

THE MAGAZINE OF PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY | SPRING 2018



# **Panthers for Life**

Plymouth State is making lifelong connections to students, alumni, community members, and friends throughout the region and the world.



# Scholarship Recipients (and how they plan to be Panthers for Life)

"Receiving student scholarships has helped me reach my academic goals by making education more accessible. Through the gifts of generous donors, I was able to be present on campus and participate in clubs, organizations, student leadership opportunities, and internships. Scholarships have helped me to overcome great financial need and gave me the opportunity to focus on being a successful student."

-Kayleigh Bennett '18, Marketing and Creative Services, Interdisciplinary Studies, Student Employee of the Year-2018, USNH Board of Trustees Student Representative "The Bruce and Susan Wiggett Annual Scholarship in Business has truly been a blessing. Not only has it helped ease the financial burden of going to PSU, it has also provided me with a new family within the PSU community. Since receiving the scholarship, I've been fortunate to speak at several campus events and have enjoyed meeting more of the community along the way. It will be bittersweet leaving PSU when the time comes, but I will never forget the friends I've gained and the connections that I've made. One day I hope that I, too, will be able to give back and pay it forward to the next generation of alumni."

-Christopher Strong '20, Business Administration, U.S. Navy Veteran



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On the cover: Cover cubs (L-R) include Isabella Russell (Parents: Elizabeth and Craig Russell '04, Men's Ice Hockey Coach); Oliver Gaudette (Kayla '14, Student Success Coach, and Evan Gaudette '14); and Chesney Moran (Amy and Jason Moran, Dean of Enrollment Management). Gil Talbot '76 photo.

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Richard Crossley photo



Patti May, director of Plymouth Academic Support Services (PASS), oversees TRIO. Ian Halter photo.

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# Carleton Parish '71 **Panther for Life**

Each year, a host of newly minted graduates crosses the stage at Plymouth State University. Some subsequently settle in New Hampshire, while others venture farther afield. But all remain Panthers for Life, united by a shared educational experience and sense of connection with an alumni body that's more than 37,000 strong. Many personify the adage of "Once a Panther, always a Panther," especially longtime University supporter Carleton 'Carl' Parish '71.

Parish passed away on February 20, 2018, leaving behind a rich legacy of generosity and commitment to Plymouth State, an institution that he credited with shaping him both personally and professionally. "Plymouth made me a gentleman," said Parish simply.

A New Hampshire native, Parish graduated from Haverhill (NH) Academy in 1962, then enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served a four-year tour, then returned to the Granite State and enrolled at Plymouth State, supported by the GI Bill. There he earned his bachelor's degree in social science, with an eye to becoming a teacher.

"Carl always loved education and did teach in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, for a year after graduating, but ultimately he returned to serving his country as a member of the U.S. Marshals Service," notes Plymouth State's Director of Development John Scheinman '19P.

Parish served the Marshals with distinction for 34 years, joining the service as a special deputy and subsequently transferring into the role of logistics officer with the Administrative Services Directorate. His duties included protecting the federal judiciary, apprehending federal fugitives, seizing property acquired by criminals through illegal activities, and housing and transporting federal criminals. Parish concluded his service with the U.S. Marshals as a physical security specialist for the Judicial Circuit Courts from Maine to Guam, retiring in 2005 to spend more time with his beloved wife Sharon.

Scheinman first met the Parishes in 2009, when he travelled to their home in Spotsylvania, VA, to discuss potential donations to the University. Like many others, however, Scheinman soon became a close friend, drawn in by Parish's generous spirit and boundless enthusiasm for Plymouth State. "Carl's two greatest loves were his wife Sharon and Plymouth State University. He bled green," recalls Scheinman with a chuckle. "What was evident from our first meeting to our last was his unwavering belief in education and his commitment to his alma mater."

Over the years, Parish demonstrated that love and commitment repeatedly. As a senior, he joined forces with several other students to found Phi Beta Upsilon, a fraternity for returning veterans. "I think our fraternity may have been one of the first veterans' fraternities in the U.S.," says Mike McKinley '73, another founding member. "We started out as a co-op of sorts, essentially a self-support unit for veterans. We had a lot of members who had served in Vietnam, but we were open to veterans from everywhere—we even had one member from Bolivia, Chacho, who fought against Che Guevara."

The members were somewhat older than most of the other students, McKinley continues, and many were dealing with challenges like adjusting to college life and securing funds to complete their education. "We began getting together casually, and then someone suggested we start a fraternity, so that's what we did." Members not only supported one another, but also the community, says McKinley. "Some of our members, myself included, were among the first Plymouth State students to serve as campus policemen, and there were others who served as community medics and firemen as well."

In 1976, the fraternity shifted its charter and opened to all Plymouth State students, veterans included, but the commitment to community service that began with Parish

"It's incredible how many lives he has changed through his gifts to Plymouth State. He was affecting people through his generosity every day." -John Clark '71, '73G

"Carl's two greatest loves were his wife Sharon and Plymouth State University. He bled green." -John Scheinman



and his classmates remains strong, says current President Alexander Giordano '18. Today, fraternity members devote numerous volunteer hours to the Veterans Home in Tilton as well as to campus projects. "We are honored to have Carleton Parish, a man so generous and accomplished, as a part of our alumni legacy," says Giordano. "We realize that his contributions have made Plymouth State a better place."

Following graduation, Parish maintained his connection with the University, giving generously of both his physical and fiscal resources. "Carleton was such a great role model for so many of us in terms of giving back, and he was unabashed in his approach to soliciting others," notes classmate, friend, and former PSU Athletic Director John Clark '71, '73G. "He was a nontraditional student and very proud—of his time in the service, of the fraternity he helped to start, of our class, of Plymouth State in general. He kept in touch with dozens and dozens of our classmates and constantly encouraged others to support Plymouth State. He was very passionate about paying it forward."

And Parish led by example. A proud member of two of the University's vital fundraising bodies—the Holmes Heritage Society and the President's Council—Parish was continuously looking for ways to aid his alma mater and honor those he held dear. Over the years, his donations reached nearly seven figures and encompassed, among other things, two endowed scholarships.

The first scholarship was motivated by somber circumstances. In February of 2011, Parish lost his beloved wife Sharon in a tragic car accident. Sharon Parish was a highly accomplished civil servant in her own right who enjoyed a distinguished career, first with the CIA, then with the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). "Carl's life was never the same after Sharon's death," says Scheinman. Parish responded to his grief by honoring his wife's memory with an endowed scholarship: the Sharon Rebecca Parish Memorial Scholarship in Business. To date, says

Scheinman, 14 students have been recipients of Parish's philanthropy. "Carl was so proud of the students—he enjoyed meeting them on his trips to Plymouth and reading all of their thank-you notes."

The second scholarship was the Carleton R. Parish '71 Endowed Scholarship in Social Science, which supports deserving, high-achieving students seeking a social science degree. Parish established the scholarship in recognition of Plymouth State faculty members Peng-Khuan Chong, James Hogan, and Manuel Marquez Sterling, professors he credited with teaching him "life lessons, beyond course content, that prepared him for a successful and exemplary 30-plus-year career in the U.S. Marshals Service and made him a gentleman admired and respected by all who know him."

Parish was also an avid fan of New England sports. Baseball was his favorite sport, and he cultivated rich relationships with Plymouth State's team—coaches, student athletes, and parents alike. Over the years, Parish provided financial support for the team's annual spring trip to Ft. Myers, FL, and repeatedly donated Red Sox memorabilia for the team's fundraising auction. He also hosted a coaches' social at his Ft. Myers home each year and bequeathed his remaining Red Sox collection to the team for future auctions. This season, the baseball team wore bracelets to honor his memory. "His love for Plymouth State athletics and the baseball team was truly special and meant a lot to me," says Clark.

Parish's largest gift was part of his final bequest, a donation to the fundraising initiative for Plymouth State's Stadium and Turf Field in honor of Clark. "I am deeply touched," says Clark.

"Carl knew the Stadium and Turf Field were very important to John Clark, and he was eager to do his part to make them a reality, so he included the project in his bequest intentions," says Vice President for University Advancement Paula Lee Hobson. "This is a \$4 million project and because of the generosity of Carl and many others, we're rapidly closing in on our goal. We have \$1 million left to raise, and I'm confident that once our generous alumni body realizes what's needed, we will secure the remaining funds this year."

Meanwhile, as the University moves toward that goal, Plymouth State formally recognized Parish's decades of unstinting support with the May 6, 2018, naming of the baseball field as the Sharon and Carleton '71 Parish Field. "I believe that Carl would like to be remembered as someone who gave back," Scheinman concludes. "He called Plymouth State his seminary and was happy to be able to give back to the institution. He was disappointed when others did not."

"It's incredible how many lives he has changed through his gifts to Plymouth State," observes Clark. "He was affecting people through his generosity every day."

Lori Ferguson

# **New Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Named**

Dr. Robin Dorff, an internationally recognized expert in strategy and planning, will join Plymouth State in June as provost and vice president of academic affairs. Dr. Dorff previously served as dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, where he supervised college operations for over 6,600 students.

"This represents an important next step in our reimagining of Plymouth State University," says President Donald Birx. "As we move fully into our Integrated Clusters model, Dr. Dorff's expertise, combined with his success in reorganizing a traditional college structure at Kennesaw State to a collaborative learning environment, will serve us well."

After completing his MA and PhD at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Dr. Dorff held faculty positions at Michigan State University and North Carolina State University. Prior to Kennesaw State, Dr. Dorff served as research professor of national security affairs at the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, where he was the General Douglas MacArthur Chair of Research.

He has served on the War College faculty as a visiting professor and as professor of national security policy and strategy in the Department of National Security and Strategy, where he also held the General Maxwell D. Taylor Chair and served as department chair.



## **Clusters Update**

Administrative progress

Faculty are leading the transition from the departmental structure into Integrated Clusters. The Provost's Council was formed in April to support this important work. Council members will represent each of the Clusters and will play an active role in developing academic strategies across campus.

