JACQUES PÉPIN,
88, LONGTIME BU FACULTY MEMBER, HAS A NEW COOKBOOK AND A NEW GENERATION OF FANS ON SOCIAL MEDIA
On April 3, 2024, Boston University celebrated 10 years of Giving Day. That’s 10 years of supporting students, championing our teams, fueling discoveries, inspiring artists, building community, and investing in tomorrow. Your support, every day, makes a difference.

Thank you!

givingday.bu.edu

Number of Boston residents, civic leaders, and representatives from local nonprofits who gathered at BU’s Howard Thurman Center for Common Ground on January 13 for a Civic Summit organized by Boston Mayor Michelle Wu. The goal: to help inspire and empower attendees as they work to find solutions to the challenges facing their communities.

TIP SHEET

FACTS, FIGURES, AND HUMBLEBRAGS

On April 3, 2024, Boston University celebrated 10 years of Giving Day. That’s 10 years of supporting students, championing our teams, fueling discoveries, inspiring artists, building community, and investing in tomorrow. Your support, every day, makes a difference.

See All Results Here

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“...”

Actor, director, and producer Ben Stiller, speaking at BU in October, when asked by a student for his advice on balancing the fears of feedback and criticism from audiences and critics. Stiller was invited to campus by COM lecturer Jeff Kahn, an old friend and a cocreator—with Stiller—of the Emmy-winning sketch comedy show The Ben Stiller Show in the 1990s.

200

Number of years BU has offered a course on Bob Dylan, using the legendary singer-songwriter as a central character to teach students about song structure, artistic intent, and cultural critique. Back in 2008, the course was a relatively novel proposition, but it was a hit with students and created a wider splash when NPR caught wind. Today, it still fills up with aspiring writers, musicians, and fans.

15

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PATRIOT LEAGUE CHAMPS!

The men’s soccer team won its first-ever Patriot League title in November, beating Lafayette 1-0 in the conference championship.

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT... ZOMBIES

Maia Gil’Adí, a CAS assistant professor of English and Latinx literature and a specialist in horror and violence in fiction, is the founder of The Zombie Archive (thezombiearchive.com), where she is building a detailed timeline of zombies on the big screen and, eventually, a one-stop shop of literature, film, art, cultural events, and scholarly sources on the zombie. A few factoids from her site:

1932’s White Zombie, starring Bela Lugosi, is considered the first feature-length zombie film.

1968’s Night of the Living Dead, a cult classic, was selected by the Library of Congress for preservation in the National Film Registry as a “culturally, historically or aesthetically significant” film.

2011’s Juan de los Muertos, one of Gil’Adí’s faves, “is a Cuban homage to Shaun of the Dead.”
A Journalist’s Responsibility

I JUST READ in the latest issue about the appointment of a misinformation and disinformation expert to teach journalism classes starting this spring ("Joan Donovan, Nationally Recognized Expert in Misinformation and Disinformation, Joins BU Faculty," Fall 2023). With all the social bias in the media today, I hope she can keep “politics” out of her class curriculum and teach that unbiased and factual reporting is the number one responsibility of a “journalist.”

Peter G. Parsons (COM’65) | Shokan, N.Y.

A Correction

WHAT THRILLS me most about Dr. Gilliam is her university. Her background bespeaks a strong connection to the sciences and arts. (I am drawn to the unique approach her late father had to his art.)

Tangentially, I am proud that a current student of mine...is applying to the music education program at CFA. With Dr. Gilliam’s outreach approach, I think it is impossible that [he] will not have the privilege of meeting her. As pianists, we cannot cross our fingers, but I am hopeful that will happen.

Welcome, Dr. Gilliam!

Sylvia Karbas Fararaj (CFA’57) | Yarmouth Port, Mass.

Words of Welcome for BU’s President-Elect

WHAT A THRILL to learn of our new President-elect, Melissa Gilliam ("Boston University Names Melissa L. Gilliam 11th President," Fall 2023). Not only is she superlative in each of her accomplishments, but I feel her ebullience and affinity could qualify as “best friend.”

I am an alum—CPA’57 (piano performance). My continuing formal studies/training of about 70 years has brought many fine students to my keys, some of whom have continued to study at BU, one performing in the big hall and others in the big hall.

David Miller

Editor’s Note: Howard Zinn did indeed retire in 1988. The story has been corrected online. We regret the error.

Peter G. Parsons (COM’65) | Shokan, N.Y.

Feedback

I LOVE using the Feedback page and I appreciate all the good comments. I am a retired Professor Zinn’s final day as 1979. I was fortunate to have him twice and will remember him several years later (I was fortunate to have him twice and will remember him for a memory pause, as she describes her accomplishments, but I feel her ebullience and affinity could qualify as “best friend.”

Elizabeth B. Page (COM’90) | Center Valley, Pa.

In closing, I’m asking that you do better, not just for your chosen areas of interest, but for everyone. Stop being divisive. End the bias. Rediscover your roots. Perhaps take one of [College of General Studies] Professor Michael Kort’s classes and rethink what political media does in oppressive countries like China and Russia, and then compare and contrast. Thank you.

Dunam Sinkovic (GS/’99, COM’01) | Center Valley, Pa.
BUTV10’S BAY STATE, the country’s longest-running college soap opera (on the air since 1991), follows students at the fictional Beacon Hill College as they navigate young adulthood. Its first-ever musical episode, titled “Catatonic: The Musical” with music and lyrics by the show’s writers, aired in December. It followed Cat, played by Rachel Mannix (CAS’26) (in bed), who is (stay with us now) grappling with the death of her boyfriend, Danny, his cheating with ex-girlfriend Alana, and her murderer brother, Kip, played by Kai Farr (COM’25) (center)—all while trying to decipher Zac, who has stabbed her. Can’t get more sudsy than that!

PHOTO BY JAKE BELCHER

one moment.

PHOTO BY JAKE BELCHER
An institute dedicated to exploring the intersections of business, markets, and society plays a pivotal role in bridging gaps in understanding and collaboration between these crucial domains.

The Ravi K. Mehrotra Institute is being funded in large part by a UK businessman with interest in “exploring the intersections of business, markets, and society.”

BU’s Questrom School of Business will launch an institute to specifically study the role that business plays—both real and ideal—in advancing and solving real-world issues.

The Ravi K. Mehrotra Institute for Business, Markets, and Society (IBMS) “will help others understand and appreciate the role business and markets do, can, and should play in creating lasting prosperity, advancing societal goals, and solving global challenges,” its mission statement reads.

Robert A. Brown, BU president emeritus, and Susan Fournier, dean of Questrom, secured the gift last year that will endow the institute from Ravi Mehrotra, founder and executive chairman of the Foresight Group. Between previously raised donations to the institute and the latest gift from Mehrotra (the largest of the donations), the institute has raised a total of $521 million, according to Fournier.

Foresight is a London- and Dubai-based global shipping, drilling, and private equity firm with a commitment to environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG). Its investment arm weighs companies’ comportment with United Nations sustainability goals on climate change and other environmental concerns, in addition to financial considerations. It also runs a foundation to train underprivileged students to work both in merchant marines and on drilling rigs.

Fournier, who is also the business school’s Allen Questrom Professor, says the mission of the school aligns strategically with the mission of IBMS.

Besides helping business and academia, he says, the institute will promote public understanding of market dynamics and economics.

“An institute dedicated to exploring the intersections of business, markets, and society plays a pivotal role in bridging gaps in understanding and collaboration between these crucial domains,” Mehrotra says, “fostering a more informed, ethical, and sustainable approach to commerce and economics.”

Fournier, who is also the business school’s Allen Questrom Professor, says the mission of the school aligns strategically with the mission of IBMS.

“It deals fundamentally with forces that allow business to be powerful and have an effect and a powerful influence,” she says.

The institute’s activities will be threefold, says Fournier. “There’s an
educational mission; a pedagogical, conversational, dialogue mission; and there’s a research mission. It’s very broad-sweeping,” she says. “People are very quick to equate capitalism and profit as bad, and to put business under a microscope that denies its ability to have an impact on society’s problems. Some of what we want to be doing is to have more informed conversations about capitalism, its alternatives, the history of business. This contributes to society as a whole, because people have lost the ability to listen to multiple sides and learn.”

Fournier says the initial research at the new institute will touch on hot topics, such as regulatory impact on healthcare innovation, the promise and perils of implementing and measuring ESG, competition and antitrust, and improving the performance of government bodies through business practices.

Nonresearch activities will include a series of public conversations—Can Capitalism Survive?—among academics, businesspeople, and public officials; creation of a business sentiment index (BSI) that will employ technology to gauge how the public feels about business (the institute will regularly report its BSI results, the way the University of Michigan reports its consumer sentiment index results); and a fellowship program drawing academics, businesspeople, and public officials to BU and beyond. "The idea is getting people out of their dorms and at in-person events with a safe space and with a couple of people who they know are going and who have similar interests,” Sharan says.

The ten have taken part in events at BU and beyond. At the School of Hospitality Administration’s PujaIndus Hospitality Innovation Competition, Popple took home $15,000 in seed money. They also joined MassChallenge, the biggest start-up accelerator in Massachusetts. —Sam Thomas (COM’24)

BU STUDENTS LAUNCH POPPLE, AN EVENT AND ACTIVITY AGGREGATOR

WHAT DO college students do when they’re bored? Sit on their phones? Go for a walk? Wallow in loneliness? If you’re Prianna Sharan (CAS’23) and Remi Chester, you get to work.

“We were talking about freshman year and how much more difficult it was to find things to do when you’re just bored,” says Chester (Questrom’25). “We thought, why don’t we aggregate events at BU and beyond. At the School of Hospitality Administration’s PujaIndus Hospitality Innovation Competition, Popple took home $15,000 in seed money. They also joined MassChallenge, the biggest start-up accelerator in Massachusetts. —Sam Thomas (COM’24)

Spreading Art Appreciation

LISA GREEN is passionate about art. But she isn’t painting landscapes or sculpting figures.

“While I’m not an artist and don’t consider myself particularly creative in the traditional sense of the word, I’ve always loved art and always had an appreciation for it,” says Green (CAS’03), chief of staff for a private equity firm in Santa Barbara, Calif.

One of her fundamental beliefs is that “art is for everyone,” Green says. “And I think it’s really important to educate people about art, so they feel knowledgeable, informed, and opinionated about it.”

Those values are the impetus behind a generous gift from Green and her husband, Mitchell, to the College of Arts & Sciences. The couple recently pledged $1 million to create the Lisa and Mitchell Green Endowment for Humanities Faculty, which benefits humanities faculty, especially those teaching in the Department of History of Art & Architecture. With this gift, the Greens hope to increase access to the study of art at BU.

Lisa Green began her career in the art world—working for Sotheby’s after graduating from BU—but later pivoted to entrepreneurship and then to private equity. She and her husband work for Lead Edge Capital, the firm Mitchell founded in 2009.

The couple has been building an art collection in their home for years, and Green makes it a priority to talk to their four daughters about the pieces.

She learned how much art can enrich a person’s life while she was a BU student. “My professors have been influential in everything I’ve done,” Green says. “To get to this point—from appreciating art to being able to own art—has been amazing.”

With a $1 million gift to the humanities faculty, Lisa and Mitchell Green are increasing access to the study of art. —BY RACHEL P. FARRELL

Lisa Green (CAS’03), with her husband, Mitchell, says it’s important to educate people about art, so they feel knowledgeable and informed.

William Fairfield Warren Society Inducts New Members

THE WILLIAM FAIRFIELD WARREN SOCIETY, established in 2015 to honor those who have given $1 million or more to Boston University, now boasts nearly 260 members, with 22 becoming eligible in 2023. At the most recent Induction of Fellows Ceremo- ny, held December 6 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, medals were presented to Patricia de la Sota (Purdue’73) (from left), Jerry Kneer, Benjamin Clark (Questrom’52), Pamela Avedisian (Hon.’23), Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine Professor Jag Bhawan, Michele von Dambrinkowski (COM’72), Andrea Zanelli (Questrom’88), Mark Gottlieb, and Steven Karban (CAS’79).

The William Fairfield Warren Society, which benefits humanities faculty, especially those teaching in the Department of History of Art & Architecture. With this gift, the Greens hope to increase access to the study of art at BU.
Once upon a time, news-pap ering was an essential of democracy and a subject for communication schools. Today, an estimated 2,500 papers across the country have become extinct since 2005; on average, two of every five newspapers across the country have folded every week. In New Bedford, Mass., the Gannett Co.-owned Standard Times has seen its staff cut to the point that the New York Times describes it as “talking on the character-istics of a ‘ghost’ paper.” But BU’s Daniela Melo is doing her part to save journalism in her city, as cofounder and chair of the New Bedford Light, an online nonprofit newspaper with no paywall or advertising.

The two-year-old Light is part of a “nonprofit media boom” that’s seeing start-ups supplement or replace ailing traditional newspaper advertising with donations: philanthropic, foundation, and corporate. As the Light’s unpaid volunteer chair, Melo, a College of General Studies lecturer in social sciences, runs board meetings, attends committee meet-ings, and has helped with grants-and-hyphen writing and approaching donors. “Like any student of comparative politics,” she says, “I spent a lot of time studying democracy. [But] everything was very abstract to me. This is that in practice. In order to have a healthy democracy, you need to have information [and] accountability of institutions. If you don’t have information, you lose trust. If you lose trust, you get to a moment like the one that we’re crossing right now, [with] high levels of distrust in political institutions.”

The New Bedford Light, Melo says, actively avoids competing with the Standard Times, concentrating on investigative reporting and arts coverage, two perceived holes in the news landscape. The paper’s staff and its board include former Standard Times employees as well as other veteran journalists. Melo, who moved to New Bedford in 2008, brings essential and intimate knowledge of the community. “It’s my profound love for New Bedford, its people, and its history that inspire me to do this work,” she says.

Can This BU Political Scientist Help Save Journalism?  
Daniela Melo cofounded and chairs New Bedford’s online nonprofit newspaper | by Rich Barlow

MET’S ONLINE PROGRAMS CLIMB IN U.S. NEWS RANKINGS

Three graduate programs listed among the nation’s best | by Joli Brown

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE keeps moving up in the U.S. News & World Report Best Online Programs rankings. All three of MET’s online graduate programs in the 2023 U.S. News rankings—in criminal justice, business (non-MBA), and computer information technology—improved their positions from last year’s results. MET also maintained a strong showing in programs supporting veterans.

