University of Washington Magazine

Education with Empathy

A president with humanity, personality, and drive, Ana Mari Cauce expanded the UW's impact far and wide.

Wondrous Wetlands

Anthony Stewart has spent many hours under the canopy of the Hoh Rain Forest, and "you would be amazed at the wetlands that are there," he says. The doctoral student in the UW School of Environmental and Forest Sciences notes that skunk cabbage, black earth pits, muck, mud and saturated black soil signal the presence of what he calls cryptic wetlands. They are invisible to satellite imaging but obvious through new digital tools and up-close observation. Stewart's research, which has drawn national attention, reveals an abundance of carbon-rich wetlands in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.

Hiking off trail and sampling at 36 sites along the Hoh River watershed, Stewart and his team packed out 10- to 20-pound soil samples. After carbon-dating the soil, they discovered that some of the carbon was trapped over 20,000 years ago. "It was our 'aha' moment. We actually showed there were huge amounts of carbon stored in these forested wetlands that hadn't been mapped before," he says.

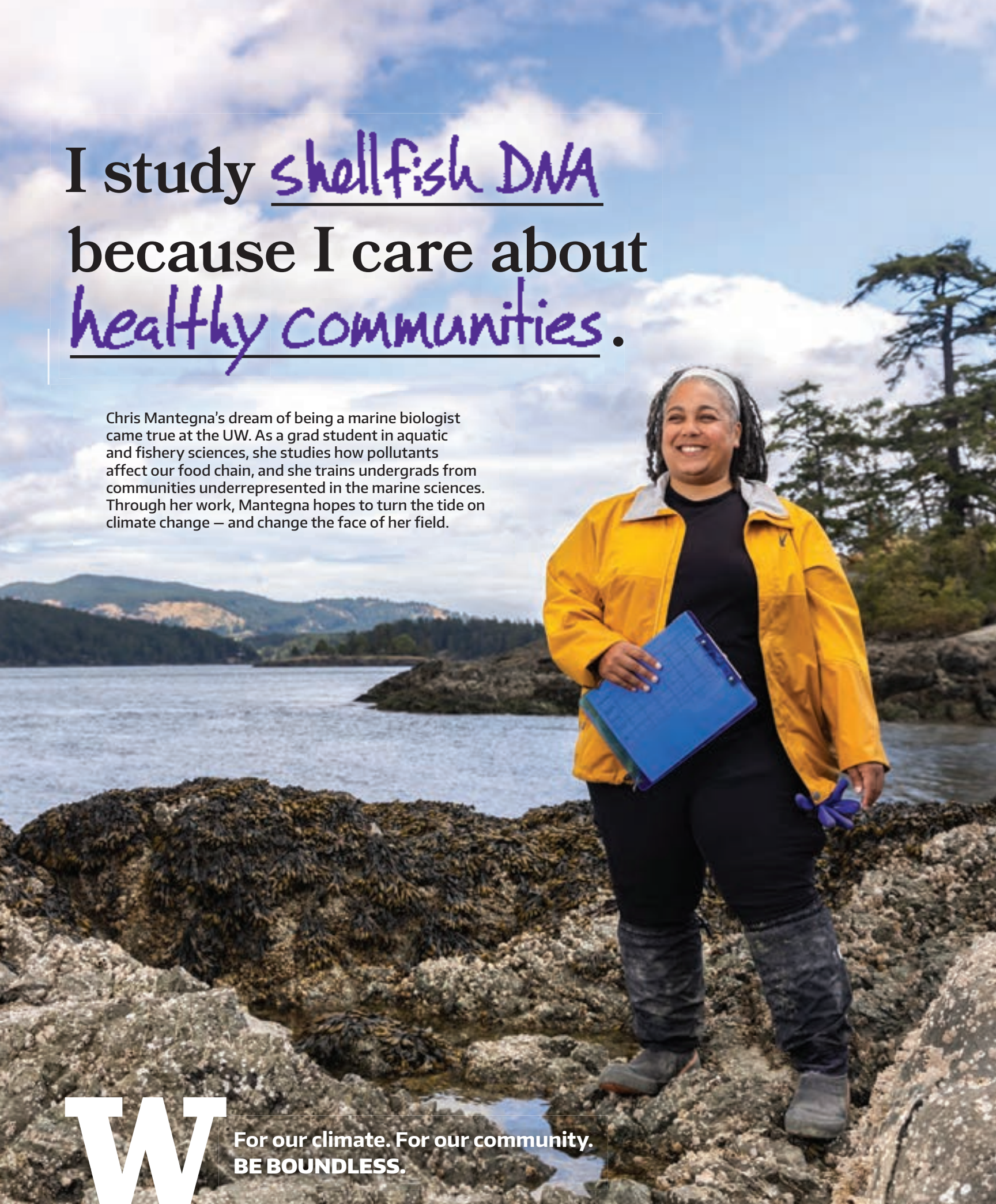
Conserving forested wetlands could help efforts to stabilize the climate. But the National Wetlands Inventory doesn't include forests, and climate change and human development are causing more U.S. wetlands to disappear. After completing his degree in June, Stewart plans to join a lab at Cornell University. "I'm excited to continue this research," he says. "These forested wetlands are way more valuable than we think."

Hannelore Sudermann / *Photo by Stas Moroz*

OF WASHINGTON OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

I study shellfish DNA because I care about healthy communities.

Chris Mantegna's dream of being a marine biologist came true at the UW. As a grad student in aquatic and fishery sciences, she studies how pollutants affect our food chain, and she trains undergrads from communities underrepresented in the marine sciences. Through her work, Mantegna hopes to turn the tide on climate change — and change the face of her field.



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University of Washington Magazine

VOLUME 36
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ARTIST'S CONCEPT BY STEPHANIE BOWER

When the Board of Regents approved the construction of a 30,000-square-foot Welcome Center, they also voted to name it in honor of President Ana Mari Cauce. The center will serve as a starting point for prospective students and a venue for community programming and alumni events. For more details on the Welcome Center, visit.washington.edu/welcomecenter.

ONLINE

uwmag.online

PHOTO BY RON WURZER

HUSKY FEVER
The Husky Hall of Fame: It's not just a list of prominent athletes' names. Inside Hec Ed, you'll find a collection of sports ephemera from significant events, managed by super-fan Dave Torrell, '62.

COURTESY UCLA ATHLETICS

SHE STUCK HER LANDING
BJ Das, '06, might compete against the Huskies as a gymnastics coach at UCLA, but she still cheers for the purple and gold. You might recognize her work.

COURTESY TOASTED.

A TOAST TO TOASTED
Two UW alumni who met in an entrepreneurship class created Toasted, a chain of cafes that celebrate Middle Eastern flavors, hospitality and culture.

ON THE COVER
A collage features some highlights from the career of President Ana Mari Cauce, whose impact over her nearly 40 years at the University of Washington has been felt far and wide.

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Forward

OPINION AND THOUGHT FROM **THE UW FAMILY**

BY **DEBORAH FULLER AND PATRICK MITCHELL**

Science Under Siege

Cuts in federal funding will close labs and stall cures

Nearly every modern medical treatment—from pain relievers and cholesterol drugs to vaccines against polio and smallpox—can be traced to research funded by the National Institutes of Health. The long-standing partnership between research institutions like the University of Washington and the federal government has become so intertwined with daily life that it's easy to take for granted.

But the scientific work driving these medical advances is in jeopardy. Under the current administration, agencies like the NIH and the National Science Foundation have frozen or terminated hundreds of active research grants. And proposed cuts in funding for critical infrastructure—known as indirect costs—threaten to stall progress and harm the health of all Americans. Thousands of ongoing projects aimed at understanding life-threatening illnesses and finding new therapies rely on funding from the NIH and NSF.

Federal support has fueled breakthroughs in cancer treatment and prevention. The National Cancer Institute of the NIH, the world's largest funder of cancer research, has helped drive a 33% drop in U.S. cancer death rates between 1991 and 2021. Basic cancer research has led to new ways to harness the immune system to fight tumors. In a 2022 clinical trial, all 12 patients treated with one form of immunotherapy saw their rectal cancer completely disappear. Likewise, none of the women vaccinated against HPV at age 12 or 13 developed the disease later. Since the vaccines' widespread use, cervical cancer deaths have dropped 62%.

Despite these successes, cancer remains a major challenge: In 2024, over 2 million people in the U.S. were estimated to be diagnosed, and 611,720 were expected to die from the disease.

Autoimmune and neurodegenerative diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's affect nearly every family. While no cures exist, new treatments are improving symptoms and slowing progression. Since 2013, the NIH's BRAIN Initiative has invested over $3 billion in neuroscience research. Most treatments address cognitive and behavioral symptoms, but two new drugs to treat early-stage Alzheimer's are in clinical trials at UW Medicine. Federal funding is also advancing early-detection blood tests—another innovation underway at the UW.

Infectious diseases remain a major threat—and cuts to federal support weaken our defenses. Advances in medicine and public health have eradicated smallpox, eliminated polio in the U.S. and turned HIV/AIDS into a manageable condition.

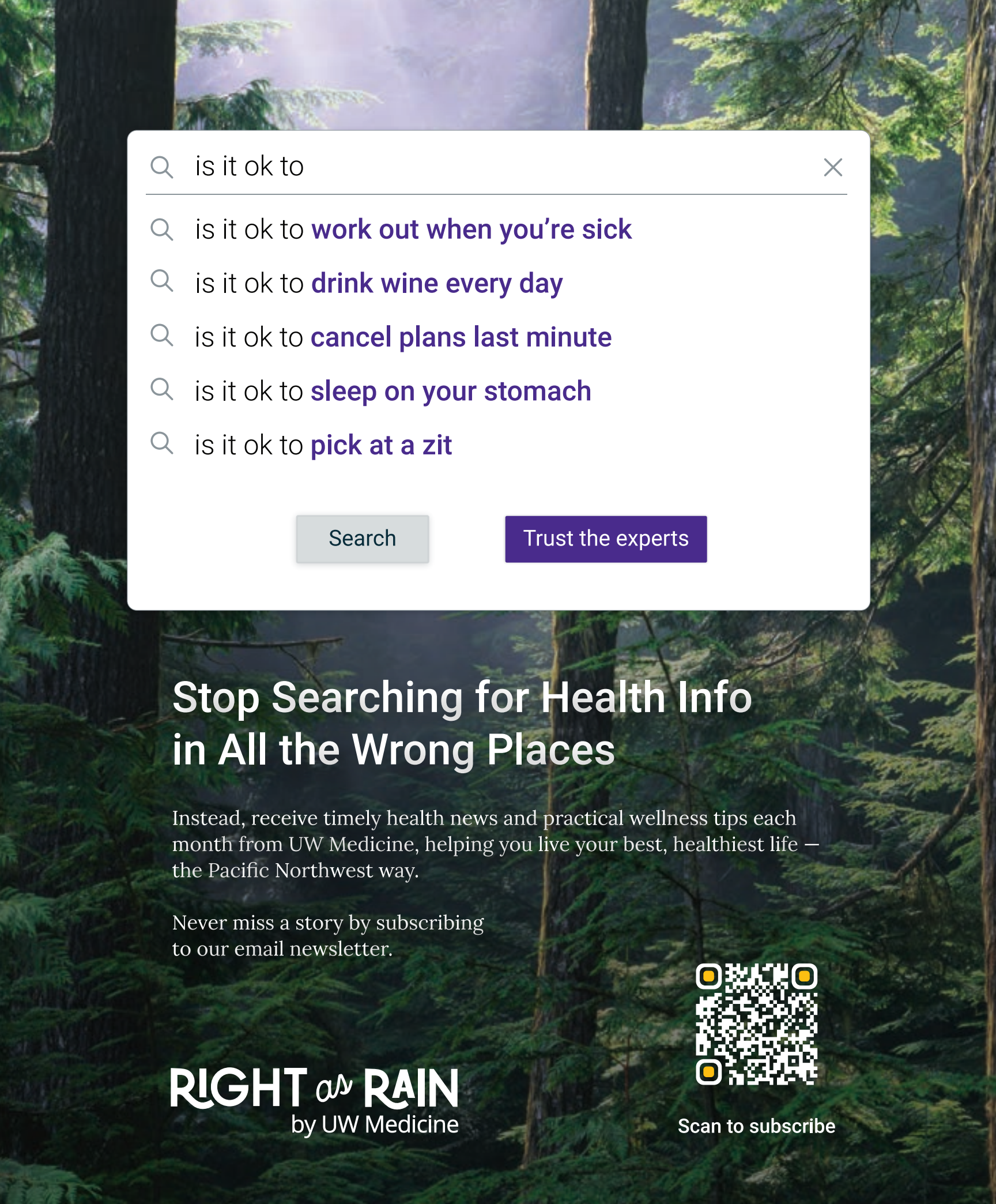
The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the value of biomedical research as U.S. labs—including the UW's—developed new drugs and vaccine platforms. Federal funding led to the new field of AI-designed medicines for which the UW's David Baker was recently awarded the Nobel Prize.

Cuts to biomedical research will have a cascade of effects: fewer clinical trials, fewer new treatments and fewer lifesaving drugs. Labs will close, jobs will be lost and the process of discovery will stall.

Our country is poised to lose its standing as the world's leader in scientific innovation. It will affect our health-care system and our economy. And just as importantly, cuts threaten our ability to train new scientists. Americans and the rest of the world stand to lose new cures, new treatments and an entire generation of researchers.

Help us raise awareness. When the pipelines of scientific progress are turned off, they won't be easy to turn back on. *Professor Deborah Fuller and Assistant Professor Patrick Mitchell are UW microbiologists leading research to improve human health.*

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY RUSSO



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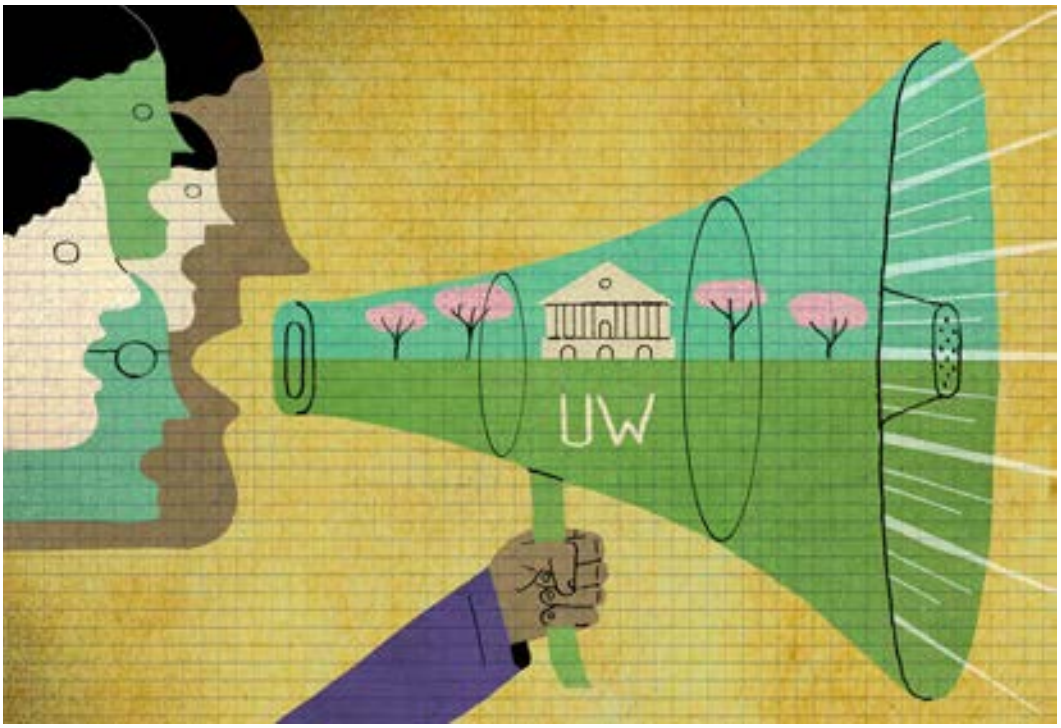

MESSAGE FROM THE **EDITOR**

When Impact Really Matters

By Jon Marmor

Supporting the University of Washington does not only come in the form of thousands of Husky fans in purple screaming their heads off at a football game or cheering on the women's crew during a race on the Montlake Cut. Those actions mean a lot, but the most vital show of support comes from the state and federal governments in the form of investments so the University can teach the state's students, conduct research that will solve society's problems, and create an economic engine that pumps billions and billions of dollars into the state's economy.

These critical investments are possible in large part due to the incredible work of the University's state and federal relations teams. They work closely with legislators, telling the story of the UW's positive impact locally and globally. But credit also goes to a growing grassroots advocacy effort created by a small team called UW Impact. Housed inside the UW Alumni Association, UW Impact has generated a base of nonpartisan alumni and University supporters who make sure the state government understands how valuable the University's impact is.

One of UW Impact's most important programs is District Dawgs, a growing group of alumni and friends who do their part to ensure it receives the resources it needs to serve the Evergreen State, participating in such programs as Husky Day in Olympia and connecting with their legislators through constituent meetings and town halls. UW Impact has been so effective on the state level that it is now expanding its efforts on the national front—a move that is fitting, given how the UW receives more federal research funding than any other public university in the nation. Only a handful of other institutions are currently engaging in grassroots advocacy at the federal level—and they all have something in common: they receive significant research funding from the federal government.

With the UW facing budget cuts for the first time in a decade, UW Impact's efforts are even more important as the University grapples with the idea of reduced resources. It's time to sound the alarm for supporting the UW in these trying times. And UW Impact is helping lead the way.

Visit uwimpact.org.

STAFF

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PUBLISHER Paul Rucker, '95, '02
ASST. VICE PRESIDENT, UWAA MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS Terri Hiroshima
EDITOR Jon Marmor, '94
MANAGING EDITOR Hannelore Sudermann, '96
ART DIRECTOR Jason Clark
DIGITAL EDITOR Caitlin Klask
STAFF WRITER Shin Yu Pai, '09
CONTRIBUTING STAFF Karen Rippel Chilcote, Kerry MacDonald, '04, Jeremy Pritchard

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Brian Hudgins, Doug Parry, Erin Rowley, George Spencer

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
April Hong, John Lok, Mark Stone, Dennis Wise, Ron Wurzer

CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS
Olivier Kugler, Janet Mac, David Plunkert, Anthony Russo

EDITORIAL OFFICES
Phone 206-543-0540
Email magazine@uw.edu
Fax 206-685-0611
4333 Brooklyn Ave. N.E.
UW Tower 01, Box 359559
Seattle, WA 98195-9559

ADVERTISING
SagaCity Media, Inc.
1416 NW 46th Street, Suite 105, PMB 136,
Seattle, WA 98107
Megan Holcombe
mholcombe@sagacitymedia.com,
703-638-9704
Carol Cummins
ccummins@sagacitymedia.com, 206-454-3058
Robert Page
rpage@sagacitymedia.com, 206-979-5821

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ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PLUNKERT

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Fabulous Ferry

The two-page spread on the Mukilteo Ferry Landing Design ("Ode to a Ferry Terminal," Winter 2024) brought back fond memories. I grew up on Whidbey Island, and we would beg my parents to ride the ferry home from trips to Seattle. At that time, the landing structure was not the highlight, but your piece elevated that part of the experience to a new level. Thank you for bringing awareness to the historical and tribal significance of the location.

Liz Vandam, '81, Minneapolis

Loving Lawrence

I've been spellbound by the work of Professor Lawrence ("The Northwest Legacy of Jacob Lawrence," Spring 2025) ever since the Seattle Art Museum opened a 50-year retrospective in 1986. The show was my mother's introduction to Lawrence's work and my introduction as well. The canvases—particularly the Harlem series—startled her, like running headlong into an old acquaintance. Born and raised in Harlem, she was overwhelmed by how he captured the feel of the era, creating motion with simple forms, primary colors and breathing life into detail, as I wrote in the Seattle Times a few years later.