First-Year Residential Experience

PSU recognizes that classroom learning is just part of the picture, along with extracurricular and co-curricular activities, internships, and community involvement. Now the University has reimagined the Residential Life Program to create a new and exciting First-Year Residential Experience (FYRE) that enriches student engagement and the transition to PSU.

Similar programs are found at some of the nation's top colleges and universities, and FYRE will be a foundational program of the Integrated Clusters learning model.

Classes typically represent only onethird of a student's time on campus. FYRE adds important value to the other two-thirds with special programs, increased access to faculty and University services, and experiences that help students find their personal path

at PSU. For more information, visit plymouth.edu/FYRE.

#### 'Four Tools' developments

The Four Tools of Clusters are the First-Year Seminar, Open Laboratories, Themed General Education Courses, and an Integrated Capstone Experience.

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) has been redeveloped to focus on "Wicked Problems," which last academic year included Gender Equity, Social Injustice, the Role of Civility and Empathy in Society, Causes and Effects of Homelessness, Understanding the "Other" in a Polarized America, the Fragility of American Democracy, and the Pollinator Crisis. All first-year students will take the new FYS this coming academic year.

In addition, a new task force is developing an Integrated Capstone that aligns with the overall Cluster vision.

# **Chronicle of Higher Education Highlights PSU's Clusters Transformation**

Plymouth State is undergoing a major, positive transformation via the Integrated Clusters learning model, and the nation's higher education community is noticing. PSU's evolution is the primary case study in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* feature on higher education administration, which suggests that the University may have advantages favoring its success.

The highly respected *Chronicle* is the leading source of news and information for higher education. "Want to Revamp Your Curriculum? Here's How to Avoid a Quagmire." appeared in the March 4, 2018, edition and is available online at plymouth.edu/che-clusters.

PSU is seen as more suited for innovation than other institutions. "Plymouth State is an unusually collegial place, averse to acrimonious clashes, many faculty members say," reports the Chronicle. In addition, President Donald Birx is credited for constantly communicating about proposals and changes, laying out a vision of the University's future.

PSU's transition is well underway and the article references the use of tools central to the Clusters initiative. including First-Year Seminars, movement from three- to four-credit courses, and Open Laboratories.



The reimagined Residential Life Program will feature a new First-Year Residential Experience (FYRE). Nina Weinstein '15 photo.

# Faces of Giving:

# Susan Kline '74, Michael Fischler, and Meghan Lang '17



Susan Kline '74, Jesse Sullivan '20 photo.

Michael Fischler, Ian Halter photo.

Meghan Lang '17, Ian Halter photo.





Plymouth State University is an educational institution on a mission, committed to educating "tomorrow changers," students who are equipped to make their mark in an ever-changing, globally connected world. The University is also determined to accept as many qualified students as possible, regardless of need. A laudable goal, to be sure, but also a daunting challenge, as some 65 percent of the institution's students face huge financial challenges before they step onto campus: 43 percent of the first-year class are the first in their family to attend college; 39 percent of the student body is from low-income households whose expected family contribution to their child's education is zero; and 26 percent of students exhaust all their scholarship options and still face a \$9,000 per year funding need.

"Our generous donors know that our deserving students need tremendous philanthropic support to be successful," says Vice President for University Advancement Paula Lee Hobson. Fortunately, Plymouth State has a tremendous advantage in this regard—dedicated supporters who hail from every sector of the University community and understand, implicitly, the rewards of paying it forward. The generosity and foresight of the following individuals from the Plymouth State family are enabling an increasingly diverse group of students to take the University's challenge to see how much further they can go.

#### Susan Kline'74

Susan Kline is a self-confessed workaholic and a passionate advocate for education. She has lived her beliefs throughout her career, earning a degree in elementary education from Plymouth State, followed by a master's in educational administration from Eastern Michigan University, with a certificate to teach emotionally disturbed children. She taught special education in Texas and California, then in 1984 took a tremendous entrepreneurial leap and founded the eponymously named Kline School in Costa Mesa, CA, to serve children from kindergarten through eighth grade.

Over the course of its 32-year history, the school educated hundreds of children and earned recognition from the U.S. Congress as a leading edge elementary school. Embracing a learning approach that emphasized enhanced individual attention, the school sought to develop students who were effective communicators, complex and innovative thinkers, independent workers, technologically literate, and socially responsible. "As a student at Plymouth State, I learned the importance of looking at the whole person," says Kline, "so that's what I sought to do at my school. Our curriculum was not textbook driven—it was individualized and project-based," she continues. "When I studied with Dr. Michael Fischler at Plymouth State, he concentrated on helping his students identify their better selves, and

that was a philosophy that stuck with me."

"At Kline School, Susan was teaching in Clusters before Clusters were cool," observes Hobson. "She embodies the ideal of Plymouth State: to graduate students who are tomorrow changers."

The University recognized Kline for her accomplishments in 2013, awarding her the Alumni Achievement Award for contributing to her profession, Plymouth State, and the improvement of society. In 2015, Kline closed her school to pursue other opportunities. She remains involved with education, however, serving as a visiting committee chair to evaluate educational programs for the Accrediting Commission of Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

## "As a student at Plymouth State, I learned the importance of looking at the whole person."-Susan Kline '74

Kline has also remained active in Plymouth State's educational mission since graduating, providing financial support for various initiatives over the years. She has donated to the Sally Boland Scholarship in recognition of the late English professor's impact on her life—"Dr. Boland's unassuming style and broad-mindedness influenced me greatly"— and has also made gifts to the Mark Sylvestre Planetarium at the Boyd Science Center and the Fischler Family Endowed Scholarship

Fund, a fund established by Michael Fischler.

"The connection I made with Dr. Fischler and other faculty influenced not only my career path, but my character," Kline observes. "As I look back, their three Rs are the best yet: be Respectful, Responsible, and Responsive."

Most recently, Kline recognized a new opportunity to amplify her legacy of giving back to Plymouth State, establishing a bequest intent to leave 50 percent of her estate to the University at her passing, a significant gift that she hopes will provide opportunities for a host of future Plymouth State students. "I really feel good about this gift, and I like the way that Plymouth State has advised me of giving opportunities in a sensitive, respectful way over the years. The development staff keeps in touch appropriately—if there's a funding opportunity they think may be of interest, they let me know."

Kline's generous bequest will support unrestricted scholarships at the University, supplementing the Plymouth Opportunity Scholarship created in November of 2017 by PSU Director of Development John Scheinman '19P and his wife Susan. "Education solves the world's problems," says Sheinman. "It's the greatest gift you can give, and Susan and I wholeheartedly believe that education should be affordable for everyone." Kline couldn't agree more. "Supporting unrestricted scholarships is tremendously important to me. Education shouldn't just be for the rich."

Susan Kline cites a quote widely attributed to Winston Churchill—"You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give."—as a guiding principle for her life. "That is my mantra as well, and I've always been happy to give to Plymouth State," says Kline. "Kline School is no longer in operation, so supporting educational initiatives at the University is a wonderful way for me to continue to serve the kids."

Kline is certain that her donations will be used wisely. "I'm confident that Plymouth State will be a good steward of my money the school can take a dollar and really make it work. I think that anyone who's in a position to make a gift to the University should feel comfortable doing so. Your money will be well managed, and your gift will make a difference in someone's life."

#### Dr. Michael Fischler

For 47 years, Mike Fischler taught at Plymouth State in the fields of counselor education, educational leadership, diversity studies, and elementary education, and to hear Fischler tell it, he's incapable of doing much of anything else. "I think I've lost my ability to communicate like a normal human being—that by now, regardless of the setting, I'm most comfortable relating to others as a teacher," he confesses with an easy laugh, "and I can only hope that others are comfortable as well! To paraphrase Freud, 'The meaning of life is to love and to work,' and I've gratefully been able to fill both of those needs through my relationships at Plymouth State."

"Plymouth State has been a lab through which I've been able to practice my work, live a meaningful life, and give comfort and support to others."-Dr. Michael Fischler

A familiar and beloved figure on campus, Fischler has educated thousands of students, including Susan Kline, during his years in the classroom. He also helped to create a haven for students seeking guidance and support through the establishment of the University's Counseling and Human Relations Center, which he founded in 1975 and saw christened "the Michael L. Fischler Counseling Center" in the fall of 2015. "Plymouth State has been a lab through which I've been able to practice my work, live a meaningful life, and give comfort and support to others," he explains.

As Fischler approached retirement, he realized that a major vehicle through which he had provided support and facilitated the growth of others—namely his work at the University would soon no longer be available. He began speaking with his wife Reine '79, an artist, about ways in which they could continue to pursue their joint commitment to making a better campus, community, and world. Recalling a serious health scare they experienced with their youngest child, Reine suggested the family create a scholarship to support a Plymouth State student struggling to cope with a chronic or terminal illness. "Thus, the Fischler Family Endowed Scholarship was born," says Mike. "It is a continuation of a promise made to God some 30 years ago, when our daughter was spared, to support children and families in need, to diminish suffering, and to make a few of their wishes come true."

"It's been said that, 'The meaning of life is to find your gift; the purpose of life is to give it away," Reine observes. "Our gift is sharing love and compassion with others, and the family scholarship allows us to do this in a significant way."

#### Meghan Lang'17

Meghan Lang is a go-getter who's all about making her own luck, but she also acknowledges that the education and support she received as a student at Plymouth State have played a pivotal role in her success. A business administration major with a certificate in sales, Lang now works as a healthcare account executive at Gartner. She secured the position in October of her senior year at PSU and asserts that the selling skills she learned in the Professional Sales Program and the leadership skills she cultivated in the Marketing Association of Plymouth State (MAPS) put her ahead of the competition. Her involvement with Compass Consulting, a social media consulting business she launched to promote the University, and Statement, a print shop run by MAPS, were also influential.