“These are excellent results that underscore the consistency of our online programs,” says Tanya Zlateva, dean of MET and a professor of the practice of computer science and education. “Our resilience and improvement in the U.S. News rankings are the result of our community’s dedication to excellence in our academics and student support systems,” along with “an eagle eye on the emerging needs of industry, keen awareness of areas in need of improvement, and deep commitment to our mission.”

The rankings are for degree-granting distance education pro grams and are based on factors that include the academic quality of the faculty and students’ ability to interact with them online, out-of-class resources for career guidance and financial aid, and student achievement. The second ranking is for programs that provide financial and other assistance to veterans.

THE PROGRAMS ARE:

Master’s in Criminal Justice: Ranked 3rd of 93 schools, up from 4th last year. Among other veterans-supporting programs in the category, MET’s ranked 6th, up from 7th last year.

Master’s in Business (non-MBA): Ranked 6th of 223 schools, up from 9th last year. Among veterans-supporting programs, MET’s ranked 16th, up from 17th last year.

Master’s in Computer Information Technology: Ranked 8th of 92 schools, up from 10th last year. Among veterans-supporting programs, MET’s ranked 13th, the same as last year.
Disinformation Scholar Joins COM

Maria Elizabeth Grabe, inaugural Dalton Family Professor, is ready to take on the “infodemic.” | By Rich Barlow

Working for South Africa’s state-controlled TV under apartheid, documentarian Maria Elizabeth Grabe faced unrelenting censorship. One producer would close his eyes while listening for anti-government criticism in her films, so Grabe learned to shoot unflattering views of officials and to use other visual cues that the man would miss during his shut-eyed sessions. She stayed late at the studio, handing in work during his shut-eyed misses.

Grabe faced unrelenting challenges in apartheid, documenting freedom’s progress and the use of these platforms to manipulate and divide people, rather than bring them together to common understanding of facts and analysis. She explains that BU and its supporters recognize the importance of a university serving the greater good.

The Dalton family, including BU trustee Nathan Dalton (Law’91), endowed the professorship. “Our ability to address both national and global challenges is being impeded by the use of these platforms to manipulate and divide people, rather than bring them together to common understanding of facts and analysis,” says Dalton, the founder of Daybreak Partners, a healthcare and tech investment firm, and cofounder and CEO of the Sora Union Group, a global company designing and building websites, apps, marketing services, and other products.

Grabe inaugurates the professorship as misinformation and disinformation on social media threatens to flood another US election. “I cannot think of a more acute threat to the democratic way of life than doubt about the integrity of information that flows through media platforms,” Grabe says. “The volume, velocity, and variety of contemporary disinformation makes an infodemic diagnosis a reasonable one.”

PAWS-ITIVELY ADORABLE

BU’s new comfort dog is a golden retriever pup named Bean. | By Molly Callahan

The pup’s main job will be offering up affection to anyone in the BU community who might need a little TLC.

The newest member of BU’s campus community is young. And prone to falling asleep in class. But she’s already drawing adoring crowds wherever she goes. And who can blame those cooing fans? After all, a golden retriever puppy is impossible to resist. This pooch, named Bean, is BU’s new comfort dog, and she’s already excelling at the job.

On a recent Friday afternoon, she paused for selfies and drew double takes from students, faculty, and staff in the George Sherman Union. Her handler, BU police officer Giovanni Chevers, beamed with pride as he invited passersby to meet their new colleague. Bean’s main job will be offering up affection to anyone in the BU community who might need a little TLC. Chevers and BUPD Chief Rob Lowe anticipate that she’ll be in high demand during exams, around the holidays, and other stressful times of the year.

“The comfort dog will serve as an additional resource for students experiencing anxiety or stress,” Lowe says. “She’ll also be another way for us to connect with them and the larger campus community, and I think she’s going to be the most popular member of our police department.”

Chevers has been bringing Bean to regular training sessions. When she’s not at school, she lives with him and his family, and for now, she comes to campus every Friday. By July, she’ll be on campus twice a week. And by fall 2025, once all her training is complete, she’ll be on campus full-time.

“She’s the most lovable little thing,” Chevers says. “She loves getting attention, she loves being around people.”

RENAMED BOSTON ARCHAEOLOGY LAB HONORS LATE BU PROFESSOR

Mary C. Beaudry Community Archaeology Center preserves artifacts recovered from hundreds of area sites. | By Amy Laskowski

A nondescript building about 20 minutes from the BU campus holds the remnants of a 19th-century shipwreck, cannonballs from the American Revolution, and Native American arrowheads. These treasures and a million more are meticulously catalogued and stored inside the city of Boston’s archaeology lab, which recently reopened to the public after a three-year renovation.

The lab, founded four decades ago and housed in the City of Boston Archival Center in West Roxbury, also has a new name: the Mary C. Beaudry Community Archaeology Center, in honor of a longtime BU faculty member who died in 2020. Mary Beaudry, a College of Arts & Sciences professor of archaeology and of anthropology, was involved in some of the city’s most important archaeological work, including digs and analyses of objects found at the Paul Revere House in the North End, the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, and the Boston Common.

“We’re so thrilled to honor Mary in this way,” said Joe Bagley (CAS’06), city of Boston archaeologist and a former student of Beaudry’s, at the center’s reopening in October.

“We hope that the work we do here continues her legacy of celebrating underrepresented peoples and really being the voice of the voiceless.”

Attending the opening were 30 or so of Beaudry’s colleagues, friends, and students. Earlier in the day, Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and other politicians celebrated the reopening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Mary Beaudry taught at BU for 40 years. She helped create the University’s archaeology department, and was described in her obituary as a scholar “committed to revealing untold stories,” including those of people of color and women. She mentored and influenced generations of students; many of them are professional archaeologists working at sites across the country and professors teaching at colleges and universities around the world.
Students Win $50K for Helping L.L. Bean Become More Eco-Friendly

Inexpensive Clothes sold by retailers like Amazon and Shein have made it easy to stay on top of trends. But they’re often tossed in the donation pile after several wears or thrown away. Ultimately, 11.3 million articles of clothing end up in landfills every year in the United States alone.

In November, a Questrom School of Business contest attempted to find solutions to the problem, with a $50,000 prize offered to student entrepreneurs as an incentive. The second annual Questrom Sustainability Case Competition challenged students to think of eco-friendly improvements for the event’s two sponsors, clothing and accessory outfitters ReWilder and L.L. Bean. Among the 11 undergraduate and graduate teams that made it from 24 teams across the East Coast that took part, four BU undergrads working together nabbed the top of $50,000 and professional advice on how to implement their ideas.

The team (pictured here) dreamed up a online resale platform for L.L. Bean products, which they called “ReBluen.” Mikhail Gurevich (EN/G’07, Questrom’12) (from left), who donated the $10,000 prize; winners Ilana Arroyo (Questrom’25), Suraj Nellore (Questrom’26, COM’20), Jason Weiss (Questrom’25, COM’23), and Devin Hirsch (Questrom’25); and Brian O’Connor, L.L. Bean’s director of sustainability and global compliance. —Amy Laskowski

The Guitar Has Raised Its Profile at the College of Fine Arts School of Music lately, thanks to five recent arrivals in the musicology and ethnomusicology department. Nathaniel Bradock (CFA’25) (back left), Lance Morrison (CFA’25) (far right), Kamara Zakarias (CFA’26) (center), and Brian Barone (CFA’24) (seated far left)—all PhD students—arrived separately during the last two years. They all play guitar professionally, and the instrument is woven into their research. Erik Brinser (in back), a CFA visiting assistant professor of musicology, arrived in September. Their research interests range from guitar in the African diaspora to the inner workings of the Fender Musical Instruments Corporation to the Boston hardcore punk scene in the 1990s.

“Te’re uniquely well-rounded,” says Victor Coelho, a CFA professor of music, director of the Center for Early Music Studies, and chair of the historical performance department. “That’s what I like about this whole group—how open they are about musical styles, about cultures.”

“The guitar doesn’t figure as a main line of development in music history books, which is unfortunate, because it has a very, very deep history,” adds Coelho, an expert lute player who also rocks out with his Fender Telecaster in the class he teaches on the Rolling Stones. “These young scholars are now studying the instrument as the main actor of a much larger global music history.” —Joel Brown

The First New Courses at CAS, MET

Two New College of Arts & Sciences classes are examining life in the icy north this semester. Arctic Studies, taught by Adriana Cuaran, a CAS professor of English and holder of the Emma MacLachlan-Metcaf Chair of Humanities, “immerses students in the dynamic world of the circumpolar Arctic,” according to the course description, with a focus on the North American and Scandinavian sections. “To Peoples of the Arctic, taught by Catherine West, a CAS research associate professor of anthropology and of ethnology, looks at the ‘diverse and thriving communities of the region,’ using archaeological, oral history, historic, and ethnographic data, exploring how the past can be used to highlight contemporary issues in the region.

Rapid global warming, exhaustive capitalism, threats to wildlife, ecotourism, Indigenous rights disputes, even a bit of international friction—it’s all happening above roughly 66° latitude—aka the Arctic Circle. Four million people live there, along with polar bears and reindeer, and what happens there impacts all of us. “Everyone is connected to the Arctic,” Cuaran says.

José López Ganem has introduced a new course in Metropolitan College’s Gastronomy program: Latinx Experiences of Farming, Cooking and Eating in the United States. The class examines the “fundamental force” that “Latin American or Spanish-speaking people” bring to the food culture of the United States, he says.

People who are part of the Latin American diaspora are often the overlooked engine of the US food system, says López Ganem (MET’22), a graduate of the Gastronomy program, and now co-executive director for the nonprofit Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute.

Instrumental Students Win Big: In $50K Sustainability Challenge

“Inconveniently,” the song goes, “there’s a whole world.” But students at BU are taking that thought to heart, and they did it big time, literally, in the Sustainability Case Competition. A team of four BU undergraduates—Ilana Arroyo, Suraj Nellore, Jason Weiss and Devin Hirsch—won the $50,000 prize for coming up with an online resale platform for L.L. Bean products, which they call “ReBluen.”

Arroyo, a Questrom sophomore, said she was inspired to apply for the competition after seeing an online article about fast fashion and its impact on the environment. “I realized that fashion is one of the biggest contributors to climate change,” Arroyo said. “I’m interested in sustainability and I thought this was a great way to contribute.”

The team’s platform would allow L.L. Bean customers to resell their used clothing and accessories, with proceeds going to support environmental projects. “We’re not just selling clothes,” Weiss said, “we’re also making a difference.”

The judges were impressed by the team’s innovative approach and their passion for sustainability. “They really stood out because of their commitment to making a positive impact,” said one of the judges, who declined to be named.

Arroyo said she hopes to continue working on the platform after graduation and eventually launch it as a full-fledged business. “I think there’s a real need for a platform like this,” she said. “I’m excited to see where this goes.”

Arroyo is not the only BU student who is taking sustainability seriously. In fact, BU is home to several sustainability-focused student organizations, including the BU Green Team and the BU Sustainability Council. These groups work to promote sustainability on campus and in the local community through a variety of initiatives, such as reducing waste, increasing recycling, and promoting sustainable practices.

BU’s Sustainability Office also offers a range of courses and workshops on sustainability topics, as well as funding opportunities for sustainability-related projects. BU is committed to increasing its sustainability efforts and making the university a leader in sustainability practices.

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FOR MORE THAN 20 years, a team of BU scientists has been on a quest to figure out how to treat incurable lung diseases, and how to regenerate damaged lungs so they’re as good as new.

Leading the push is pulmonologist Darrell Kotton, who runs a lab at the Center for Regenerative Medicine (CReM), a joint effort between the University and Boston Medical Center, BU’s primary teaching hospital.

By refining their work using sophisticated stem cell technology, Kotton and his team are closer to realizing that vision than ever before.

In two new studies published in Cell Stem Cell, BU researchers detail how they engineered lung stem cells and successfully transplanted them into injured lungs of mice. Two lines of cells targeted two different parts of the lung: the airways, including the trachea and bronchial tubes, and the alveoli, the delicate air sacs that deliver oxygen to the bloodstream. Their findings could lead to new ways for treating lung diseases, such as severe cases of COVID-19, emphysema, pulmonary fibrosis, and cystic fibrosis, a disease caused by a genetic mutation.

“We’ve accomplished this by getting better and better at generating the cells,” says Kotton, a BU Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine professor of medicine, director of CReM, and corresponding author on both papers.

Kotton and his team imagine a future where they can use a patient’s own cells to fix lung damage caused by disease by reprogramming cells in a laboratory dish and transplanting them back into the patient. The new lung cells would replicate, like regular cells do, replacing the damaged and diseased areas of the lung. Bringing damaged lungs back to normal function without a lung transplant is possible with stem cells, which can develop into other specialized cells in the body. There are many different types of stem cells that have been discovered over the years, but Kotton and his lab focus on a type called pluripotent stem cells.

These cells are found only in embryos. But in 2006, Japanese scientist Shinya Yamanaka figured out how to genetically reprogram adult skin or blood cells into an embryonic stem cell–like state. Those engineered cells are called induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells, and won Yamanaka the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2012. Induced pluripotent stem cells can be turned into any cell type in the body, including lung cells.

Kotton and his team—which includes Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine professors Finn Hawkins and Xaralabos Varelas, College of Arts & Sciences physics professor Pankaj Mehta, and many other researchers—developed methods for engineering each of the lung’s stem cells in the laboratory using iPS cells, including by using machine learning methods. This step helped them determine the best conditions for generating cells that could go on
We demonstrated that engineered cells, which have never before been part of a lung, can be transplanted into injured mouse lungs, where they integrate into the host’s respiratory system and behave similar to the host’s pulmonary cells,” says Michael Herriges, a post-doctoral fellow in the Kotton Lab and lead author of the paper focused on the lung air sacs. Making lung cells that can be used for therapy from just microscopic clumps of unspecified iPS cells is a long and complicated process—and one that has been Kotton’s life work.

The cells that were transplanted into the mice lasted their entire lifespan, over two years. Now, the researchers must figure out whether the cells can prevent disease progression in the mouse models; eventually, they will produce more lung cells to test in disease models; eventually, they will have to test their technique in larger animals with lungs that more closely resemble human lungs.

“Many lung diseases are characterized by irreversible tissue damage,” says Martin Ma (CAMED’26), an MD/PhD student in molecular and translational medicine and the lead author of the paper focused on lung airways. “Since the lung is not the most regenerative compared to other organs in the body, damage can lead to much suffering for patients without a treatment option.”