I thoroughly enjoyed the way Rachel Gallaher artfully wove details of his academic and artistic career into a Northwest perspective that I hadn't encountered before.

University of Washington Magazine consistently contains articles relevant across age, community and academic interests, both acknowledging those of us who've shaped the educational, racial and socioeconomic diversity of past generations and opening a window for us to witness how current students build on that intellectual community.

Mary Cronin, '83, Vashon

Negative Stereotypes

I am an alumna of the University of Washington. As an African American woman, I am writing to express my concern regarding why the artist Jacob Lawrence's pictures on pages 25 and 27 were selected to depict a segment of the Black experience.

The pictures you published contain many negative connotations and stereotypes. The Black people in the paintings looked grotesque. Perhaps in another setting, the pictures could have been discussed and their message enhanced and understood.

Phyllis Beaumonte, '73, '75, '79, '85, Renton

Misplaced Credit

Jon Marmor's piece ("Facing Down COVID-19," Spring 2025) congratulates the University of Washington for its response to COVID-19. Mr. Marmor mentioned UW experts and scientists were responsible for developing measures such as wearing masks and social distancing. With the benefit of hindsight, we have seen that mask wearing wasn't terribly effective and social-distancing rules came from rather dubious origins.

Moving schools online (including the UW for the 2020-2021 academic year) was also terrible for students, especially younger students who actually weren't as at risk for death compared to older people. Policies such as closing schools did lasting damage to schoolchildren, especially lower-income children. In addition, the University of Washington Medical Center fired 21 workers for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine after Gov. Jay Inslee, '73, issued an executive order requiring the vaccination of all state workers.

The tone of the article was self-congratulatory toward UW. I certainly think that is misplaced.

Patrick J. Charles, '94, Spokane

The Mayne Man

Great article about Kenny Mayne, a local boy who made good ("Never Ken-ough," Spring 2025). I worked with his father at United Airlines as a passenger service agent at Sea-Tac Airport. Kenny Sr. was a fine man with a great sense of humor. Like father, like son. Thanks, in part, to a degree from the UW (class of '62), I went on to become a United pilot.

Tim Joslin Sr., '62, Des Moines

Bonderman's Travels

I met David Bonderman ("The Ability to Change a Person's Life," Spring 2025) when I was a Peace Corps volunteer in India in 1967. My partner in a small village in north India was Bondo's roommate at Harvard Law School. Bondo was on a travel fellowship that he was awarded after graduation from Harvard Law. He lived with us a short time.

He modeled his UW Bonderman Travel Fellowship on the one he was awarded at Harvard. We stayed friends until his death in December. I attended his celebration of life in Seattle and just received my Bondo bobblehead in the mail yesterday.

Bondo earned billions of dollars, but he used his wealth and influence to make the world a better place.

Gene Tackett, Bakersfield, California

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

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PHOTO BY APRIL HONG

Members of the Golden Gardens Swim Club, many of them UW alumni, enjoy the thrills and chills of open water swimming in Puget Sound.

Cold for the Cure

Icy plunges could bring everyday health benefits

By Shin Yu Pai

There's a weird scene on Sunday mornings at Golden Gardens Park in Ballard. First, the parking lot fills with people, and then they're shimmying into bathing suits and wetsuits and clustering around their trunks and car doors. After a healthy dose of hellos, this community of open-water swimmers walks en masse to the beach to plunge into the frigid waters around Meadow Point.

There are several colorful subgroups to this Sunday scene: a batch of male chefs sporting intricate tattoos, a group of "nudies" who opt out of clothing, some semi-serious swimmers in wetsuits and a gang of "bobbers" who hang out a few feet from the shoreline. You'll recognize the bobbers by their knitted beanie hats.

Two cold-plunge swimming groups that congregate on the beach in wetsuits and neoprene caps are teeming with Huskies like software engineer Charlie Cox, '21. She was a lap swimmer who headed outdoors during the pandemic, drawn to the mental-health and social aspects of cold plunging. It felt different from swimming laps in a pool, she says. Another swimmer advised her on the proper gear, including swim shoes, gloves and a parka for after the dip.

In this highly social crowd, everyone looks out for each other. "It's more relaxed and we vibe together," says Cox, 25, one of the younger swimmers in the group.

According to one National Institutes of Health study, cold-water swimming is growing in popularity, especially among women. Most swim in saltwater, swim with a group and do it year-round. Physical therapist Susanne Michaud, '03, '07, "borrowed a friend's courage" to join a cold-plunge group after the UW's IMA pool closed in 2021. "There are no borders in outdoor swimming. You don't crash into anyone," she says. It's a totally different experience

"We call the pool 'water prison,'" says Ann Doll, '93, '22, a member of a fun-loving group that calls itself the Golden Gardens Swim Club. Out in the open water, the cold-water crowd celebrates each other as well as wildlife encounters. It's not uncommon to see harbor seals, crabs, starfish, flounders and even sea lions. For many, getting up close with nature is one of the best parts of the experience.

But there's more to cold swimming—including mental health benefits and boosted immune function. Preliminary research suggests it reduces stress and anxiety and increases metabolism. Dr. Chris McMullen, a UW Medicine specialist in rehabilitation medicine and sports medicine, says "repeated cold-water immersion has been shown to increase the circulating concentration of certain immune system cells and proteins. The limited studies we have on the health benefits from cold immersion suggest that the people who are doing it on a regular basis might see more of those benefits."

Dr. Brendan Shannon, a kidney specialist at Harborview Medical Center and UW clinical professor, says that beyond the physical benefits, "swimming with the tidal currents, you get connected to cosmic sources." He first dipped his toes into cold swimming in 2021.

"At first, it was extremely tiring," he says. "The cold water makes it harder. I was afraid it would be painful." But Shannon shelled out for a better wetsuit, paddling gloves and a neoprene cap, which he wears under a bright green latex cap that makes him easy to spot, and now he can't wait to get into the water.

Doll, who swims up to two times a week, encourages those who are "cold-curious" to ease into it. "Whether you wear a wetsuit is up to you," she says. "Some people like to feel the water on their skin. Go in for one or two minutes up to your knees or thighs. It doesn't have to be your whole body. There's benefit to having even a small amount of your skin exposed to the cold."

For newcomers interested in taking the plunge, the Golden Gardens Swim Club shares this advice: A wetsuit helps you to stay warm in cold water and keeps you more buoyant while also protecting you against stinging jellyfish. Earplugs can prevent surfer's ear, a condition where prolonged exposure to cold water and wind causes bony growths in the ear canal and can lead to infections and hearing loss. Consult a medical professional if you have underlying conditions before jumping in. And if you aren't ready to dive in, try submerging your face in ice water, which is reported to provide similar mental health benefits.

Wings and Things

In the 1930s, UW anthropologist Erna Gunther began boxing up pieces from the Burke Museum to ship out to classrooms, day camps, libraries and home schools—putting pieces of the natural history and culture museum s collection into the hands of teachers and students throughout Washington state. The Evidence of Evolution box, above, allows students to compare fossils with modern-day specimens. The treasures include a megalodon tooth fossil, a sharp-tailed grouse wing and four mounted insect boxes. More than 60 themed boxes are delivered to at least 400 locations each year and highlight the region s culture, life sciences and natural history.

Photo courtesy Burke Museum

Finish Your Thoughts

A UW management expert says there's no such thing as multitasking

By Shin Yu Pai

Sophie Leroy, a professor of management and associate dean of administration at the UW Bothell School of Business, picks up the phone on the second ring. Fresh out of a Zoom meeting, and after taking a beat, she is ready to chat.

Shifting from a conversation with a colleague to explaining her academic research to me, Leroy notes the critical importance of transitions—even if it is just taking a moment. "I need to give the brain time to process what just happened," Leroy says. "When I take 30 seconds—or even just a few seconds—to review what I just did or agreed to do next, then my brain can relax and switch focus" and ultimately be more productive. While some see multitasking as a valuable skill, there is no such thing, she adds. We just switch back and forth between things really fast, and that is problematic.

Over the past 17 years, Leroy has studied the brain and how we more and more must constantly shift focus. Her research and findings have caught the interest of the popular press, including Time magazine, The New York Times and The Economist.

One key finding: Switching leaves behind "attention residue." Our brains want to finish a task before focusing on the next. Like having too many browser tabs open, unfinished tasks stay active in our minds, disrupting performance throughout the day.

Fragmented work time and work norms—or even social norms—exacerbate this problem. We juggle projects and teams across text, calls and email. Switching between focused tasks, meetings and texts, emails and phone calls, stretches our attention beyond its limits.

"We assume the brain will focus wherever we want it to focus," Leroy says. "But the brain doesn't function that way. Our brain likes to have things closed, or in good standing, before switching to something else."

Instead, many of us start multiple tasks and shift between them all day. "There's a disconnect between what we ask the brain to do and what it can do," Leroy says. "As people switch between meetings and tasks, the brain struggles to let go and move on."

To minimize attention residue, Leroy suggests working offline to avoid interruptions and taking breaks between tasks and before meetings. Her own habits include tackling complicated tasks early in the day—before 9:30 a.m.—when her brain is the sharpest and she has time to focus.

ILLUSTRATION BY JANET MAC

"As you go throughout the day and you switch between tasks, the brain craves completion," she says. "Let's assume you've been in meeting after meeting. It's 2 p.m. and you have a choice between doing an important task that you may not be able to finish before your next meeting or a smaller task that can be done quickly. You're going to pick the task that will give a sense of completion as fast as possible. But strategically, that may not be the task you should be choosing to do. It takes more self-control later in the day to manage our need for completion."

As a scholar and parent, Leroy applies her research at home with her children. "I used to joke that one day I would give them the wrong computer or lunch," she says. "I was experiencing attention residue about work and becoming more prone to making mistakes." She adjusted her routine. Before focusing on her children, she plans her workday, writes her to-do list and reviews her top goals. "And then I would focus on our home routine," she says. "I did this to give my brain what it needed to let go of work and be more present."

Leroy also emphasizes giving children space and time to finish tasks. Whether completing a homework assignment or reading a chapter, the practice builds focus and follow-through—skills that will serve them in adulthood.

People struggle with switching between tasks because they fear what they may leave behind. Writing things down helps the brain let go and return more easily.

Activities that train the mind to focus and let unrelated thoughts go can help us manage our attention. Meditation and mindfulness help train the mind to let go of unresolved thoughts or tasks. Likewise, activities that bring people into a zone, like musicians when they're playing, condition brains to be present. "They focus completely on the art, and that is a very useful skill to practice," Leroy says.

"A lot of us have lost that habit," she says. "The brain is a muscle. The beauty of it is that we're capable of training ourselves and our attention for longer stretches of time. We also have to reassure ourselves—in an interconnected world that demands our attention all the time—that if we don't respond right away, it's not the end of the world. It is OK to take care of our attention first so that we can engage with the world more fully and with more intentionality."

Broadcast News

KUOW welcomes a new president and CEO from St. Louis Public Radio

By Jon Marmor

Tina Pamintuan, a distinguished figure in public media who is known for her bold leadership and extensive experience as a journalist and educator, has been appointed the next president and CEO of KUOW-FM. Since December 2021, she has been CEO of St. Louis Public Radio and a board member of National Public Radio since November 2020.

With a career in public media spanning over two decades, Pamintuan brings a wealth of experience and leadership to KUOW. Before joining St. Louis Public Radio, she was the general manager at KALW in San Francisco. During her time there, she oversaw the creation of a nonprofit, launched and managed the station's first governing board, and negotiated its inaugural operating agreement with the San Francisco Unified School District. Her efforts led to a five-year strategic business plan and helped reinvent the station's local public affairs and music programming to attract a more inclusive and diverse audience.

During her tenure in St. Louis, the station won the highest number of journalism awards in its history two years in a row and was also awarded its largest grant. Her tenure culminated in the University of Missouri's announcement that the station would transition into an independent nonprofit, a move Pamintuan had long advocated for.

"Selecting a new leader to guide KUOW into the future was no easy task. We are thrilled to have found someone of Tina's vision and expertise to take the helm," says Randy Hodgins, UW vice president of External Affairs. "Her skills and experience will allow her to lead KUOW with excellence as the station builds on its strong tradition of producing award-winning journalism, innovative podcasts and strong community engagement."

COURTESY KUOW

Tina Pamintuan founded and directed the audio journalism program at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York.

Pamintuan founded and directed the audio journalism program at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York.

Pamintuan will succeed Caryn Mathes, who retired June 2 after 11 years at KUOW's helm.

"I look forward to working with the exceptional team here," Pamintuan says. "Together, we will build on the station's legacy, chart its future and explore new opportunities to engage our audience."

PHOTO BY RON WURZER

A Whole New Ballgame

Angie Mentink and Melissa Robertson break new ground in high-profile positions with the Seattle Mariners

By Jon Marmor

Angie Mentink (left) and Melissa Robertson are outstanding in their fields as the newly appointed Mariners color analyst (Mentink) and the team's chief legal officer (Robertson).

The Seattle Mariners made history this season by appointing Angie Mentink, '97, and Melissa Robertson, '03, to key spots in the Mariner lineup.

Mentink, one of the greatest softball players in UW history who also was one of the first women to play professional baseball, is the first woman to serve as a color analyst on Mariners radio and TV broadcasts. She will rotate with former Mariners players Jay Buhner, Dave Valle and Ryan Rowland-Smith. For Mentink, a longtime sports TV host, it's her first radio gig, where she will appear on 20 games. Mentink's UW degree is in general studies; the UW Communication program was closed during challenging budget times in the early 1990s.

Robertson, who has worked for the Mariners for 18 seasons, was promoted to senior vice president and general counsel for the organization. She leads all aspects of the club's legal affairs, including baseball operations, ballpark operations, corporate partnerships, marketing, people & culture and sales. She also manages the club's litigation matters, oversees government relations and acts as counsel to the Seattle Mariners Foundation. A Seattle native and lifelong Mariners fan, Robertson earned her bachelor's from Scripps College in California before coming home to attend UW School of Law, where she was executive articles editor for the Washington Law Review.

Talk about some big hitters. Read a Q&A with Mentink and Robertson at uwmag.online/mariners.

Tick, Tick,

Alex Eisen, ’25, hopes hikers do their homework before they hit the trails

By Hannelore Sudermann

Ticks and the diseases they carry are on the rise in the Pacific Northwest. To help Washingtonians who spend time outdoors, Alex Eisen, a graduating master’s student in epidemiology, has launched a tick-tracking project with the Washington Trails Association and the Washington State Department of Health. Using hikers’ trip reports, she developed a database that identifies where ticks have been encountered across the state, benefiting both the state agency and outdoor enthusiasts.

According to the state health department, the blood-feeding parasites are present throughout the state, but there have been relatively few reports of tick-borne diseases like Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever or tick-borne relapsing fever. The state was already collecting information based on ticks collected and submitted by individuals statewide, but that wasn’ t a very large dataset, Eisen says.

For her project, Eisen wrote code to identify the words “tick” or “ticks” in the trail reports hikers submit to the trails website, wta.org. “I’ve come across some wild stories just reading the hiking reports,” she says. “Some people were just finding, like, 20 on their dogs, or one in their armpit after a hike. Some found them crawling in their laundry at home.” The code she created can be used by public-health organizations to streamline working with large datasets by automating data extraction based on keywords. In this case, the code was used to review more than 250,000 trail reports submitted since 1993.

Today, the Department of Health has a tick-surveillance dashboard online. The most tick sightings are in Central Washington, Eisen says. But her project revealed a significant number of tick reports in Island County. That prompted Elizabeth Dykstra, the public-health entomologist for Washington state, to do field surveillance and bring back ticks to test for the presence of disease.

Wanting to enrich her experience in spatial epidemiology, Eisen also created a map highlighting where ticks had been reported. That map is now part of the Tick Dashboard. Though she has moved on to other projects, Eisen has given her code and methodology to the health department so the tracking can continue. “I hope this map will be a helpful tool for hikers in Washington,” she says. It might help them prepare for the risk of tick exposure in certain areas or cause them to consider hiking somewhere else. “It’s citizen science that’s fueling this,” she says. “I would hope, first, that people use this information to take precautions. But also, if you go on the trail and see a tick, tell us.”

BIRDS AND THEIR FEATHERS

A team led by UW researchers has found that certain female hummingbirds take on the brightly colored plumage worn by males to avoid conflict and improve their access to food. In a recent study published in the international journal Animal Behaviour, the research team discovered that some female white-necked jacobin hummingbirds mimic male plumage. The result is reduced aggression from other hummingbirds and increased access to nectar resources. “This research takes a mental model we’ve been describing for a while in our papers and gives it a mathematical backbone,” says Jay Falk, an evolutionary biologist and former UW biology postdoctoral scholar who led the study. “This model adds to our understanding of how diversity, especially diversity within sexes, can be a stable endgame.”

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HARM?

In the wake of Seattle Public Schools and more than 50 other school districts filing suit in 2023 against social media companies for causing harm to students’ social, emotional and mental health, a team of researchers from the UW Bothell School of Nursing & Health Studies started looking at the legal challenges of proving this harm. Dr. Nora Kenworthy, graduate student Jacqueline Richards and Dr. Kosuke Niitsu, a psychiatric mental-health nurse practitioner, concluded that the cited research on social media health harms lacks strong causal evidence. They also noted that the lawsuits often overlooked existing research on disproportionate impacts to marginalized groups. Further research in this area could not only help determine causality, but also help provide answers about how best to mitigate the impacts, Kenworthy says.

PHOTO BY MARK STONE

GOT NANO?/INSIDE THE Washington Nanofabrication Facility, students and staff are developing technology smaller than the eye can see and transforming research in quantum devices, microchips and medicine. With 15,000 square feet of laboratory, clean rooms and user space, it is the largest publicly accessible full-service clean room in the Pacific Northwest, housing more than 100 specialized processing and characterization tools. In addition to supporting basic and applied research on campus, the facility is open to area companies working on fabrication projects as well as other researchers and engineers in the region.

NEWS BRIEFS

CAFÉ SOCIETY

Early to the Seattle espresso scene, Café Allegro started serving the UW community in 1975, making it the city's oldest continuously operating coffee bar. Opened by Dave Olsen, a Montana transplant who would go on to become a leader at Starbucks, it was one of the first Seattle businesses built around espresso and a precursor to the aforementioned world's-largest coffee chain. A half-block from campus, it quickly became—and has remained—a popular spot for studying, first dates and fueling up before class. In early May, the U District institution celebrated its 50th birthday.

WE'RE NO. 1

The UW Information School's master's program in library and information science rose to the No. 1 spot in the U.S. News & World Report's latest rankings of America's Best Graduate Schools. It shares the position with the University of Illinois. Another 32 UW programs placed in the report's top 10, and more than 80 are ranked in the top 35. While the UW celebrates the success of the programs recognized by U.S. News, it also recognizes shortcomings inherent in the ranking systems.

More Than an Honorable Man

20 years ago, we lost Robert Edward Galer, a Seattle native who earned a UW degree in commercial engineering—and received the Medal of Honor in World War II

By Jon Marmor

The next time you are in Austin, Texas, be sure to head about a mile east of the Texas Capitol and stop by the lush, 22-acre Texas State Cemetery. There, on Monument Hill, Section 1, Row B, Number 13, you will find the grave of Robert Edward Galer. He graduated from the UW in 1935 with a degree in commercial engineering. He also received the Medal of Honor.

And if you are on the UW Seattle campus, you must drop by the Medal of Honor memorial at the south end of Memorial Way. There, you will see Galer's name on the granite memorial honoring seven other alumni who received our country's most prestigious military honor: Gregory Boyington, Deming Bronson, Bruce Crandall, John "Bud" Hawk, Robert Leisy, William Nakamura and Archie Van Winkle.