"I'm certain that my time at Plymouth State gave me a big step up in securing a job right out of college, and I want to help current students get the same experience and benefits that I did."-Meghan Lang '17

As a result, Lang has established a scholarship to help others in marketing, pledging \$3,000 a year for the next five years to provide annual \$1,000 scholarships to the leaders of MAPS, Compass, and Statement. By leveraging Gartner's matching program to double the impact, the Granite Guarantee Scholarship, the Women's Circle of Giving Scholarship for the Women's Leadership Summit, and the Stadium and Turf Field project will also see funds from her total gift of \$30,000 over five years.

"A lot of people think about giving back to their school when they get older, but I believe it's important to get in the habit as a recent graduate," Lang asserts. "When you give back as a young alumna, chances are you still know some of the current students benefiting from your donation, making the impact that much greater. I'm certain that my time at Plymouth State gave me a big step up in securing a job right out of college, and I want to help current students get the same experience and benefits that I did." . Lori Ferguson

# Holistic TRIO Program Helps Students Succeed

More than half of all Plymouth State students are either first generation, low income, or have a disability. This "trio" comprises the three key factors in determining eligibility for TRIO, a federally funded student support service and the primary component of the University's Plymouth Academic Support Services (PASS) program. Despite the challenges faced by many students, an impressive graduation rate provides compelling evidence of the program's effectiveness.

"TRIO teaches students how to navigate the system," says Patti May, who has directed PASS since 2014. "If your parents didn't go to college, you might not know what a registrar's office is. We provide hands-on, holistic support to help these students succeed. It's more than just telling them to go to the Financial Aid Office—it's walking them there and personally introducing them to a counselor who

TRIO is a federal higher education program that provides students from disadvantaged backgrounds with the necessary support to help them access services that allow them to earn their degree. The PSU TRIO program has excellent retention and graduation rates. In 2016-2017, 88 percent of participants returned for the next academic year and there was an 81 percent graduation rate of the students who had begun the program six years prior.

Especially noteworthy is that 97 percent of TRIO participants at PSU were in good academic standing, thanks to the tutoring, counseling, and course selection services offered. "Academics is an important component of the TRIO program but it's not the only piece," says May. "We also help with personal and career matters and, for many students, we act as parental figures."

TRIO supports all aspects of the student experience, from developing social skills to financial literacy and cultural awareness. Before classes begin, support starts with TRIO Connection Days, when participating students come a week before the semester begins to get to know one another, the campus, and their surroundings. Students also visit their classrooms and are connected with local businesses for job opportunities.

A major contributing factor to TRIO's success is its mentorship program. TRIO links first-year students with upperclass students who can relate to their concerns, help them overcome challenges, and ultimately lead them to success.

"It's amazing to see the transformation these students undergo during their time with TRIO," says May. "So many of them arrive shy due to challenging circumstances and leave as confident young adults who have found a place to call home and people to call family. They're ready to conquer the next step in life." • Elana Studer '17

TRIO links firstyear students with upperclass students who can relate to their concerns, help them overcome challenges, and ultimately lead them to success.







I can easily say that the TRIO program is a huge reason why I became the successful and confident student that I am today. I began as a shy incoming first-year, terrified by the idea of being far from home and having to become acclimated to a new environment. The moment I walked onto campus, though, I instantly became a part of the TRIO family. The staff and student mentors genuinely care, and they do everything in their power to ensure that we are successful in our college careers and will continue to be so after graduation.

-Jessie Woody '19, Physical Education

I qualified for the TRIO program since I was a firstgeneration college student. I applied because it looked like a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and make new connections-and it was! At the end of my first year, TRIO organized a group of us to go to the Blackfeet community in Montana to do volunteer work. I was able to experience new cultures and communities that I otherwise never would have. Without TRIO, my college experience would have been very different and not as impactful.

-Fenjens Kwok '18, Mathematics

A few weeks into my first semester at PSU, I attended my first TRIO meeting. At the time, I was overwhelmed with all the challenges that come with being a new student. Whether I was having issues with academics, social life, or needed help figuring out how to pay for school, the staff and students in the TRIO program provided me with the tools and support I needed to succeed. Above all, I am grateful for the sense of belonging that the TRIO family has given me.

-Harrison Frost '21, History

# A World of Opportunity

This year alone, 53 undergraduate, 13 graduate, and four exchange students from all over the globe have made Plymouth their home away from home. International students have been making the trek abroad for as long as anyone on campus can remember, and the tradition of welcoming them into our small-town community goes back even further.

While there are many reasons why international students choose to spend undergraduate years in the United States, there is agreement on the main aspects that set PSU apart from other institutions, overseas and in the United States.

The surrounding picturesque peaks, snowcapped in the winter and bustling with hikers in the summer and fall, are a sight to behold and a major selling point for prospective students around the world. Joni Hongisto '20 is from Kaarina, Finland, and says he enjoys the scenery especially because it's so unlike the exceptionally flat landscape in his home country.

The warm and welcoming nature of the Plymouth community, while perhaps not as monumental as the nature that encapsulates campus, is another facet that elevates PSU on the global stage. Dan Shaw '19 is from Winchester, England, and co-captain of the men's soccer team with Hongisto. Shaw muses, "It's completely different than England where everything is rushed; life in Plymouth is relaxed and happy."

Hongisto sees immense value in the opportunities, and ultimately the degree, from PSU. The ability to focus on a sport and pursue a degree simultaneously is quite unique to the American higher education system. Other countries incorporate athletics into their

university structure, but the caliber and dedication are not comparable to that of the United States. Some international athletes discover PSU on their own, and others are recruited by the University or alumni to play for a specific team.

Competitive sports not only bring international students to PSU, they bring international students together. Rob Wright, Plymouth State men's soccer coach, relocated to New Hampshire from the UK. "The team is well known for its international reputation," he says.

The men's soccer team has long been a hot spot for international students, along with the hockey and ski teams. Men's soccer has welcomed over 100 student athletes from Japan, Sweden, and beyond. The program never fails to attract a diverse group, and a little more than a decade ago Faizal (or Jamal, as he was called during his time at PSU) Luttamaguzi '08 immersed himself in everything that Plymouth State had to offer academically and athletically.

Born in Uganda and raised in Stockholm, Sweden, Luttamaguzi knew that PSU would transform his life in an incredibly positive way based on his first encounter with an influential figure who would eventually inspire him to pursue his passions. Recently retired Professor Warren Mason of the College of Business Administration was a driving force in Luttamaguzi's transformation in the way of personal realization. Even today, a conversation about Plymouth State is incomplete without mention of his humble mentor, who had kind words to share about the former international student.

"I remember Faizal well. After 35 years of working with students, some you remember better than

Now a proud founder of four thriving businesses, one of which involves eco-friendly wooden bikes that garnered an impressive nomination for Stockholm's Innovation of the Year in 2017, Luttamaguzi exemplifies the many international students who are thriving after earning their degrees here.

others. He was always open to learning American business practices, and with his winning smile and cheerful manner, he was easy to work with. Even at that young age, you sensed his determination and entrepreneurial spirit. That he's gone on to be so successful, I am not at all surprised!"

Empowered by discussion about the nature of "globalization" and what it means to be "the international kid," Luttamaguzi made a name for himself after graduating by combining his two areas of expertise and passion: the global experience and marketing. After five years of excelling in the realm of international marketing, he returned to Stockholm to pursue a life of entrepreneurship.

The weaving of international students into the fabric of our tight-knit community is truly multifold. Students are willing and able to be immersed in a unique university setting that provides great opportunities for academic, athletic, and personal growth, and the University is inspired by and proud of the positive contributions that they make both during their time in Plymouth and afterward.

■ Shannon Griffiths '17







Top to bottom: Faizal "Jamal" Luttamaguzi '08, Dan Shaw '19 (on left, with Nate Roberts '19), and Joni Hongisto '20.

#### **ATHLETICS**

Back Row (L-R): Ryan Joy '15; Mike Laflamme '16; Alex Sobolov '11; Zach Parsons '11; Lauren Lavigne '94, '96G; Chris Kilmer '99; Craig Russell '04; Rob Wright '08G

Front Row (L-R): Devin Zeman '05; Courtney O'Clair '04, '08G; Kim Bownes '07G; Dave Gyger '97

PSU's athletic facilities are home to many Panther alumni. The main office of the Physical Education Center is where you'll find Associate Director of Athletics Courtney O'Clair '04, '08G and Assistant Director of Athletics Lauren Lavigne '94, '96G. A stroll down the hall leads to Director of Athletics Kim Bownes '07G, Assistant Director of Communications for Athletics Chris Kilmer '99, Field **Hockey Assistant Katie Kovacs** '06, and the baseball office, occupied by assistants Brandon Cox '14, Jarek Krajewski '16, and Mike Laflamme '16.

Around the corner you'll find Head Women's Soccer Coach Ryan Joy '15, Head Men's Soccer Coach Rob Wright '08G, Men's Soccer Assistant Parker Spear '13, Women's Soccer and Basketball Assistant Leah Swanson '16, and Men's Basketball Assistant Zach Stevens '16.

You might also run into new Women's Volleyball Coach Joan Forge '77 and her assistant Kaitlyn Tedeschi '14, or maybe Assistant Wrestling Coach James Matlack '14 and Swimming and Diving Assistant Sam Carberry '15.

The football offices in ALLWell North house Zach Parsons '11, Alex Sobolov '11, and Devin Zeman '05, and at the Ice Arena you'll find Men's Hockey Coach Craig Russell '04 and Women's Hockey Coach Mykul Haun '07. The building is run by Arena Manager Dave Gyger '97.



# **Alumni in Athletics**

On most days, visitors to the Physical Education Center are enthusiastically greeted by "Hey, what's going on?" from Courtney O'Clair '04, '08G, associate director of athletics. The ambiance is welcoming and familiar. There's a strong alumni connection within athletics, and many former students have returned or stayed for the same reasons.

Director of Athletics Kim Bownes '07G, who began her career as the head alpine ski coach in 1988, puts it best. "It has always been the people—students and co-workers—who make Plymouth such a special place."

Assistant Director of Athletics Lauren Lavigne '94, '96G came to play basketball and softball in 1990. Her experiences on campus, and specifically with English literature Professor Henry Vittum, made her realize that Plymouth State was where she wanted to be long term.