Ma believes that years down the line, the process for fixing damaged lungs could appeal to patients who would rather not take medications every day for their whole lives. And it could put another option on the table for patients who suffer from genetic lung diseases that do not have a current medical therapy. For example, a patient with a genetic lung disease like cystic fibrosis would have a drop of their blood taken. Their blood cells would be reprogrammed into IPS cells, and then manipulated—using methods developed in the Kotton Lab—to recreate in a laboratory dish the needed lung cells. Those cells would be gene edited to correct the genetic mutation causing the disease and, lastly, transplanted back into the patient. Unlike getting a lung transplant, which involves heavy immunosuppression so the body doesn’t reject the new organ, a patient would ideally tolerate their own cells without rejecting them, with no need for immunosuppression.

Beyond their clinically focused goals, the researchers hope their work continues informing basic science questions, like how cells communicate with each other, what mechanisms regulate the identity of lung cells, and what makes them different from one another. “Our work builds on a lot of basic science research that didn’t originally have a clinical goal,” says Ma, such as the invention of IPS cells. “My hope is that our papers can create a platform for other researchers in the community to generate more foundational knowledge that future translational studies will eventually build upon.”

Could a saliva test for soldiers predict mission readiness?

BU engineer to lead project analyzing biomarkers to assess readiness for physically and mentally challenging tasks

By Patrick L. Kennedy

You’re due to run a grueling road race in a few hours. Do you have the stuff to make it across the finish line or will you crash before the end? Or maybe you’ve got a ballet recital or a poker tournament or a big speech—some demanding physical or cognitive challenge is looming, and you need to know that your brain and body are up to it. What if, instead of relying on a vague gut feeling, you could turn to cold, hard data?

That’s the goal of a multi-institutional, cross-disciplinary project led by Alexander A. Green, a College of Engineering associate professor of biomedical engineering. With up to $1.75 million in federal funds over four years, Green and his colleagues plan to develop a fast, portable saliva test that will analyze an assortment of biomarkers associated with performance on challenging tasks. It could be used to test readiness and the likelihood of success, among other health applications.

The testing device would serve as a kind of personal dashboard, showing the levels of the biomarkers of interest. Scientists at GE HealthCare’s Technology & Innovation Center will take the data from the volunteer samples and develop a machine learning model to help figure out that mix of levels that will determine readiness. “Some of the molecules might need to be present in the saliva at higher or lower concentrations,” Green says.

The GE center, formerly part of GE Research, has been working with DARPA for several years to identify biomarkers for readiness. Although DARPA’s first priority is armed forces readiness, the device could have a variety of uses in civilian homes and clinics. An obvious application is in elite athlete training. “In the lead-up to some big competition, like the Olympics, you could test yourself daily to find out what the conditions are on that day,” Green says.

The researchers also envision the test being used to assess maternal health during a pregnancy, or even the likelihood of a transplant organ’s rejection, among other health applications.
As fans of all good cop shows know, blood evidence can help detectives crack even the toughest of cases. The century-old science of bloodstain pattern analysis—using the configuration of blood left at a crime scene to reconstruct details of the incident—is as critical to crime scene investigation as fingerprinting or DNA analysis.

But it’s having to update its playbook to keep up with the technology of our everyday lives and the modern materials found at crime scenes. A century ago, blood evidence might have been found on plain wooden floors, simple textiles, or carpets—and it still is today. But it’s also found on scratch-resistant cell phone screens, antiglare windshields, and hydrophobic surfaces specifically engineered to repel fluids. “As with any science, it’s constantly evolving,” says Kenneth Martin, a retired 25-year veteran of the Massachusetts State Police and a clinical instructor in the Biomedical Forensic Sciences program at BU’s Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine. Martin often testifies as an expert witness in court cases that depend on blood evidence, and he is increasingly seeing crime scenes where blood has come into contact with different hydrophobic surfaces. “That has been an area where I’ve thought that we could use a lot more research,” says Martin.

At the College of Engineering’s Fluid Lab, James Bird has made a career of studying the interaction between fluids and their surroundings—and his latest research could help give forensic scientists like Martin new tools for analyzing bloodstains. Bird, an ENG associate professor of mechanical engineering, became interested in interpreting blood evidence after attending Martin’s course. His lab is doing a range of experiments designed to simulate the kinds of blood evidence found at crime scenes—from the complex scatter patterns associated with stab wounds to the dynamics of a single drop of human blood falling onto a surface. “A lot of the experiments people have done looking at bloodstains have been on clean surfaces,” says Bird. “Well, most surfaces aren’t clean.”

How BU engineers are changing the way blood evidence is interpreted | BY DEVIN HAHN

A BU team working to improve the science of bloodstain pattern analysis: PhD student Garam Luu (ENG’23) (from left), ENG’s James Bird, and Kenneth Martin of the Biomedical Forensic Sciences program.

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A BU team working to improve the science of bloodstain pattern analysis: PhD student Garam Luu (ENG’23) (from left), ENG’s James Bird, and Kenneth Martin of the Biomedical Forensic Sciences program.
FOR MARIA SMILIOS, a single sentence in a book on lung disease led to almost a decade of research and writing to tell the world about a little-known chapter of early 20th-century medical history. A former editor for Springer Science+Business Media, Smilios (GRS’ 07) was reading about a drug discovery one day in 2015 and spotted a line about how tuberculosis was cured at Sea View Hospital on Staten Island. The hospital, which closed in 1961 and is now an apartment complex, was only 20 or so miles away from her Astoria home, so she began searching online for more information. Hidden deep in the Google results was an article about Virginia Allen, a Black nurse who became part of a cohort of nurses of color who worked at the hospital.

“I couldn’t even find much about them online, these ‘Black Angels,’ as they were called by the patients who would write them Christmas cards,” Smilios says. “But I kept googling, and then called the Staten Island Museum to see if they knew anything, and they said, ‘Oh, Virginia will actually be giving a presentation here in a few days.’”

That’s when I knew I had a book,” she says.

Smilios, now living in Asheville, N.C., with her daughter, spent eight years searching newspapers and archives and interviewing nurses and their relatives to write The Black Angels: The Untold Story of the Nurses Who Helped Cure Tuberculosis (Penguin Random House, 2023).

In the book, Smilios sets the scene by outlining how tuberculosis, then known as “consumption,” ravaged the US. The leading cause of mortality in many American states, TB killed more than 5.6 million people in the country in the first half of the 20th century, she writes in the book. It attacked all parts of the body, especially the lungs, where it ate away at the tissue. Victims faced progressive difficulty breathing, coughing up blood and choking as they wasted away.

Sea View, the largest municipal sanatorium in New York, cared for poor and Indigenous patients “suffering every conceivable form of tuberculosis,” Smilios writes. In 1929, white nurses began quitting, most fearing how contagious TB could be in close quarters: a single sneeze shot 30,000 infected droplets 27 feet into the air, and a cough blasted out 300,000.

Alum’s book chronicles role of Black nurses in the fight against tuberculosis | BY DAVID SILVERBERG
For more than 20 years, the nurses—"Black women in white whose decades of service changed the course of medical history," Smilios writes—toiled on the wards, where "they bathed and fed and then shrouded the dead." They did so not only because they were committed to saving lives "at the risk of their own," she writes, but also because "they were Black women, subjects of Jim Crow labor laws that offered them few options."

Smilios says she didn’t want the book to read like "dry history, but I wanted people to be entrenched in this human story."

"I interviewed dozens of people, read hundreds of articles and everything I could on TB and World War II and the Great Migration, and I asked for help from TB doctors who were gracious enough to help me turn all of this into an understandable layman’s language."

Virginia Allen was one of the cohort of nurses of color who worked at Sea View Hospital, saved lives, and "changed the course of medical history," Maria Smilios writes.

Many histories of the battle against TB cite the famous 1953 drug trial of the antibiotic called isoniazid, which was so effective that patients who were once at death’s door could suddenly get out of bed and walk. But, as Smilios writes, the trial might not have succeeded without the nurses’ knowledge of "how the disease ebbed and slowed, how it closed, then let go."

By 2022, only 714 cases were reported statewide in New York.

**PERSISTENCE OF MEDICAL INJUSTICE**

Smilios has seen the effects of medical injustice again and again. At BU, where she studied religion and literature, she volunteered for three years in the pediatric bone marrow transplant unit at Boston Children’s Hospital. There, she heard of families struggling to deal with insurance companies and pay their hospital bills.

"Something about being present in that moment, with those dying kids—I thought, if I could tell all of these human stories and make people aware of this kind of suffering, maybe some greed would stop," she says.

Then, in her early 20s, Smilios lost her mother to breast cancer. "Everything was a fight to get her good care," she recalls. "I knew if we had money, things would have been different, and it was then I began to see the injustice in America’s healthcare system—how who lived and who died was really determined by how much money you made and your zip code."

That injustice was apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, she says. "When I saw what was happening with who died from COVID, I wondered, well, who lives and who dies? It’s the zip code you live in," she says. "And I became furious, but I wanted to write a book that was objective. I wanted to write a book where the story would tell people, ‘You need to be angry.’"

She plans to continue writing about injustice in America’s healthcare system—and it was then I began to see the injustice again and again. At BU, where she studied religion and literature, she volunteered for three years in the pediatric bone marrow transplant unit at Boston Children’s Hospital. There, she heard of families struggling to deal with insurance companies and pay their hospital bills. "Something about being present in that moment, with those dying kids—I thought, if I could tell all of these human stories and make people aware of this kind of suffering, maybe some greed would stop," she says.

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She plans to continue writing about the issue. "My next book will definitely be on health equity,” Smilios says. "There are so many more stories to tell."
education. “During the pandemic, [Carmi and I] were bouncing ideas off of each other, like, what would be a good story? We grew up playing this tarot card game, Yaniv, and we always would joke that it would be a great game in a casino.”

Four other alums contributed to the movie, Nik Sadhanani (CFA ’12) produced and has a supporting role as a ringleader party guest, Annabel Steven (CFA ’16) plays one of the leads, Deh, a new teacher at Ed Koch High School, and Ben Salus (CFA ’16) plays Rick, whose bachelor party leads to disaster. Ian Geers (CFA ’14) helped out behind the camera and played background characters in several scenes. “These are my closest friends from school, and we know how to create together,” Ducoff says. “It made sense to bring them on board!”

The filmmakers had Orthodox Jewish working on the film as well as rabbinical and Yiddish consultants. “It was really important to us that we not lean into any stereotypes,” Ducoff says, noting that Yaniv has been accepted into a number of Jewish film festivals. “The whole process has been a dream come true,” he says. “As a kid, I could never imagine this happening, but it is—and it’s thrilling.”

If you care about systemic oppression, you need to start caring about fat people.”

Anastasia Kidd (STH ‘04,’18) issues that challenge in her new book, Fat Church: Claiming a Gospel of Fat Liberation (Pilgrim Press, 2023). Kidd, a minister in the United Church of Christ and a lecturer and director of contextual education at the BU School of Theology, declares war on popular notions about people who are fat, a word she embraces (and that Bostonia therefore uses here).

“The supermajority of fat people will remain fat people their whole lives,” she writes. “Eighty years of research shows that employing restrictive diets and exercise regimens for sustained weight loss works for only the tiniest fraction of people.”

As for religion, she continues, “Fat activists specifically name the Christian church as an institution unyielding in its denigration of bodily appetites of all sorts, which makes it a happy bedfellow with diet culture.”

Established medical opinion says obesity (which Kidd types with an asterisk replacing the “e”—“ob*esity”—because she considers the word, its Latin origin meaning to overflow, a duality of fact for ailments such as hypertension, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Kidd relies on contrarian research, in publications from Scientific American to the International Journal of Epidemiology, asserting that fat correlates with, but doesn’t cause, unhealthiness.

With studies suggesting fat people face workplace discrimination, Massachusetts and other states are considering bans on size discrimination in employment. Kidd says Christianity must do its part by embracing “fat liberation” as it embraces the movements of other marginalized people.

Bostonia: People might think that dieters fail at “sustained weight loss” because they forsake dieting and exercise. What does research say about that?

Anastasia Kidd: Studies since the 1950s show that restrictive food diets and exercise alone are not enough for sustained weight loss of more than a couple of years. By year three, approximately 98 percent of dieters will have gained all their weight back, plus some. It all boils down to the fact that body size is not a mutable trait without life-altering interventions, including dangerous surgeries or lifelong dependence on weight loss drugs. The American Medical Association declared fatness itself a disease, against the recommendation of its own working group. They know what the research says, but they still use all their tools to stigmatize fatness so they can sell diets and pills and programs and surgeries because it’s hugely lucrative to do so.

Has Christianity failed to embrace fat people or participated in their stigmatization? Christianity certainly has participated in the stigmatization of fat people. We can point to Christian colonialism, which was led by white, Protestant, and primarily Anglo-Saxon people. Sabrina Strings’ Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia is the seminal work on how anti-fatness grew in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries, as white colonists encountered bodies unlike their own because of the transatlantic slave trade and immigrant waves from southern Europe and elsewhere. The ideal body type became the thin, tall, light form of northern European culture.

[My] book was written to help people who’ve never known anything but body shame understand that the way we feel as a society is not about “truth” about fatness, but about the monied narrative power that’s shared by the media, beauty and diet industries, and a white colonial Christian ethic of tightly controlling our bodies as a way to be morally superior.

Was it difficult writing about your own weight and your shame about it earlier in life? Yes, even as a fat activist, I have had to undo much of my own internalized anti-fatness along the way, and am still doing so. It is dang near impossible to grow up, especially as a woman, in this society and not imagine the fat on one’s body to be a symbol of failure, even if it’s literally always been there.

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Was it difficult writing about your own weight and your shame about it earlier in life? Yes, even as a fat activist, I have had to undo much of my own internalized anti-fatness along the way, and am still doing so. It is dang near impossible to grow up, especially as a woman, in this society and not imagine the fat on one’s body to be a symbol of failure, even if it’s literally always been there. Fat people are used to turning their anger inward at our own “failure” to grow up, especially as a woman, in this society and not imagining the fat on one’s body to be a symbol of failure, even if it’s literally always been there. Fat people are used to turning their anger inward at our own “failure” to become thin. Once I turned my anger outward, toward the anti-fatness that had so affected my life, I lost my shame and embraced my fatness as a permanent and unapologetic identity marker. Because one doesn’t have to love everything about one’s own body to fight like hell against that which oppresses it.

...
CREATIVES

EXCERPT

SHE MAY BE VERY HAPPY

An artful, soul-baring “micro-memoir” about raising her daughter Lueza, who sustained a catastrophic brain injury during birth but lived joyously until she died as a teenager.