Shortly after graduating from the UW, Galer enlisted in the Navy. After attending flight training at Naval Reserve Aviation Base Seattle, he was assigned to Ewa Airfield on Oahu. He was only seven miles from Pearl Harbor when it was attacked on Dec. 7, 1941. Several months later, Galer was at the controls of a F4F Wildcat fighter plane, screaming through the skies north of Guadalcanal, hunting down a fleet of Japanese bombers and fighters. Talk about sudden impact: in his first flight, he downed two aircraft, one bomber and one Zero fighter.

That auspicious start foretold what was to come. Galer, a Seattle native, was credited with 13 aerial victories and four probable victories in the Pacific Theater. He received the Medal of Honor for leading a Marine Fighting Squadron in aerial combat with enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands area in August and September 1942. His Medal of Honor citation says: "Leading his squadron repeatedly in daring and aggressive raids against Japanese aerial forces, vastly superior in numbers, Major Galer availed himself of every favorable attack opportunity, individually shooting down 11 enemy bomber and fighter aircraft over a period of 29 days. Though suffering the extreme physical strain attendant upon protracted fighter operations at an altitude above 25,000 feet, the squadron, under his zealous and inspiring leadership, shot down a total of 27 Japanese planes. His superb airmanship, his outstanding skill and personal valor reflect great credit upon Major Galer's gallant fighting spirit and upon United States Naval Forces." President Franklin D. Roosevelt presented him with the Medal of Honor at a White House ceremony on March 24, 1943.

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR SOCIETY

> "Major Galer availed himself of every favorable attack opportunity, individually shooting down 11 enemy bomber and fighter aircraft over a period of 29 days."
>
> *– Medal of Honor citation*

But that was not the end of Galer's military career. He went on to hold high-ranking positions beyond the end of World War II, ultimately being named Assistant Chief of Plans on the staff of the commander of the U.S. Air Force Pacific Fleet.

He saw more combat during the Korean War, leading Marine attack aircraft against a heavily defended industrial area in North Korea. He received the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" for his service. In 1952, he was shot down behind enemy lines but was later rescued by helicopter.

He required hospitalization but returned to duty in late 1952 in California, became assistant director of the guided missiles division of the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics, and later became acting director. He also was awarded a master's degree from George Washington University. His final assignment was assistant director, Guided Missiles Division, Bureau of Aeronautics. He was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General when he retired in 1957.

His list of awards is more than impressive, but it does not communicate the danger he put himself in to serve his country. Reading his story on numerous websites, your heart will start pounding and your throat will tighten as you learn what this fearless University of Washington graduate experienced.

Twenty years ago, on June 27, 2005, Galer died at the age of 91 in Dallas, Texas. He deserves to be remembered for the incredible courage and bravery he exhibited all those years ago. Be sure to stop by the Medal of Honor memorial on the UW Seattle campus and pay tribute to a hero.

Exposure to danger didn't end in World War II, as Galer returned to combat in the Korean War and was shot down behind enemy lines. He was rescued and spent time in a hospital.

LEADING ON THE FLY

How Ana Mari Cauce went from 'accidental administrator' to groundbreaking leader at the UW

By Hannelore Sudermann

Nature hasn't always been her refuge, but Ana Mari Cauce will tell you it's a habit she acquired since moving to Washington in 1987. And now, when she wants to explore ideas, get to know someone better or just unwind, she steps outside. "There's nothing better," Cauce says. "The physical beauty here draws you out." Whether she's walking among students, visiting the heron rookery on campus or wandering a beach with her pup, she finds inspiration in the world around her.

That blend of groundedness and vision has defined Cauce's decade-long tenure as president of the University of Washington. She became the UW's 33rd president with no grand personal aspirations, but with a lifelong dedication to education, research and equity. She stepped up because the University of Washington needed her—and because she believed in what a public university could do when it worked for its people.

In the end, her legacy isn't just accomplishments, it's building a culture marked by trust, transparency and a belief that higher education can be both excellent and accessible.

Now, as she prepares to step down, Ana Mari Cauce leaves behind a university transformed.

1 Call her Ana Mari. She answers to "Professor," "Doctor" and "President," but Ana Mari Cauce has never been the kind of leader who demands honorifics or special attention. Throughout campus and across Washington, students, alumni and community and political leaders have described her as refreshingly approachable. She's open about her childhood as a Cuban immigrant, the challenges of her job as the University president and the many places she finds joy—including dancing at football games, exploring tidepools with young family members and cheering at the October 2024 announcement of Professor David Baker's Nobel Prize in Chemistry. Once, while attending a conference in Turkey, she was heading for a hotel breakfast when a familiar tune stopped her in her tracks. "I couldn't believe it," she says. "It was a UW Alumni tour, and they were singing, 'Bow Down to Washington.'"

When people send her emails, Cauce writes back. When they post notes to her Facebook page, she answers.

She drives to work in a practical, compact SUV. She totes her own dry cleaning for evening events. She's funny and self-deprecating, once describing a class she taught on stress and coping as "useful subjects for a university president."

2 She describes herself as an "accidental administrator." The UW has been Cauce's professional home for almost 40 years. Her plans were to build a career in research and teaching. The field of psychology stimulated her as a scientist, but "it also touched my heart," she says. She focused on adolescent development, with an emphasis on the developmental trajectories of at-risk youth.

Landing at the UW in 1986, "when I was a bean sprout," she says, she navigated the complexities of tenure and secured a foothold as an associate professor in just four years. When she was tasked with running the department's clinical training program and then asked to serve as chair, she thought she would "take my turn" and then go back to work. She worried about missing time with her students and her research.

"My first real administrative post came when I became chair of American Ethnic Studies," she says. She was affiliated with the department, but not a full member. And in 1996, the department was in turmoil, with faculty concerns and student unrest. When she became chair, "they thought I came in to close the department," she says. Quite the contrary, Cauce calmed the storm. She attended every class, won the trust of the faculty and students, and in the end, she was celebrated. "I realized how I could really make a difference as an academic administrator," she says.

Years—and a handful of administrative posts—later, she was quite happy working as the University's provost. "I hadn't really thought about being president," she says. "But the University needed me to do it."

3 She was the right leader at the right time. On a February morning in 2015, UW President Michael K. Young stunned campus by announcing he was leaving to lead Texas A&M. Already thinking about how to respond, Cauce, who was serving as provost, announced: "We're not going to skip a beat."

Word of Young's departure had barely spread before Provost Cauce was named interim president. "She had this vast amount of experience and perspective and so many ideas of what we could do to even improve from where we were," says Bill Ayer, '78, then chair of the Board of Regents and former CEO of Alaska Airlines.

Though Cauce gave no sign she wanted the job permanently, many on campus and in the alumni community saw her as the clear choice. Her years in leadership roles across the UW and her steady success inspired confidence.

The regents were looking for someone who could lead the University into the next decade, whose modus operandi was getting big things

THE PATH

1970

1977-1984

ANA MARI CAUCE BEGINS her journey into academia by studying English and psychology at the University of Miami before heading to Yale for graduate school. There, she pursues her doctorate in psychology, focusing her research on risk and resilience among adolescents. In the wake of the death of her brother, César Cauce, an activist who was killed by members of the Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi Party at a rally in 1979, she realized that going into higher education "was the best way for me to play a positive role in the world."

1980

1986

CAUCE JOINS THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON as an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology.

1990

1996-1997

CAUCE'S DUTIES EXPAND. She first becomes director of clinical training for the psychology department. Then, recognizing her sympathetic leadership, the UW regents vote to appoint her chair of the American Ethnic Studies department, which is in turmoil over faculty contracts, course selection and vacant teaching positions. Students protest her appointment, but in the first year, she gains the confidence of students as well as the faculty. Over three years, she sets the department on a new path. She becomes a full professor and launches her journey into administration.

2000

2000-2015

FIRST AS DIRECTOR OF THE HONORS PROGRAM, then chair of the Psychology Department, then executive vice provost, Cauce develops a taste for administrative work and steps from one leadership role to another. In 2008, she becomes dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, the UW's largest academic unit. In 2012, she is chosen as the provost, the UW's second-in-command and in charge of decisions for academics and the more than $6 billion budget. Her selection is welcomed by faculty who value her efforts as dean and her thorough knowledge of the University.

OF A PRESIDENT

2015

After 30 minutes of deliberation and with a standing ovation, the **UW BOARD OF REGENTS APPOINTS CAUCE INTERIM PRESIDENT** of the University of Washington. The decision comes just 10 days after her predecessor's sudden announcement of his departure. One month into her interim presidency, Cauce launches the Race & Equity Initiative, placing diversity and equity among the central focuses of the University. Six months later, her interim position is made permanent when the regents unanimously take the rare move of hiring a president from inside the University.

2016

Launching the University-wide **POPULATION HEALTH INITIATIVE,** Cauce announces a 25-year campaign to break down barriers to improving public health. Its purpose is to help communities live longer, healthier, more productive lives based on three pillars: human health, environmental resilience, and social and economic equity. A $210 million donation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation creates a home for the collaborative work in the Hans Rosling Center, which opens in 2020.

2015

CAUCE FORMS A HEALTH PARTNERSHIP with Gonzaga University, ensuring that the UW School of Medicine will continue training students in Eastern Washington. This eventually leads to the constuction of a health education facility in Spokane.

2019

Cauce proves that working with the Washington Legislature is another of her strengths. A sweeping higher education bill passed with bipartisan support allows for more Washington students to attend the UW for less money. Described as the most progressive state higher education funding bill in years, **THE WORKFORCE EDUCATION INVESTMENT ACT** raises nearly $1 billion over four years by increasing the state's business-and-occupation tax. The bill, which was supported by many businesses including Microsoft and Amazon, eliminates the financial-aid waitlist and allows the UW to better weather financial downturns.

2020

UNDER CAUCE'S LEADERSHIP, the UW sets a record by raising $6.3 billion from more than half a million donors as part of the Be Boundless—For Washington, For the World campaign.

2020-2021

Washington is the first state in the nation to identify a case of the novel coronavirus, **COVID-19.** One month later, a Washington state man becomes the first known death. The UW becomes the first school in the country to move to remote instruction. Meanwhile, UW researchers develop a laboratory test for the virus and the UW-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation becomes an international resource for tracking and predicting the spread of the virus, informing global response.

2023

Cauce decides to **MOVE THE UW** from the Pac-12 Conference **TO THE BIG TEN** based on declining opportunities for the Pac-12 and more opportunity in the larger and more powerful conference.

2024-2025

CAUCE'S FINAL ACADEMIC YEAR as president starts off with a roar with UW Professor David Baker's winning the Nobel Prize for his work on protein design. "This is about as good as it gets!" Cauce exclaimed during a news conference. In other news, the UW joined the Big Ten conference, putting athletics on the highest-profile national stage and opening opportunities in research and collaboration with other conference institutions. Cauce winds down her year as one of the UW's longest-serving and most beloved presidents.

2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025

2025 AND BEYOND

In January, the Board of Regents approves the construction of a 30,000-square-foot **WELCOME CENTER** near the Burke Museum and votes to name it in honor of President Ana Mari Cauce, recognizing her legacy of community engagement, accessibility and inclusion. The center will house the UW Visitors Center and campus tours as well as host community programs and alumni events. It is slated to open in 2028. For details: washington.edu/welcomecenter

ARTIST'S CONCEPT BY STEPHANIE BOWER

PHOTOS COURTESY UW PHOTO

done. "She had made a lot of decisions that not everybody agreed with. Yet everybody liked her," Ayer says. Still, the board launched a national search, and then came back to the obvious choice. Everyone was "sky high on Ana Mari," Ayer says. "We paid attention to that."

4 Cauce had no time to waste. Though she couldn't see the future, she was ready for what she described at the time as "the big, messy, hairy, complex work we do together in the service of others, in pursuit of our public mission."

In fall of 2014, protests and calls for racial justice started sweeping the country. The Black Lives Matter movement was building on campuses from Seattle to Baltimore, Minneapolis to Los Angeles. Michael Brown, an 18-year-old in Missouri, had died at the hands of police, and students were demanding action on racial equity. "Lives were being lost," says Ed Taylor, vice provost and dean of undergraduate academic affairs. "These were really hard times both on campus and in our nation."

Cauce gathered University leaders and asked what they thought of her giving a campuswide speech on race and equity. Every one of them advised against it, Taylor says, warning it could jeopardize her career.

"But she led with her values and led with her heart at that moment," he says, adding that they soon realized she had already decided. That speech, delivered in spring 2015, launched the universitywide Race and Equity Initiative, placing anti-racism and equity at the center of the University's priorities and challenging everyone on campus to address their own biases and build a more inclusive culture.

> "SHE CARES DEEPLY AND SINCERELY ABOUT OUR STUDENTS AND THEIR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT
>
> - ED TAYLOR, '94, VICE PROVOST AND DEAN OF UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

5 She is good in a crisis. In winter 2020, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, confusing and often conflicting information emerged about a new, virulent coronavirus. With the nation's first confirmed case on its doorstep, the UW—home to a major medical research enterprise and strong expertise in public health—became "campus zero."

In those early days, Cauce met almost daily with health experts and campus leaders to assess what lay ahead. "One of the things that really impressed me during this chaotic time was how willing she was to meet and sit and listen," says Dr. Geoff Gottlieb, an infectious disease expert who chaired the University's advisory committee on infectious diseases. Cauce consistently sought input from medical and public-health experts and made herself available—often at a moment's notice—as she was exploring how best to meet student needs and whether to move instruction online. "Ana Mari took all the information she could get from all the different quarters of campus" and from peer institutions in California and the East Coast, Gottlieb says. "Somebody had to go first, and the UW was often the first to make some of these hard decisions. Other schools in Washington state and across the country were often following our lead."

At the time, it wasn't clear who would be hit hardest by the virus. Ultimately, younger people fared better. In hindsight, Cauce was right to act early. "We weren't just thinking about the undergraduates," Gottlieb says. "We were trying to think about the whole campus—staff, faculty, the University District and students with underlying medical conditions who were at higher risk."

Gottlieb hadn't worked closely with Cauce before the pandemic, but he was quickly impressed by her calm, factual communication about the virus and the University's response. "She was good about conveying uncertainty," he says. "She was the perfect person at a terrible time."

6 She had the trust of the faculty. These days, most university presidents come from the outside. Cauce rose through the ranks, starting as an entry-level assistant professor. "When I came here, I did not expect to stay," she says. "I thought I would go back to the East Coast, where I belonged." But the vibrant city, the rich arts scene and the "incredible, majestic beauty" of the landscape proved irresistible. Though based in a major city, the campus felt like a small town. Cauce could bike to her office, go in at any hour and create a close-knit, campus-based family for her students.

Cauce was also drawn to the UW culture, the expectation that she would succeed and the overall feeling of ambition and collaboration across campus. Getting her first grant on the first try fueled her early success as a teacher, mentor and researcher. "But I certainly didn't do it alone," she says.

Many faculty say they see themselves in her, says Professor Alexes Harris, '97. "She has created a culture that allows so many of us to be us." Whether it is in the classroom or in research, "I can show up 100% me," says Harris, who, as an African American woman, values that space. A faculty regent since 2022 and the UW faculty athletics representative since 2019, Harris has seen Cauce prioritize students—even stepping away from formal events to enter protests and encampments so students felt heard. "What she did as a leader was always about this institution and our students," Harris says. "She loves this place. … She is probably the best president ever."

7 She charts her own path. As the first openly gay, first Latina, first first-generation immigrant and first woman to serve full time as president of the University of Washington, Cauce didn't just make history, she opened new possibilities. "If you're going to break barriers, why not go for all of them?" she says. In doing so, she has created

space for future university leaders from underrepresented backgrounds to more easily see themselves in roles like hers, and to believe they belong there.

Today, it is rare for a university president to rise from the faculty ranks. But in Cauce's case, her tenure is central to her success as president. "Anyone who survives a decade as the president of a major university in the United States, we should not just say thank you, we should take a moment to stand in awe because it is among the most difficult jobs" in the country, says Brad Smith, president of Microsoft, who has a long relationship with the UW as an adviser and donor.

8 A planner and a dreamer, as president, Cauce placed a premium on innovation, research and cross-discipline collaboration. In 2016, she launched the Population Health Initiative, an ambitious 25-year project that has funded more than 200 projects involving over 500 faculty members and working with community-based organizations.

She is widely admired for strengthening ties to the community and making herself and the University more accessible. Coming from the tech sector, Microsoft's Smith has seen her deepen partnerships with the tech industry to benefit UW students as well as the region's innovation economy. "I've worked closely with Ana Mari to advance specific projects that are now part of the landscape of Washington state," Smith says. Among them are the Global Innovation Exchange—a partnership with Microsoft and Tsinghua University in China—and CoMotion, the UW's innovation hub, which helps graduate students and faculty protect their intellectual property, fund advisers and investors and bring their research discoveries to market.

"It's easy to work with her because of her tremendous experience," says philanthropist Susan Brotman, widow of Costco founder Jeff Brotman, '64. The couple's long history of engagement with the UW includes co-founding the Brotman Baty Institute, a precision medicine lab at UW Medicine.

"President Cauce loves this university so much, and it's so obvious in everything she says and does," Brotman says. "Everyone wants her to be in the room."

9 She is for all of Washington. As Cauce was starting her work as interim president, Washington State University announced it was pulling out of the UW-led WWAMI program, which trains medical students from Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho. Cauce quickly traveled to Spokane to meet with Gonzaga University president Thayne McCulloh and explore how to continue training students in eastern Washington.

"From day one, she was in Spokane," says Dave Clack, '57, a longtime leader the city's economic development. His wife, Mari, '58, served 12 years as a UW regent. "Ana Mari made it clear the UW was the university for all of Washington," Clack says. One year later, Cauce and McCulloh announced a formal medical education partnership and 60 students began their training on the Gonzaga campus that fall. Today, the UW-Gonzaga partnership operates out of a new 90,000-square-foot building where about 120 UW medical students learn alongside Gonzaga nursing and health sciences students and UW's MEDEX Northwest physician assistant trainees. Cauce's swift action "completely changed the landscape here," Clack says.

10 Her love for the UW is genuine. Ed Taylor, '94, who joined the faculty in the mid-1990s, remembers walking across campus when a wave of imposter syndrome hit him. "Out of nowhere, I looked to my right and Ana Mari was walking next to me. She said, 'Hi Ed. We've got good important work to do here,'" he says. "Then she pointed to the administration building and said, 'There's important work to do there as well.'" At that moment, Taylor realized Cauce didn't just see him as a faculty member—she saw his potential to contribute more broadly to the University. Now vice provost and dean, he reflects on her deep commitment to the institution. "She doesn't have a hidden agenda, and she's not political in any sense I've ever seen," he says. "But she cares deeply and sincerely about our students and their holistic development." Before she was president, as the architect of the Husky Promise—launched in 2007— Cauce championed students facing financial barriers. The program has supported more than 60,000 students from low-income families by pairing federal aid with local grants and scholarships, to cover full-time tuition and fees.

"ANYONE WHO SURVIVES A DECADE AS THE PRESIDENT OF A MAJOR UNIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES, WE SHOULD NOT JUST SAY THANK YOU, WE SHOULD TAKE A MOMENT TO STAND IN AWE BECAUSE IT IS AMONG THE MOST DIFFUCLT JOBS IN THE COUNTRY

- BRAD SMITH, PRESIDENT OF MICROSOFT

As Ana Mari Cauce's presidency draws to a close, her leadership at the University of Washington stands as a testament to grand aspirations grounded in a deep affinity for the institution. Under her guidance, the University has grown and flourished, advancing public health, championing social justice, strengthening athletics and expanding the reach of innovation and inclusion. She has shown what it means to love a university while pushing it to new heights—and shattering a few ceilings along the way. As she packs up a decade of books, papers and purple blazers and heads for a well-earned summer at the beach, Cauce can know that while her tenure has come to an end, her legacy will continue to shape the UW for generations to come.