"Dr. Vittum supported my pursuit of athletics and he would always ask about my games," says Lavigne. She remembers bumping into him one day on her way to a softball game. She invited him to come, but hardly expected him to be there.

"He didn't understand sports, but believed in the value of the experience," says Lavigne.

Jogging off the field between innings she scanned the crowd, and there, on the top bleacher, was Vittum.

"I was so proud, so touched," says Lavigne.

Lavigne spent two years at Endicott College as head women's basketball coach, but returned to lead PSU's program in 1998, a post she held until becoming an administrator in 2012.

"I came back to be a part of the school that made me who I am. I grew up here. PSU has always been my home," she says.

Craig Russell '04 has played a significant role in turning the men's ice hockey team into a regional powerhouse. He came to Plymouth as a mid-season transfer during the 2000-2001 season. When he arrived, he knew just one player on the team.

"I came to the rink, got dressed, and jumped on the ice for my first practice," says Russell.

As the 'new guy' Russell was anxious, but an upperclassman welcomed him early on. "He said, 'Let me know if you need

anything off the ice. I'm happy to help you," Russell recalls.

When practice ended a team captain grabbed Russell, making sure the newest Panther had a place to stay and was set for food. From that moment Russell knew Plymouth was where he belonged.

The same sentiment is echoed by more recent graduates. Leah Swanson '16 decided to play four years of soccer and two years of basketball at Plymouth because of those relationships.

"I loved the connections that I made right from the start," says Swanson, who now works to maintain the supportive atmosphere for current students.

"The athletics department is one of the best environments. I've ever been in," she continues. "Everyone is so welcoming and always there to help me, just as they were when I was an undergrad. I couldn't imagine starting my career anywhere else."

Students come to PSU for a host of reasons, and the culture and continuity of the athletics programs makes many of them want to stay. • Chris Kilmer '99

# Peter Laviolette '21

It was Fourth of July weekend, 2006, and eight-year-old Peter Philip Laviolette III '21 was at a holiday party. But this celebration was a bit different than most. Five hundred people filled the family cul-de-sac, and the most famous guest was a piece of silver and nickel alloy weighing 34.5 pounds and standing just under three feet tall ... the Stanley Cup.

Laviolette's father, Peter Philip Laviolette Jr., had just completed his first full season as the head coach of the Carolina Hurricanes, guiding the franchise to its first championship.

For as long as he can remember, the younger Laviolette was obsessed with hockey. His dad put him in skates when he was two. At three he took his helmet, gloves, and stick with him everywhere. At age four, in his first game, he scored a hat trick.

Perhaps he had an advantage over other kids: he had regular access to an NHL-caliber, personal coach. But the family life of a sports luminary isn't always easy.

Peter had been playing AAA hockey in North Carolina, the highest level of competitive hockey for an athlete his age. After the 2008-2009 season the family moved to Florida, where the best youth hockey within driving distance was only A level. He had to make do.

When his dad was hired to lead the Philadelphia Flyers a year later, Laviolette didn't make the AAA team. The lack of high-level competition had the expected result on his skill set, but he took advantage of his situation and began working out with his father and the Flyers.

"Dad didn't push me over the limit, but he was there to get me up in the mornings. He would

make me a good breakfast, drive me to the rink, make me work out, and then we'd skate for an hour. The next year I made the AAA team, and I give that all to him."

At the same time, he was picking up the pro culture. At the end of practices he'd hop on the ice and skate with his dad's teams. "I'd stick handle, shoot with the guys, get dangled," he says with a smirk.

One his favorite Flyers was Zac Rinaldo, a left wing known for his physicality. "He lined me up," recalls Laviolette, relishing the story. "He put me on the boards and ran into me, and it was hard. Not as hard as he could, but hard enough to knock over a 12-year old. I did it to him and we kept doing it for 30 minutes. He kept teaching me."

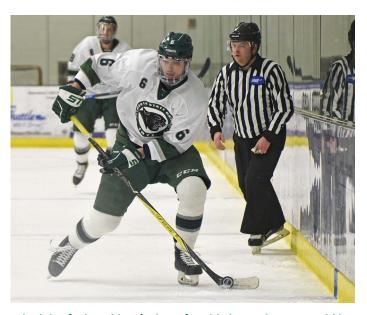
After difficulties in high school in New Jersey, Laviolette came to New Hampshire's Proctor Academy to start over, and by his senior year knew he could be successful at college. He chose PSU.

"I had this feeling, like I feel comfortable here," says Laviolette. "I knew I would be in a good place."

The family already knew the MASCAC (Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference), as Peter Jr. had played at Westfield State University in the 1980s. "I loved Plymouth, loved New Hampshire, and thought it would be neat to play in the league my dad played in, and see if I could make some noise," says Laviolette.

And that's how the son of an NHL coach ended up at Plymouth State University. The two talk regularly and Peter Jr. catches PSU games online. When both are in action, a video coordinator for dad's current team, the Nashville Predators, records the son's game.

"My dad is brutally honest," Laviolette laughs. "If I played



"I had this feeling, like I feel comfortable here. I knew I would be in a good place."-Peter Laviolette '21

badly he'll list every single thing I did. He won't do it in a way that will hurt you, but sometimes you need to hear it."

Exceptional encouragement has come from both parents. "My mom [Kristen] is the best. She's the foundation of our family. With my dad traveling so much, she got everything done: driving us to hockey and sitting and doing homework with me. She's the reason I'm here today."

As the youngest first-year on the team, Laviolette arrived on campus nervous, overwhelmed, and anxious. In less than a week, though, everything felt right. "I instantly made best friends," he says. "The hockey guys would invite me to breakfast and call me to hang out. They made sure I was okay."

Laviolette saw time in 20 games this season, coming away with six goals and three assists. Plymouth State rolled through the regular season, finishing 19-5-2 and securing the program's sixth regular season MASCAC championship in seven years. The year

came to an unexpected end as the top-seeded Panthers were upset in the tournament semifinals.

That loss has turned into extra motivation. "We're going to be fired up next winter," he says. "That loss is really going to fuel us."

Plymouth State hockey will be exciting to watch next season, and the Panther community, including at least one NHL head coach, can't wait for the puck to drop. • Chris Kilmer '99

A young Peter Laviolette '21 poses with Lord Stanley's cup. (family photo)





# **Cluster Connect.** PSU's Online Community for Clusters, Ideas, and Projects

Have you heard about how Plymouth State students are engaging in real-world activities with regional impact? They're preparing for the workforce by participating in challenging, meaningful projects. In order to create more of these valuable experiences and facilitate connections between students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners, the University has created "Cluster Connect," a new digital platform uniquely supporting the PSU Integrated Cluster experience.

Our new learning model features ideas and projects that have regional impact, engage external partners, and equip students with experiential learning skills across academic disciplines. Cluster Connect breaks down walls and allows PSU to engage, collaborate, and connect online through Cluster projects and activities by serving as a digital space to share ideas, discuss projects, and track ongoing engagement. Through social interaction and collaboration, the PSU community posts and shares information virtually across campus and within specific Clusters and targeted groups.

Cluster Connect enables PSU community members to identify colleagues with complementary interests; review and comment on Cluster news, ideas, and accomplishments; and engage in project launch, activities, and discussion. As faculty design projects centered around solving problems of regional businesses and organizations, they build cross-disciplinary teams focused on robust learning experiences.

Since Cluster Connect's debut in early 2018, initial brainstorming that may have previously originated in e-mail or on the back of a napkin have emerged in the platform's "Ideas" section. This is where projects and Cluster-based activities often begin. As the idea is developed, it engages interested faculty, staff, students, as well as partners and alumni before becoming a fullfledged proposal. Team members from specific Clusters review proposals related to the disciplines that make up their Cluster. Once approved, proposals become projects that might be embedded in a course, championed by a student club or community organization, or more broadly available for engagement from across campus.

#### Corey Hoyt

Have an idea for a great Cluster project? Please contact Rodney Ekstrom '09G, director of alumni relations, at (603) 535-2217; alumni@plymouth.edu.

# Cluster projects proceed through five stages. Examples from different projects are depicted here.



Project: The Peace Wall An idea is created and shared in Cluster Connect.

**Starting point** 



The PSU Peace Wall project is a tangible and interdisciplinary effort that sustains our culture of peaceful, respectful, and kind behavior.

Bicknell's thrush project field trip event.



Ian Halter photos.



# **Stage 2 Project Proposal and Review**

**Project: Climb Above Addiction** Climb Above Addiction, a fundraising event to fight the opioid epidemic, will provide scholarship funds for treatment and recovery.



After meeting at a Cluster networking event, Stay Work Play Manager Beth San Soucie hired Emily Sullivan '18 as her organization's tourism research and planning intern.

# Stage 3 **Project Conducted**

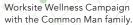
**Project: Conservation of** the Bicknell's Thrush This project addressed how conservation needs and development intersect.





# Stage 4 **Outcomes**

**Project: Cluster Connections Fair** A Cluster Connections event led to résuméenhancing position.







**Project completion** 

# Stage 5 **Summary**

Project: Worksite Wellness Campaign Students actively participated in all aspects of the research process, including implementing well-attended employee forums and an electronic survey. Data was analyzed using qualitative methods grounded in the Social Ecological Model of Behavior Change and a final report to the stakeholders was formulated, branded, and produced in written documents.

# Wisinski Family: A Legacy of Contributions and Love for Plymouth

"Kids get the technology and what's in the books, but what they don't understand is that real life is different," says Carolyn "Carrie" Egan '81. Ebullient, empathetic, and wise to corporate ways, Egan confidently guides students toward employment. An international sales manager who worked her way up through tenacity and talent, this volunteer mentor is often on campus sharing intricacies of the business world, from formal dining etiquette and selfadvocacy to strategies for countering sexual harassment.

Carrie was the first member of her family to attend Plymouth State, setting in motion a dynamic that encompasses her two siblings, daughter, and niece. Legacy families (multiple members of one family who enroll at the University) abound at Plymouth State, and the enthusiastic multi-generational members of the Wisinski Family personify the "paying it back, paying it forward" concept.