“Doctors in pediatric residency were learning from Lueza. They would ask me about the decisions that were facing and what was important. One morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important one morning I heard the sound of classical guitar music and opened the door to a bearded man sitting in the hall outside of Lulu’s room playing Bach. There was a pain-management golden retriever that worked with a nurse and visited children who were undergoing painful procedures. A beautiful gray-haired chaplain would check on us. We would stand in the hall, and she would listen to me talk about Lueza and how important...
The longtime BU faculty member, TV host, and friend of Julia’s has a new cookbook, with dishes and techniques that save time and money.

“For me, the important thing is that you think about what you are doing,” Pépin says from his Madison, Conn., kitchen. “Whether you are using a knife or a spoon, the same principles apply.”

“I don’t cook the same way that I did 50 years ago, but the way you sharpen a knife, poach an egg, or slice an onion—that never really changes,” says Jacques Pépin in his Madison, Conn., kitchen.

Find a recipe for Jacques Pépin’s bread flapjacks, and watch a video of the chef cooking with students in BU’s test kitchen, at bu.edu/bostonia.
Jacques Pépin’s home is a hub of culinary artistry and innovation, where the magic of food is not just created but celebrated. Pépin has been a trailblazer in the world of cooking for almost 50 years, contributing to culinary education, inspiring a generation of cooks, and engaging with fans through social media. His latest cookbook, Jacques Pépin Cooking My Way: Recipes and Techniques for Economical Cooking, is a testament to his commitment to teaching and sharing his passion for cooking.

### Jacques Pépin’s Home

Pépin’s collaboration with his daughter, Claudine, has led to the establishment of Pépin’s Kitchen, a cooking school that aims to prevent food waste and promote sustainable cooking practices. The school has an array of knives and utensils, including an island with a built-in block for every sort of knife, and utensil holders brim with kitchen tools. An in-counter coffee machine offers a variety of coffee and tea, while the 20-foot-long second cooktop and an array of oils and vinegars stand ready for culinary adventures.

### Social Media Impact

Pépin has leveraged social media to continue his educational mission, engaging with fans through his Instagram channel, Facebook videos, and YouTube. “I don’t really go on things like Facebook or Instagram much,” he says. “Claudine was the one who asked me, ‘Why don’t you make some short videos?’ Now, we’ve done more than 300.”

### A Social Media Hit

Pépin’s social media presence has been transformative, allowing him to reach a global audience and inspire millions of people to cook. His followers have grown from 1 million to 2 million on Facebook during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the videos on his Instagram channel have over 1 million views. The response to his cooking videos has been enthusiastic, with fans eager to learn from his precision and artistry.

### The Role of Education

Pépin is dedicated to teaching the next generation about the importance of cooking and its role in reducing food waste. He believes that cooking is a form of expression and a way to bring people together. “It’s part of the DNA of most people in the world to not waste food,” Pépin says. “In France, I think it’s part of tradition, but maybe even more so for me because I was raised during the Second World War. My mother was a very great cook and had a restaurant, but she was very miserly and used absolutely everything in the kitchen. That’s what I was raised on.”

### The Future of Cooking

As Pépin looks to the future, he remains committed to teaching and sharing his knowledge. “I don’t cook the same way that I did 50 years ago,” he says. “I still cook, but I cook with a different kind of precision.” The future of cooking, according to Pépin, lies in the hands of a new generation of cooks, who are embracing new technologies and social media to share their recipes and ideas. Pépin’s legacy is not just about teaching cooking, but about inspiring a love for food and the art of cooking itself.
Pépin’s joyful, approachable way of explaining cooking techniques—from the basic to the more complicated—is at the root of his enduring popularity. “My dad is the biggest joker,” says Claudine. “He loves a good joke. He’s the guy who is so excited to tell you the joke that he’s laughing before he finishes it because he thinks it’s so funny. And chances are, it is so funny. But my father is first and foremost a teacher, and he values education and teaching technique a tremendous amount. You can have the most beautiful ingredients in the entire world, but if you don’t know how to chop an onion, what are you doing?”

LESSONS FROM HOJO’S

Pépin developed his passion for cooking while working in his mother’s restaurants. Born in Bourg-en-Bresse, France, near Lyon, he came of age during World War II and has never forgotten the food shortages of the time. He quit school at 13 to take on a culinary apprenticeship and, a few years later, moved to Paris to work in the kitchens at the renowned Hotel Plaza Athénée.

In his early 20s, he was called to serve in the military, assigned as the personal chef to three French heads of state, including President Charles de Gaulle. That may sound glamorous, a stepping stone to celebrity, but Pépin says chefs weren’t afforded the same level of respect they are today. “It was a different world,” he says. “You have to think of things in the context of the time. Chefs weren’t looked at the same way as now. A cook’s place was in the kitchen, that was it. I served people like Eisenhower, Tito, Macmillan, Nehru—many heads of state from around the world—but no one would ever mention the chef. At that time, the cook was at the bottom, socially. ”

In 1959, Pépin moved to New York City and became a chef at the now-closed French restaurant Le Pavillon, and attended an English for international students program at Columbia. At Le Pavillon he became acquainted with Helen McCully, then the food editor of House Beautiful magazine, who introduced him to both Julia Child and James Beard around 1960.

Soon, through other connections he made at Le Pavillon, he had two enticing job offers. One was an invitation to become President John F. Kennedy’s White House chef. He chose Howard Johnson’s. “Again, in the context of the time—I didn’t go to the White House because I didn’t realize the kind of potential that held,” he says. “I have a picture hanging on my wall of [my late friend] René Verdon, who did become the White House chef. He sent me this picture of him with the president a year or two later.”

Pépin studied American dining habits and was responsible for developing and improving dishes. He introduced fresh onions and butter, rather than dehydrated onions and margarine, for instance, and developed dishes like clam chowder and chicken pot pie.

The decade he spent with HoJo’s prepared him for a few months. “It was bigger than 1,000 locations and was the biggest restaurant chain in the country. It was more complicated—is at the root of his end. ”

After his accident, Pépin moved to Madison, Conn., in 1972 and turned his attention to writing cookbooks and columns for publications like the New York Times. He taught in culinary programs in New York and cooking classes at BU’s School of Hospitality Administration.

JACQUES AND JULIA

Pépin remembers his first meeting with Child, in 1960: “Helen [McCully] said to me, ‘Oh, that woman who is writing the book Mastering the Art of French Cooking is coming to New York, so we’re going to cook for her.’ So, we did, and then I became friends with Julia. We spoke French the first time we met because her French was better than her English, having just come back from living in France, and I had only been in [New York] for a few months.”

While the two had good-natured disagreements on certain approaches to cooking, both believed that food hadn’t been taken seriously as a course of academic study. They set out to change that.

Pépin had already been teaching at BU for many years and, in 1989, he and Child helped establish a semester-long certificate program in the culinary arts at BU’s Metropolitan College. But they also envisioned a program with courses both in the kitchen and the classroom, in which students could study food through lenses of history, sociology, anthropology, literature, and the arts. “Julia had said to me, ‘We should start a program in gastronomy. That doesn’t really exist in colleges,’” says Pépin. They wrote to BU President John Silber (Hon. ’95), who gave the okay to launch a master’s degree in gastronomy. That doesn’t really exist in the only programs of its kind in the country,” Pépin says. “It’s been very gratifying.”

“Jacques’ impact on the program is clear—we engage our hands and intellects together in the kitchen,” says Megan Elias, a MET associate professor of the practice and director of the Gastronomy Program. “His visits every semester...
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Pépin, at home in his art studio, is a longtime painter. For decades, he has hand-painted menus for meals he’s cooked for guests. His 2022 book, Art of the Chicken, features scores of his colorful, whimsical works.

are really magical times, because he brings joy with him when he enters our kitchens. He’s approachable and supportive. He is interested in the students, and it’s clear that he loves to cook with people, not just for them.”

Pépin radiates that joy in his television programs and social media videos. He landed his first TV show, Everyday Cooking, in 1982. In the years since, he’s starred in many PBS cooking programs, including one with Child, 1994’s Julia and Jacques: Cooking at Home. He says the idea for the show was sparked by the cooking demonstrations they’d given at BU. (Their relationship was the same both on camera and off, he says, with a fun, easy rapport and deep respect for each other’s approach to cooking—even if they occasionally disagreed on whether a dish needed more salt.)

Pépin’s love for teaching inspired the mission of his charitable foundation. In 2016, he, Claudine, and Rollie Wesen created the Jacques Pépin Foundation, with the goal of expanding culinary training opportunities for those who are disenfranchised or underrepresented in the field. Wesen, director of the foundation, wanted to ensure that Pépin’s legacy as a culinary educator is never forgotten. “Jacques said that learning to cook is something that can really help people who need a hand up in society,” says Wesen. “That started us on this path of supporting community kitchens that are all around the country.”

The foundation has provided over $1 million in grants to support more than 100 community kitchens and culinary training programs in Cleveland, Ohio, Tacoma, Wash., and elsewhere.

“We wanted to help people who have been a bit disenfranchised in their life—perhaps people who have come out of jail, people without housing, recovering addicts, veterans looking to enter a new career,” says Pépin. “The grants we give to the different organizations are not necessarily always to buy new stoves. Recently, we helped one organization buy a washing machine for the students to wash their uniforms. This has been quite rewarding because I feel that if somebody is interested in cooking and likes working in the kitchen, we can probably, in six weeks, teach you how to peel an onion and poach an egg, very simple stuff like that, and get you started in the kitchen. And if you stay there for five years, maybe you’re the chef. People can perhaps go on to open a restaurant. You can redo your life this way.”

THE ART OF COOKING

Back at Pépin’s home on that August day, he gives me a tour of his second-floor art studio, a space filled with natural light. For nearly 50 years, he’s hand-painted menus for meals he has cooked for guests. He’s kept them all. In 2018, he published Menus: A Book for Your Meals and Memories (Harvest), a journal of sorts whose pages are adorned with designs he painted, so people can fill in their own menus. In 2022, he published the New York Times best-selling book Art of the Chicken: A Master Chef’s Paintings, Stories, and Recipes of the Humble Bird (Harvest), which features scores of his colorful, whimsical works.

Pépin sees similarities between how he approaches two of his passions: cooking and painting. “Sometimes I start a painting, and I don’t really know exactly where I’m going. But at some point, you start responding to it. You put a shape there, or a color there, because it feels good without even trying to validate it in any ways,” he says.

Cooking involves similar intuition: “Let’s say you are making a chicken sauté with morels,” he says. “The same night, you may do that order six or seven times. And if someone were behind you mocking exactly what you’re doing, they’ll see that for those seven times, you did it differently. But they all came out exactly the same. You make different adjustments without even thinking about it—you taste, you adjust, you taste, you adjust.”

Pépin, at home in his art studio, is a longtime painter. For decades, he has hand-painted menus for meals he’s cooked for guests. His 2022 book, Art of the Chicken, features scores of his colorful, whimsical works.

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Boston University Planned Giving
BU's pioneering researchers are cracking the code to help us live longer, healthier lives.

**AGING REIMAGINED**

**AMERICANS ARE NOT JUST GETTING OLD—they're also getting older.** Look at Millie Flashman. She was born in 1922. Graduated from Boston University in 1943. And she's happy to tell you all about it. Flashman might have been a novelty once, but not anymore. A hundred years ago, 1 in 20 people in the United States were over the age of 65; today, it's 1 in 6.

BU is at the forefront of research into understanding how and why we are living longer, healthier lives than during any previous time, exploring the impact on families, the healthcare system, and the economy. For example, the University is home to the world’s largest study of centenarians, where medical experts and geneticists like Thomas T. Perls are studying superagers, investigating why some people make it to 100 while others don’t—and what the rest of us can learn from them. Their goal: help all of us live life to the fullest, for as long as possible.

In the pages ahead, we ask Perls and Flashman the secrets to a long and happy life, get some tips for things you can do in your 20s (and 30s and 40s) to help ensure you enjoy your 80s, and meet inspiring older alums who are enjoying second acts. For folks like them, it’s never too late to become a champion swimmer, a model, or a marathon runner. As Perls has found, optimism and extroversion “are conducive to getting to older age.”

It’s likely that superagers such as 101-year-old Millie Flashman (PAL’43, SSW’45) won the genetic lottery. Living that long takes a combination of protective genes that, together, shield their bearer against the illnesses of aging.
IN 1922, the year Millie Flashman was born, doctors treated diabetes with insulin for the first time. In 1943, when she graduated from Boston University’s (now closed) College of Practical Arts & Letters, fascist Italy surrendered in the Second World War. In 1945, mere months after she got her master’s at BU’s School of Social Work, a joyful nation welcomed returning troops from the war. In 1991, when she retired from SSW’s faculty, the Soviet Union dissolved.

And yet, when asked about the biggest change she’s seen, this 101-year-old witness to world-altering events says… the fridge. “We didn’t have refrigerators then,” Flashman says, recalling the wooden icebox of her 1920s childhood and the periodic visits by the iceman, selling ice blocks for 60 or 80 cents, “depending on the weight.” She’s bemused by the potency of this seemingly small-bore memory. BU researchers, by contrast, are awed by her prodigious recollection and longevity. Flashman, who lives in a fourth-floor condo at a landscaped complex outside Boston, celebrated the start of her second century with a birthday lobster roll. She drove until the pandemic, and donated her car to a public radio station. That’s why Thomas T. Perls recruited her to BU’s New England Centenarian Study (NECS), which he has codirected since the first of its four research projects launched in 1995. Over those three decades, Perls, a BU Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine professor of medicine, has studied thousands of long-lived individuals, pursuing the secrets to their fountain of healthy longevity. “By determining how centenarians and their relatives age so slowly and...
Around the world, more than 55 million people have dementia, the majority of Alzheimer’s disease, a degenerative brain disorder that’s the result of damage to the brain’s nerve cells and causes memory loss, behavioral changes, confusion, and deterioration of language skills. In the United States, more than 5.7 million people over the age of 65 are living with Alzheimer’s, according to the Alzheimer’s Association, and the likelihood of developing the disease only goes up with age. And, while there are a number of therapeutic treatments available to people with the disease, there’s no cure.

Where some might see grim statistics and an uphill battle, geneticists, medical scientists, and other researchers at BU—home to the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center, one of 33 such organizations in the US funded by the National Institutes of Health to advance research on Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias—see an opportunity to take on one of society’s greatest medical challenges.