2025 Teachers of the Year

And now the story of the educators who won everything.

by JON MARMOR photos by UW PHOTO

AS STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, we come from different backgrounds. We have differing interests, living situations, abilities and dreams. But we all have one thing in common: We have classes taught by some of the best teachers you will find in all of higher education.

It's June, which means it's time for the UW to recognize its faculty stars. This year marks the 55th anniversary of the Distinguished Teaching Award, the UW's highest teaching honor. The first was given in 1970 to Giovanni Costigan, a history professor beloved by students as well as alumni and friends who attended his talks on English and Irish history through the History Lecture Series. (UW Tacoma and UW Bothell gave their first Distinguished Teaching Awards in 1995.)

And now, drumroll please, here are this year's stars.

Kerri DeGroot

Assistant Teaching Professor, Rehabilitation Medicine, Division of Occupational Therapy

Years Teaching: 16

You Ought to Know: She is the co-builder of a brand-new occupational-therapy doctorate curriculum. Her primary goal is making sure her students feel that they are supported in doing, being, becoming and belonging.

Quote Unquote: "I see my role in the classroom as a co-creator of learning instead of expert instructor. I love when my students ask me questions about content or skills that I cannot answer immediately, but we always circle back with evidence and learn the answers together. ... I design class experiences to challenge previously held beliefs and stretch my students on their "being" path of developing identity."

Jasmine Mahmoud

Assistant Professor, School of Drama

Years Teaching: 7

You Ought to Know: Mahmoud overhauled the theater-history curriculum to center underrepresented artists and scholarship on race, gender, sexuality and ability. She provides classroom policies that include demanding respect for diversity and accessibility. She also teaches students to understand that inclusivity extends well beyond the classroom.

Quote Unquote: "What is your body doing? What meaning is your body making? What meanings might other people be putting on your body? Again, I repeat these questions while leading students through a series of actions. We lean forward while sitting at our desks. We hold hands and then link our elbows. We lie on the ground. We kneel. We stand with arms up and then make a fist with one hand. … This exercise asks us to think—critically, through our bodies. … I am deeply committed to teaching that builds inclusive, accessible, anti-racist communities."

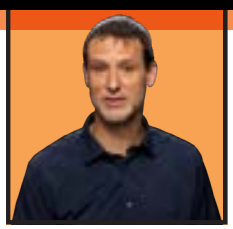
Laura McGarrity

Associate Teaching Professor, Linguistics

Years Teaching: 20

You Ought to Know: McGarrity is the instructor for the department's largest undergraduate courses, mostly lower-division courses which are taken primarily by non-majors with backgrounds in a variety of disciplines. She introduced LING 269 "Swearing and Taboo Language" to appeal primarily to non-majors as a way of introducing them to the field of linguistics.

Quote Unquote: "I am often students' first introduction not just to the major but to the field as a whole. … I strive to make the course relatable and relevant to as many students as I can. I incorporate diversity and inclusiveness into my curriculum. … To effectively reach such a diverse set of students, I have embraced technology in my teaching."



Bryan D. White

Teaching Professor, Biological Sciences, UW Bothell

Years Teaching: 14

You Ought to Know: White is interested in the learning that occurs in students and peer facilitators due to small, peer-led breakout sessions that utilize active learning strategies. For the past two years, he has taught BIO 220 utilizing four learning environments: Face-to-face lectures, breakout sessions led by peer facilitators, online and lab. "After taking my class, student attitudes shift toward expert-like views of biology and the problem-solving effort required to do science. According to the literature, shifts toward expert-like ways of thinking are extremely rare, even in upper-level science courses. I am studying what aspects of my class contribute to these attitudinal changes in students."

Quote Unquote: "A paramount goal of mine is to make science personally relevant to students and help them uncover everyday science in their personal lives. … Whether it be Coke becoming 'flat' and using carbonic anhydrase found in your saliva for a dose of dependent experiment in front of the class, or exploring the mechanisms of heavy metals left from the old Tacoma smelting plant, I strive to energize and extend the book content and articulate connections between in-class science and science in our everyday lives."

Martine De Cock

Professor, School of Engineering and Technology, UW Tacoma

Years Teaching: 20

You Ought to Know: De Cock created the first Ph.D. program on the UW Tacoma campus: the Ph.D. in Computer Science and Systems which was launched in the School of Engineering and Technology in 2020. She also heads two research labs, the Privacy-Preserving Machine Learning group and the Responsible Health AI Lab.

Quote Unquote: "Students arrive on our campus full of dreams, expectations, and, most of all, great potential to change their lives and that of their families. Understanding that it is my honor and responsibility to help them realize that potential is what drives me to set a very high bar for my students. I pride myself on offering courses that are challenging yet feasible and fully worth the effort. Little makes me happier than seeing my students succeed and achieve far more than they ever imagined, from mastering a difficult topic, doing well on an exam or winning an award, to landing a dream job or getting admitted into a strong graduate program."

Marsha L. Landolt Distinguished Graduate Mentor Award

Hannah Wiley

COURTESY OF HANNAH WILEY

Professor Emeritus of Dance

A five-time nominee for this honor, Hannah Wiley is routinely and frequently described as "the heartbeat of the Dance Department." Someone whose "mentorship is rooted in rigorous empathy and diligent advocacy anchored in creating communities of care." And that's just scratching the surface.

Wiley created the UW's MFA in Dance in 1990, and her impact continues to be felt nationwide. Says former student Adele Nickel, now an assistant professor of dance at Sam Houston State University: "Hannah taught me that teaching is more like gardening than engineering: Teachers don't make dancers, they nurture them."

More praise comes from Brian Evans of the Bates College Department of Dance and another former student of Wiley's: "Hannah's mentorship creates ripples—students she has guided go on to support others with the same care and respect she models. Hannah is the kind of mentor whose influence stays with you, shaping who you become as a professional. Her commitment to her students and the profession of effectively sustainable and holistic higher education is profound, and her impact is lifelong."

Adds Nickel: "The year before I came to UW, I was a finalist for a job at Bard College that I didn't get. I asked for feedback from the program director, and she had one piece of advice: 'Go study with Hannah Wiley. She's the best dance educator in the country.' I couldn't agree more."

Distinguished Contributions to Lifelong Learning Award

Jason Daniel-Ulloa

Associate Teaching Professor, Health Systems and Population Health, School of Public Health

He's been called an "exemplar in humanity and teaching … an activist-scholar and important role model to students." He's known for his exceptional mentorship, his advocacy for nontraditional students and his innovative teaching methods. We're talking about Jason Daniel-Ulloa, an associate teaching professor who really takes the word "teaching" seriously. He was invited by the department chair to provide doctoral students with a seminar series on how to teach.

In His Own Words: "Much of my teaching approach focuses on creating and maintaining spaces that encourage students to feel engaged and present to help them feel invested in the system. … I am committed to working with students to help them find a passion for public health, social justice and eliminating health disparities."

Quote Unquote: "His dedication to lifelong learning has had a profound impact on my academic and professional journey. Dr. Ulloa is a true advocate for his students, particularly those from nontraditional backgrounds, and his commitment to their success extends far beyond the classroom."—A former student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The Producer

From promoting punk bands to designing light festivals, Terry Morgan has shaped Seattle's cultural landscape for over 50 years

By Shin Yu Pai | Photos by John Lok

WHEN TERRY MORGAN'S COMPANY, Modern Enterprises, produced The Police's second-ever Seattle show in 1980, the team had to improvise. En route to the Showbox Theatre, the band's equipment went missing, and the stage at the venue—which also doubled as a Jewish bingo hall—was too small. So Morgan borrowed gear from local musicians and extended the stage with bingo tables, cobbling together a wobbly platform that strained to support the band as they rocked out.

It's just one of hundreds of wild stories Morgan recounts from his decades as a talent manager, producer, musician, artist and general guy-who-does-everything in the Seattle arts and music scene over the past five decades.

"Terry Morgan is virtually peerless in our Seattle music scene," says Kate Becker, a cultural community leader in the office of the King County executive. "His immeasurable contributions over the decades have made our city better, song after song, event after event. We are lucky to have such an accomplished impresario bringing his brilliance to our music and festival landscape."

Morgan began booking shows in the 1970s as a student arts director for the Associated Students of the University of Washington. But he started earlier—at age 13—organizing gigs like school dances and VFW events in Oak Harbor, where he played guitar and bass.

One of the few Black families on Whidbey Island, the Morgans had limited access to Black culture. Morgan found inspiration in his extended family, which included actor Sidney Poitier and tennis legend Arthur Ashe. "Just watching what Arthur did with his life and voice guided me in the direction that I took," Morgan says. "We took different paths, but his perspective made me more aware of things from an early age.

"When Poitier won an Academy Award, I was in elementary school. To watch Sidney continue [in his career] made me cognitively aware as a teenager in an isolated community. When I moved to Seattle, my reality became as big as I wanted it to be," and Morgan's dreams were in reach.

As an African American studies major at the UW, Morgan, '76, studied widely outside his major, learning video art from art faculty Bill Ritchie and electronic music from Glenn White. "Music and

electronic art all just melded together," says Morgan. The young musician played in the UW Jazz Band for a few quarters and met Kenny G, '78, during his first year. Through his involvement with the band, Morgan connected with music faculty Joe Brazil and accepted a role working as his TA. In Brazil's classroom, Morgan encountered legendary guest artists who visited Brazil's class, like Dizzy Gillespie and Joe Henderson.

After graduating, Morgan worked with video artist Jack Buchans, a disciple of Nam June Paik, the father of video art. Buchans had built a Paik-Abe video synthesizer, a primitive electronic tool that blends images and distorts colors. With Buchans, Morgan began developing music projects using recordings by Young Scientist, a synthesizer trio that Morgan also helped manage.

Soon he was producing events around Seattle. One early booking was punk band The Blackouts at the UW's Ethnic Cultural Center Theatre—on the same night the Dead Kennedys played Washington Hall. Even so, Morgan's posters and promoting pulled in a sizable crowd.

It was a cutthroat scene. Rival promoters would tear down his posters, forcing him to hustle harder. Eventually, Morgan joined forces with Carlo Scandiuzzi, Jim Lightfoot and Mike Vraney to form Modern Enterprises, LLC, based in the historic Terminal Sales Building. They promoted acts from the West Coast and Europe in venues from Vancouver, B.C., to San Francisco. "The acts would come in from England," Morgan says. "They'd go to Vancouver first. And Seattle was their first U.S. show. We worked with the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver and started promoting some of our own acts—my approach was to build bands by affinity."

"The concept of 'griot'—where the stories of a people were kept alive in song—led to me thinking of punk rock as a living tribal entity"

Still in his 20s, Morgan returned to the UW to study systematic musicology. Under the UW ethnomusicology program founder, Robert Garfias, he explored African and world music through the lens of culture.

"Music was a reflection of culture and its traditions, an evolution of art as a way of life," Morgan says. "It was religion and ritual. The concept of 'griot'—where the stories of a people were kept alive [by oral historians] in song—led to me thinking of punk rock as a living tribal entity." Musicians were its modern-day griots.

Morgan pulled away from his graduate studies as his career promoting punk rock took off. Also in the 1980s, he booked Bumbershoot, bringing in artists including Bobby McFerrin, Diane Schuur and k.d. lang.

He approached the Seattle Center with the idea of an annual Black music festival, which launched in 1981 and is still going strong as Festival Sundiata. Morgan brought Gil Scott Heron, Mighty Sparrow, Burning Spear, Branford Marsalis and Bill T. Jones to the annual event. "I focused heavily on bringing African influence and African American artistry together," he says.

As grunge took hold, Morgan shifted to managing alternative rock bands like The Posies, The Young Fresh Fellows, Hammerbox

Previous, Terry Morgan, an event producer, keeps an office near the Seattle Center. Above, Morgan holds a photo of himself playing the guitar as a teen. Right, One of his largest audiences was for the Space Needle's 2020 New Year's Eve digital light show.

and the Walkabouts, all on the Seattle-based Sub Pop label. He produced the Out to Lunch concert series for the Downtown Seattle Association, curating lunchtime performances five days a week at various parks and venues. "My goal was to showcase as many local acts as possible, plus some national acts," he says.

By the 1990s, Morgan was producing major events that drew thousands. The 1992 Ultra Lame Fest with Sub Pop brought Mudhoney, Seaweed, Supersuckers, Pond and Earth to the Paramount Theatre. Morgan's work with the venue led to producing and promoting more shows like the Nine by 90 Festival, which featured Alice in Chains, Beat Happening, Love Battery, The Posies and the Walkabouts. In 1998, he brought Roberta Flack to perform at the grand opening of the Pacific Place mall.

In the early 2000s, Morgan produced music for large civic events, including the Seattle Center's first Oktoberfest and Ivar's Fourth of July celebration at Myrtle Edwards Park. He ran the Ivar's event for 15 years bringing in artists like Bo Diddley, Nancy Sinatra and Chris Botti.

For the past 20 years, Morgan has focused more of his attention on his own work with musical partner LeRoy Bell. Bell was a songwriter for his uncle's company Mighty 3 Music, which popularized the Philadelphia International Sound. Bell wrote songs for artists ranging from the Delphonics to Elton John and had a strong interest in performing. Morgan and Bell formed a rock and soul band and have toured with BB King and opened for Etta James, Sheryl Crow, Al Green, Joe Cocker, Michael McDonald, The Doobie Brothers, Van Morrison, Steve Miller and Huey Lewis. At Morgan's urging, Bell auditioned for—and landed a spot on—the "X Factor," the British TV music competition. The performance caught the attention of Universal Music in South Africa and led to an invitation to perform in Johannesburg with Zahara, the country's top-selling artist.

Today, Morgan still produces a few events and serves on the Washington State Arts Commission. For the past two decades, he has produced the concert series at University Village. In 2018, he launched the Borealis Festival of Light, a four-day projection mapping event and art festival that lit up Seattle's Museum of History and Industry, drawing audiences of 120,000.

During the pandemic, Morgan produced the Space Needle's 2020 digital New Year's Eve show, which aired on KING-5 TV. Inspired by a dream—and grounded in his background in video and digital art—it featured 10-minute psychedelic animation telling the story of life starting with the Big Bang. The show was the highest-watched New Year's show in KING's history with 1.3 million viewers.

Though embedded in Seattle's music and arts scene, Morgan and his wife, Judy, moved to Lake Forest Park in 1999. One of their neighbors was famed science-fiction author Octavia Butler, who chose the community for its walkability. "She was very shy in person," says Morgan, who occasionally offered to drive her home. "On one of those occasions, she asked me to come in. We chatted and she told me what she was working on."

Since Butler died in 2006, Morgan and his neighbors have worked to honor her importance to contemporary culture. Two years ago, they renamed her street Octavia Butler Boulevard. Now Morgan is organizing "Octavia Butler Day" on June 23. The event will celebrate Butler's birthday with lectures and video presentations. Morgan hopes to involve area arts organizations to inspire dialogue and deepen engagement around Butler's ideas. "When people gather together around a shared passion, their synchronized consciousness becomes a psychic energy that's universal," says Morgan. "And that amplifies the experience."

cəlaca či? ?i

Roger Fernandes, an artist who lectures in American Indian Studies, shares traditional Native stories with students during the UW's Welcome Week in 2019.

kʷi cəlac

Pronounced suh-LAHTS-ah-chee ee kwee suh-LAHTS, meaning 55 in Lushootseed, the ancestral language of the Puget Sound Salish peoples. The UW has offered Salish language classes since 1972.

Born 55 years ago out of student activism, the UW's American Indian Studies department has become a global model for Indigenous scholarship and community connection

By Caitlin Klask

Members of the newly-formed Indian Student Association hold a powwow in 1971.
Courtesy of UW Digital Collections

LEFT, COURTESY UW PHOTO. ABOVE, COURTESYUW DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

IN THE SPRING OF 1970, a group of Native American students brainstormed ways to prioritize Native studies at the UW. By that fall, the American Indian Studies Center was formed, with faculty from across campus teaching anthropology, art and history from a Native perspective.

IN 1971, the UW American Indian Student Council (now First Nations @ UW) held its first spring powwow. In 1974, Marvin Oliver, '73, taught the first American Indian Studies class, Art of the North American Indians. Vi Hilbert, an elder from the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe taught Lushootseed language. The Native Voices filmmaking program, which began in 1999, rose in popularity throughout the aughts. By 2002, students could major or minor in American Indian Studies, and in 2009, it became an academic department.

TODAY, the American Indian Studies department offers a major, a minor and a graduate certificate in American Indian Studies, a minor in Oceania and Pacific Islander Studies, and now a certificate in Tribal Gaming and Hospitality Management.

THIS YEAR marks 55 years for one of the largest and most comprehensive American Indian Studies programs in the world. We spoke with five faculty from AIS, each of whom shares a passion for Native knowledge. Their answers have been edited for space.

What brought you to the UW?

Jean Dennison: There are 29 federally recognized tribes in the state, and they're active on environmental issues, educational issues, cultural practices. Our regent [Leonard Forsman, '87] is the chairman of the Suquamish Tribe and is very active in the state. It's exciting to build off that momentum and excitement and commitment. There are few other institutions in the continental U.S. that have such a concentration of Native faculty or anywhere near the kind of programming that we have.

Charlotte Coté: I never considered teaching as a career. [She originally studied political science and worked in broadcast television.] At UC Berkeley, I got the chance to teach as a graduate student instructor. That's when it really started connecting for me. I met Sasha Harmon, a professor in American Indian Studies, who told me about an open position at the UW. I applied, and I got invited to give a job talk. And when I got there, there was a job talk flyer for Dian Million. Neither Dian nor I knew that we were both interviewing for the position. They ended up liking both of us and hired both of us.

Luana Ross: I came to the UW from the University of California because I am Bitterroot Salish and this geographic area was a good cultural fit. Equally important is that the UW was vitally interested in our documentary film program, Native Voices.

Dian Million: I had only applied to the UW. I had family in Alaska, and some family in Oregon. I think most Native people like to be closer to home.

How has American Indian Studies evolved?

Dian Million: We've ridden out the ups and downs that this campus has had: the wage freezes, the present-day cuts and threats of cuts. But one of our strong points is this department was [someone's] dream, and we will always fight for it. These are legendary elders. We're standing on the shoulders of an enormous amount of effort inside and outside the University.

Jean Dennison: Independence from other units is one of the most crucial things that happened. If you're in your own department, you get to set tenure and promotion guidelines, decide what your hiring commitments are. There's a level of stability that's important, and recognition that this matters, that this is worth investment.

Charlotte Coté: Even with the challenges we've experienced, being a small department on campus, we're a very powerful department in what we can offer—and that's creating an important space on campus and making Indigenous intellectualism visual.

What is Native knowledge, and why is it important in higher ed?

Jean Dennison: Science, math, art, these things have long histories in Indigenous communities, but for a long time that knowledge has been dismissed or undermined. Most higher education institutions have been built in ways that don't recognize those knowledges or celebrate them and often work to deny [them]. By Native knowledge, I'm talking about acknowledging that our communities have long histories of knowing advanced mathematics, environmental science, art forms like beading and carving—you can see math and sciences built into those practices from the beginning.

Charlotte Coté: When I was a student, I wasn't aware that there was this Western paradigm that existed in academia. It wasn't until I went to UC Berkeley and became part of a cohort for comparative ethnic studies that I even started having conversations with other students about this and saying, 'Yeah, you're right! These places are colonized.' That's what I try to tell my students: We're indigenizing this space. We're centering Indigenous knowledge.

Dian Million: What our knowledges represent is not just nature studies. It's an ethos. It's a way of seeing the world. Those are things that I think we developed over many thousands of years that are still very active in almost every place I've ever been. I call that Indigenous ethos.