Carrie, Melissa Poltrino '83, and Guy Wisinski '85 enrolled at Plymouth State, and cousins Courtney Egan-Sellar '12, '13G and Julia Redman '12 (Carrie's and Melissa's daughters, respectively) shared the campus experience a generation later.

Athletics is a thread that runs through the family. Patriarch Frank Wisinski, the son of Polish immigrants, was an All-American football star at Norwich University, and Carrie, Melissa, and Guy all grew up playing sports.

At Plymouth State, Carrie and Melissa were physical education majors and members of

the gymnastics team; Guy was a three-letter man in football, baseball, and skiing; Courtney played field hockey; and Julia played varsity women's soccer and captained the women's ski team. Melissa also earned her Advanced Lifesaving Certification at Plymouth, part of a larger career in swimming and diving. "The camaraderie of athletics, that's something we all share," explains Julia.

Frank was a senior director at Texaco and, due to his corporate responsibilities, the growing family moved frequently. Seven years in Saratoga, NY, represented a period of relative calm, but when Frank was asked to take on multiple cross-country relocations he and his wife, JoAnn, decided change was in order. Frank acquired a business and JoAnn took action once again, coordinating the family move to Claremont, NH.

"Our mother is a 'rock star' who always made everything work," says Guy. "Our parents have always been wonderfully supportive."

Carrie was then a high school senior. She embraced her new state and enrolled at Plymouth State College, a fateful decision that continues to pay family dividends.

"I made immediate friends, an amazing group with different interests, and I'm still in touch with many of them," says Carrie. "Plymouth had a homey feeling. As soon as I got on campus, I was happy and felt like I belonged. I loved it and still do."

Carrie established the first ties to Plymouth, but perhaps

the most pivotal role belongs to Melissa. If she hadn't followed in Carrie's footsteps Guy might not have felt a gravitational pull a few years later.

"Carrie and I were very close, and I hung out with her and her friends," Melissa recalls. In time, she developed her own campus friendships but the sisterly bond continued, with the two later living together in student apartments and both marching in Commencement in 1981. Melissa received her associate's degree then and Carrie her bachelor's.

"When I get to campus I don't feel different. I still feel the same campus, beautiful, up in the White Mountains. Every time I drive by I still see Smith and Grafton, popping up there, and I think of us up on the seventh floor. Everything that they've done has been to make improvements. The new facilities-how awesome they are for the next generation." -Melissa Poltrino '83

Melissa bid Carrie adieu and welcomed Guy that fall. Now the older campus sibling, she helped Guy navigate college, including a favorite memory of hiding him in

her room when he was pursued by

Kappa Delta Phi brothers. Fraternity life, which later included serving as a Kappa

officer and on the Fraternity Council, was just one of Guy's many involvements. "Plymouth allowed me to get engaged in so many different areas of campus life, and that's what led me into successful careers in sales management and leadership skills," says Guy. He wrote for the Clock and for John Garner, the sports information director, and for John Clark '71, '73G, athletic director, during the "Joe Dudek era" when Plymouth football was part of the national conversation. After the manager of WPCR overheard Guy and Russell Archambault '84 pretending to be announcers, the pair were offered regular radio slots for basketball games. Guy later teamed up with fellow Kappa brother Kevin "Sparky" Keough '85 to announce football games.

Team bus travel allowed Guy to get to know Dean Dick Hage and other administrators, and after his love for the school was recognized it was suggested that Guy become a Plymouth tour guide. "That experience really helped me in my professional sales career," he says.

Guy and his sisters all went on to very successful business careers yet remain modest about their academic accomplishments. "None of us were scholars by any means, but we came out of Plymouth with an incredibly well-rounded education," says Melissa, whose career highlights include helping Harvard set up an advanced telecom system. "College is a lot more than a degree, it's getting life skills. If we got an interview, we were able to sell ourselves because of Plymouth."



Courtney Egan-Sellar '12, 13G, married in February, with family Julia Redman '12, Guy Wisinski '85, Čarrie Egan '81, and Melissa Poltrino '83. (family photo)

Carrie's continuing devotion to PSU and desire to give back found expression through the Boston Business Forum, which she co-founded along with David Poulin '85 and Austin Smith '79 in 2013. The club was later renamed the Panther Business Club. (See story on Brett Lucas '11, page 16.)

The siblings would visit Plymouth when opportunities arose, and the connection grew exponentially when Courtney and Julia enrolled in 2008. Neither had previously imagined winding up together. Julia was in-state and skiing was front and center in her life, so Plymouth had a lot to offer, but Courtney lived in Massachusetts and considered several options. Carrie kept her formidable sales skills in check.

"Mom did well. She really tried to keep her opinions to herself and let me make my own choices," Courtney recalls. "I graduated from a small high school and Plymouth didn't feel overwhelming. I knew that I wouldn't be another number and that I could go up and talk to my professors."

Julia, who was to earn a degree in communication studies, arrived on campus first for preseason soccer practice. "Within a week, it was the best," she says. "Plymouth really does a good job in making you feel part of the community right away."

They wound up with the same circle of friends, and cousins who previously knew one another through family get-togethers discovered they had a lot in common.

Their years at Plymouth renewed the elders' interest. "Because Julia and I chose to go, it reminded them of how amazing it is, and they got to see how much work Plymouth had done to better itself," Courtney muses. "I think they were very proud to be Plymouth alumni and see how well the school has done.

"We're all pretty united on our feelings about Plymouth," continues Courtney who, like her mother and aunt, earned a bachelor's in education. Courtney completed her PSU master's in special education in 2013 and is now a case manager with the Hampton, NH, school district.

The dedication of this remarkable family will endure through the Wisinski Family Endowed Scholarship Fund, which was created last year to assist deserving students in the Professional Sales Program.

"The program is rigorous and Mom was impressed with how advanced PSU's technology is; she can really compare the tech level between her time and mine," says Courtney. "A lot of things Plymouth State taught me I'm using in my school right now."

Returning to campus, Guy joined Carrie for an event organized by Professor Robert Nadeau 'o6MBA, director of the Professional Sales Program. The two filled the room. "I was so impressed by how hungry students were to succeed and that speaks volumes about Plymouth State," says Guy. "The level of motivation got me reengaged."

Guy was tickled that John Clark, "a person who made a difference in my life," warmly remembered him and gave an extended tour of ALLWell North. Guy was tremendously impressed. "What Plymouth is doing with the elderly and disabled in the community is amazing—talk about paying it forward!"

Guy was invited back to keynote the annual Evening of Connections dinner. He spoke about his numerous volunteer efforts, including keeping tabs on a network of students whom he coached in youth football and helping them get interviews and jobs, and a longtime association with the Posse Foundation, which has given out over \$9 billion in

scholarships to help thousands attend college.

"For me, paying it forward is an honor," Guy says.

"Guy always remembers his roots and always gives back; that's what our mother and father instilled in all three of us," offers Melissa. Now in his eighties, Frank Wisinski continues to be the force for good that he has modeled throughout his life. The Marine Corps veteran organizes emotional Seacoast "Welcome Home" events for returning Afghanistan troops, who have been surprised by up to 1,500 well-wishers.

The dedication of this remarkable family will endure through the Wisinski Family Endowed Scholarship Fund, which was created last year to assist deserving students in the Professional Sales Program.

Giving back and paying it forward: the world changes, and while need remains constant. methods for helping evolve. On Commencement Day 2018, Julia, ever the athlete and now working for Pro Search in Portland, ME, volunteered to rappel ten stories down the city's tallest building to raise funds for a nonprofit youth organization. Only a Panther for Life could be so sure-footed.

■ Peter Lee Miller

# **Brett Lucas '11**

# Paying it Forward: The Panther Business Club Scholarship

"You get out of it what you've put in." Brett Lucas '11 is fond of this maxim, which he modeled as an undergraduate and now exemplifies as a successful alumnus. Lucas is a leader of the Panther Business Club-a Boston area alumni chapter—that recently established a new annual scholarship for top performing business students.

Lucas was president of the Marketing Association of Plymouth State (MAPS) and was one of the first students certified through the University's Professional Sales Program. He currently serves on the advisory boards of both programs and regularly returns to campus to share his expertise.

He is an account executive at Quick Base, Inc., a high-growth software company that has become a nexus for Panther advocacy and opportunity. Lucas, Nick Juselis '14, and Colin Murphy '13 met as students through MAPS and, unlike their co-workers, they proudly display college banners in their Cambridge, MA, offices.

# "We want to reward leadership. The primary driver is to reward those leading both inside and outside of the classroom." -Brett Lucas '11

"We talk about Plymouth all the time," says Lucas, who came to the firm through recruitment by Murphy. "We're all top performers, and the common ground is Plymouth. Now at Quick Base, leadership specifically looks to recruit from Plymouth. They are only hiring exceptional people, and I find myself referring a lot of alums."



Brett Lucas '11, third from left, receiving a sales award from Quick Base. He is one of several Plymouth alumni at the high-growth software firm.

The Panther Business Club, established in 2013, promotes and supports business connections, lifelong friendships, and Plymouth State. Lucas encourages fellow alumni to get involved and give back as campus speakers, through networking, attending club events, and supporting PSU philanthropically.

The Panther Business Club Annual Scholarship Fund will make awards to students in financial need, and Lucas stressed that there are other considerations as well. "We want to reward leadership. The primary driver is to reward those leading both inside and outside of the classroom." • Peter Lee Miller

For more information and upcoming Panther Business Club events, visit plymouth.edu/pantherbusinessclub.

Watch Brett Lucas discuss the Panther Business Club online at plymouth.edu/magazine.

# **ALUMNI CHAPTERS**

Chapters are geographic or affinity/ interest-based groups with the following goals:

Grow the network of alumni by hosting events, building initiatives, and providing opportunities for personal and professional development by connecting with PSU and 37,000 alumni.

Connect back to PSU through volunteer opportunities. Alumni contribute their time and talent to drive the success of students as well as the greater PSU community.

