonio Spikes** will be representing Coe as faculty champions in the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)/Riipen Work-Based-Learning Consortium.

Assistant Professor of English and Faculty Co-Director of Center for Health & Society **Margaret LeMay** had a poem, “sample. winter.13,” accepted for publication in Brink Literary Journal.

McCabe Professor of Philosophy **John Lemos** published his latest book, “Free Will’s Value: Criminal Justice, Pride, and Love” (Routledge, 2023). In May, he attended the meetings of the Canadian Philosophical Association, where he gave two talks on free will. He also has an article, “Haji and The Indeterministic Weightings Model of Libertarian Free Will,” forthcoming in The Journal of Philosophical Theological

Research. In this article he responds to some recent published criticisms of his view from Ishtiyaque Haji.

Professor of History **Brie Swenson Arnold** presented the original research paper “Competing Visions of Reconstruction in Talladega, Alabama” and served as an invited panelist on two roundtables (“Reflections on the 10-Year Anniversary of the Midwestern History Association” and “Teaching during the Pandemic”) at the Northern Great Plains History Conference in September 2023. She served as a content expert and reviewer for 25 different K-12 social studies topics/primary source curriculum sets for the State Historical Society of Iowa, funded by a Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources grant. She was also appointed to the Board of Editors for the scholarly journal “Annals of Iowa,” State Historical Society of Iowa.

# ALUMNI COUNCIL *Update*

## Hi Kohawks!

As we embark on 2024 with renewed energy and aspirations, consider weaving the spirit of giving into your plans. This year presents exciting opportunities to contribute your time, talent and treasure to Coe College, shaping a future rich in shared experiences and collective impact.

## Giving of Your Time and Talent

One meaningful way to stay connected with Coe is by joining the Alumni Council. We are on the lookout for passionate individuals eager to contribute their time and talents. Your unique experiences and skills can shape the future of our alma mater. Consider becoming a part of our dynamic team, where your insights can make a lasting impact.

## Giving of Your Treasure

Mark your calendars for the much-anticipated Day of Giving 2024: Thursday, April 11!

This is not just a day; it’s an opportunity to create a ripple effect of positive change. Your donation of any size, coupled with matching funds from generous contributors, can result in a substantial impact.

Expect a day filled with shared enthusiasm and collective generosity. And, a special challenge to my classmates of 2013, show up again and help lead the pack in participation! Keep an eye out for more information about this annual day of philanthropy and all the ways you can take part.

Every act of giving, be it of time, talent or treasure, strengthens the bonds that make Coe a truly remarkable community. Your involvement secures the legacy and future of Coe College for generations to come.

Stay tuned for more details on Day of Giving 2024, and if you’re ready to take the plunge into active engagement, consider joining the Alumni Council by filling out the volunteer form at [alumni.coe.edu/f/volunteer-at-coe](http://alumni.coe.edu/f/volunteer-at-coe) or scanning the QR code.



**Lauren DuBay Gilbertson '13**  
Alumni Council President





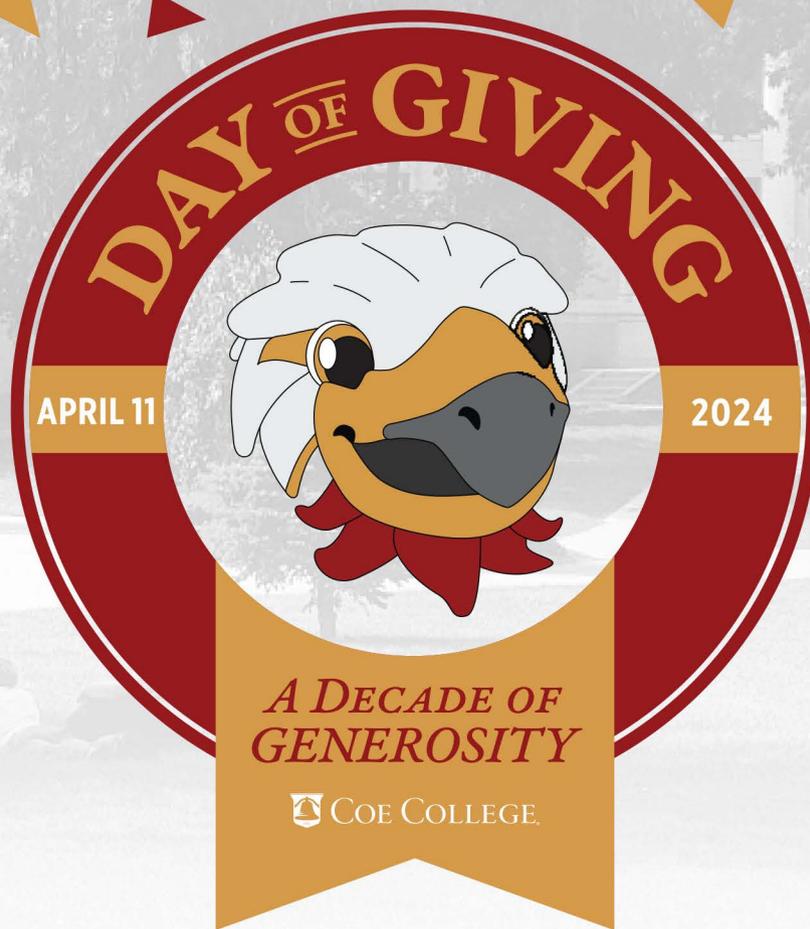
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We are celebrating a **decade of generosity** from the Coe community. Save the date for Coe's 10th annual Day of Giving on **April 11, 2024!** Join us to make a difference and support Coe together.