Lindsay Farrer, chief of the Bio-Medical Genetics Section in BU’s Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine, focuses on understanding and identifying genetic factors that make a person more at risk for, or more resilient to, developing Alzheimer’s disease. In a seminal 2007 paper published in Nature Genetics, an international collaboration of researchers co-directed by Farrer demonstrated that variants in the protein-encoding gene SNHL2 are associated with Alzheimer’s disease in multiple ethnic populations. The discovery, says Farrer, opens up a new potential target for Alzheimer’s researchers.

Because genes are inherited, “they can potentially impact Alzheimer’s disease mechanisms before any other environmental influences take root,” says Lindsay Farrer. Because genes are inherited, “they can potentially impact Alzheimer’s disease mechanisms before any other environmental influences take root,” says Farrer. “We’re trying to figure out what are the genetic risk factors and protective factors, because they can serve both as potential diagnostic or predictive markers, as well as become potential therapeutic targets.”

Rhoda Au approaches Alzheimer’s disease from a different angle. In 2005, Au, a BU medical school professor of anatomy and neurobiology and one of the principal investigators of the Framingham Heart Study Brain Aging Program, began digitally recording people’s voices as they answered standard psychological test questions. What Au later realized, inspired by the rise in digital voice assistants such as Apple’s Siri and Amazon’s Alexa, is that her recordings contained rich information about the participants—not just the content of their answers, but the quality of their voice and memory.

Au and her colleagues can analyze a person’s speech over time for changes that may indicate something cognitive—perhaps Alzheimer’s—is at play.

“A speech is a cognitively complex task,” she says. “And so, in that search for how to better measure people’s cognition, I realized an answer is embodied in these voice recordings. How so? Because, as you’re producing speech, you have to bring in a number of cognitive capabilities: you have to bring in your semantic memory, you have to be able to multitask and assemble a sentence, a quote, and then you have to bring together sentences that make sense into a coherent message. That’s all cognition, memory, attention, executive function—all of that comes into play.”

Au’s team is part of a new program, SpeechDx, launched by the Alzheimer’s Drug Discovery Foundation. It’s “a longitudinal study aimed at creating the largest repository of speech and voice data to help accelerate the detection, diagnosis, and monitoring of Alzheimer’s disease,” according to a trade magazine specializing in speech technology.

BU is one of several institutions collecting speech and other clinical brain-health data from more than 2,500 participants. All that data will be collated to create an enormous database that can be leveraged to spot trends and possible diagnostic markers—as a means for earlier Alzheimer’s detection overall.

Rhoda Au can analyze a person’s speech over time for changes that may indicate something cognitive—perhaps Alzheimer’s—is at play.

Two years after Au found a way to hear Alzheimer’s disease, Dr. Marc Perls found a way to feel it. As a teenaged nursing home orderly in 1970s Colorado, “I just saw some pretty horrific things going on,” he says. “Anybody with any kind of behavior issue was put on an antipsychotic. It felt a little bit like the lobotomy in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” After medical school, he cared for his first two centenarian patients during a fellowship at a rehab center. Their robust health stunned him.

“I immediately wondered why they didn’t have Alzheimer’s disease, because the pervasive wisdom at the time was that since Alzheimer’s had an exponentially increased rate of prevalence after the age of 65, everybody at 100 must have Alzheimer’s.” Perls says. “Well, these two definitely did not. And I wanted to then go out and find more centenarians and see if they were this natural model of resistance or resilience to aging.”

He summarized what it takes to be a centenarian with an invented word: SAGEING. The acronym is for seven centenarians who may have genetic variants that shield against heart disease, stroke, diabetes, Alzheimer’s, and other diseases of aging.

The four NECS studies gather extensive data on participants. Debbi Cutler (SSW ’89), Flashman’s daughter, recalls being impressed by how some older adults, then amazed by how some aged so well.

“Anybody with any kind of behavior issue was put on an antipsychotic. It felt a little bit like the lobotomy in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.”

Centenarians generally have the average person’s number of disease-promoting genetic variants. But they may also have variants that shield against heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer’s, and other diseases of aging. Perls and his NECS colleagues have also discovered that superaging runs in families. Flashman’s uncle, Joe Goldstein, was one of Perls’ first study participants, dying at age 102.

Formula for Healthy Aging

Perls found his calling after first being repulsed by the shoddy care given to older adults, then amazed by how some aged so well.

As a teenaged nursing home orderly in 1970s Colorado, “I just saw some pretty horrific things going on,” he says. “Anybody with any kind of behavior issue was put on an antipsychotic. It felt a little bit like the lobotomy in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” After medical school, he cared for his first two centenarian patients during a fellowship at a rehab center. Their robust health stunned him.

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He summarized what it takes to be a centenarian with an invented word: SAGEING. The acronym is for seven behavioral and other factors that can get many of us to age 90, and lucky few beyond that: sleep (“not getting enough sleep has been associated with increased risk for Alzheimer’s and other dementias”), attitude (research suggests optimism and extraversion “are conducive to getting to older age”), genetics, exercise (“at least five times a week, 30 minutes each time”), interests (passions that get you out of bed, “exercising your brain as much as
exercising your muscles”), nutrition (“as much non-red meat as possible, fish is good, maybe a little bit of poultry” and aiming for a healthy weight), get rid of smoking and “packery, like growth hormones.”

These factors form the basis of Perls’ 30-question longevity calculator, which yields an estimate of the age to which you’ll live. (Perls, who is 65, clocks in at 95.)

Flashman has always practiced “E” (exercise) and “N” (nutrition). She’s watched what she eats, and while “I’m not a great athlete, I loved different sports,” including field hockey, tennis, and fencing. She smoked in college but dropped the habit after having kids. Flashman also credits “I” (interests). “Recently, if I wasn’t able to Zoom, I’m not sure I would be alive. Because I’ve taken courses online.” She took in-person classes, too, pre-COVID.

Perls notes a vital caveat to RAMING. “Those who are the victims of structural racism really have the deck stacked against them, in terms of being able to have proper access to medical care, screening and prevention, vaccinations,” he says. “If we did as good a job of screening and preventing hypertension in Black people as we do in white people, a huge chunk of the life expectancy disparity would disappear.”

A More Youthful Cognitive Function

During a visit last year with Flashman, Perls secured her agreement to undergo neuropsych testing to see if she’d qualify for a study of cognitive superagers, RADCO (Resilience/Resistance to Alzheimer’s Disease in Centenarians and Offspring), one of the four projects under NECS. “These are 100-year-olds and older who have the cognitive function of people 30 years younger,” says Perls. “If you’re cognitively intact like that at 100, you’re virtually immortal.” RADCO participants donate their brains postmortem for study, in part to see if they had any evidence of Alzheimer’s. If so, “How did they have neuropathology consistent with Alzheimer’s and yet they were cognitively intact? What’s protecting them?” asks Perls.

Throughout the world. And, once you enter your older years, consider keeping your circle large. “Inter-generational relationships are a gift,” Baiz says. “Older adults have valuable wisdom to share with younger adults, and younger adults bring new novel ideas to conversations.”

“Brains in a Dish”

These are lab-made brains, developed from patients’ blood cells, which are used to test how brain and other cells react to stress and diseases such as Alzheimer’s. If so, “How did they have neuropathology consistent with Alzheimer’s and yet they were cognitively intact? What’s protecting them?” asks Perls.

Watch what you eat

A balanced diet is important no matter what age you are. Perls recommends a Mediterranean diet to help fend off aging-related diseases and cancer. Also helpful if you want to live a long, healthy life: go easy on the red meat.

Ditch the bad habits

Smoking, for one, has notoriously terrible health outcomes—as does drinking alcohol. And gambling or binge shopping? That’s money you won’t have for your retirement years. Dropping your bad habits now is critical to longevity and stability later in life, Perls says.

Develop deep, lasting friendships

Safe, strong friendships that you can rely on are critical, says Perls. “You don’t have to die to give the world better.” She finds friendship can extend longevity as much as any other factor, Perls says. “This study will go on forever, I hope.” The National Institute on Aging funds all the studies.

IN YOUR 20S

Start putting money away ASAP

When it comes to retirement, there’s significant peace of mind that comes from knowing you have cash to count on. Start an IRA now, advisors Jean Berko Gleason, College of Arts & Sciences professor of speech, language, and hearing sciences, says. Even a little bit at a time now is far preferable to scrambling to put money away later—and more effective too.

Exercise every week

Worry less about a number on the scale and more about what makes you feel your best. Perls says. Try to fit in 30 minutes of exercise a day, 5 times a week—mixing core work, cardio, and strength training.

Develop skills in a wide range of areas

Cultivate a variety of skills and hobbies. White says. She recommends curating a set of “adventure” skills—like hiking or camping—and “sedentary” skills—like pottery or cooking—that you can enjoy both by yourself and with friends.

Commit to getting enough sleep each night

Not getting enough sleep has been associated with an increased risk of Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia, according to Thomas T. Perls, a BU Chebanian & Avedisian School of Medicine professor of medicine who studies the aging secrets of centenarians. Everyone’s different, but experts generally recommend young adults get around seven hours of sleep a night.

Don’t get set in your ways

Growth—the mental and emotional kind—should be an eternal pursuit. Keep an open mind as you make your way through the world. And, once you enter your older years, consider keeping your circle large. “Inter-generational relationships are a gift,” Baiz says. “Older adults have valuable wisdom to share with younger adults, and younger adults bring new novel ideas to conversations.”

Committing to leaving the world better than you found

Socioeconomic inequalities have access to housing can compound with age, says Judith Gomea, a School of Social Work professor of social research. Consider getting—and staying—involved with equity-focused nonprofits or advocacy groups in your community to help make sure that everyone around you can enjoy their 80s too. “We want the families that these families, individually and as a whole, have in common” that enable longevity across generations, Perls says of the family study. “This study will go on forever, I hope.” The National Institute on Aging funds all the studies.

“May find out that I have Alzheimer’s,” Flashman quipped when Perls floated the idea of her joining the study. “I promise you that’s not the case,” he replied. She agreed that, should she qualify, she’ll be willing to donate her brain in after she passes away, eliciting the doctor’s delighted “bingo!”

Other programs in the NECS include Integrative Longevity Omics, a study of about 1,400 individuals, two-thirds of them centenarians and the remainder their offspring. The Longevity Consortium’s Centenarian project, which aims to find healthy-aging therapeutics; and the Long Life Family Study, which started in 2003 with members of 550 families that had clusters of exceptionally long-lived members.

“We want to find the familial factors that these families, individually and as a whole, have in common” that enable longevity across generations, Perls says of the family study. “This study will go on forever, I hope.” The National Institute on Aging funds all the studies.

Brains in a Dish

You don’t have to die to give the researchers a crack at your neurons, though. While visiting with Flashman, Perls also persuaded her to give a blood sample for coresearchers who make “brains in a dish.” These are lab-made neurons, developed from patients’ blood cells, which are used to test how brain and other cells react to stress and fight off disease.

George Murphy, an associate professor of medicine at BU’s medical school and a cofounder of its Center for Regenerative Medicine, describes how you make a brain. “We collect a teaspoonful of blood from centenarians and reprogram these samples into personalized, master stem cells, called induced pluripotent stem cells.”

The lab takes these cells and “coaxes them into a host of cell types that are impacted by aging.”

One such cell type, cortical neurons, can reflect diseases such as Alzheimer’s. “We hypothesize that individuals with exceptional longevity share protective molecular profiles that regulate stress response and...”

...and aging secrets of centenarians, one of the four projects under NECS. “These are 100-year-olds and older who have the cognitive function of people 30 years younger,” says Perls.
promote [cognitive] resilience,” says Murphy. To test that hypothesis, PhD student Todd Dowrey (CAMED’27) doses the lab-made neurons with stress-inducing materials to learn how superagers and their brains fend off aging’s infirmities.

BU’s stem cells bank has collected blood samples from 42 people—some older than 105—including the children of superagers. The holy grail of this work is insights about how the rest of us might live cognitively healthier lives. “We are beginning to uncover a compelling story,” says Murphy. It appears that superager-derived neurons boost genes that help adapt to aging and cognitive issues. Centenarians also may possess elite immune systems that help ward off debilitating disease.

The beauty of these stem cell lines is that they can be grown indefinitely, Murphy adds, “creating a permanent repository of biomaterial that can be used to fuel any aging study.”

Life itself isn’t permanent, but Flashman is hoping her twilight years contribute to mind-blowing knowledge that leads to healthier longevity in others. That would cap a lifetime devoted to healthcare. After graduating from BU, the School of Social Work hired her to organize a student unit in the psychiatric clinic at what is now Boston Medical Center, the University’s primary teaching hospital; after that got off the ground, she taught the course Casework and Human Behavior, took time off to raise her family, then returned to teach and develop a course in family therapy. She became a charter member of the American Family Therapy Academy.

“Having taught at BU, and knowing how important research was—the dollars they get from that,” she laughs, “I was glad to help out [Perls’] research. I think that, you know, a good citizen would do that.”

Herman Kelly, Jr. (NHY’83), a champion swimmer, has competed in the National Senior Games three times.
Before Herman Kelly, Jr., became an award-winning instructor in African and African American studies at Louisiana State University, before he was ordained as a pastor in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, he was a Morehouse College Tiger Shark. “The Morehouse swim team has the legacy of being one of the premier Black swim teams in the world,” Kelly says. “I made the team my freshman year, and I swam all four years.” After graduating, Kelly took a decades-long break from swimming, until a worrisome doctor’s visit got him back in the pool. Since his return, Kelly has trained every week, earned a few state championship titles, and competed in the National Senior Games three times, placing 14th in the nation in 2022. His goal is to become national champion in the next five years. “The water is where God and I meet,” he says.

As a high schooler in the late 1950s, Hank Davis formed a rock and roll group called Hank and the Electras, cut a few records, and then disbanded the group to attend college. “[But] I guess I never got past it,” he says. As a psychology professor, he reconnected with his love of performing. “When I stood in front of a class of 600 kids teaching Intro Psych, that’s exactly the same energy I might have used when I was performing onstage,” he says. “Only now, I’m talking about Skinner and Pavlov.” Now that he’s an emeritus professor, he has more time to write magazine articles and liner notes, archive and reissue rare tracks by early rock and country musicians, and record new music—all of which he did during his 35-year teaching career. In 2013, he compiled all of his knowledge into a new book, *Ducktails, Drive-ins, and Broken Hearts* (SUNY Press), a look at the roots of American rock music, which *Library Journal* called “captivating and surprising.”

