

NKU MAGAZINE

SPRING/SUMMER 2016 // VOL. 1, NO. 2

RICH BOEHNE IS

GIVING LIGHT

**HE STRUGGLED AT NKU BEFORE FINDING HIS PATH.
NOW THE E.W. SCRIPPS CEO SHINES A LIGHT FOR FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS.**

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DANGEROUS
LEVELS
OF LEAD
IN NEWPORT, KY SOIL.**

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FIRST RACIALLY
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COOL COURSE
CATALOG
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YOU WERE HERE.**

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Support NKU! Look for this giving icon throughout the magazine for ways to support the NKU departments and programs you care about, or log on now to givenow.nku.edu. Thank you!

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NKU anthropology alumnus Nick Thaxton ('15) bags artifacts from the foundation of the Parker Academy school house—the first fully-integrated school in the United States. During an ongoing series of archeological digs on the site, NKU faculty, students, and volunteers unearthed many of the artifacts presented on page 22.

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How do you go from struggling first-generation college student to president, chair, and CEO of one of the nation's largest TV and digital news companies? Just ask Rich Boehne.

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FINDING GRACE IN AMERICA'S DARKEST HOUR

A photographic look at artifacts unearthed at the site of a pre-Civil War racially integrated grade school—the first of its kind in the country.

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TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL

Innovative and challenging programs are why NKU is consistently ranked among the top universities in the nation by *Forbes*. But a handful of classes in particular turn conventional teaching methods on their heads.

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EDITOR

BRENT DONALDSON '05

ART DIRECTOR

DIONNE LAYCOCK '90

PHOTOGRAPHER

TIMOTHY D. SOFRANKO

PUBLISHER

ERIC GENTRY
*Vice President for
University Advancement*

KELLY L. MARTIN

*Assistant Vice President of
Marketing and Communications*

CHRIS COLE

Director of University Communications

CONTRIBUTORS

MIKE ANDERSON
JAYNA BARKER
CAROL BEIRNE
KELSEY BUGENSTOCK '16
RYAN CLARK '10
CHRIS COLE '99, '04, '09
GAVIN COLTON '16
BRIAN HACKETT
SHARYN JONES
WILLIAM LANDON
AMANDA NAGELEISEN '04
MELISSA POWELL

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FRANK A. BIRKENHAUER '92
President

JIM CUTTER '81
Past President

JESSICA JOHNSTON '99
Vice President

TOM WIEDEMANN '90
President-Elect

MICHELLE MCMULLEN '15
Director of Alumni Programs & Councils

CORRESPONDENCE

NKU MAGAZINE
OFFICE OF MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS
AC 701
1 Nunn Dr.
Highland Heights, KY 41099

PHONE

(859) 572-6948

WEB

MARCOMM.NKU.EDU

EMAIL

NKUMAGAZINE@NKU.EDU

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STAY GOLD

You may remember that the last issue of *NKU Magazine* introduced a complete redesign for the publication—including a name change. Recently, that issue of the magazine was recognized with two prestigious international awards, for both print and the *NKU Magazine* app.

The print version took home the Hermes Creative Award Platinum, as well the Communicator Awards Gold Award for Excellence; while the *NKU Magazine* app won the Hermes Creative Award Gold and the Communicator Award Silver.

Both the Hermes Creative Awards and the Communicator Awards are international marketing and communications competitions, composed of top-tier professional judges from organizations such as Conde Nast, Coach, Disney, The Ellen Degeneres Show, Estee Lauder, Fry Hammond Barr, MTV Networks, *Wired*, and Yahoo!



Got a question? Email us at nkumagazine@nku.edu.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our campus has been busy since the printing of our first edition of *NKU Magazine* last Fall. Our students have been working on innovative undergraduate and graduate research in our classrooms and communities, and the entire Northern Kentucky community has rallied to advocate for additional state funding for our University.

Our cover story explores NKU's impact upon Rich and Lisa Boehne, and the impact they will have on a new generation of our students through a generous \$1 million gift to provide scholarships for first-generation students.

Rich and Lisa met at our University, and they began their pursuit of a dream here. Rich is now chairman, president, and CEO of The E.W. Scripps Co., and incoming chair for our Board of Regents. He says his journalism adventure began the first time he walked onto our campus and into a learning environment that enabled his career.

Like so many of our students—about half of our incoming freshmen each year—Rich and Lisa faced unique challenges as the first members of their family to attend college. Through their generous support, we will be able to ensure that our students can succeed and achieve their dreams.

Earlier this year, our new Black Alumni Council was created to serve African-American graduates and help support African-American students (pg. 11). It gives alumni an opportunity to gather, stay connected, give back, and help students by supporting programs such as NKU ROCKS, which helps first-year African-American students transition from

high school to college.