Luana Ross: As I taught classes in Native Studies over the decades, I developed a class on Native women which evolved into a class on Indigenous feminisms. At the core of my definition of feminism is nationhood and sovereignty. It was critical to look at the root causes and possible solutions to problems in our communities. Indigenous feminism, as I developed it, provided me and the students with a theoretical framework to analyze the social ills in our communities.

Daniel and Luana, how did you approach documentary filmmaking in the Native Voices program?

Luana Ross: We wanted to make sure that there were ethics regarding research, since prior to that time it seems like there were many people just going into Native communities and grabbing information, not even thinking about who really owned the information. Native communities have very strict rules around who owns songs, who owns stories.

Daniel Hart: One of the things we always stress is that our students' work can contribute immediately to national and international discourse about Indigenous people and communities. Our students' films are screened in thousands of libraries, educational institutions, tribal communities and places like the Smithsonian and Sundance, just to name a couple of examples. We're proud and grateful to see that our graduates are continuing to contribute to national discourse both as media producers and as professors all over the world.

Why are non-Native students interested in Native studies?

Dian Million: People in the United States don't have a working knowledge of who American Indians are, except as a demographic of some sort that are perhaps wounded, or a problem. We are fighting that constantly. I'm a social historian. I would say it outright, that there is a purposeful ignorance that this country holds for who we are.

Daniel Hart: One of the things non-native students find is they're sitting on a lot of really uncomfortable unresolved feelings about their relationship with native communities, because we're still

The Native Graduation Celebration, known as šəqəd tiił sləʔibəš (Honor the Journey), is held annually in partnership with the American Indian Studies Department.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Jean Dennison
(Osage Nation)
- Associate Professor, American Indian Studies and Anthropology
- Co-Director of the Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies
- 10 years with the UW

Charlotte Coté
(Tseshaht/Nuu-chah-nulth)
- Professor, American Indian Studies
- Chair of wəɬəbʔaltxʷ Advisory Committee
- 24 years with the UW

Dian Million
(Tanana Athabascan)
- Associate Professor, American Indian Studies
- Affiliated faculty, Canadian Studies, English and Comparative History of Ideas
- 23 years with the UW

Luana Ross
(Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes)
- Associate Professor Emerita, Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies
- Co-Director, Native Voices film program
- 26 years with the UW

Daniel Hart
- Professor Emeritus, American Indian Studies
- Co-Director, Native Voices film program
- 26 years with the UW

Marvin Oliver (right), teacher and artist, created Raven's Feast, now called šəqəd tiił sləʔibəš (Honor the Journey), to celebrate graduating American Indian an Alaska Native students.

TOP LEFT, COURTESY OF UW PHOTO. TOP RIGHT, BY DANIEL JACKSON. RIGHT, BY KAREN ORDERS

Fancy shawl dancer Nikiyah Longee performs at the 2025 Spring Powwow.

in a colonial situation. Just in the immediate Salish Sea area, we have more than a dozen intact tribal nations who are working every day to strengthen themselves and protect their sovereignty. That's a situation that non-native people, in their heart of hearts, want to get more comfortable with.

What makes American Indian Studies integral to the UW and the state of Washington?

Charlotte Coté: I want people to understand the importance of what we do, the research that we do, the work that we do in our classrooms, that it isn't just for a select few—it resonates out into the larger world. We, as Indigenous peoples, being the first peoples of these lands, our histories weave into all the other histories. The way we connect to students in our classes, they feel empowered to tackle careers in public affairs, law, community work, tribal work, film, art, sciences. We provide such unique opportunities for our students in our classes, which have an amazing breadth of intellectual knowledge.

Dian Million: I don't think there's anything more interesting on earth than the complex relationship of Indigenous peoples and nations in our own homelands with this country, and how absolutely brilliant and innovative they have had to be to continue. I think people sense that excitement in our classes.

What makes the American Indian community at the UW special?

Charlotte Coté: People should know about the great work that we're doing, not just within our department, but within the communities that we're connected to, and the partnerships we've created over many years with the regional tribal communities to create this larger sense of community with people on campus and outside of campus.

Dian Million: We came together and cared for each other as a family, took care of issues as a family. Every time we hit big bumps, it ended in us regrouping and working out the problem together.

Jean Dennison: Compared to other research universities, there are very few that have robust programs [like the UW]. Most don't have a major and minor, and when they do, they're small. We not only have a strong department, but we have larger infrastructure supporting our work. The Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies, for example, provides financial support for our research and funds additional Native knowledge experts to join our classes. It also builds a larger community for Native faculty, staff and students through its programming. The UW Canoe Family, for example, is a partnership between AIS and CAIIS, creating community around coastal canoe practices.

Daniel Hart: Folks here stress Indigenous approaches to research, education, relationships and especially the idea of reciprocity, that when you take something, you have to give it back.

What do you want to see in the next 55 years?

Jean Dennison: We desperately need space. We can't even have a faculty meeting where we can all sit in the same space together, and we don't have enough offices for new hires. It's really an issue of Land Back [reclaiming control over ancestral lands]. The Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies does not have permanent space at all. There's something disheartening to students and faculty that we don't have space to do our work. Knowing this was all Native land, knowing Native folks have only been allowed to carve out tiny spaces or don't have permanent space at all is really hard.

Dian Million: We're working to build further but keep the excellence, tempered by the understanding that budget cuts have come down on us just like everybody else. We've fought for every bit of faculty we have right now.

Daniel Hart: We are now led by a group of people who want what they want, and they're going to take what they can take. It's always been the case that Indian communities suffer in real ways when the thinking gets like that. All the more reason for Native Studies. These are courses that build bridges.

Columns

NEWS FROM **THE UW COMMUNITY**

COURTESY BRIAN CHRISTIAN

Thinking Outside the Bot

MFA alum Brian Christian explores human behavior and artificial intelligence

By Hannelore Sudermann

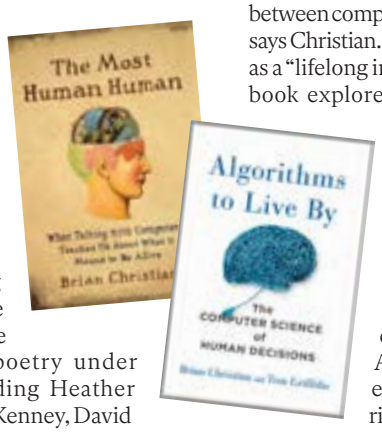
Author and researcher Brian Christian explores the implications of computers and AI on humans and how machine learning systems can capture what humans actually value and care about.

His first book about artificial intelligence started as a poem "that grew and grew." Today, Brian Christian, '08, is a leading authority on computer-human interaction, with three bestselling books on the subject and wide recognition for his skills blending computer science and philosophy for the common reader.

In high school, Christian took unconventional approaches to his assignments—opting, for instance, to write a song instead of a book report. What began as playful experimentation turned out to be more meaningful. At graduation, he was named the school's poet laureate. "And I was given the Excellence in English award," he says. "It was literally the last 20 minutes of high school. It was really a pivotal moment for me"—realizing that his teachers also saw him as an artist.

At Brown University, he split his energies between science and the humanities. He just couldn't decide if he was "a writer who loves science or a scientist who loves writing," he says. So he double majored in computer science and philosophy.

After moving to Seattle—drawn by both it's tech and literary scenes—he decided to pursue a master's in creative writing at the UW. Inspired by a line from one of Gertrude Stein's essays, "And then there is using everything," he studied creative nonfiction and poetry under instructors including Heather McHugh, Richard Kenney, David Shields and Linda Bierds, but did not lose touch with his affinity for computer science.



In a class taught by Bierds, Christian started a prose poem exploring how something manufactured by technology can teach us about reality. It quickly evolved into a lyric essay and eventually became part of his master's thesis. Then it led to the foundation for his first book, "The Most Human Human," and his quest to be one of the human participants in the Turing Test, competing head-to-head with the most-advanced artificial intelligence to see who or what a panel of scientists would deem more human. Being a poet who writes essays about computers wasn't an easy sell. Fortunately, a former book editor turned agent got what Christian was doing and—just as he was on the verge of moving back in with his parents—sold the publishing rights at auction to Doubleday.

Christian's first brush with national fame came in February 2011. Living in Philadelphia and preparing for a tour to promote "The Most Human Human," he was walking down the street when his cellphone rang. IBM's Watson had just defeated Ken Jennings on "Jeopardy," and Charlie Rose was looking for someone to talk about "this AI thing." With just 30 minutes to get to the studio, Christian ducked into a shop, bought a new shirt and 20 minutes later was sitting in front of a camera answering Rose's questions over a live feed. Also that month, he wrote The Atlantic's cover story "Mind vs. Machine."

His 2016 book, "Algorithms to Live By: The Computer Science of Human Decisions" was a project with Tom Griffiths, a UC Berkeley scientist he first met at Brown and who was "bridging the gap between philosophy and statistics and between computer science and psychology," says Christian. He describes their friendship as a "lifelong intellectual bromance." Their book explores how people can benefit from applying computer-science algorithms to their everyday decision-making.

Christian's third book, "The Alignment Problem: Machine Learning and Human Values," came out in 2020 and explores the question of a superintelligent AI and the potential technical, ethical and even existential risks it brings. The New York Times featured it as one of the five best books about artificial intelligence, and it was an MIT Technology Review best book of the year. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella described it as "clear and compelling."

With three bestsellers under his belt, Christian has made a career of exploring the human implications of computer science. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in experimental psychology at the University of Oxford, where he has "a great opportunity to get deeper into some of the research questions that 'The Alignment Problem' left on the table."

ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER KUGLER, INTERVIEW BY SHIN YU PAI

Columns

2025

COURTESY UW PHOTO

UWAA Distinguished Service Award

Brad McDavid

The fourth band director in the 96-year history of the University of Washington Marching Band, Dr. Brad McDavid was also the longest-tenured director in band history. He is credited with taking the band to new heights and far-away places on performance tours of Australia, China, Scandinavia, Japan, France, Ireland and Italy. If that weren't enough, he was selected to serve as the Head Artistic Director and Head Director of the 1,800-member international Beijing Olympic Band in 2008.

Yes, wow. He was also one of the best and most dedicated friends the UW Alumni Association has ever had. Inducted into the 2016 Washington Music Educators National Conference Hall of Fame, he has served on several selection committees for national awards, and he is the co-author of the two-volume instructional series, "The Marching Band Director's Video Toolbox," published in 2013.

The Ohio native previously taught at the elementary, middle-school and high-school levels while working in the public schools of central Ohio and Tempe, Arizona. Here at Washington, he weathered the pandemic, during which many band members lost motivation and the band shrunk in size. Fortunately, the band since recovered and returned to full strength. During his 30 years here, there were almost too many memories to recall but one stood out: the band's first football halftime performance after Sept. 11, 2001, as a tribute to the victims of the terrorist attack.

McDavid retired in 2024 and the purple sport coat, purple-and-gold tie and white gloves can take a break and relax in a closet. "We just felt like the time was right to step aside," he says. Now, he is enjoying traveling and getting the opportunity to watch while his son is going to become a band director. Talk about full circle.

COURTESY UW PHOTO

UW Distinguished Teaching Legacy Award

J'May Rivara

J'May Rivara's official title at the University of Washington is Associate Teaching Professor in Social Work. Her former students don't call her that, however. They call her: a cornerstone of support, advocate, champion, guiding light, an enduring influence.

A UW faculty member since 1985, she was first appointed Lecturer at the UW School of Social Work in her role as Associate Director of Social Work at UW Medical Center. She left UWMC two years later to join an interdisciplinary project, "Traumatic Brain Injury in Children." Rivara is revered for the way she has taught, mentored and nurtured graduate social work students and since 1995 as a Faculty Liaison to students in their formal practicums. Teaching graduate social work students "fell in her lap" first in 1976 in Hazard, Kentucky, when the University of Kentucky took its social work distance-learning program to Eastern Kentucky so social workers could have the opportunity to obtain an MSW. She says her experience with the diverse students there in low-income Appalachia greatly influenced her teaching philosophy. At the UW, she has supported students committed to cancer care, palliative care or end-of-life care. She also served as co-director of the Carol LaMare Traineeship, part of the endowed Center for Integrative Oncology and Palliative Care at the UW School of Social Work. "She consistently embodied what it means to be a social worker. When I mention her name, colleagues tell stories of the profound influence J'May has had on their identities as social workers, professionals, and individuals," says former student Warren Leyh. Adds former student Danielle McLaughlin: "Her actions and words have shown me that being a social worker is not a time-limited role, but rather a set of values and relationships that are pursued over the long haul." Rivara is quick to praise all of her social work colleagues for the values they pass on to their students. "There is nothing more inspiring to me," she says, "than seeing the torch being passed to our next generation of social workers."

ASSOCIATION AWARDS

PHOTO BY RON WURZER

UWAA Golden Graduate Distinguished Alumna Award

Dr. Pamela Mitchell, '62, '91

Since earning her BSN from the UW in 1962, Dr. Pamela Mitchell has blazed a trail in health care. This year, the UW Alumni Association presents her with the Golden Graduate Distinguished Alumna Award in recognition of significant long-term engagement with the UW, including half of a century as a professor in nursing and public health. Here are a few other accolades she humbly admits to:

- Co-created the Quality Health Outcomes Model, which redefined the way health-care professionals approach patient outcomes by focusing on patients' health characteristics and structural circumstances.
- Joined the UW faculty in 1969.
- Received the 1982 UW School of Nursing Distinguished Teaching Award.
- Authored or co-authored more than 200 peer-reviewed journal articles, books or book chapters, book reviews, abstracts and technical reports.
- Cited for her work more than 95,000 times. (Though research was her favorite part of her career, "I'm glad I don't have to worry about those things anymore," she says.)
- Co-founded the Center for Health Sciences Interprofessional Education, Research and Practice—a community of health-science faculty and staff dedicated to collaboration and teamwork—in 1997.
- Participated in a national effort to improve stroke and heart attack recovery using talk therapy rather than relying solely on pharmaceuticals.
- Served as president of the American Academy of Nursing from 2007 to 2009.
- Received the UW's highest leadership honor, the David Thorud Leadership Award, in 2014.
- Entered the Washington State Nurses' Association hall of fame in 2022.

Born in Denver, Mitchell moved to Richland when she was young. She met her husband, Donald, while working at Massachusetts General Hospital, and the two moved to Seattle to continue their careers. Their three sons followed in her academic footsteps, all earning doctorate degrees.

Mitchell retired in 2018 and now enjoys seeing the world on cruise vacations and looks forward to an African cruise with her family this summer.

PHOTO BY RON WURZER

UW-UWRA Distinguished Retiree Award

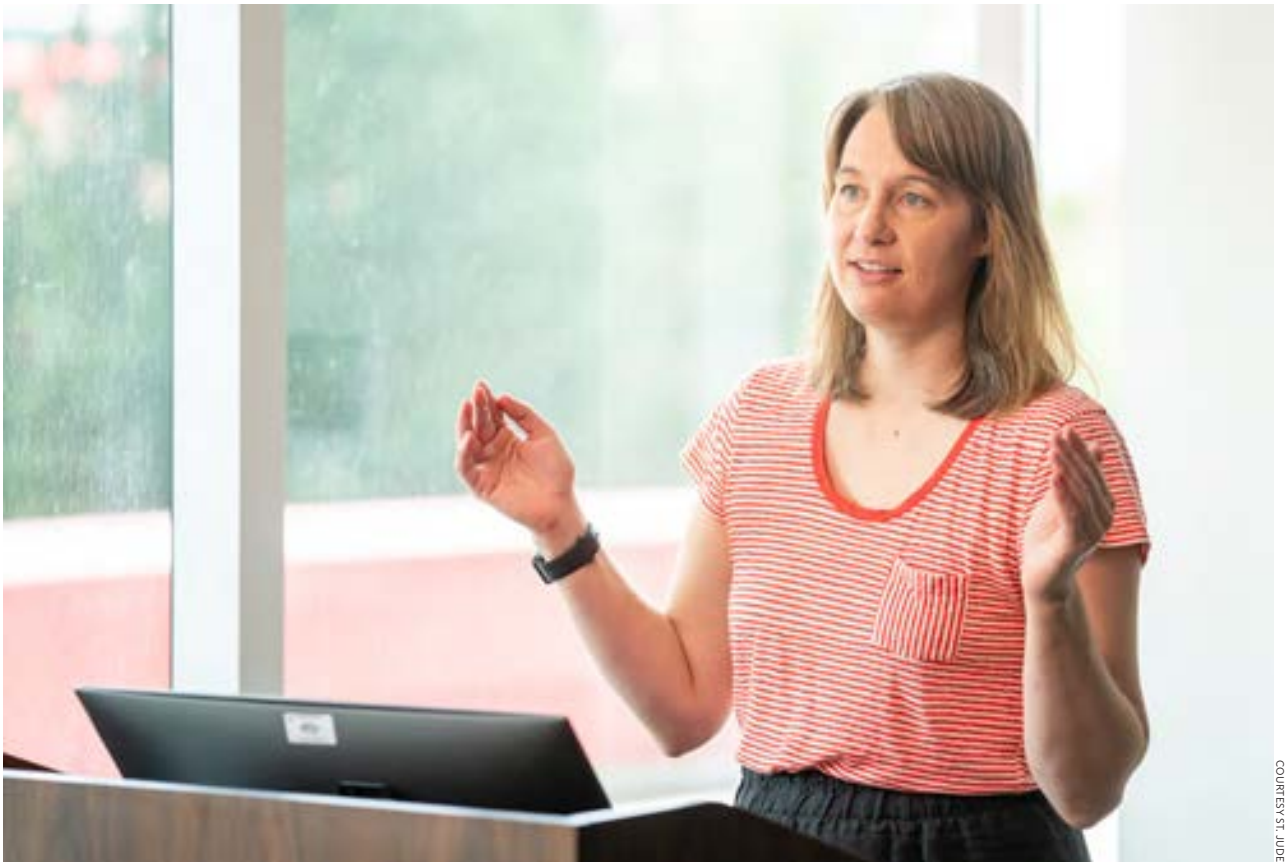
Jill McKinstry

For many years, people wanting to enjoy Mount Baker Park—a popular 21.7-acre setting on a ravine across from Lake Washington—would have to navigate a treacherous, steep, often-muddy, hazardous gravel trail at the end of 34th Avenue South. The result? A lot of falls, twisted ankles and broken limbs. Then Jill McKinstry stepped in. "Jill saw this deficit and decided to do something about it," recalls Susan Kocik, a Mount Baker resident and co-chair (with McKinstry) of the Mount Baker Safe Access Committee.

With the blessing of the Mount Baker Community Club, McKinstry applied for and won a Seattle block grant for a study of the area. With the help of a volunteer committee of neighbors she recruited, McKinstry raised funds, supervised construction, scheduled volunteers, led negotiations with the Parks Department and on and on, says lifelong friend Lynn Hogan. Her leadership in negotiations with several city agencies ultimately secured funding to complete the project. The result? "The project is a complete success," Kocik wrote. McKinstry even personally paid to have the new handrail painted.

McKinstry, former director of Odegaard Undergraduate Library who received the UW's David Thorud Leadership Award in 2009, routinely applies her leadership and ability to motivate others to make life better. She and her husband joined Jimmy Carter on Habitat for Humanity builds in Kentucky, South Africa, Mexico and Hungary.

And she has been a force in the Washington state organization Grandmothers Against Gun Violence. She joined in 2018, became treasurer, and is now board chair of the group and its 1,000-plus members. "As the principal founder of Grandmothers, I have always kept an eye out for special people with clear leadership skills, a collaborative style and who model generosity," writes Margaret Helding. "We found an ace in Jill."



COURTESY ST. JUDE

Being cut from the UW's women's crew inspired Lindsay Schwarz to work harder, a trait that has served her well in her career as a medical researcher.

Early Riser

Former Husky rower receives a prestigious early career award for scientific research

By Brian Hudgins

'The day-to-day grind of being a scientist in a lab—you have to love the daily process of it.'