Perhaps no one was more surprised at Ronni Sarmanian’s modeling career than Sarmanian herself. “In school pictures, I stand out—that odd little dark face in the corner,” she says. “I just wasn’t the profile.” After a successful career as one of the nation’s first tech communications specialists, Sarmanian retired in the early 2000s and moved to Charleston, S.C., in 2019. A few years later, some friends convinced her to attend a model casting call for the city’s fashion week. She was a hit with the judges and soon caught the attention of a local modeling agency. Now, in addition to walking the catwalk in community fashion shows, Sarmanian is moving into lifestyle modeling. “The kind of work I would do might be an ad for a retirement community…or being the face of some medication,” she says. “They always say, ‘Don’t tell anyone how old you are because you don’t look that old.’ It’s just a number. You’re doing what you’re doing because you’re healthy and vibrant.”
As a child, Mary McManus was diagnosed with polio in one of the country’s last outbreaks. The nightmare returned in 2006 in the form of post-polio syndrome, a painful nerve and muscle disorder that often occurs decades after recovery from the initial virus. It forced McManus into early retirement from her beloved career as a Veterans Affairs social worker, and doctors told her to get used to life in a wheelchair. “In February of 2007, I was home all alone, and I said (to) God, ‘I know I’m at a crossroads. You helped me when I had polio. What are we going to do now?”’ McManus says. The answer came with the arrival of an in-home personal trainer. “We started setting new goals. I said, ‘I want to run the Boston Marathon next year.’ And she said, ‘Well, you’re going to need a pair of running shoes.’” In 2009, at 55, McManus crossed the finish line, raising $10,535 for Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. She still runs three times a week, rain or shine.

NAME: Mary McManus (CO’76)
LOCATION: Chestnut Hill, Mass.
FIRST ACT: VA social worker

After a 22-year career as an English teacher in Brooklyn, N.Y., Harvey Widell retired in 1989 and relocated to a senior community in Florida. Within two weeks, he was asked if he would like to be the director of the Way-Off Broadway Players, a troupe of 16 people who toured south Florida, doing scenes from plays, comedy, and sketches. Since his move, Widell has helmed three local theater groups, led acting workshops, and appeared in more than a dozen productions. “The correlation between teaching and directing is a very great one,” he says. (Before retirement, he was a community theater director on Long Island for 30 years.) A star player in his current theater troupe, Widell has had lead roles in My Fair Lady, Fiddler on the Roof, The Sound of Music, and South Pacific, to name a few. “I don’t see any reason not to keep at it,” he says. “I’m going to keep doing it for as long as I can.”

NAME: Harvey Widell (CF’A’57)
LOCATION: Boynton Beach, Fla.
FIRST ACT: English teacher

NAME: Linda Keene (Questrom’73)
LOCATION: Charlotte, N.C.
FIRST ACT: Marketing executive, nonprofit CEO

Technically, Linda Keene is in her third act. After a 25-plus-year career as a marketing executive, she transitioned to the nonprofit sector, serving as a CEO for eight years. It was a whirlwind career, and Keene didn’t feel like sitting idle in her retirement. “I learned about a field called art quilting, where people create pictures out of fabric,” she says. “And I said, ‘Well, let me see if I can do something like that.’” Keene’s work, which features vignettes of African American life, is influenced by her grandmother’s quilting and mother’s seamstress handiwork. “They were doing it to make something to keep families warm, using the fabric that was available,” she says. Steeped in tradition and incorporating some of the skills she picked up from her mother, Keene’s fiber works have been featured in Quiltfolk magazine, shown in local galleries, and exhibited in the Mint Museum in Charlotte, N.C.
Hundreds gathered on Marsh Plaza for a candlelight vigil in solidarity with Israel, organized by BU Hillel and BU Students for Israel. Among the speakers was Yonatan Manor (COM’25), BU Students for Israel president (facing the crowd):

“We are here today to remember and mourn the beautiful souls lost during the darkest time in Israel’s modern history.”

Students hold vigils, launch fundraisers, while graffiti becomes a frequent tool to voice anger

“Our hateful act struck at the heart of my community, defacing a place of worship and peace,” Amanda Kopelman (ENG’24) wrote in an opinion piece on BU Today. “As a Jewish student, I do not feel safe at Boston University.”

In another essay published the same day, Adam Shamsi (CAS’24) and Faisal Ahmed (CAS’24) wrote, “BU is capable of swiftly mobilizing resources and putting out statements when it comes to acts that are perceived as anti-Israel. However, despite ongoing harassment against pro-Palestinian students, Boston University has failed to act just as swiftly in condemning those acts.”

In January, Freeman announced initiatives underway to “ensure a safe and secure campus,” including the creation of two working groups, one for the Jewish-Israeli community, one for the Muslim/Arab community, that will both report directly to him.

Here, in photos, is a glimpse of how the tensions unfolded at BU last fall.
Students gathered at the Tsai Performance Center for the worldwide Shut It Down for Palestine protest, called by pro-Palestinian groups, urging people around the world to demand a cease-fire and an end to US support for Israel. The silent sit-in was to honor the thousands who have died in Gaza. An estimated 250 people were part of the protest at BU.

About 50 demonstrators blocked traffic on the BU Bridge, calling for a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip. Pictures and videos posted on social media by the Boston chapter of the organization IfNotNow showed demonstrators in shirts that said, “Not in our name.” They also held up signs reading, “Jews Say: Ceasefire Now,” “Let Gaza Live,” and “Free the Hostages.”

BU Students for Justice in Palestine held a solidarity vigil on BU Beach, inviting those of all faiths and drawing about 200 people. The group wanted to create a space for mourning, prayer, and remembrance for the Palestinians who have lost their lives.

BU Students for Justice in Palestine held an event on Marsh Plaza called Bring Them Home Now! They asked the BU community to show solidarity with Israel and demand that all remaining hostages be returned home from Gaza. The 137 chairs, each with a photo, or more than one photo, of a hostage attached, represented those being held captive. The circle of chairs represented the hostages released so far. The same day, BU Students for Justice in Palestine held an Emergency Die-In in the GSU Link.

The Boston University Police Department and the Suffolk County District Attorney’s office said they were investigating a possible hate crime on campus, after someone wrote “Free Palestine” on a window of BU Hillel. A spokesperson for the DA’s office said the vandalism may rise to the level of a hate crime because the Florence & Chafetz Hillel House is a place of worship that holds regular religious services, as well as a community center and a building associated with an educational facility.

“We have the power and the duty to force our institutions to end support for Israeli occupation.”

BU Students for Justice in Palestine said in their social media post promoting the walkout.

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DECEMBER 1
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1960
WALTER FEINSINGER (CAS’60, GRS’62,66) of Champaig, Ill., a philosopher of education, published Educating for Democracy (Cambridge University Press, now 1972). The book “provides a vision for curriculum reform that promotes democratic citizenship in an age of climate change and attacks on basic democratic institutions.” Walter writes. Email him at wfein@uiuc.edu.

MARIAN (GILBERT) KNAUP (CAS’60) of Chestnut Hill, Mass., published her fifth book, South Providence Girls: A Chop in Time (Loa City Bay Press, 2021), a memoir that chronicles the lives of Marian and 12 girls as they grew up and grew old together in South Providence, R.I. In June, Marian held a book discussion at the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. Email her at mkap@comcast.net.

1964
SUSAN STEPMILLER (CAS’64) of New York, N.Y., is a retired specialist in second- and foreign-language education and the author/editor of several English-language learners textbooks, as well as professional books for language teachers. Since 2000, Susan has been a freelance music critic and regularly publishes her reviews on www.bachtrack.com and on www.classicalsusa.com. Email her at susanstepmile@gmail.com.

1966

1969
SYDNEY GILLUM (CAS’69) of Wellesley, Mass., published A Mischief of Mice: Secrets, Lies, and Love in the Sandhills of Minnesota (Bloomington Two Books, 2022). Her memoir of her early years. “The title is based on characters of the 1950s and 60s before the prevalence of television,” she writes, “but it is also a mystery.” Cynthia is a psychotherapist and was an early practitioner of poetry therapy.

1970
CAROL GEDIM (Wheelock’70) of San Marino, Calif., a president of the San Marcos Community Foundation, a city-appointed funding agency that awards grants to area nonprofits. In its 35-year history, the foundation has given out more than $2 million to 363 (31%) organizations. “It’s a joy and honor to serve my community in this role,” she writes.

SHERRI RICHARDS (Wheelock’70) of Greensww, Conn., published ABD: The Perfect Housing Solution (Gibbs Smith, 2014). Her 12th book and 10th on modular, prefabricated, and sustainable architecture, ABDs are about accessory dwelling units like in-law apartments, garage conversions, and nanny houses.

ROY PERKINSION (GRS’70) of Wellesley, Mass., had an oil painting included in Reflections, Services & Sunsets, a group exhibition held in October 2023 at Page-Waterman Gallery & Framing in Wellesley. That month, two of Roy’s pastels of fishing flies were dis- played at the Colepy Society of Art’s holiday small works show on Newbury Street. “When I first thought of fishing flies as subjects, I realized Wallace Steuben’s poem, ‘ كذلك of the Jar’,” Roy writes. “It is amazing that such a mundane object—a ya—can be an idea, a fly fishing fly—can become so astonishing. That’s what poets and artists do.” Email him at roy@perkinson.com.

1973
ALAN JERNER (GRS’73) of Berkley, Calif., published in the Place of the Path (UnCollectedPress, 2023), a fictionalized memoir that incorporates prose and poetry into a portrait of his Northern California hometown. Alan is a retired public librarian and has lived in Berkeley for nearly his entire life.

HANNY L. SEGAL (CAS’73) of Fullerton, Calif., published Gay Fathers, Twins (Questrom’23) and Tess Kohanski (MKT’17), along with Kohanski’s brother Chris, Park-9 offers indoor and outdoor dog parks, a menu of fancy dog treats, and themed nights and events.

Since Park-9 opened in Everett, Mass., in April 2021, more than 10,000 dogs have been registered to visit, proving there is a hungry market for a place where both humans and dogs are welcome. “People want a great uniter and the easiest thing to start a conversation about,” Guise says. “We want to take care of people who want to be with their dog, but we’re now starting to see a lot of traffic from dogs—owner owners coming just to play with the dog and have a drink.” Kohanski and Guise had originally talked about running a dog bar as a retirement plan, until they stumbled upon the perfect location. “I walked through this space and was like, ‘We’re doing it!’” Kohanski recalls. Guise was on board, and they signed the lease three weeks later.

Park-9’s layout is a “choose your own adventure” for dogs and people, according to Kohanski. There is an on-shel lounge area, which looks no different from a trendy restaurant with industrial touches: an old lathe by the door, reclaimed wood floors, soaring ceilings, and a giant safe. Locals say, and you’ll stop leashes under the tables and dog couches tucked away in corners. Must dogs will want to head to the main event: the large dog park, which resembles an actual outdoor experience, with natural light and fake trees. If you visit, you may notice the couple’s four-year-old golden retriever, Nora, who helped inspire the business and has the title of chief happiness officer. “She helps us realize how much dogs can change your life and have a positive impact,” Guise says.
Alum Bill Banfield Receives President’s Call to Service Award

Jazzman has long been devoted to bridging music, education, and spirituality.

BY JAMES SULLIVAN

Bill Banfield, an accomplished composer, jazz guitarist, conductor, arranger, and recording artist, received the award in a ceremony at Bethel AME Church in Jamaica Plain, Mass. Banfield has been serving the community since his years as an undergraduate at New England Conservatory (NEC); at just 19 years of age, he accepted an offer to teach in the Boston Public Schools.

On hand for the ceremony at the church were colleagues representing the breadth of Banfield’s impact over more than four decades in and around Boston. In 2005, he was the founding director of the Africa’s Studies department at Berklee College of Music, where he is now a professor emeritus. In 2022, he joined Longy School of Music of Bard College as its first senior scholar in residence. He is the founder and director of the recording label, Jazz Urbane as well as the Jazz Urbane Café, a forthcoming restaurant and performance space in Roxbury’s Nubian Square.

Led by Pastors Ray Hammond (HOM’09) and Gloria White-Hammond (CAS’72, HOM’09), Bethel AME is Banfield’s home church. The evening included performances by the Boston Arts Academy Choir and the full version of Banfield’s own Imagine Orchestra, which featured special guest Najere, the renowned saxophonist who was Banfield’s mentor at NEC. There was a video message from the church elder and testimonial statements from Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Cornell West, two of Banfield’s many admirers.

President Joe Biden’s explanation of the meaning of the award was especially moving for him. “Hearing Biden’s words about bringing light, life, and redemption to the work—I had to fight back my tears to make sure I kept my composure,” Banfield recalls.

Putting into practice his lifelong devotion to making the connection between music, education, and spirituality for more than 30 years, Banfield has taught a curriculum he built, called the Theology of American Popular Music, at colleges across the country. He has served as a research associate with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage and three times as a Pultizer Prize judge in American music.

Having the ceremony hosted at Bethel AME made it particularly meaningful, Banfield says. Every time he looked around the audience, he saw more familiar faces: “It really hit home,” he says, “because it was on the soil where I did a lot of the work.”

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RACHITA CHAUDHURY (ENG’18) and THOMAS FLOROS (ENG’18), both of Cambridge, Mass., met as undergraduates and tied the knot in August 2023, surrounded by family, friends, and clergy. To honor the bride’s and groom’s cultures, Rachita and Thomas’ guests participated in three wedding ceremonies in one day—one Catholic, one Indian, and one Thai. Their first ceremony was held at St. Catherine of Sienna Church in Riverside, Conn., where DREW WOLFE (ENG’18) (bottom photo, back row) served as best man. The rest of the festivities took place at Whitty Castle in Rye, N.Y. in the Thai ceremony. Rachita’s mother, Prairat Chaudhury (ENG’18), both of Montgomery, Ala., and Thomas’ father, Amnon Chaudhury, both of Santa Monica, Calif., immigrated from Thailand. Rachita’s Thai ceremony, Rachita’s mother, Prairat Chaudhury (top photo, standing), immigrated from Thailand, poured water over the bride’s and groom’s hands as part of a traditional wedding ceremony called “rod nam sang.”

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class notes.

DANIELLE TAYLOR (GS’77) of Atlanta, Ga., was appointed director of the Clark Atlanta University Art Museum in October 2023. Danielle is a professor of African American studies at the university and has been interim museum director since August 2022.