Support philanthropic goals by collectively raising funds for causes at Plymouth State that are important to them through social media campaigns, fundraising events, outreach efforts, and other engaging and interesting efforts.

Plymouth State alumni are connecting to make important things happen! Join an established chapter or affinity group, or help us build one of these new chapters:

- North Country, NH
- Washington, DC
- Panther Gridiron Club (Plymouth State Football)
- Colorado (Denver to Ft. Collins Front Range)
- Florida (Tampa, Ft. Myers, Orlando)
- LGBTQ and Allies

Would you like to get involved or share ideas for growing connections across our network of 37,000 Plymouth State alumni? Contact Rodney Ekstrom '09G at (603) 535-2217 or alumni@plymouth.edu.

# Elijah Johnson '18

Plymouth State's "tomorrow changers" take charge of their destinies by making the most of all that the University has to offer. Elijah Johnson '18 came north looking for a challenge, and four years later he credits PSU with encouraging him to go farther than he previously thought possible.

Plymouth is very different from Johnson's home near Hartford, CT. The high school football talent had closer college options but he took a less familiar road, and that has made all the difference.

"What drew me to PSU was that I knew I would need to put myself in different situations and have to grow up a little," says Johnson.

College represented much more than earning a degree for Johnson, who aimed to put his family on firmer footing. "There were a lot of situations back home that weren't the greatest and I didn't want to get myself involved in them," he says evenly. "I knew that I wanted to do well for myself and be able to help people back home. I wanted to be a good influence, someone who people can look up to."

Johnson's high school team had turned around a losing record, so he wasn't discouraged by a PSU squad that won only two games the season before he arrived. His goal to "grow up" was realized with the help of life lessons from PSU Head Coach Paul Castonia, a 32-year veteran of college coaching.

"Over the last two years, he was the voice of reason with some of the young kids," says Castonia. "He progressed as much or more as anyone we've had come through the program."

The team won only one game in Johnson's first year but made steady progress, culminating in a thrilling senior season of nine wins, the conference

championship, and PSU's first NCAA Tournament contest in years. Yet this Hollywood ending might never have happened if the Plymouth State community hadn't had Johnson's back.

Johnson faced financial pressures, and his first-year roommate and football teammate, Jack Howarth '18, shared these concerns with his mother, Amy Schwartz '15EdD. An administrator with the University System of New Hampshire, Schwartz provided valuable guidance.

"Your grades have to be really good—you don't get scholarships with C's," Schwartz counseled.

Johnson responded academically, spurring Schwartz to advocate on his behalf with PSU administrators. Over time Johnson's on-campus network grew to include Kim Bownes '07G, director of athletics; Tracy Claybaugh, vice president for finance and administration; Lauren Lavigne '94, '96G, assistant athletic director; and John Scheinman'19P, director of development, among others.

"He's exactly the kind of kid who you'd want to invest in because he's not going to let you down," says Schwartz.

"PSU helped me out with scholarships and jobs," says Johnson. "I'm thankful for those opportunities but I wouldn't have been able to stay unless I took advantage of them.

"The big thing is, all of these people still check in on me," he continues. "On top of that are my teammates, including ones from years ago that I'm still in touch with."

"Elijah embraced our community and understood the value of working toward his future," says Scheinman. "He has a tremendous work ethic."

"I'm very thankful for the opportunities that Plymouth State offered me," says Johnson. "There are a lot of great people here, and you need to be open and willing to take advantage of those opportunities."

The football team's resurgence and Johnson's personal accomplishments parallel the arrival of ALLWell North. The magnificent athletics complex, which opened in 2016, was "just a hole in the ground" when Johnson arrived. recalls Coach Castonia. "ALLWell was huge for us," says Johnson.

Football's demands provided a solid basis for Johnson's studies. A business management major in the Professional Sales Program, he qualified for the invitation-only, competitive sales course. "Expectations are high," says Professor Robert Nadeau 'o6MBA, who directs the program. "Elijah was driven and clearly wanted to make a difference."

Johnson credits Scheinman for emphasizing the Panther credo of "paying it forward," which Nadeau sees as an excellent fit for Johnson's disposition. "He has zero sense of entitlement and a high level of emotional intelligence," says Nadeau. "He empathized with other students and reached out to help."

Johnson coached and mentored younger sales students, and in April he attended the National Collegiate Sales Competition, a prime networking forum. "My goal was to look for opportunities not only for myself, but for other PSU students who could benefit as well," says Johnson.

Hard work and a positive attitude were rewarded with several job offers, and Johnson accepted a position with DHL, an international shipping and logistics firm.

■ Peter Lee Miller

Visit @friendsofplymouthstatefootball on Facebook for Panther Gridiron Club news, team videos, and to connect with fellow fans. Club activities include fundraising in support of the football program's daily operations, as well as capital improvements such as the Stadium and Turf Field Project.

For more information please contact Brian Gagnon '05, '09G, assistant director of volunteer and alumni engagement, at (603) 535-2227; alumni@plymouth.edu.



# THE GREEN | PLYMOUTH STATE ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES

Mark your calendars so you don't miss out on any of these great upcoming events!



#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

5th Biennial Greek Alumni Reunion Weekend June 24-26, 2018

**Panther Business Club's Spirit of Boston Cruise** June 29, 2018

Red Sox vs. Twins at Fenway Alumni Game July 26, 2018

#### **Alumni Summer Reunion**

(The Class of 1973 and earlier classes are invited.) August 2-3, 2018

**Holmes Center Alumni Educator Conference** August 6, 2018

**Women's Leadership Summit** August 11-12, 2018

Tailgating begins! Football home opener vs. **Western Connecticut State University** September 15, 2018

**Homecoming & Family Celebration and Reunion Weekend** 

September 28-30, 2018

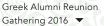
38th Barbara Dearborn '60 Golf Classic September 30, 2018

**AMC Adventure Weekend at Pinkham Notch** March 15-17, 2019

Find out more about these and other great alumni events at go.plymouth.edu/AlumniEvents.

PSU Panther Prowl, Homecoming 2017 A

Women's Leadership Summit 2017









PSU-AMC Weekend 2018 A



# CLASS NOTES \*



🛨 Classes ending in 8 and 3, celebrate your reunions at Homecoming & Family Celebration and Reunion Weekend, September 28-30, 2018! For the Class of '73 and older classes, please also join us at our Summer Reunion August 2-3, 2018 (more details on pg. 22), a special gathering for our most senior alumni who enjoy Plymouth during the summer.

#### 1960s

Stephen L. Clark '66 published a book, Memorable Moments Frozen in Time, recounting magical moments during his 38-year teaching career. The book is available on Amazon.com.

David S. Smith '67 has been the headmaster at Coe-Brown Northwood Academy in Northwood, NH, since 1980 and varsity basketball coach for 28 years. "It's really about the kids, and they're great kids," Smith says. "They're working hard and we have some players that I don't think get a lot of notice because maybe they're not flashy, but they have great fundamentals." Smith was inducted into the NHIAA Hall of Fame in 2009.

James E. Goss '68 retired from the U.S. Army in 2004 at the rank of sergeant major and retired from government service (Military Personnel Services Corp) in 2014. He is currently involved with his local chamber of commerce as an ambassador and as a member of the Plymouth State Alumni Association Board of Directors. Goss was a featured speaker at PSU Commencement 2018.



Robert S. "Skip" Whitmore '69 and his daughter Kristin A. Mullins '95 were visiting in Nashville, TN, when they wore their matching Plymouth State Panthers t-shirts!

#### 1970s

Marion J. Patterson '71 was recognized as a Woman of Achievement in the area of Arts, Education, and Culture by Waypoint, a Cedar Rapids, IA, nonprofit that provides a wide range of services to women and children. The award was in recognition of her outstanding work as an instructor at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar

Cheryl A. Smith '78 writes, "My time at PSC helped me realize I was destined for graduate school and to teach at the

college level. I love that I can formally teach adult learners in a variety of formats and settings, conduct research, work with agricultural producers throughout New England, train master gardeners, and work in the lab and field to diagnose plant health problems ... and help growers prevent future losses." Smith is a past recipient of the Boston, MA, Outstanding Service Award, presented by Mayor Menino, for her dedication as a primary instructor for the Master Urban Gardener Program. She has a BA in biology from PSU, an MS in plant pathology and entomology from the University of Rhode Island, and a PhD in botany and plant pathology from the University of New Hampshire.

Kimberly A. Stamas '78 retired in March after a long career with the Town of Andover, MA, most recently as recreation director. Stamas started working for the town in high school. She worked with the playground department and was eventually hired as the town's recreation coordinator in 1984 until getting the top recreation job 30 years later. "I now have an eight-month-old granddaughter and I look forward to seeing her a lot more," Stamas says.

H. Brooks Stevens '79 has been designated by the American College of Financial Services as a chartered life underwriter and financial consultant.

#### 1980s

Martin M. Zarli '80 retired after 35 years of teaching and coaching at Moultonborough Academy. He was inducted into the NH Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2007 and the NHIAA Hall of Fame in 2009. He won NH P.E. Teacher of the Year in 2016. He is now happily retired with wife Linda (Hunter) Zarli '71 in Columbia, NH, where they fly fish, hunt, paint, hike, and spend time with their children and six grandkids!

Karen E. Pelletier '82 has been named vice president of operations for the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, and will retain her responsibilities as director of education and workforce development. Pelletier began her career with the chamber in 2014 in a newly created position established to support chamber members by creating more conduits to colleges and universities, which helped fill positions in member companies.

## IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Plymouth State alumni, faculty, staff, and friends who have passed away.