Two of Dr. Lindsay Schwarz's cherished UW moments were not tied to early success.

Schwarz, '03, a member of the Department of Developmental Neurobiology at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, recently received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. It is the highest honor handed out by the U.S. government to scientists and engineers who are starting their independent research.

Schwarz, a Centralia native, tried out for the UW crew as a freshman in 2000. She had never rowed before enrolling at UW. "Crew was transformative for me," Schwarz says. "I tried out my freshman year and I got cut. I just wasn't good enough. I worked really hard on my own and tried out again in my sophomore year and ended up being much more successful."

Not being a natural at rowing and having that year of training gave Schwarz a foundation for a future research experience. After she graduated from UW with a bachelor's degree in cell and molecular biology, Schwarz was fueled by her interest in science—even if she did not have a picture of how that would play out careerwise.

"There was a job ad in The Seattle Times for a full-time technician in Dr. Steve Carlson's lab," Schwarz says. "I got the job and it was a really unique experience. Even though Dr. Carlson [professor of neurobiology and biophysics] was a senior faculty member in the UW School of Medicine, he was still in the lab a lot."

That meant Schwarz received no shortage of responsibility and independence in a small lab. The practical experience showed her what a career as a scientist would require.

Carlson shared some advice for her and the other students and recent grads who rotated through the lab: Many experiments would not work. The reward for doing them should not be expected success or excellence. The point is to improve and make progress for the next day. "Taking that mindset is really important," Schwarz says. "The day-to-day grind of being a scientist in a lab—you have to love the daily process of it."

This love led to the Presidential Early Career Award for Schwarz, who was nominated by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, part of the NIH.

"So many people I look up to had won this award. … it's an honor," she says. One of her main research projects over during the past five years has centered on developing a tool for improving the ease and accuracy of studying and manipulating specific subpopulations of cells. Her lab's progress on this research was published in Nature Neuroscience in 2024.

Schwarz, who joined the St. Jude faculty in 2017, plans to keep pushing the envelope as a researcher. "St. Jude really focuses on innovation, risk-taking and tackling big questions in science," Schwarz says. "I am able to collaborate with amazing colleagues."

COURTESY LESLIE FRIED

COURTESY OF ALASKA JEWISH MUSEUM

Above: Installation view of "A Refuge in the Last Frontier" exhibit at the Alaksa Jewish Museum. Left: Scenic artist Leslie Fried paints a decorative wall mural.

Northern Light

How Leslie Fried illuminates Jewish history in Alaska

By Shin Yu Pai

When Leslie Fried, '08, moved to Anchorage in 2011 to work as an exhibition developer for a museum focused on Alaska's Jewish community, she arrived to find a museum without a permanent home. Fried settled into an office in an old bank building and started preparing for the renovation of another site that would become the Alaska Jewish Museum.

When the museum opened in summer 2013, Fried filled it with permanent displays on the history of the state's Jewish residents and their contributions to Alaska. "On the Wings of Eagles," the first show she researched and designed for the museum, told the story of Alaska Airlines pilots and flight attendants who, in a series of missions from 1948 to 1950, airlifted about 45,000 Jewish refugees from Yemen to the new state of Israel.

Fried says there are about 6,000 Jews in Alaska, nearly half of whom live in the Anchorage metropolitan area. Jewish entrepreneurs first arrived in the territory via San Francisco in the 1860s, around the time the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia for $7.2 million. In the exhibition "From Purchase to Prosperity," Fried curated the history of Jewish merchant-pioneers who created a mercantile empire as Alaska transitioned from territory to state.

Fried had moved from Seattle, where she had worked as a scenic and decorative painter for theater and film sets. She was head painter for the Intiman Theater for five seasons and designed and worked on projects for the Seattle Children's Museum and Seattle Opera. But while working on a film set in 2003, she developed lead poisoning from exposure to welding fumes. She took time off to recover and realized she needed to make a career change.

On a visit to the East Coast, Fried reconnected with a friend and former mentor who asked about her plans. Fried, then 55, said she would like to be a curator. "He said, 'At your age, you're going to be competing against young grads coming out of Yale and NYU.' He suggested I become a librarian," she says. Fried's friend was the retired chief librarian at Fairleigh Dickinson University. He had dedicated his time and energy outside of libraries to managing art estates, traveling and brokering deals.

With a new vision in mind, Fried enrolled in the iSchool to study library and information science which she combined with a graduate certificate in museology. While in graduate school, she was also serving as executor of the estate of her partner, Steven (Jesse) Bernstein, a writer and performance artist. In the late 1980s, Bernstein was well known in the Seattle arts and music scene as a poet, novelist and performer. He opened for grunge bands and had a reputation for unnerving his audiences by dont things like reciting poems with a live rodent in his mouth.

As she was collecting materials for his archives, Fried wrote to everyone Bernstein knew. Years later, while enrolled at the UW, she found a permanent home for the materials. She recruited two students to help with the cataloguing and worked with Anne Jenner in UW Special Collections to transfer the materials.

Fried's writing skills have spilled into her creative life. In 2021, she published her first poetry collection, "Lily is Leaving."

Today, at the Alaska Jewish Museum, Fried is the sole full-time employee. She plans and develops historical exhibitions, researches and writes instructional texts and writes grants to support programs. The Alaska Jewish Museum has outgrown its space. To mitigate this challenge, Fried has created virtual exhibitions on the museum's website.

Fried says she draws inspiration from a Rudyard Kipling quote: "If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten."

"I choose to portray historical events in this way through oral histories, photos, film footage and in-person events," Fried says. "Visitors really respond to this. Often they are moved to relate their own experiences."

Passion and Purpose on the PCT

Doctoral student Mari Hoffman takes to the Pacific Crest Trail to honor her late mother

By Erin Rowley

When hikers take on the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail that stretches from the California-Mexico border to the Washington-Canadian border, they receive a trail name. Mari Hoffman's trail name is "Magic."

Hoffman, a student in the UW's Molecular and Cellular Biology Ph.D. program, hiked nearly half of the PCT last year. It wasn't your typical outdoor adventure. Hoffman was hiking to honor the memory of her mother and raise money for Tina's Wish, an organization that supports research for the early detection and prevention of ovarian cancer. Cindy Hoffman died in 2023 after a two-year battle with the disease.

"My mom always taught us that the best way we could honor her or others in the world was through our passions," Hoffman says. "The PCT was something I've always wanted to explore."

When Hoffman started the hike in May 2024, she was joined by her father, Mark, who survived cancer. He returned to visit during the early stages of her journey, providing "trail magic" (known as unexpected acts of kindness in the PCT community) for her and her fellow hikers. And just like that … a trail name was born.

Hoffman hiked 1,093 miles over 61 days before ending her journey at South Lake Tahoe due to an ankle injury. She raised more than $3,500 and wrote a blog to document her journey. The trail brought many ups and downs and proved both physically and mentally challenging. The experience also brought her closer to her mother.

"I talked to my mom out loud a lot," she says. "I had a lot of time for reflection on our time together. She's always modeled strength, independence and trust in yourself."

While Hoffman had that solo time for reflection, another highlight was meeting people along the way—from fellow hikers and the "trail family" she connected with to people in town who provided a warm meal or place to shower.

During her expedition, she learned how to trust herself. With each section of the trail, she'd start with a new resupply of food and water, and while she knew where her next stops would be, a lot was still unknown. "You're tempted to plan every step ahead," she says. "You have to trust that once your future self gets there, you'll know more than your current self."

Hoffman plans to complete the remaining sections of the PCT when her schedule allows. She also wants to provide her own version of trail magic for hikers coming through the Washington and Oregon sections this summer.

Hoffman is pursuing her Ph.D. at UW so she can focus on cancer research. She is passionate about advocacy and fundraising for early detection and women's health.

Her interest in cancer research came during her father's battle with chronic lymphocytic leukemia when she was 16.

"We've come so far and have had so many improvements in the field of oncology, but there are many different types of aggressive cancer that we still don't have many options for," she said. "That is my continued inspiration."

Hoffman became interested in cancer research during her father's battle with chronic lymphocytic leukemia when she was 16 years old.

PHOTOS COURTESY MARI HOFFMAN

Mahogany, Manuscripts and Fairy Tales

Ann Schmiesing brings the history of "The Brothers Grimm" to life

By George Spencer

COURTESY ANN SCHMIESING

Once upon a time, two boys named Jacob and Wilhelm lived in a lovely home. But when their father suddenly died, the boys and their mother were cast out. Forced to live in an almshouse, the sons worked hard. They became scholars, and luckily for Germany and the rest of the world, the tale of the Brothers Grimm has a happy ending.

Their collection of folk stories "Kinder- und Hausmärchen" ("Children's and Household Tales") was first published in two volumes in 1812 and 1815. The most translated work of German literature, it went through seven complete and 10 abridged editions in their lifetimes, growing with each new version to ultimately include 210 stories.

What drove them to share such gleefully ghoulish yet morally uplifting tales is as surprising as finding a wolf snuggling in Grandmother's bed. "They were motivated by a desire to promote a sense of German heritage at a time when Germany was not a unified political entity. They felt it would help Germans have a sense of identity at a time when they were still politically fragmented," says Ann Schmiesing, '91, the author of "The Brothers Grimm," the first English-language biography of the duo in 50 years.

It's a myth, writes Schmiesing, a professor of German and administrator at the University of Colorado-Boulder, that these literary nation-builders trekked to humble villages where peasants shared the stories. Instead, the brothers mostly heard them from upper- and middle-class German women.

The surname Grimm translates as "wrathful." During their half-century collaboration, they revised the fairy tales in ways that further accentuated their violence, she says. "But there tends not to be gratuitous violence or gruesomeness in the Grimms' fairy tales. It's often to teach a moral lesson, a punishment for wicked behavior," she says. They did, however, bowdlerize sexual content from some stories.

The inseparable brothers worked in studies in Wilhelm's house at mahogany desks surrounded by bookshelves, heaps of manuscripts and curiosities such as an Egyptian statue, shells, stones, fossils and sculptures of a bear and a lioness.

While both men died before Otto von Bismarck unified Germany in 1871, the sociable Wilhelm and Jacob, a bachelor who lived with Wilhelm and his wife, were united in their academic passions. They were librarians, linguists and civil servants who also wrote about mythology and legal customs. Their final project, the monumental "Deutsches Wörterbuch" dictionary, reached the letter D when Wilhem died in 1859 and thanks to Jacob's efforts made it to F before his passing in 1863.

"If you go beyond the global impact of their fairy tales, today's depictions of the Middle Ages in popular media owe a lot to the fascination with medieval life the Grimms ignited," says Schmiesing.

She counts among her favorite Grimms' tales "Rumpelstiltskin" and "Hans My Hedgehog," a story of a man who wishes for a child even if it is a tiny, spiny beast. He gets his wish, sort of, when his wife delivers a baby who is a hedgehog from the waist up and human below. After riding a rooster into the world to seek his fortune, Hans survives a fiery ordeal, wins the princess, and if they have not died, then they are still alive today, for that is how Grimms' tales ended in German instead of the "happily ever after" translation.

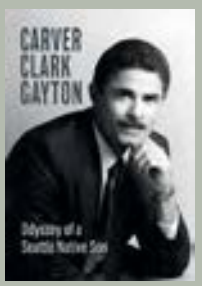
Why do fairy tales have universal appeal? "They're a space where it doesn't matter what society thinks of you, even though you might be the underdog facing enormous challenges or adversity," she says. "In fairy tales through hard work, the help of a benevolent helper, and a bit of magic thrown in, you will prevail."

When asked if Disney, which has made 16 feature films based on fairy tales, has ever sought her as a consultant, Schmiesing says no. But she stands ready to help spin straw into cinematic gold. "If they call and ask," she says, "I'm here."

MEDIA

BOOKS

Wild Cucumber: New and Selected Poems
By Ann Spiers, '68, '77
Empty Bowl Press, 2025
Poems by Vashon Island's poet laureate reveal intimate human yearning, setting events against the lush and rugged backdrops she travels as a girl, woman, mother, grandmother, teacher, lover, hiker, writer, birder, gardener environmen talist and guide.



Odyssey of a Seattle Native Son
By Carver Clark Gayton, '60, '72, '76
HistoryLink and distributed by the UW Press, 2025
Carver Gayton's story bears witness to Seattle's experience of race and the importance of family, teachers, teamwork and building bridges in the context of the civil rights movement. From his family roots in slavery and abolition, his life in the Seattle public school system, his career as a Husky football player and assistant coach to his career at Boeing and many civic activities, he draws on his experience of being Black in America.

CDs

The Almond Tree Duos
By Melia Watras
Planet M Records, 2025
Violist/composer Melia Watras celebrates her latest album, featuring the world-premiere re cording of her compositions for violin and viola. The album's title references the symbol of hope and new beginnings in Oscar Wilde's "The Can terville Ghost." Hailed by Gramophone as "an artist of commanding and poetic personality," Watras is professor of viola and chair of strings at the University of Washington.

Podcasts

Go Huskies Podcast
Host: Tony Castricone
The Varsity Podcast Network
Produced by the UW Athletic Department and hosted by play-by-play announcer Tony Castricone, this podcast provides an insider's look into the world of Husky Athletics.

Serving in Science

From the Navy to the UW, Kristin Bennett's journey has sparked innovations in studying brain injury—and making education accessible.

By Danielle Marie Holland

It's 3 a.m., and Benson Hall is quiet. In the dimly lit second-floor hallway of the Nance Lab, undergraduate Kristin Bennett, '25, opens a refrigerator and pulls out a container of brain tissue.

With tweezers, Bennett carefully picks up a photosensitive slice and examines it under a microscope, scanning the sample at 10x magnification, then 40x. Scrutinizing the tiny universe found in one sliver of tissue, she says, "It's so much to explore."

Bennett is studying thin slices of brain tissue grown in vitro under controlled conditions through a method pioneered by lab director Elizabeth Nance, a UW associate professor of chemical engineering and bioengineering. By studying living samples of different ages and from different areas of the brain, Nance's researchers aim to better understand how the brain reacts to disease and injury, including traumatic brain injury (TBI). Undergraduate research is an important part of the Husky experience for many University of

DENNIS WISE

Kristin Bennett, a chemical engineering major, conducts research at the Nance Lab to better understand brain injury. A Navy veteran with a disability from her time in the service, Bennett sometimes wears braces to support her joints or uses other accommodations.

“Private funding support allows me to do this—to serve the UW community, our veteran community and every person affected by traumatic brain injury. The most rewarding thing about being in school at this stage of my life is the continued opportunity to serve.”

Washington students—but as a 43-year-old Navy veteran, Bennett is not your typical undergrad.

For six years, Bennett was a nuclear chemist on a Navy aircraft carrier deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. “Service is what my whole life has been about,” she says, reflecting on her calling to serve as one of the few women in a newly integrated field, managing the mechanical systems and chemistry of the craft’s nuclear reactor. Bennett’s role included decontaminating personnel exposed to radioactivity before they could receive medical treatment. During her duty, she was exposed to toxic burn pits, ionizing radiation and hazardous chemicals—leaving a lasting impact on her health.

By age 28, Bennett had suffered multiple ministrokes, losing function on her right side. By 40, she developed autoimmune disorders and lost 40% of her lung capacity, leading to a 90% disability rating for service-connected conditions. Describing the treatments as “horrific,” she endured pain, nausea, emotional numbness and difficulty connecting with others. She spent years in recovery—relearning how to talk, walk and do math.

There were no medicines for the rare condition that caused Bennett’s ministrokes. That dismaying fact, she learned, was also true for TBI, the most prevalent brain injury. Her call to service evolved.

Each year, TBI affects 67 million people globally and 1.5 million in the U.S. The lack of treatments costs the U.S. health care system $40 billion annually. Knowing that veterans with TBI are 22 times more likely to die from health-related conditions, Bennett was determined to make an impact.

Thanks to her Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation benefits, Bennett was offered a full college scholarship and a salary, allowing her to start college at 38. She completed pre-requisites at Seattle Colleges and then transferred to the UW. Accepted into both chemical engineering and bioengineering, Bennett was recruited by Nance to the Department of Chemical Engineering and selected for the professor’s lab.

Impact

The Nance Lab is one of a few in the world exploring brain injury and treatment through multiple-particle tracking techniques that use nanoparticles to probe living brain tissue. Researchers are studying how the brain *parenchyma*—the functional tissue of the brain—acts as a barrier to therapeutic drug delivery and how it responds to stimuli and treatment.

Bennett adapted the Nance slice model to investigate the mechanics and physics of TBI. In doing so, she created a potentially more controllable and tunable method of introducing injury in the brain samples using acoustic waves. This innovative approach laid the groundwork for her ongoing research—the surface acoustic wave (SAW) model. In recognition, Bennett was awarded the prestigious Washington Research Foundation Fellowship in 2023.

"I would never have been able to develop the SAW model without the Washington Research Foundation," Bennett says. The program gave her the freedom to explore her curiosity without limitations, allowing her to push the boundaries of the field. With funding for her project, Bennett was able to build on existing research and invent SAW. She adds, "WRF jump-starts the imagination and careers of every student they touch."

Bennett's journey to TBI research led organically to supporting scholars with disabilities. Her own disability from her time in the service reshaped how she processes information, giving her a unique perspective. "Having firsthand experience enables me to ask questions others may not, which leads to innovative modeling and solutions," she says. "That's why inclusion is so important—people from diverse backgrounds bring different perspectives to a problem." While only 3% of STEM researchers identify as having a disability, 27% of Americans are disabled, leaving a gap of lived experience in these fields.

In 2024, Bennett was named a Mary Gates Leadership Scholar for designing and implementing a curriculum to promote inclusion and allyship in engineering. The award, which helps UW undergraduates develop leadership skills, funded her efforts to make engineering education more inclusive. She led changes in curricula and classrooms to ensure that they were accessible to all students—not just those with declared disabilities and accommodations. "I'm not afraid of failing," Bennett says of her work, "I'm afraid of not trying."

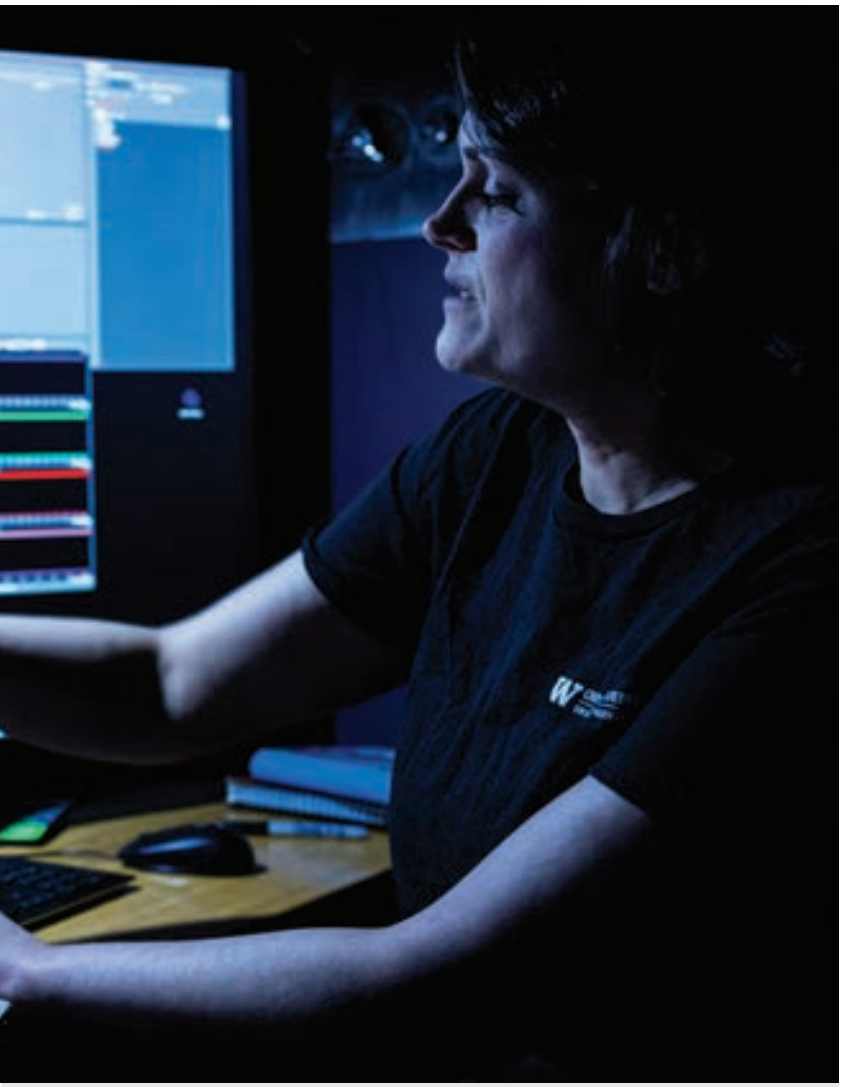
Through Bennett's leadership, over 70% of her department's teaching faculty adopted universal design principles—a framework for improving usability and accessibility. "The likelihood of working with, supervising or becoming someone with a disability is quite high," she says. "As a student with disabilities, this allowed me to make a difference for others." Her long-term goal is to see these accessibility measures used across the University.