PEGGY (STRAHVE) BARRETT (COM’93) of Wakefield, Mass., published her debut historical novel, A Delicate Marriage (Atmospheric Press, 2023), under the name Margarita Barresi. Set in Puerto Rico under the name Margarita Barresi. Set in Puerto Rico, it’s like nothing he expected, and years later, he’s still processing what it’s like nothing he expected, and years later, he’s still processing what

NANCY CHAVENSON (Sargent ’78 (left) of Bradenton, Fla., celebrated 45 years of friendship with NAZ (ZAGORZYCKI) ZAMORSKI (ENG ‘78, Quorum ’78) with a Caribbean cruise in April 2023. The pair met at BU and have been friends ever since. Naz is a former computer engineer with Bell Labs and Nancy, whose career in the food service industry started with ARS Food Services at BU and ended with Whole Foods Market, consults as a cheese specialist part-time at Whole Foods. Email Nancy at nchavenson@yahoo.com.

JIM SULKOW (COM’83) of Brookline, Mass., was honored in October with an induction into the New England Music Hall of Fame, in recognition of his 25 years as a music writer for the Boston Globe. Jim is the author of two books, both released in 2023 by Trouper Press Books: Rocktage & Beyond, Vol. 2, 45 Years of Classic Rock Chats & Rants, and Backstage & Beyond, Vol. 2, 45 Years of Modern Rock Chats & Rants. His work has been featured in USA Today, Creem, A&E, the Guardian, LA Weekly, Newsweek, and many other publications.

LARRY WARD (GS’78, Sargent ’80) and his fiancée, AMANDA FRANK (CAS’22), both of Cambridge, Mass., serve as executive producer/distributor/endangered producer, respectively, of the annual Cambridge Jazz Festival. In July, Larry and Lyrd produced the eight annual festival, featuring a lineup of national and international performers, including some Grammy winners and nominees. Larry, a former Cambridge city councillor, is one of the city’s election commissioners.

1982

AARON WINOKUR (COM’81) of Carmel, N.Y., is president of Winik Communications, an agency that won four prestigious Building PR Awards for its awareness campaign in pursuit of accountability and restorative justice for the September 11 attacks. The campaign general Winik Communications—submitted to the client, the nonprofit 9/11 Justice—a grand prize for Best Campaign of 2022, gold awards in the Best Issue and Cause Advocacy Campaign and Best Non Profit/Association Campaign categories, and a silver award in the Best Media Relations Cam- paign category. Wink and families partnered with 9/11 Justice and held several press conferences on behalf of their campaign, which sought to bring public attention to the Saudi-funded UAE Gulf war. “Saudi Arabia’s war,” he said, “forces funds to a loan for development and promotes its sporting (athletics and the NFL) in the US and around the world, and that presented challenges for our client, which is a small nonprofit of well-intentioned people who think they know what’s right,” works his family was also affected by the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

1983

Michael Beilinson (SSW ‘83) of Bellingham, Wash., was appointed to the National PACE Advisory Board of directors after serving as the CEO of PACE Rhode Island since its founding in 2004. Joan is also a member of the boards of directors of Landmark Medical Center and the Rhode Island Food Policy Council.

1986

JOHN MULHINE (MET’86) of Martinsburg, W.Va., writes, “Pam and I, along with our son, Sean, spent 2023 years in the service of the US Army. In 2000, I retired as a first sergeant and went to work for IBM Corporation as a military analyst and analyst. Larry, a former director of the Clark Atlanta University Art Museum and a professor of African American studies, has been interim museum director since August 2022.

JOSEPH PALLADINO (ENG ’82 (far right) of Hartford, Conn., was honor- ed in October with the Charles A. Dana Research Professorship Award at Trinity College’s commencement ceremony in May. Palladino, a Trinity profes- sor of engineering, was unable to collect the award in person, as he was attending BU Commencement ceremonies for his three children:

2018

MELISSA MAXWELL (CRH’13) of New York, N.Y., received rave reviews for her recent play, Imbroglio, after its world premiere at the 20th annual Great River Shakespeare Festival in Winona, Minn. In July 2023, the website Talkin’ Broadway wrote, “Imbroglio Is a terrific play that holds the audience spellbound from its jocular spoofing scene to its devastating con- clusion…a crackling, snapping good story, expertly melted out over two acts, and given a starting production by Great River Shakespeare Festival”.

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A Guide to Black Women’s Health

Melody T. McCloud’s new book aims to help readers improve their physical, psychological, and social well-being

BY JILLIAN MCKROY AND CINDY BUCONI

IN HER NEW BOOK, alum Melody T. McCloud presents a comprehensive resource for women to learn the signs, symptoms, treatments, and preventive measures for heart-to-toe conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, cancers, HIV, dementia, and maternal mortality. In *Black Women’s Wellness: Your ‘I’ve Got This!’ Guide to Health, Sex, & Phenomenal Living* (Sounds True, 2023), the Atlanta, Ga.–based OB/GYN, public speaker, and media consultant provides clinical data, anecdotes, and tools to enable readers to overcome long-standing health inequities and improve their physical, psychological, and social well-being. The book is aimed at the public but also can be used for course curriculum and as a reference for health professionals, says McCloud (CAS’77, CAMED’81), adding that it addresses what other physician-authored books don’t: the effect that racism and micro-aggressions—psychosocial stressors—have on Black women’s physical and mental health.

Psychosocial stressors come in many forms, she says, from daily disparaging comments to mainstream music: “Today’s ‘music’ has gone from ‘Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch’ and ‘My Cherie Amour’ to ‘ho, ub, and where.’ That’s not positive messaging; that’s not endearing. And if your men are talking to you that way and you listen to that all day, that’s going to pain your psyche.”

McCloud demonstrates how stress can affect physical health. “Stress increases your cortisol and other stress hormones,” she says, “which can lead to hypertension, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes—all potential killer diseases.”

The book has chapters about sex and sexual health, relationships, domestic abuse, and violence.

*Black Women’s Wellness* has been praised by public figures. “This book is a blueprint to help us ensure total health,” writes actress Paulina Washington. And Jen Ashston, an OB/GYN and ABC News/Good Morning America’s chief medical correspondent, writes, “*Black Women’s Wellness* will improve women’s lives.”

“That is my goal,” McCloud says.
peggy jain (whewlock’92) of brewster, mass., published capa cod cameo way: walking with a purpose (blurt books, 2023), an account of her mission “to walk all of cape cod during the pandemic, looking at issues of social and racial justice from both historical and contemporary perspectives,” she writes. pugy has worked in higher education for 40 years and remains in the field as a consultant and coach. she also leads the executive leadership institute for public colleges in new england.

mark robertson (cfa’92) of los angeles, calif., was the featured violin soloist for the films where the cowboys died (2022) and john wick: chapter 4 (2023), and has contracted orchestras and acted as concertmaster for the biogeyman (2023) and the 2023 remake of white men can’t jump (1992). mark has also led the orchestra for episodes of big city greens (seal team), and hbo & treasuir, as well as the documentary film rather than treasure (2023).

1993

ted akavia (cfa’93) of rancho palos verdes, calif., gathered eight collegiate percussionists through his nonprofit organization, tap, and provided them with tuition free master classes, mock audition experience, and unique performance opportunities in los angeles. his program is partnered with the seatz learning center, a school that serves children with mild to severe learning, social, emotional, and behavioral challenges. email ted at tattatz@gmail.com.

emily stephens (cfa’13) of northfield, mass., coauthored shaping down the barriers: a guide to centering african american song for concert performers (rowman & littlefield, 2023) with carolyn helton, a member of the university of michigan voice faculty. emery also recorded the role of brother dancer in james p. johnson’s one-act blues opera, de diggin’ jazz, accompanied by the university symphony orchestra and conductor kenneth knizer. a music faculty member at st. olaf college, emery is also the minnesota district governor for the national association of teachers of singing.

1994

joanna welch (questrom’94) of wilmington, del., was appointed cabinet secretary for her state’s department of health and social services by governor john carney. she leads a department of more than 4,000 employees and oversees an $8 billion budget. previously, josette was a cabinet secretary in delaware’s child services department. she also was a prosecutor for the state’s department of justice, where she held leadership roles over 15 years, including chief prosecutor and direc- tor of the special victims unit. email her at josettewelch@gmail.com.

lynn wustrow (law’94) of salem, mass., edited crime and conse- quence: the collateral effects of criminal conduct (mcle, 4th ed. 2023), a practical guide for both criminal prosecutors and defense attorneys on how to address the many consequences of criminal conduct and conviction.

charina ortega (eng’16) and marshall melzer (campion’16), both of brighton, mass., were married in october 2023 in waltham. they were joined by many bu friends, with their best friend, alé jandro eguren (eng’16), serving as officiant.

whiz naz (met’04) of rawalpindi, pakistan, pivoted to writing mystery fiction after a career as a professor. writing under the pen name zaph baxter, he has published three installments of his meditating psychic cozy mysteries, in which amateur psychic riza strong solves supernatural murders with her trusty kitten. his fourth book, artificial dumbness, is forthcoming. email whiz at drmak@bu.edu.

megan (weeks) murray (com’02) of albany, n. y., is chair of the family law section of the new york state bar association for its 2023–2024 term. she is the founding partner of the family law offices of megan s. murray, in trenholm.
We asked BU alumni about your identities and life stages. Here’s what you said—and what you can do next.

First-Generation

40% of respondents said that they were first-generation undergraduate or graduate students at BU.

You can engage with today’s first-gen campus community.
- Write a letter to a first-gen student with advice, suggestions about how to best navigate BU, or any other thoughts you’d like to share. Scan this QR code to submit your letter.
- Learn more about BU’s Newbury Center for first-generation students at bu.edu/newbury-center.

Parents

31% of respondents noted that they are a parent, guardian, or caretaker of a dependent child, or planning to become one within the next year.

Those who responded “yes” are most interested in work-life balance (19%) and attending BU family-friendly events (22%).

You can meet fellow parents and enjoy activities for the whole family.
- Join the BU Terrier Alumni Parents (TAP) network on BU Connects. Sign up at buconnects.com.
- Learn about options for summer programs and camps.
- Remember that Alumni Weekend 2024 (September 26-28) will have family-friendly events and opportunities! Sign up to get notified at bu.edu/alumniweekend.
- Check out our online seminar “Unicorns, Narwhals, and Work/Life Balance: Which of These is Real?”

Young Alumni

28% of respondents graduated from BU in the last 10 years.

You can meet fellow alumni and enjoy activities and programs.
- Visit buconnects.com to find your regional alumni networks, connect with local Terriers, attend a nearby event, and volunteer locally!
- Sign up to get notified about Alumni Weekend 2024, which will feature events specifically for young alums. Visit bu.edu/alumniweekend.

Engaging with BU
The top three ways alumni are interested in engaging with the BU community are:

1. Building a professional network and finding or being a mentor (21%). Visit bu.edu/alumniweekend.
2. Attending alumni reunions (21%). Visit bu.edu/alumniweekend.
3. Sharing expertise as a guest speaker (18%). Check out the Proud to BU podcast.

Want to tell us more about yourself? Visit bu.edu/update.

Wherever you are in life—or in the world—the BU Alumni Association is here for you.
Camping Gear Made Just for Kids

Timothy Butcher (Questrom’07) started his company, Mounts, after a disastrous camping trip with his baby

WHEN TIMOTHY BUTCHER and his wife decided to take their 16-month-old daughter on her first camping trip, they did what all first-time parents do: they majorly overpacked. They brought a family-sized tent, a travel crib, fleece PJs, three sleep sacks, and lots of other stuff. And while they thought they’d planned for all scenarios, the trip was still a disaster.

“The tent was too hot during the daytime, and then during the night, she got cold because the travel cot had no insulation and was on the ground,” says Butcher (Questrom’07). “She woke up throughout the night. We didn’t sleep at all.”

As soon as he got home, Butcher, who works in finance, began researching better gear. He enjoys hiking, camping, and skiing, but learned that although companies don’t really sell baby thermals because it was winter, and it turns out there is a niche for baby thermals because companies don’t really sell those,” he says. “And then in the summer, I started seeing sleeping [sacks] taking off.”

Upcoming products include a tent, socks, and a sleeping/camping mat.

“Sometimes you feel trapped as a parent, and you don’t want to forget your old self,” Butcher says. “We wanted to give you the tools to get back out there.”

Mounts’ toddler sleep sack is suited to keep kids warm on nights as cold as 20 degrees.

Timothy Butcher (Questrom’07) says he wanted to give parents the tools “to get back out there.”

Former members of the BU ski racing team gathered with loved ones at the new West Roxbury, Mass., home of AARON KELLOGG (COM’06, Pardee’06) (back row, far left) to celebrate his recent move and engagement to Han Park. Joining Aaron (clockwise from back left) were JILLIAN (FORNEY) PETERS (CGRS’08, Sargent’09), BYRN IMPAGLIZZO (Questrom’09), CARLA ELY (Questrom’09), ALLISON LEWIS BAKON (Questrom’09), JAMIE LYNNE (MELZINGER) HAY (CAS’09), Sargent’09, SHANNON (BRAY) WHITLOCK (Questrom’09), and EYSSIE MAGNUTTO-CLEARY (CGS’07, Pardee’09).

By Amy Laskowski
IT ALL HAPPENED so fast. In July 2015, Christine Kannler’s brother, Peter, a firefighter in Chelsea, Mass., was diagnosed with stage IV esophageal cancer. In September 2015, he died. In the spring of 2017, Kannler (CAS’96, SPH’00, CAMED’00), a private-practice dermatologist, launched into action.

She began doing screenings for firefighters in Westwood and Chelsea. “Then I started to talk to the union,” she says, “and I explained how I had done this free skin cancer screening program as a dermatology resident, and I had done it every year since…. I would just call up, get the forms, show up at the fire station, and do it right there. “

More than seven years later—and over 100 towns and cities visited—Kannler is a regular at firehouses across Massachusetts, where she offers free skin cancer screenings and preventive education. For her impact, she received the state’s Stephen D. Doan Fire Marshal’s Award in 2021 and a Distinguished Alumni Award from BU’s College of Arts & Sciences in 2023.

“I think this population is perfect for this program, because you have a high-risk population that [is] a part of their community and will ultimately need someone to screen them for many years,” Kannler says. “So, why not pair a local dermatologist with a local firefighter, or fire station? It seems like a no-brainer and easy lift. “

Now, firefighters can get screened by a participating dermatologist on select days throughout the month and during special events. Typically, Kannler will show up after a firehouse has requested a cancer-awareness class from DFS; during a screening, Kannler will often reiterate some of the safety tips from the presentation.

The efforts are paying off. After conducting thousands of free screenings, 15 participating dermatologists have contacted Kannler to thank her for catching a melanoma.

There’s another benefit. “Sometimes people will say, ‘I knew your brother,’ and I’ll be like, ‘Oh, great, tell me a story, give me one more little nugget that I can hold on to,’ she says. “And that’s how I treat it. It gives me a chance to think about him.”