Gretchen A. (O'Mara) Noonan '39, October 23, 2017, Franklin, NH Ruth B. (Birch) Marzec '48, January 21, 2018, Ocala, FL Roberta J. (Christie) McNamara '50, October 18, 2017, Antrim, NH Robert C. Upham '50, April 1, 2017, Ocala, FL Mavis (Knox) Rutherford '51, February 1, 2018, Laconia, NH Maybeth (Paris) Oberti '52, March 8, 2018, Peabody, MA Elissa M. (Cannistraro) Sullivan '53, October 17, 2017, Laconia, NH Jane H. (Harrison) Knowlton '56, February 20, 2018, Gloucester, MA Walda Szopa '58, January 15, 2018, West Yarmouth, MA Bette J. (Tirrell) De Rocher '61, February 17, 2018, Bedford, NH Virginia C. (Morgan) Saulnier '61, January 7, 2018, Hill, NH David S. Wyman '61G, March 14, 2018, Amherst, MA Judith A. (Backon) Martens '63, March 12, 2018, Rutland, VT Richard Wylie '63, May 12, 2018, Sudbury, MA Prudence A. (Gjettum) Nealis '64, March 2, 2018, Lyman, ME Marna L. (LaPointe) Ingerson '68, December 9, 2017, Maidstone, VT Elizabeth E. Kudrick '70, January 31, 2018, Hooksett, NH Carleton R. Parish '71, February 20, 2018, Spotsylvania, VA Marian (Levesque) Tibbetts '75, February 4, 2018, Sanford, ME Keith G. Wallenstein '78, March 6, 2018, Winchester, MA Jorja M. Volpe '80, December 14, 2017, Kittery, ME Eric H. Chipman '81, December 8, 2017, Watertown, MA Ronald M. MacLeod '87, November 27, 2017, Plymouth, NH Calvin L. Wills '98, January 13, 2018, Flatwoods, KY Timothy J. Biedrzycki 'oo, February 22, 2018, Amherst, NH

Faculty, Staff, and Friends

John F. Budrow, February 3, 2018, Beverly, MA
Rita E. (Coady) Chase, January 20, 2018, Hudson, MA
Paul F. Miller, September 9, 2017, Conshohocken, PA

Stacy A. Fox '02, March 19, 2018, Danvers, MA

Andrew T. Neforas '10, January 6, 2018, Fitchburg, MA

Vanessa M. Grande '13, January 10, 2018, Beverly, MA

Adam G. Boucher '15, March 4, 2018, Lowell, MA

## Sunshine State alumni are building a vibrant chapter!

The Village, Tampa, and Ft. Myers area alumni have helped us build our Florida Alumni Chapter.

We are exploring the Atlantic coast for a future sub-area, and are also looking into a biennial statewide alumni gathering. We invite our Florida alumni to get involved—contact us at alumni@plymouth.edu and update your information so we can keep you included on the happenings at go.plymouth.edu/InfoUpdate.

Valerie S. Caruso '83 has been a school psychologist in the Manchester School District in Manchester, NH, since 2000. She was previously employed by the Newtown School District in Newtown, CT. She writes, "I am now a school psychologist for 30 years based on my undergraduate degree in psychology. The internship during my senior year at PSC provided valuable experience and insight into career options."

Richard A. Coutermarsh '85 received a commendation award from the commissioner of the Texas General Land Office, the Honorable George P. Bush, on February 9, 2018, to recognize his extraordinary leadership efforts in connection with leading all-hazards incident management teams during numerous incidents and disasters of national significance (Hurricane Ike, Deepwater Horizon, Texas City Y Oil Spill, and Hurricane Harvey). Coutermarsh is senior executive fellow/HQE for the County of Galveston, TX.

David B. Sturdevant '87G, head of school at Lincoln Academy in Newcastle, ME, is retiring June 30, 2018, after 33 years as an educator in the state. Before joining Lincoln Academy, Sturdevant spent 28 years at Fryeburg Academy in western Maine, where he served as an English teacher, dorm parent, curriculum coordinator, alternative school founder and director, and assistant headmaster and principal.

Susan A. Higgins '88 is web content editor and social media manager of Farmers' Almanac in Maine. In 2001, she received Honorable Mention from the National Steinbeck Center's National Short Story Competition for "Best Offer." In 2014, she received Honorable Mention for the John Hervey Award for Excellence in Harness Racing Journalism. "I had a very rich and robust experience with my writing 'brethren' at Plymouth," she writes. "My professors in Rounds Hall and the people I met on

the editorial team of the *Clock* became my friends for life and prepared me for a world of the written word. My degree in English writing paved the way for my current job in editing, web content, marketing, and social media."

Darius X. Thompson '88, '93G ran a campaign for the Exeter, NH, Board of Selectmen. "I can talk and work with anybody," he says. "And through my 20-plus years working with HR professionals, it's inherent as a selectboard person that you need to be civil in your conversations and be respectful with one another. When those dynamics can get into play, those things can impact how you are perceived."



Mark Johns

#### 1990s

Amy Bassett '90 (above) is a new member of the PSU Alumni Association Board of Directors. Her four-year term begins on June 9, 2018. Bassett serves as the Maine district director for the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Andrea C. Difilippo '93 is chief parenting officer for Social Judo, a technology company that has created a tool for parenting children on their smartphones. Difilippo gave a Ted Talk in November 2017 on Parenting in Cyberspace. She also has her own private practice. She writes, "I learned the importance of human connection, both in the classroom and among my friends at PSU."







Far left: Ellen P. (Pietrzak) Kotzin '92, '94G and her family in Upstate New York.

Center: Brittany A. (Feiner) Porkka '06 visited the PSU campus in 2017 with her children, Jacob, Noah, and Madison.

Above: Jonathan Hunt '00, PSUAA Board of Directors

#### Ellen P. (Pietrzak) Kotzin '92, '94G

(top left) is a middle-school French teacher in DeWitt, NY. She has been active in publishing through the AATF National Bulletin, with another publication released in April 2018. Her son is studying musical composition at the University of Pittsburgh and her daughter is a senior in high school. Married 20 years as of August 2018! She writes, "I was very well prepared by my language teachers Dr. Joel Goldfield, Dr. Virginia Garlitz, and Frau Gisela Estes and took all three languages at PSC at that time."

Ian A. Walker '93 of Norwell, MA, has been appointed the vice president of finance at VERC Enterprises. Walker joins VERC Enterprises with more than 20 years of experience in the financial services industry, most recently as chief financial officer for Stephanie's Restaurant Group in Boston.

David M. Ryan '94 has been named superintendent of SAU 16 in Exeter, NH. Ryan has served as assistant superintendent for the Manchester School District. He also served as principal at Nashua High School North, where he was lauded as the state's principal of the year. Ryan has a bachelor of arts in English from Plymouth State College, a master's of education from Boston College, an educational specialist degree from the University of New

Hampshire, and recently successfully defended his dissertation for his doctor of education degree at Boston College.

Betsy A. Memoe '97G has been appointed co-principal of Manchester Elementary and Middle School in Manchester, NH. Memoe will serve as middle school principal at MEMS, where she has spent the last 25 years as a primary middle school counselor.

Michael J. Sullivan '97 has published an action adventure/science fiction book called *Runner's Dawn* under the pen name Michael Stinger. The book is available on Amazon Kindle, Barnes & Noble, and Google Play.

Michael A. Bellamente '99 is chair of the newly formed Sustainability Committee of the NH Association of Realtors. A real estate agent with Zoeller Realty Group at Keller Williams Coastal Realty, he recently left his role as managing director of the Green Alliance, the Portsmouth-based network of sustainable businesses and consumers. Prior to taking over the Green Alliance, Bellamente served as head of consumer engagement for CDP, a global repository of corporate environmental data.

**Kevin A. Hebert '99** is the new head varsity football coach at Spaulding High School, a Division I school in Rochester, NH.

## 2000s

Jonathan S. Hunt 'oo (top right) is a new member of the PSU Alumni Association Board of Directors. His four-year term began on March 10, 2018. Hunt recently started a new position as major gifts officer at Colby-Sawyer College.



# 5th Biennial Gathering! June 22–24, 2018

- ★ Commemorative Greek Reunion t-shirts ★
- ★ Huge group photo on the steps of Mary Lyon Hall ★
  - ★ All-Greek Saturday night gathering featuring DJ Chuck Noel '78 ★
- $\star$  Late night gathering on the back patio of Merrill Place  $\star$ 
  - ★ Sunday morning breakfast option ★
  - ★ Overnight accommodations at Merrill Place,
     PSU's newest residence hall and conference facility ★

Sign up online at go.plymouth.edu/GreekReunion.



A gathering for the Class of 1968's 50th Reunion. The Class of 1973 and earlier classes are invited.

- ★ Lunch gathering with classmates and University leadership ★
- ★ Campus tours of new buildings and spaces ★
- ★ Class meetings, gatherings, and group photos ★
- ★ Dinner at the Museum of the White Mountains ★
  - ★ New Hampshire Music Festival concert
- ★ Champagne and dessert reception under the stars ★
- ★ Overnight accommodations at Merrill Place, PSU's newest residence hall and conference facility ★

ADA Assistance Available

Alumni and spouses are invited as complimentary quests of PSU, in honor of your landmark reunion. (Space is limited; first come, first served on lodging and tickets.)

Sign up at go.plymouth.edu/SummerReunion or call us at (603) 535-2589, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Garrett M. Lashar '05 is the alpine program director at Carrabassett Valley Academy, a U.S. Ski and Snowboard Gold Certified Club and a U.S. Ski and Snowboard High Performance Center. Lashar began his coaching career with Waterville Valley Ski Club, working with the men's and women's U19 program. He returned to CVA for two years, coaching the men's U19 program. For the past six winters, Lashar has coached athletes across genders at the U16 and the U19 levels.

Dominic A. Lea 'o6 is the senior commercial property manager at CBRE, Inc. for the Tenet Healthcare account, overseeing real estate operations for the East Coast markets including Memphis, TN, Birmingham, AL, and Hialeah, FL, and managing real estate portfolios for St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, MA, MetroWest Medical Center in Framingham/Natick, MA, and Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia.

Rachel C. Xavier 'o6 achieved just under \$17 million in sales in 2017 for Roche Realty Group. Xavier has consistently been one of Roche Realty's top multi-million-dollar producers, continually ranking in the top five agents within the firm. In 2017, for the second year in a row, Xavier was third in sales

income and sales volume for the firm, reaching almost \$17 million in sales.