For the near future, Bennett will continue her work at the Nance Lab as a UW chemical engineering graduate student. She plans to apply therapeutics to the SAW model, hoping to find an effective treatment for brain injuries and advance to clinical trials. Since 2004, there have been 138 clinical trials for TBI; all of them have failed. Bennett is determined to change that outcome.

"Private funding support allows me to do this—to serve the UW community, our veteran community and every person affected by TBI," says Bennett. "The most rewarding thing about being in school at this stage of my life is the continued opportunity to serve."

Bennett examines a high-resolution image of brain tissue taken with a confocal microscope, which uses lasers to illuminate brain cells and their nuclei.

Microglia are the immune cells that keep the brain healthy by responding to pathogens and injury-related damage. This 160x magnification shows rupturing microglia membranes (in green) as they explode. The round shapes are cell nuclei—healthy live ones in blue, and dead or dying ones in pink or red.



DENNIS WISE

Philanthropy Advances Science

Philanthropy has been crucial in supporting not only Bennett's research but the work of all researchers at the Nance Lab. Private donations fuel the success of the lab, making it possible for faculty, grad students and undergrads like Bennett to do the kinds of high-risk and exploratory research projects that can lead to discovery.

The changing landscape of funding has made private support even more vital, as many labs suddenly can no longer offer hands-on research opportunities. Without these investments, Bennett points out, "an entire generation of young scientists will be denied exposure to research early in their careers"—limiting the future of innovation in fields like brain injury and disease.

Associate Professor Nance notes that private support "is a critical piece in the bigger funding landscape. It provides opportunities for graduate students, faculty and undergraduates to carry out research." She sums it up: "Philanthropy advances science."

Empower undergraduate researchers. When you support the Office of Undergraduate Research, you help Huskies like Kristin Bennett work alongside faculty to make new discoveries and advance knowledge.
go.uw.edu/magazine

CYRUS MCCRIMMON

With Gratitude

By Ken Denman
Chair, UW Foundation Board

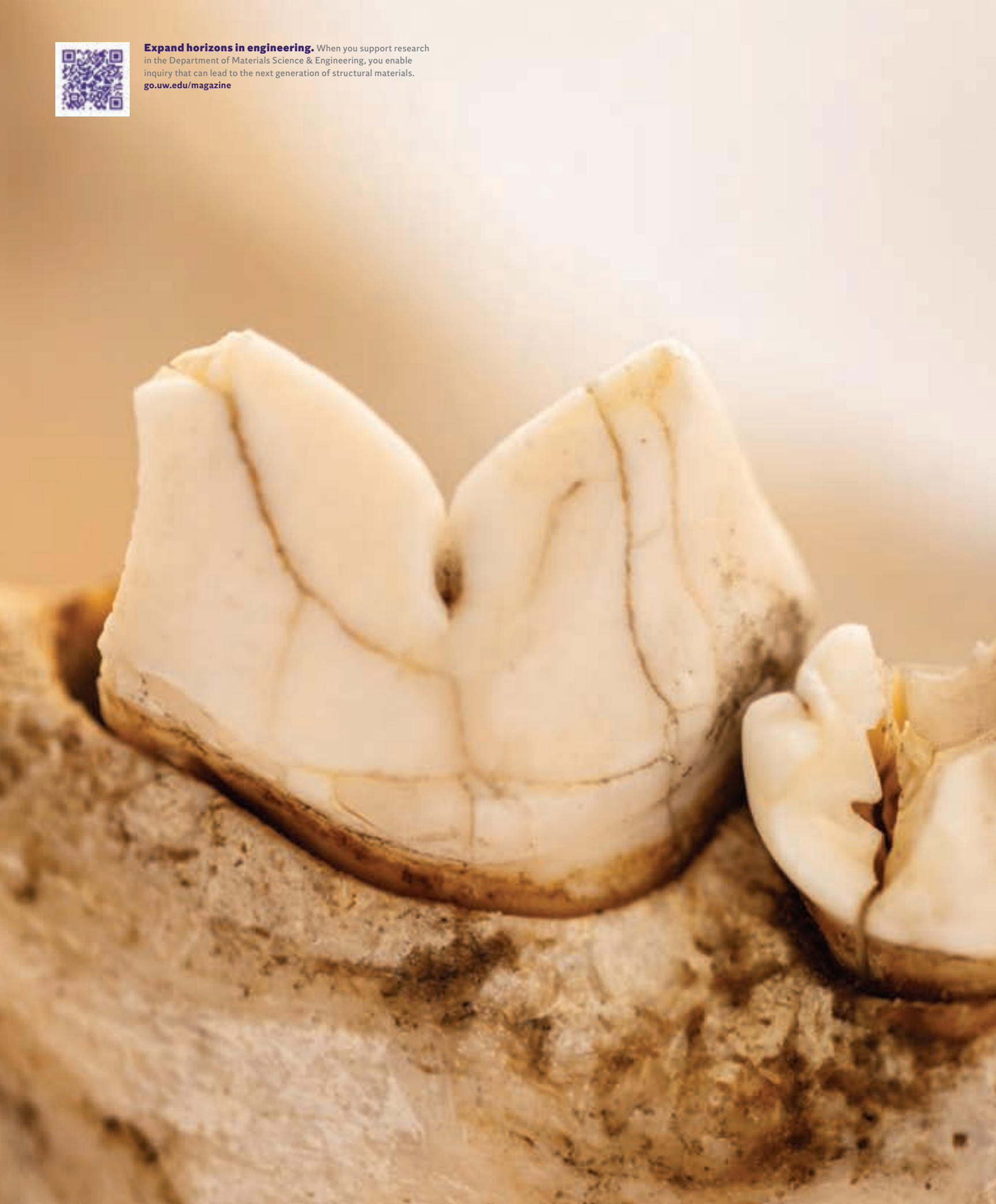
I've been a proud Husky for many decades—first as an MBA student, then as a visiting professor and board member. In that time, I've watched the UW rise to become one of the top universities in the nation and world. Faculty, researchers and students see the University as the place to improve lives, make prizewinning discoveries and chart their lifelong journeys.

Integral to the UW's success has been the energetic, intelligent, passionate and authentic leadership of President Ana Mari Cauce, who is stepping down later this month. I deeply respect and admire President Cauce's rare ability to lead with empathy while making tough decisions and owning them. We saw that in action during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when she had to make the difficult choice to move the UW to remote instruction—becoming the first school in the country to do so. Over her impressive career and decade-long tenure as president, she tackled many strategic, foundational and often emotional issues, and there was never any question of where the buck stopped.

President Cauce would agree with me that our success has also been made possible by your support. Thanks to you, undergraduates like Kristin Bennett, a Navy veteran who transferred to the UW to study chemical engineering, can create a new model to study traumatic brain injury. I hope you're as inspired as I am by Bennett's journey and the impact her research could have on millions of lives. Your generosity also empowers researchers like Materials Science & Engineering Professor Dwayne Arola to ask big questions like "How can we make stronger materials?"—and to study tooth enamel to find answers.

These are just a tiny slice of the possibilities you create when you give to, volunteer with or advocate for the UW—and that support is more vital than ever now, when higher education and research funding are under increased scrutiny and threat.

We'll continue to need your partnership and leadership as we open a new chapter at the UW—and consider where we can go next. It's a chapter I look forward to writing together.



Molar Power

Breaking a tooth on a sandwich led to an aha moment—and a potential breakthrough for creating tough synthetic materials. The broken tooth and the revelation both belonged to Dwayne Arola, ’89, ’91, ’96, a UW professor of materials science and engineering with adjunct appointments in mechanical engineering, oral health sciences and restorative dentistry. “My dentist said teeth have a way to resist fracture,” he says. “They’re a mixture of mineral and organic materials, a composite of sorts—so I got interested in why that occurred.”

Arola’s interest led a team of University of Washington researchers to explore exactly how enamel, the outer layer of a tooth, works to keep teeth functioning throughout a lifespan. Their goal is to develop the next generation of synthetic materials, inspired by the design of tooth enamel to manage cracks and withstand strong forces.

Since other animals’ tooth enamel is less dense than that of humans and not typically fluoridated, it’s easier to view its underlying microstructure. By analyzing molar specimens from lions, African wild dogs, gray wolves, black bears, snow leopards and other predators, borrowed from the Burke Museum of Natural History & Culture’s impressive collection, the team has learned that enamel’s ability to weather cracks comes from *decussation*—the woven pattern in its microstructure. The team recently turned to studying differences in enamel among primates, examining changes related to diet and evolution. Says Arola, “I never imagined that breaking a tooth would lead to such an interesting adventure.”

Tough, wear-resistant synthetic materials modeled after these patterns could have a variety of uses, from armor for tanks to ballistics and aerospace. On the prospect of helping inform the next generation of strong materials, the research team is all smiles.

By Brooke Fisher with Anikka Stanley
Photo by Dennis Wise

Explore Charm and Farm, Wonderful Wildlife and Colorful Chapels

Vietnam, Machu Picchu and Istanbul offer once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to experience and enjoy new lands

Machu Picchu to the Galapagos
March 31–April 15, 2026
Tour Operator: Odysseys Unlimited
Traverse the magnificent Sacred Valley, staying overnight at astounding Machu Picchu and absorbing its mystery on two guided visits. Encounter the history and beauty of Cuzco and Quito—both UNESCO sites. Then spend four nights on beautiful Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos, cruising by private yacht with an expert naturalist guide to nearby islands to observe their unique wildlife.

Check out these highlighted trips and many more at Washington.edu/alumni/travel

Journey through Vietnam
January 17–31, 2026
Tour Operator: Odysseys Unlimited
Get acquainted with French-accented Hanoi and explore stunning Ha Long Bay. Stay in a beachfront hotel in Da Nang and tour the acclaimed Cham Museum and Hoi An's charming Old Town. Enjoy a cooking lesson and visit a farming settlement. Explore Hue's vast Imperial Citadel. With two nights in the storied Mekong Delta, experience river life and visit a floating market.

Istanbul & the Turquoise Coast
May 6–16, 2026
Tour Operator: AHI Travel
Revel in Istanbul's spectacular mosques and palaces. Tour Cappadocia's "fairy chimney" rock formations and frescoed chapels carved into the landscape—then descend into a subterranean city. Spend three nights aboard an exclusively chartered gulet yacht, docking in picturesque port towns and tranquil harbors along the Turquoise Coast.

REAL DAWGS WEAR PURPLE

TIM LEHMAN, '06, '16

INDIGENOUS PLANNING STRATEGIST, CITY OF SEATTLE

From tsunami evacuation towers on the Washington coast to sustainable rural planning in China, Tim Lehman (Northern Arapaho) found his passion for designing through a cultural and social-justice lens at the University of Washington. As a geography major and then a graduate student in landscape architecture and urban planning, Lehman discovered his calling to create spaces where people can celebrate, practice their cultures and be themselves. Since graduating, the proud double Dawg has designed spaces for Indigenous communities, including an elder-care facility in Oklahoma, and Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center at Seattle's Discovery Park. He also teaches the next generation of Huskies as a landscape architecture instructor. And as the city of Seattle's first Indigenous planning strategist, Lehman now serves the urban Native community he's a part of.

Lehman, pictured here at Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center, worked with local Indigenous community groups to remove invasive plant species and replace them with native plants.

RealDawgsWearPurple WearPurple UWearPurple

Empowering the UW Community: Career, Campus, and Civic Opportunities

The University of Washington Alumni Association presents programs and services that support our students, build community with our alumni and friends and strengthen higher education in Washington. Empowered by the dedicated support of our 60,000 members, we are proud to provide impactful programs and services, including:

Career connections and professional development opportunities for students and alumni. From UW Husky Landing to the Huskies@Work matching program, practical job search trainings and the more comprehensive Career Design Fellowship; UWAA offers a range of opportunities for networking and professional growth.

Student scholarships and campus support. Through student scholarships and financial support for UW community events and Registered Student Organizations (RSOs), UWAA is an engaged campus partner that brings students and alumni together.

Opportunities to advocate and learn. UWAA membership supports UW Impact, a program which creates opportunities for alumni to participate in civic engagement across the state in support of the UW.

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COURTESY UW MEDICINE

Fighting Stigma, Fighting STDs

Dr. King Holmes transformed the study of sexually transmitted infections into a respected field of research

By Jon Marmor

He is universally acknowledged as a founder of the academic field of sexually transmitted infection research, epidemiology, prevention and care. Dr. King Holmes, '68, '69, was a longtime University of Washington professor and researcher known for his brilliance in the lab, his candor and his disarming approach.

The title of his first book, written with Jennifer Wear, says it all: "How to Have Intercourse Without Getting Screwed." Once, at a lecture, he explained the pun: "I wrote it for my kids."

Holmes was the first to chair the UW's Department of Global Health and a leader in the Division of Allergy & Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine. His work in STI research resulted in improved care—and just as important, the destigmatization of both patients and researchers around the world. He wrote the field's definitive textbook and trained and mentored 170 scientists.

His impact was immediate and far-reaching. In 1989, with the support of the deans of the UW's six health-sciences schools, he created the Center for AIDS and STD to unite all AIDS- and STD-related research, clinical and training programs at the UW and affiliated institutions. He had the vision to expand the UW's impact in international health, resulting in the rapid development of groundbreaking programs in HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases around the world.

From 1984 to 1989, Holmes served as chief of medicine at Harborview Medical Center, where he supported expanding on-site research facilities with the Harborview Research & Training Building and the Ninth & Jefferson Building, which houses the Seattle King County Public Health Sexual Health Clinic, the UW Center for AIDS and STD, the UW International Clinical Research Center and another lab for research on HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Holmes "brought sexually transmitted diseases out of the closet," Judith Wasserheit, a UW colleague, once told The Seattle Times. "King did pivotal research on almost every aspect, every single STD, every diagnostic or treatment."

Holmes died March 9 at the age of 87.

RECOGNITION

Carol James was married to legendary Husky football coach Don James for 61 years. Known as "the Dawgmother," she provided a family atmosphere for the Husky football program during Don's 18-year Husky career and often hosted recruits for breakfast. "Since arriving in Seattle with Coach James in 1975, Carol has been one of the Husky football program's most gracious and welcoming ambassadors," says UW Athletic Director Pat Chun. Carol died Jan. 26 at the age of 92.

Frank Chopp, '75, was the 46th speaker of the Washington House of Representatives. A passionate advocate for affordable housing and providing services for our most vulnerable residents, he was Washington's longest-serving leader in state government. The Bremerton native "was a force of nature. … His vision and passion will live on in countless programs and affordable housing projects," says former Housing Division Assistant Director Corina Grigoras. He died March 22 at the age of 71.

Charlie "Chuck" Alm, '58, was a member of the UW's legendary 1958 men's varsity eight crew that beat the Soviet National Team in Moscow in the first-ever sporting event broadcast live to the U.S. from behind the Iron Curtain. "Chuck was a giant amongst us and inspired generations of Husky oarsmen and coaches," says men's head coach Michael Callahan, '96. Alm went on to serve as executive director and board president of the UW Alumni Association. He also served as board president of the Washington Athletic Club, 101 Club and Northwest Harvest. In addition, he was prime minister of Seafair. He died Jan. 16 at the age of 87.