CHRISTINE KANNLER
Says that after her brother’s death, she became aware of a strong link between the firefighting profession and cancer diagnosis. According to a 2013 study done by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, firefighters are 9 percent more likely to be diagnosed with cancer than the general population and suffer a 14 percent higher mortality rate due to exposure to burning carcinogenic chemicals.

Kannler says the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer published a paper in the journal The Lancet in 2022 stating that occupational firefighting is a group-one carcinogen—the highest level. The study listed many agents associated with the most frequently diagnosed cancers in the firefighting population. “Just from looking at the public health numbers,” she says, “it would seem as though they’re getting more aggressive cancers, but we’re also maybe not catching them in time.”

To expand her program, Kannler collaborated with the state firefighters union, the Massachusetts Fire Marshal, the Department of Fire Services (DFS), and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network, which integrated her program into a larger DFS initiative, Extinguish Firefighter Cancer. As she visited more Brethren, other dermatologist volunteers joined the ranks.

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class notes.

RENEE HIRSCHBERG (Whitcomb’12) of Redwood City, Calif., became the chief alumni relations officer at Stanford University in October 2023.

EMILY GREENHALGH (COM’12) of Walsgrave, Mass., published Fun with Owls & Snails (Penguin Random House, 2023). “The science activity for all the students to try in the classroom is based off of a project I did on the different species of owls in the US,” she writes. Email Emily at emmellongreenhalgh@gmail.com.

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SAVAITH AHUWALLA (Pardew’12) (left) of Natick, Mass., was appointed to the Commonwealth’s Asian American & Pacific Islander Commission in recognition of his award-winning work as an activist and a communications professional. Savaith, joined by his wife, Nanditha Shrivappak (right), was sworn in by Massachusetts Treasurer Deborah Goldberg. Friends can email Savaith at SavaithAhuwalla@gmail.com.

RACHEL SPAIN (CAS’09) of Weston, Mass., became president of the Boston Alumni-Undergrad Alumni Association board of directors in 2023; she’s served on the board since 2016. Rachel recently celebrated 10 years at Sun Life U.S. in Wellesley Hills, where she is a director of communications. A lifelong fan of aviation, she obtained her private pilot certificate in June 2020.

SAMUEL FREDERICK (CAS’09) of Stoughton, Mass., is a professor of German at Pace University. In 2001, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Wesleyan University.

KEVIN ROSEN (JAY’01) of Boston, Mass., has published his first book, A Short History of the World: From Beginning to Present (University of Massachusetts Press, 2022), an edited collection of letters penned by the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet and playwright. Kevin is an assistant professor of English at Stonehill College.

SARAH LOUER (CAS’09) of Massachusetts, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, was named a Rising Star by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston in 2023. A resident specialist in the National System of Federal Credit Unions, she has been with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston since 2008.

JOHN ADAMS (MET’00) of Cambridge, Mass., is an associate professor of music at Harvard University. John is the director of the University of Cambridge, where he has been teaching since 2004.

VICTORIA WAYSLAND (COM’12) of Lowell, Mass., a music journalist, was selected in August for Forbes’ inaugural “30 Under 30” list for Boston. Victoria is the Boston music editor for The Globe, a Boston-based online cultural magazine. “This distinction reflects my decade of dedication to documenting the Boston music scene, my three decades of local music coverage, and my efforts to uplift the local arts scene as a member of the Recording Academy,” she writes. Email Victoria at swaysland@gmail.com.


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OTTO LERBINGER, a College of Communication professor emeritus, taught public relations at COM for 50 years before his retirement in 2004, making him Boston University’s longest-serving faculty member. But it was his mix of knowledge and kindness that the University community remembered after he died, on September 17, 2023. He was 98.

“I’ve met hundreds of academics, and Otto was among the very top,” says Edward Downes, a COM associate professor of public relations, recalling how Lerbinger helped him navigate the transition from industry to academia. “He brought an admirable combination of intellectual brilliance and brilliant kindness.”

Janice Barrett (COM’90), a former COM associate professor, remembered Lerbinger as “a brilliant academic, a prolific writer, and a trailblazer in our field. A gentle, kind, compassionate soul, he offered sage advice and unwavering support.”

Amy Shanler (CAS’96, COM’96, ’04), a COM associate professor of the practice of public relations, was a graduate student in Lerbinger’s Crisis Communication course in 2001 when planes struck the World Trade Center towers in New York City.

“Dr. Lerbinger was a pillar of strength and empathy during the September 11 attacks, helping our class try to make sense of the senseless and find hope during a dark and scary time,” Shanler says. “I am eternally grateful for having the opportunity to learn from this smart and empathetic human.”

Lerbinger was an internationally recognized authority on corporate affairs, crisis management, and communication theory. He earned a BA from Brooklyn College, an MS from the University of Chicago, and a PhD in economics from MIT. His publications exploring public relations include the books The Crisis Manager: Facing Disasters, Conflicts, and Failures and Corporate Public Affairs: Interacting With Interest Groups, Media, and Government. He also was a consultant to commercial clients and gave seminars around the world.

In 2003, Lerbinger was named the inaugural recipient of COM’s first endowed chair, the Harold Burson Chair in Public Relations. At the ceremony announcing the chair, then-BU Provost Dennis Berkey said Lerbinger “is one of those senior scholars on the faculty who carry the character and the aspirations of the University with him constantly, serving as a member of the Faculty Council, serving on key committees across the campus, and always being there with a watchful eye and a thoughtful mind and a willingness to speak up and say what needs to be said.”

John Schulz, the dean of COM at the time, said at the ceremony that Lerbinger, “despite being the longest-serving member of faculty on our campus, retains an energy and enthusiasm in the classroom that is seldom equaled and never surpassed. Each term, students note the demand and rigor of his classes and then give him rave reviews.”

Lerbinger was BU’s longest-serving faculty member.

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“I’VE MET HUNDREDS OF ACADEMICS, AND OTTO WAS AMONG THE VERY TOP,” SAYS EDWARD DOWNES, A COM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, RECALLING HOW LERBINGER HELPED HIM NAVIGATE THE TRANSITION FROM INDUSTRY TO ACADEMIA. “HE BROUGHT AN ADMIRABLE COMBINATION OF INTELLECTUAL BRILLIANCE AND BRILLIANT KINDNESS.”

JANICE BARRETT (COM’90), A FORMER COM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, REMEMBERED LERBINGER AS “A BRILLIANT ACADEMIC, A PROLIFIC WRITER, AND A TRAILBLAZER IN OUR FIELD. A GENTLE, KIND, COMPASSIONATE SOUL, HE OFFERED SAGE ADVICE AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT.”

AMY SHANLER (CAS’96, COM’96, ’04), A COM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, WAS A GRADUATE STUDENT IN LERBINGER’S CRISIS COMMUNICATION COURSE IN 2001 WHEN PLANES STRUCK THE WORLD TRADE CENTER TOWERS IN NEW YORK CITY.

“DR. LERBINGER WAS A PILLAR OF STRENGTH AND EMPATHY DURING THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS, HELPING OUR CLASS TRY TO MAKE SENSE OF THE SENSELESS AND FIND HOPE DURING A DARK AND SCARY TIME,” SHANLER SAYS. “I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM THIS SMART AND EMPATHETIC HUMAN.”

LERBINGER WAS AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AUTHORITY ON CORPORATE AFFAIRS, CRISIS MANAGEMENT, AND COMMUNICATION THEORY. HE EARNED A BA FROM BROOKLYN COLLEGE, AN MS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, AND A PhD IN ECONOMICS FROM MIT. HIS PUBLICATIONS EXPLORING PUBLIC RELATIONS INCLUDE THE BOOKS THE CRISIS MANAGER: FACING DISASTERS, CONFLICTS, AND FAILURES AND CORPORATE PUBLIC AFFAIRS: INTERACTING WITH INTEREST GROUPS, MEDIA, AND GOVERNMENT. HE ALSO WAS A CONSULTANT TO COMMERCIAL CLIENTS AND GAVE SEMINARS AROUND THE WORLD.

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John Stone, CAS Sociology Professor

**FORMER CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT**

JOHN STONE, a College of Arts & Sciences professor of sociology and an international scholar of the politics of race and ethnicity, died on October 11, 2023. He was 78.

Stone earned a doctorate in 1970 from St. Anthony’s College at Oxford University. His interest in the dynamics of race and racial conflicts began with his doctoral research in South Africa, while working as a consultant for the University of Witwatersrand, Natal, and Cape Town.

During the 1970s and 1980s, he held a variety of faculty posts, at Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania, the University of South Africa, and the University of London. He was also chair of George Mason University’s Department of Sociology and anthropology for many years. In 2001, he joined the University of Vermont’s department, serving as chair until 2007.

In 1974, Stone founded the journal Ethnic and Racial Studies (ERS) and was its chief editor for 10 years. ERS was the first international journal devoted to the study of race and ethnicity, and its influence on other societies in the field was profound. He was the author or editor of at least nine books, and published widely on race, ethnicity, colonialism, nationalism, and migration. He coedited Alexis de Tocqueville on Democracy, Revolution, and Society (University of Chicago Press, 1980), with Stephen Mennell; the book was translated and translated into many languages. His 2003 coedited book, Race and Ethnicity in Comparative and Theoretical Approaches (Wiley-Blackwell), with Rutledge Dennis, was recognized for making available the introduction to the field and widely assigned as required reading to students. He coauthored Racial Conflict in Global Society (Polity Press, 2014) with Polly S. Rizova (GFS/90). And, in 2021, he coedited the five-volume Wiley Blackwell Companion to Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism with Dennis, Rizova, and Xiaoxia Hang (GFS/180).

Students flocked to Stone for the wise, committed, and compassionate mentorship he provided. His BU colleagues regarded him as witty and self-deprecating, always willing to offer cogent editorial comments on their manuscripts. In their tribute, they wrote: “To many in the sociology department, John was a friend, and, to the newcomer, a mentor who never missed an opportunity to share a joke or a laugh. That management seemed more important than anything else that we did. He was well known for his warm and buoyant personality and went out of his way to help students and departmental colleagues.”

He cared about people and lifted up those around him. He was kind and funny and a calm voice of reason amidst challenging circumstances and an incredible source of knowledge and insight about the United States’s history and culture. He was an esteemed professor, and his contributions to the field of sociology have been widely recognized.”

Stone was a warm and dedicated colleague. He was incredibly dedicated to his students, and approached academic life with steadfast diligence, levity, and calminess. We will miss him greatly.”

Due to space constraints, we are unable to publish only a small number of biographies among all those who have passed away. If you would like to submit a name for consideration for our Memoriam page, please send us your name, school, discipline, and years of graduate study and status, and a link to a published obituary. Thank you.

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**FORMER COM CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT**

DAVID ANABLE

Former COM Journal Chair

LONGTIME REPORTER AND EDITOR SPENT 20 YEARS AT THE CHICAGO SCIENCE MONITOR

DAVID ANABLE, former chair and professor of journalism at the College of Communication, died on August 13, 2023. He was 84.

Anable was born on June 7, 1939, in the village of Bremptont Speke in England. He earned a degree in agriculture from the University of Cambridge and in agricultural economics at Oxford University. He spent more than 20 years with the Christian Science Monitor—first in London and then in Boston—as a reporter, New York bureau chief, international news editor, and managing editor.

“Uncle was a mentor to dozens of Monitor reporters and editors. He never missed an opportunity to share his insights, and his guidance was always on point.”

Anable led the center (D 1951) at the University of Cambridge, and he was a consultant to the ICFJ (Wheelock ’57) in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. He was known for his warm and engaging personality, always willing to offer cogent editorial comments on his students’ manuscripts. In his tribute, he wrote: “To many in the sociology department, John was a friend, and, to the newcomer, a mentor who never missed an opportunity to share a joke or a laugh. That management seemed more important than anything else that we did. He was well known for his warm and buoyant personality and went out of his way to help students and departmental colleagues.”

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one more thing.

WAIT, THERE’S A NATIONAL PLUMBING COMPETITION?

Yep, and BU lead plumber Craig Childress is the best in the country | BY RICH BARLOW

FOR THREE HOURS during the final weekend in October, Craig Childress sweated against the country’s best in a Florida arena.

With tens of thousands of prize dollars on the line and CBS Sports Network cameras trained on him, he installed a vent and drain for a sink, added piping for an electric water heater, and rigged the whole assembly together. Then, putting together a horizontal furnace with air-conditioning system, he mounted an a-coil and plenum, laid the assembly on the ground to install a filter, and connected refrigerant lines from the unit to an outdoor condenser.

What, you thought this was the NBA?

As lead worker in plumbing services at BU’s Facilities Management & Operations, Childress helps students and employees plug leaky faucets, stanch ceiling drips, and upgrade aging boilers. Now, he deserves that superlative “lead” at the national level, after taking first place in both the national plumbing and the heating/ventilation/air-conditioning championships in Tampa. Childress won $50,000, wrenching victory (sorry) from 2 other plumbing finalists—and from 14 HVAC technicians in that specialty’s semis and finals—in the annual Elites Trade Championship Series. (CBS Sports Network, which occasionally shows nonathletic endeavors such as poker, was scheduled to air both championships in December.)

“Professionally speaking, this competition was the most rewarding and fun thing I’ve ever been part of,” Childress says.

The competitions, held at the Tampa Convention Center, were developed by the Chicago-based marketing firm Intersport and by Ideal Industries, a global manufacturer of tools and components for the trades. Childress’ journey to Tampa began last April, when 9,000-plus contestants nationwide completed a first-round timed written test on their phones in the HVAC competition. (A plumber by profession, he learned HVAC systems while working for a previous employer.)

Childress appreciates the spotlight the competition shone on his work. “It was celebrating the trades,” he says. “You don’t really ever hear about anything like that.”

Read the full story about Craig Childress’ championship wins at bu.edu/bostonia.

Celebrity chef.
Fashion philanthropist.
Forbes 30 under 30 CEO.
Boston beer innovator.

Believe it or not, they have something in common:
a BU degree.

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Listen or watch today at bu.edu/proudtobu
COME BACK TO BU FOR 
A WEEKEND LIKE NO OTHER

SEPTEMBER 26–28, 2024

This year, we’re going all out for Alumni Weekend! Highlights include the Back to BU Beach Festival, Alumni Trivia Night, and the Golden Terriers 50th Reunion. Add to that the Best of BU Alumni Awards, and you’ve got a weekend like no other!

Sign up for notifications today at bu.edu/alumniweekend

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