Gregory M. Jones '07 is senior project manager for the City of Newburyport, MA. Jones has worked as a land use planner in New Hampshire for 11 years. After graduating from PSU, he worked as conservation and planning commissioner in Laconia and as a planner for the Strafford Regional Planning Commission. More recently, he has worked as town planner for Plaistow, NH.

Laura L. (Kozminski) Flores '09 is the band and choir teacher at Parker High School and the band teacher at Wallace Junior High School in Parker, AZ. She writes, "PSU prepared me so completely for teaching. The moment I stepped on campus, I felt comfortable and at home. I also liked everything that the music department was about and how complete it is. I love the fact that I always wanted to be a high school band teacher and I'm a lucky person to say that I have my dream job."

Erika A. (Scialdone) Olivier '09 and husband Matt Olivier have opened Matt's Local Pharmacy in Middletown, RI, believed to be the only independently-owned pharmacy on Aquidneck Island.



## **Women Supporting Women**

The Women's Leadership Summit (WLS) hosts its third annual gathering August 11–12, 2018, at Merrill Place Conference Center at PSU.

At this event, the WLS will kick off its fundraising in support of the American Association of University Women Scholarship. The WLS aims to help all women "find their true north" through healthy, outdoor-oriented networking events, and now with financial support through scholarships. Alumnae and all other members of the Plymouth community are welcome to be involved.

To learn more and get involved, contact alumni@plymouth.edu or call (603) 535-2589.

## **EXCHANGING VOWS**

- 1 Joseph G. Mattson '05 married Alison Puffer on July 22, 2017. PSU alums in attendance: Amy (Harrington) Slattery '04, Becky Kennedy '02, Ben Kane '06, Kyle Bowman '04, Christine (Brown) Bowman '04, Charles Gaddy '06, Nick Pelotte '05, Justin Slattery '14G, Dan Fife '06, Chris Kilmer '99.
- 2 PSU alumni attending the wedding of classmate Seth A. Baldelli 'o6 in March 2018. Left to right; Chris Guillmette '10, Mandy Pandy, Joshua Connors '06, Seth Baldelli '06, Cameron Cestaro '06, Crystal Rousseau '07, Nick Gurney '06, and Matt Falzerano '07.
- 3 Daniel A. Robichaud '10 and Heather M. (Shalvey)
  Robichaud '10 tied the knot on June 24, 2017, in Providence,
  RI, with the reception following at the Saphire Estate in
  Sharon, MA. Heather and Dan now reside in Smithfield, RI. In
  attendance were (left to right) Dennis Gendron '09, Brigitte
  Paquin '10, Matthew Teperow '10, Amanda Zoeller '10, Hilary
  Groff '10, Ashley Sleath '10, Tom French '10, Michael Audy '11,
  Alexander Koza '09, Charles Goss '10, Neil Brennan '10,
  Kim Correia '88, Gregory Thibault '13, and Casey Correia '16.

Marisa T. (Zamrock) Heinlein '16 and Montanna E. Heinlein '13 were married September 9, 2017.

4 Cynthia T. (Barata) MacGregor '15 and Mark W. MacGregor '14 met at PSU and were both Plymouth State student athletes. They were married March 10, 2018, at the Heritage Hotel in Southbury, CT, surrounded by friends, family, and many other Panthers from the Classes of 2014 and 2015.

# **ARRIVALS**

George E. Dagher '10 and Kristina L. (Aloisi) Dagher '10 welcomed their first child, Andre John Dagher, on July 14, 2017.

Elizabeth J. (Gagnon) Mazzie '09 and Jesse Mazzie welcomed home Emma Mazzie on November 28, 2017.

**Angela (Uhlman) Preisendorfer '98, '09G** and husband Justin Preisendorfer welcomed their daughter, Eliza Fern Preisendorfer, on April 4, 2018.

Brian Gagnon '05, '09G and Ashley (Spalding) Gagnon '07, '12G welcomed their first son, Cullen Hawk Gagnon, on May 10, 2018.



Cullen Gagnon



Eliza Preisendorfer











#### Samantha C. Prindiville '09

completed her MM, music education, in December 2017 and was awarded her professional teacher's license in March 2018. She writes, "Plymouth State prepared me by ensuring I had the best pedagogical background in music education to get me started in my teaching career."

#### 2010s

Elane L. Doell '10G has joined the University of North Carolina Wilmington as assistant vice chancellor for human resources. Doell came to UNCW from East Carolina University, where she was an advanced classification and compensation consultant. Prior to that, she served as chief human resources officer for Cape Fear Community College and served as assistant director and then director of HR at Plymouth State University.

Lindsey M. Stepp '10G of Holderness, NH, has been named the commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration. New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu nominated Stepp for the position on December 6, 2017, and she was confirmed by the Executive Council on December 20, 2017. Stepp's term as commissioner runs until September 1, 2020.

Adah J. Gillon '11 received a master's degree in special education from Central Connecticut State University in 2015.

Matthew B. MacLean '11 has been named the head football coach at Sandwich High School in Sandwich, MA. MacLean, a physical education teacher, came to Sandwich prior to the start of the 2017–2018 school year by way of Abington, where he served as an assistant for the Green Wave football program.



Maxx L. Finn '14

Joseph R. Hudson '12 was hired by the Boston Red Sox as a strength-and-conditioning coach. Hudson will work with players before games and will be on the bench during all games. He will also work with pitchers after starts to help them in their recovery process.

Ashley A. (Rasicot) Smith '12 is a senior supply planner at Under Armour in Baltimore, MD. She won the 2016 Supply Chain Excellence Award for Customer Collaboration for her work on the Under Armour Curry 2 shoe, and was the 2016 footwear MVP at Under Armour. She continued her education at the University of Maryland in acquisition and supply chain management, graduating in April 2018.

Noelle W. Tuttle '13 was promoted to marketing and communications manager at Sugarloaf Mountain.

Andrew P. Veilleux '13G is the program manager at the Newfound Lake Region Association. He writes, "I worked with an organization throughout my degree that is very similar to the organization I currently work for. That gave me a huge boost over other job applicants. I get to work outside with friendly people in a place I love."

Martha J. Cummings '14G, director of the Rufus Porter Museum in Bridgton, ME, is leaving to pursue professional interests in southern New Hampshire. Cummings led a revision of the museum's strategic plan, designed the



Derek B. Barros '16

permanent exhibit in the Webb House, stabilized the museum's finances, and upgraded the database and other technology. Membership, giving, and volunteerism have all increased over the time she has been the director.

Maxx L. Finn '14 (top left) is freelancing as an assistant lighting designer with Opera Omaha and Boston Lyric Opera. He received his MFA in stage design from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2017 and won the school's award for Achievement in Lighting Design for his work on Hamlet. He writes, "Plymouth State gave me the knowledge base and hands-on experience to excel through a three-year master's program and begin my career in theatre. What I love most about my career in theatre is that no two days are the same; I am always on my toes and I continue to learn and create."

Derek B. Barros '16 (top center) is a therapeutic support specialist at Huntington Therapeutic Day School in Brockton, MA, and is pursuing a master's in school adjustment and mental health counseling. He recently concluded a race for city council in Brockton and coaches football and track at Cardinal Spellman High School.

Jacqueline N. Curran '16 will be receiving her master's in criminal justice from the University of Massachusetts in May 2018. She writes, "Plymouth State's rigorous curriculum prepared me for graduate school. I was



Ali A. Sekou '17

nervous when I first started graduate school, but the level of work expected is the same that was expected at PSU. As such I have a cumulative 3.9 GPA and will be graduating with my master's in the spring."

Anthony C. Lindardos '16G has been appointed state director for USDA Rural Development in New Hampshire and Vermont. Linardos managed K-Mart Pharmacy for ten years before becoming pharmacy district coordinator for New England. He served as the general manager for Omnicare of NH, a CVS company, for the past four years.

Michael G. Economos '17 of the Peoria Rivermen was named the Warrior Player of the Week by the Southern Professional Hockey League for the week of February 12, 2018.

Ali A. Sekou '17, (top right) recipient of the Graduating Senior Award for Excellence in Tourism Management and Policy, has been accepted to the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire.

# SHARE YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PHOTOS!

Send us your personal and professional accomplishments at go.plymouth.edu/infoupdate so we can share your news with the alumni community.

Submit your update today!



# Reimagining and Reinventing Greek Life at PSU

Greek life began to take shape at the University in the early 1950s and remained an important campus component for nearly 50 years. After a hiatus of more than 15 years, sanctioned fraternities and sororities will return as a key part of a reimagined student success and retention program.

President Donald Birx announced the new direction in March 2018. "Since my arrival at Plymouth State three years ago, I've thought often that our campus would benefit from active, community-centered Greek life as I've experienced on other campuses during my career," he said. "Having worked in environments with fraternities and sororities, I found them to be positive factors with an orientation towards service, community, and school pride."

There are currently three University sanctioned sororities: Delta Zeta, Kappa Delta Phi NAS Kappa Sigma chapter, and Tau Omega. Academic success is a priority for the sisters of Tau Omega, and they devote free time to philanthropic efforts. Each member must perform at least 15 hours of service per semester.

"Each holiday season, we transform into elves to help put on the Journey to the North Pole event in Lincoln, NH," says Tau Omega President Fatima Brees '19. "We also help with Squam Lake Association clean-ups and raise funds and donate baked goods to David's House at the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth (CHaD)." The group's on-campus work includes volunteering with the Student Support Foundation to combat food insecurity.

The further implementation of Greek life on campus will involve alumni, students, the President's Cabinet, Student Senate, the Office of the Dean of Students, current recognized PSU Greek leadership, and clubs and others seeking recognition and support. "It will be thoughtful, well regulated, and focus on the very best that these organizations offer our students," says President Birx.

■ Marlin Collingwood

For more information, please contact Rodney Ekstrom '09G, director of alumni relations, at (603) 535-2217; alumni@plymouth.edu.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

# CONGRATULATIONS PSU CLASS OF 2018!