Columns

In Memory

ALUMNI

JOSEPH "LOUIE" HAMM
Woodinville, age 88, Dec. 3

DARLENE MCDANIEL
Bellevue, age 90, Jan. 6

HORACE A. "HAL" NICHOLAS
Issaquah, age 96, Jan. 17

1940

CATHERINE "CAY" BENNETT
'42, Seattle, age 101, May 3, 2023

WILLIAM JOHN CODE
'48, Seattle, age 103, Dec. 4

WALTER DONALD BOWLES
'49, Ventura, California, age 100, Dec. 21

JOYCE SIGRID HORBACH
'49, Issaquah, age 96, Jan. 27

1950

MARILYN EBLING JORGENSEN
'50, Bellevue, age 97, Dec. 2

JOHN "JACK" WAECHTER
'50, Bermuda Dunes, California, age 96, Dec. 17

ROBERT WEBER
'50, Mercer Island, age 98, Feb. 28

JOSEPH GREENGARD
'51, '52, Seattle, age 95, Jan. 14

WILLIAM D. LINDELL
'52, Wenatchee, age 95, Dec. 29

JACK SEELEY
'52, Seattle, age 95, Feb. 12

KATHRYN ANN HENSEY
'53, '71, '87, Renton, age 93, Feb. 16

DAVID NOVAK
'53, Bothell, age 92, Feb. 21

STUART WEISS
'53, Des Moines, age 95, June 7, 2024

RICHARD L. OLSON
'54, Columbus, Georgia, age 92, Nov. 26

RICHARD E. PAETZKE
'54, Kenmore, age 92, Feb. 19

DAVID J. DORSEY
'55, Wenatchee, age 94, Jan. 20

GERALD BERKELHAMMER
'56, Skillman, New Jersey, age 93, Dec. 31

ROBERT S. BOYD
'56, East Wenatchee, age 90, Jan. 27

CAROL DALLAS GRANT
'56, Lynnwood, age 90, Jan. 25

EDWARD HILPERT JR.
'56, Concord, New Hampshire, age 94, Jan. 23

JOHN H. JESSUP JR.
'56, Kirkland, age 90, Jan. 10

GEORGE RIEDINGER
'56, Wenatchee, age 91, March 23

CAROL ODEGARD YURKANIN
'56, Bothell, age 90, Feb. 8

JULIAN "PETE" DEWELL
'57, Seattle, age 95, March 3

ARLOENE MALLORY
'57, Desert Hot Springs, California, April 10, 2024

JOHN E. "JACK" MEREDITH
'57, Auburn, age 90, March 12

PETER HAROLD HANSELL
'58, Seattle, age 89, Nov. 22

SUZANNE TRIMBLE CLOORE
'59, Apollo Beach, Florida, age 87, Dec. 22

NANCY LOU CUSHING
'59, Sammamish, age 87, Dec. 9

PATRICIA HOWARD JOLLY
'59, Seattle, age 87, Feb. 21

NEAL "ROGER" SCOTT
'59, Lacey, age 87, Oct. 24

WALTER GREGSON VAUX
'59, Port Townsend, age 87, Jan. 17

LEE WHEELER
'59, Kirkland, age 88, Jan. 17

W. MICHAEL WYNE
'59, Beaverton, Oregon, age 87

1960

JOHN M. WOLF
'60, Birmingham, Michigan

JOSEPH L. STRABALA
'62, Tucson, Arizona, age 92, Dec. 1, 2021

CHARLES W. HUFFINE
'63, '68, '75, Seattle, age 83, Feb. 1

EDWARD A. DEMKO
'64, Vancouver, Washington, age 85, May 12, 2024

MALCOLM B. MADENWALD
'64, '70, Anacortes, age 85, Feb. 19

VIRDEN A. DOHNER
'65, Wichita, Kansas, age 89, March 26, 2024

CLAUDE ROBINSON
'65, '67, Vancouver, Washington, age 81, Jan. 31

JOHN EDWARD ERNEST
'66, Seattle, age 91, Feb. 1

MICHAEL FULLER
'66, '71, Turlock, California

JILL ANN PRINCEHOUSE
'66, Seattle, age 82, March 1

GEORGE "PETER" BECK
'67, Winlock, age 82, Jan. 20

BARBARA ELLIOTT
'67, Clinton, age 79, Nov. 20

HOWARD T. JOHNSON
'67, Issaquah, age 90, Dec. 15

PATRICK ASHLEY
'68, Chicago, age 78, Oct. 2024

JOANNE HJORT
'68, Seattle, age 80, Dec. 21

MAX RALPH READ III
'68, Bellevue, age 81, Jan. 9

ROBERT DAHL
'69, Kirkland, age 77, March 11

JANET LOUISE DALRYMPLE
'69, Seattle, age 78, Feb. 4

CASPER LANE
'69, Indianola, December 2023

JOHN RANDOLPH SEALEY
'69, Walla Walla, age 79, Oct. 17, 2023

JOHN E. SWEEK
'69, '70, Fort Worth, Texas, age 86, Dec. 11

JUNE WHITSON
'69, Seattle, age 91, Jan. 24

1970

JEAN CARNEY
'70, Salem, Oregon, age 80, Nov. 2

LEE CORKRUM
'70, Hamilton, Montana, age 77, Jan. 5

GREGORY FRANCIS HAUGHIAN
'70, Shoreline, age 77, Feb. 22

JANET LOUISE ROGGE
'70, '74, Seattle, age 75, March 22

HAROLD BROOKINS
'71, Seattle, age 78, March 12

PATRICIA MCCULLOUGH CRAIG
'71, Bellevue, age 93, March 21

STEVEN CRAIG EXCELL
'71, Lynnwood, age 74, Feb. 8, 2024

MARLENE ANN GOULD
'71, Gold Bar, age 76, March 14

LINDA KAY HARMS
'71, Bothell, age 76, Dec. 1

JOSEPHINE POMPEY
'71, Seattle, age 76, Feb. 7

PETER BELDING SCRIBNER
'71, Seattle, age 80, Jan. 11

GEORGE TERPENING
'71, Auburn, age 86, July 20

PEGGY A. NELSON KALLSEN
'72, '83, '00, Vashon, age 75, Dec. 20

GARY LUTHER WESTERKAMP
'72, '73, Olympia, age 80, Feb. 16

MARNIE BEATTIE-PROUTY
'73, '75, Mercer Island, age 98, Dec. 6

WILLIAM R. FAIRWEATHER
'73, Silver Spring, Maryland, age 81, Feb. 23

PHILIP "STEVE" PIVAL
'73, Mililani, Hawaii, age 76, June 16, 2024

HYLTON BRAVO HARD
'74, Seattle, age 79, Feb. 24

DWIGHT HYLAND
'74, '82, Seattle, age 73, Jan. 7

KATHI SUE PLOEGER
'74, Seattle, age 73, Feb. 15

ERIC KARL SALTZ
'74, '78, La Jolla, California, age 71, Oct. 7

PATRICIA STOCKDALE
'74, Shoreline, age 95, Dec. 12

CLIFFORD THURMAN
'74, Seattle, age 83, Jan. 15

JEANNE ALLISON BARROS
'75, Hollywood, Florida, age 75, Dec. 4

CHRISTINE KEENEY
'75, '80, Corvallis, Oregon

KENNETH M. KIRKPATRICK
'75, Sammamish, age 71, Feb. 11

STELLA ROLPH
'75, Burlington, age 94, Dec. 2, 2022

LARILYN ZELLER STENKAMP
'75, Seattle, age 76, Dec. 12

MARK BRASHEM
'77, Bellevue, age 70, Jan. 25

PATRICIA R. RIGALI
'77, Seattle, age 76, Dec. 4

JOSEPH RUNTE
'77, Mill Creek

REBECCA A. SMITH
'77, Mill Valley, California, age 68, Dec. 15, 2023

STEPHEN TODD
'77, Freeland

NAN MCMURRY
'78, '80, Seattle, age 87, Jan. 10

NINA WEST
'78, '99, Seattle, age 68, Nov. 26

WILLIAM ASBURY BECK JR.
'79, '85, '97, Maple Valley, age 69, Dec. 10

ROSEMARY O'HARA
'79, Seattle, age 92, Dec. 23

JOYCE ALBERTA PROUDLOCK
'79, Shoreline, age 84, Feb. 10

1980

SHIRLEY ANN MILLER
'80, Maple Valley, age 82, March 15

KATHLEEN SUE LOWNEY
'81, Brasstown, North Carolina, age 65, Jan. 8, 2024

SHEILA MARIE WARD
'81, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, age 72, Jan. 4

DAVID ROBERT CARLSTROM
'82, Seattle, age 75, Jan. 12

CHARLES M. STILLMAN
'82, Seattle, age 79, Feb. 18

STEPHANIE BROWN SHEA
'83, '88, Clyde Hill, age 83, Feb. 13

JEFFREY LLOYD ING
'85, '96, Seattle, age 62, Dec. 13

REBECCA PERBIX MALLOS
'85, '90, Everett, age 76, Dec. 14

1990

KYLE WATSON
'91, Bellevue, age 57, Feb. 18

BRIGETTE K. NIXON
'93, '00, '05, Portland, Oregon, age 52, June 12, 2024

KATHERINE NGO PYKE
'94, Lynnwood, age 52, Jan. 21

JASON SOUZA
'95, Seattle, age 52, Sept. 24

LISA MECKLENBERG JACKSON
'97, Missoula, Montana, age 57, May 27, 2024

ROBERTA KAY REED
'97, Renton, age 77, Jan. 11

2000

STEVEN KIRCH
'04, North Bend, age 46, Feb. 8

JEFFREY BOYCE
'11, Tacoma, age 71, Dec. 7

AADITHYA "AADU" PRAKASH
'21, Seattle, age 32, March 28

FACULTY AND FRIENDS

WILLIAM A. ATKINSON served as a professor in the College of Forest Resources from 1970 to 1979. He later managed forest land for Crown Zellerbach Corp. and finished his career as chair of the Forest Engineering Department at Oregon State University. He died March 2 at the age of 91.

PUTNAM BARBER led a Renton-based experimental program that recruited 18- to 25-year-olds to work for social service agencies. He later headed up the Washington Office of Community Action and was recruited to teach classes on nonprofits at the UW. He died March 8 at the age of 84.

KARL BANSE was born in East Prussia in 1929, educated at the University of Kiel and accepted an assistant professor job at the growing UW School of Oceanography in 1960. He served the UW for 62 years in the field of marine biology. He died Feb. 8 at the age of 95.

JOHN SKINNER BEHNKE served on the board of the Henry Art Gallery from 2000 to 2014 and was board chair from 2007 to 2010. His commitment to the Henry lives on through the John S. Behnke endowed directorship. He died Jan. 25 at the age of 72.

MARJORIE CADDEY worked at the UW for many years in the departments of Public Health, Forestry, Economics, Fisheries and the Center of Quantitative Science. She died Feb. 11 at the age of 89.

CAROL JANE CASSINELLI earned a master's degree in English from the UW and served as editor for the UW College of Engineering's newsletter, "The Trend in Engineering." She died Jan. 13, 2024, at the age of 87.

HARRY SIDNEY COOKER joined the UW faculty in 1977 as a professor in Speech and Hearing Sciences and served until his retirement in 1999. He died Sept. 14 at the age of 94.

KELLY CORR was regarded as one of Washington state's best trial lawyers. He also taught part-time in the UW School of Law. He died Feb. 3 at the age of 76.

WILLIAM G. COUSER was head of the UW Division of Nephrology from 1982 to 2002. Under his direction, the division became known worldwide for research and training in kidney diseases. He died Feb. 24 at age 85.

J. PATRICK DOBEL was a longtime professor in the UW's Evans School of Public Policy & Governance. He taught ethics leadership and strategic management, and he published the groundbreaking book "Compromise and Political Action: Political Morality in Liberal and Democratic Life." He served as associate dean several times and was most proud of his service as the UW's Faculty Athletic Representative from 2004 to 2011. He was appointed the John and Marguerite Corbally University Professor of Public Service in 2011. He died Jan. 29 at the age of 76.

JAMES DONNETTE, '69, was associate professor emeritus in the Department of Architecture in the UW College of Built Environments from 1966 to 1997. He earned his master's degree in architecture from the UW in 1969. He died Nov. 10 at the age of 87.

JOHN FINKE was a UW Tacoma professor who created antibodies to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease by replicating the disease in mice. He died June 23, 2023 at the age of 52.

MICHAEL G. FLORENCE, '80, completed his surgical residency at the UW, trained UW surgical residents and medical students and was a founder of the UW's Surgical Care and Outcomes Assessment Program. He died March 2 at the age of 75.

REMO GALVAGNO, '61, owned Air Van, a Washington-based moving company that has been a supporter of Husky Athletics and the UW Alumni Association. He died Feb. 1 at the age of 87.

GORDON GRAY served in the Navy and Air Force before moving to Seattle to join the UW's Applied Physics Lab. He died Jan. 18 at the age of 97.

MARY ELIZABETH GRONLUND spent 25 years working as an RN and beloved colleague in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at UW Medical Center-Montlake. She died March 12 at the age of 92.

JAMES HARDISTY was a professor in the UW School of Law for more than 40 years. A stickler for following rules and laws, he died Dec. 30 at the age of 83.

CHICK HARRIS served as a defensive backs coach for the Huskies football team from 1975 to 1981. He died Jan. 6 at the age of 79.

MARVIN T. HERARD, '54, was a longtime professor at Seattle University and in 1961 became its first professor to receive a Fulbright Fellowship. He died Nov. 22 at the age of 95.

JACOB "JACK" HILDEBRANDT, '66, was a UW professor in the departments of medicine, surgery and pediatrics. He was a UW faculty member for more than 40 years. He died Jan. 5 at the age of 94.

PATRICIA HOEY, '79, '83, '98, was a pharmacist and a pioneer in developing electronic medical records. She died Jan. 22 at the age of 65.

NANCY E. DUNCAN HUSS served as executive secretary to the director of the Henry Art Gallery. She died Jan. 21 at the age of 81.

DAVID EUGENE HYRE was a research scientist at the UW. He died Jan. 30 at the age of 59.

ALLAN FRED JOHNSON, '59, served as chief of medicine and chief of staff at UW Medical Center-Northwest. He died Feb. 24 at age 96.

DIRK C. JONGEJAN survived the hardships of growing up in the Netherlands during the German occupation in World War II. He later served as a guest lecturer in the UW Department of Landscape Architecture. He died Nov. 28 at the age of 86.

RITA KATZ, '60, was born in Belarus and was 4 years old when she and her family fled from the Nazis. After hiding in a swamp near starvation until the end of World War II, she later made her way to a displaced persons camp in Berlin and came to Seattle in 1947 not speaking English. She graduated from Garfield High School and the UW. She died March 25 at the age of 88.

JOHN EDWARD KEENE, '61, '69, served on the faculty of the UW School of Medicine. He died Nov. 23 at the age of 89.

JOAN MARIE KELDAY worked in the Office of the Dean at the UW School of Medicine as assistant director of the WWAMI Program. She died March 30 at the age of 93.

PAULA LANGBEHN was a psychiatric nurse who worked more than 40 years at Harborview Medical Center. She died Jan. 29 at the age of 82.

JAMIE C. LEE worked as the HR department manager for the Burke Museum. She died March 24, 2019, at the age of 48.

INEZ LILLEOREN, '50, '61, was a nurse who later became the UW's director of nursing education. She died Feb. 19 at the age of 98.

MADELYN LINDSAY, '68, '70, served as assistant director of the Seattle Center and on the Evans School advisory board. She died Dec. 14 at age 78.

WILLIAM A. "BILL" LOEW worked as a dental technician and instructor in the UW School of Dentistry for more than 40 years. He died Oct. 10 at the age of 83.

MARILYN R. MORGAN worked in the UW Dean of Women's Office from 1957 to 1963. She died Jan. 16 at the age of 94.

SANDRA MOTZER, '75, '76, was a UW nursing professor and longtime community volunteer in Lake City. She died Jan. 8 at the age of 80.

CHESTER LEE NACHTIGAL served on the faculty of the UW College of Engineering. He died March 5 at the age of 83.

HOMAYOUN NACIFY completed an internship at the UW and provided years of health-care service to SeaMar Community Health Centers. He died Dec. 13 at the age of 91.

WALLACE NELSON, '52, served in the Navy and later was a UW clinical associate professor of neurological surgery. He died Feb. 16 at the age of 99.

KAYOKO OGIMOTO spent 22 years as a research scientist in the UW's Nutrition Obesity Research Center Energy Balance Core. She died Jan. 21 at the age of 64.

ERIC W. PETERSON, '87, was a former Husky football player who enjoyed a successful career in the construction trade. He died Feb. 9 at the age of 61.

DEAN MARLEY POLIK was a former UW student who was a longtime Tyee Club member. He died Nov. 4 at the age of 76.

ROY PROSTERMAN was a well-known UW law professor and land-reform advocate. He died Feb. 27 at the age of 89.

CATHERINE RICE RUTH worked in the UW transportation office. She died recently at the age of 80.

DARRELL SCATTERGOOD, '66, was the administrator of the UW's Physics Department. He died March 1 at the age of 89.

ERIC SCIGLIANO worked as a science writer for Washington Sea Grant. He died in January at the age of 71.

FRANCIS "SANDY" SPELLMAN, '68, '75, worked at the UW Primate Center and later joined the UW Bioengineering faculty. He died Feb. 7 at age 87.

ROBERT SPINDEL became director of the UW's Applied Physics Lab in 1987. He died Jan. 8 at the age of 80.

REINHARD STETTLER was a longtime professor in the UW College of the Environment who studied trees. He died Dec. 9 at the age of 94.

DIANE THOME joined the faculty of the UW School of Music in 1977 and taught music theory and composition. She was named the UW's 1996 Solomon Katz Distinguished Lecturer. She died Jan. 12 at the age of 82.

HENRY TODD, '81, worked in information technology at the UW for 30 years. He died Dec. 17 at the age of 83.

AVERY WEISS was a UW professor emeritus of ophthalmology. He died Dec. 1 at the age of 75.

CURTIS WAKEFIELD WIENKER, '39, was a longtime professor at the University of South Florida. He died Oct. 19 at the age of 80.

Udub

THINGS THAT DEFINE **THE UW**

First in Her Class

Before women could vote, Clara McCarty of Steilacoom became the UW's first graduate and a pioneer for women in public service

By Doug Parry

A sign that welcomes visitors to Steilacoom, a small town southwest of Tacoma, announces that "Steilacoom was first." It was the first incorporated town in what's now the state of Washington and was home to the state's first sawmill, first jail, first school district and first public library.

It's only fitting that Steilacoom was the birthplace of the first woman—first person, in fact—to graduate from the Territorial University of Washington. Clara McCarty was only 18 years old when she earned a Bachelor of Science in June 1876.

That diploma came 15 years after the University first opened at its original site on the outskirts of downtown Seattle in 1861. During its turbulent early years, it closed in 1863, from 1867 to 1869, and again in 1874. The University would close one more time "on account of poverty" the year McCarty graduated, but it then managed to keep the doors open for another 148 years and counting.

When McCarty attended the young University, Seattle was a hardscrabble town with a reputation for lawlessness and a population of a few thousand, mostly loggers and sailors. The University mainly served the city's schoolchildren, with only a few students taking collegiate courses. There were only eight faculty members, and tuition was $30 a year.

"Typewriters and fountain pens were unknown, and even notebooks and pen and ink were scarce," she later recalled. "Nearly all writing was done with pencil on foolscap paper."

According to the Seattle Daily Times, McCarty, a woman of many firsts, was the first woman to earn a bachelor's degree on the West Coast. Years later, she told the newspaper that as the only graduate of 1876, she had "shared honors as class president and valedictorian."

After teaching and earning a master's degree at the University of California, she returned to Pierce County, and in 1880, at 22 years old, successfully ran for election as its first superintendent of public schools. It was three years before women in the territory won the right to vote and 40 years before the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified. The first woman elected to public office in the territory, she stayed on the job for two years before marrying and retiring from office. Her husband, John Henry Wilt, was a fellow teacher who became deputy district court clerk and county sheriff.

In 1883, according to biographer Deb Freedman, McCarty became better known in Pierce County for another first: She owned the county's first typewriter. She made about $10 a day—more than $300 in today's dollars—typing briefs for a law firm. She also entertained scores of visitors who knocked on her door to behold the new technology.

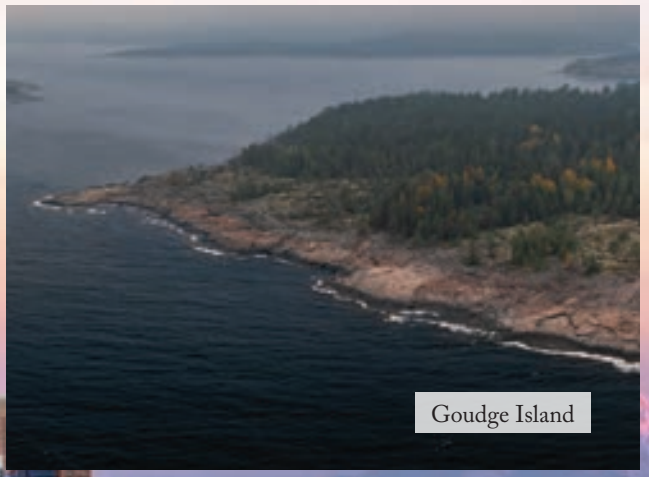
McCarty stayed active in Tacoma civic organizations and returned to work after her husband's death in 1909. Ever the go-getter, she took on jobs as a secretary at the YWCA, as an assistant at the Washington State Historical Society and as a librarian. She died in 1929 at age 71.

Most of today's students might not know who McCarty was, but her name should ring a bell. McCarty Hall, one of the student residences on campus, was named for her in 1962.

The University's first graduate, Clara McCarty (inset), earned her degree in an era when campus included schoolchildren, college-level students and faculty, pictured above in 1883.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF UW LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UW3269 AND UW2227

A Legacy of Dedication and Impact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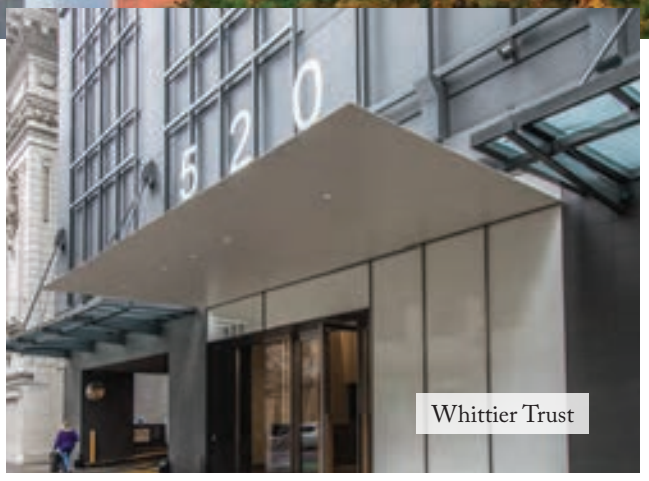

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