You can also read about a Newport soil study that partnered students from our environmental

Our commitment to diversity among our student body, faculty, and staff is a central goal of our five-year Strategic Plan. Since the launch of the plan in 2013, the number of bachelor's degrees conferred to underrepresented minority students has grown by 37 percent.

sciences program with journalism students to unearth dangerous levels of lead in the yards of local residents. The study is an excellent example of the kind of transdisciplinary work happening at NKU. Scientists often struggle to tell their stories in interesting ways. Journalists often struggle with the science behind the news. Working together, they learned from each other and produced more impactful results.

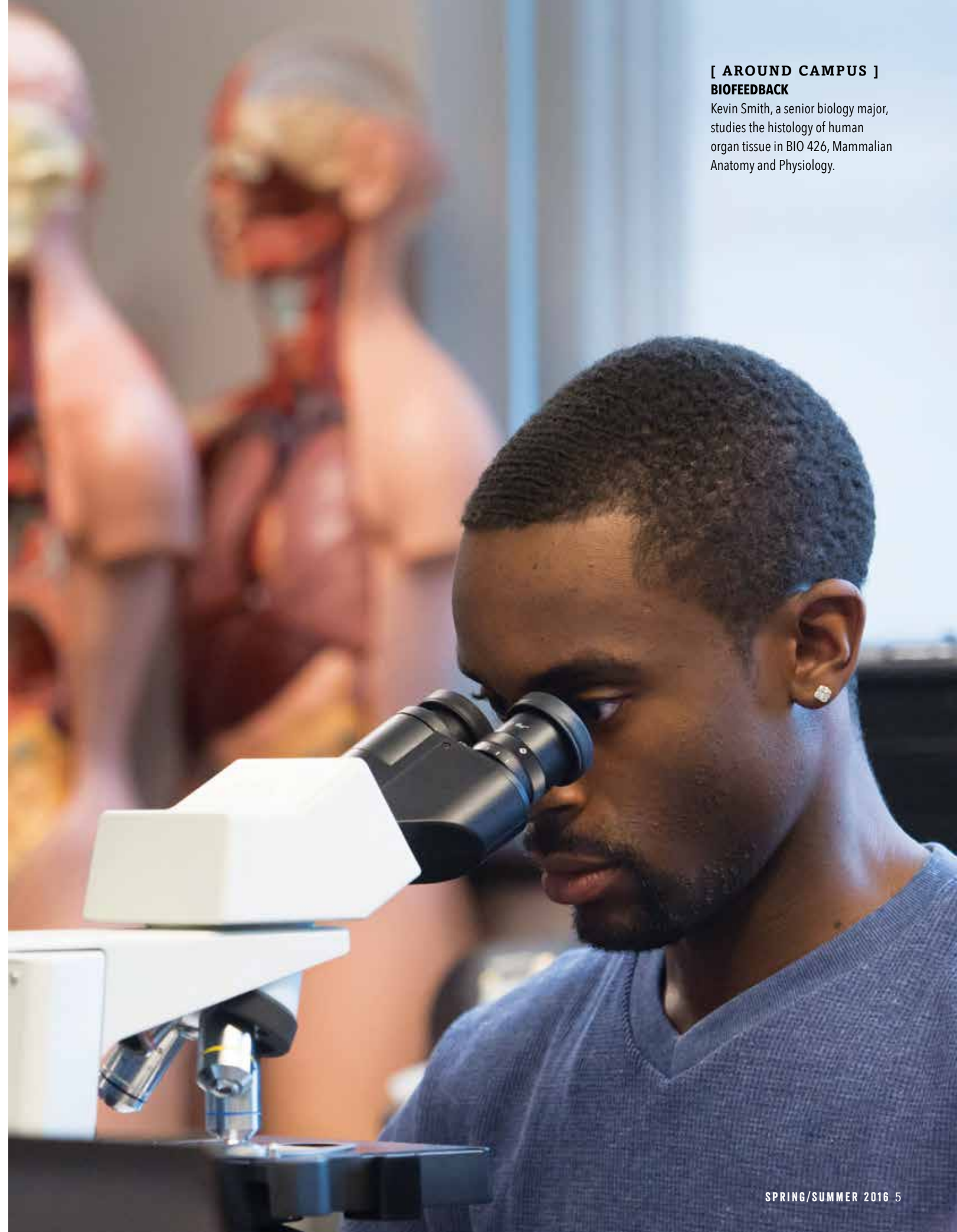
Best wishes for a fun and productive summer.

Geoffrey S. Mearns

President

[AROUND CAMPUS] BIOFEEDBACK

Kevin Smith, a senior biology major, studies the histology of human organ tissue in BIO 426, Mammalian Anatomy and Physiology.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

16 YEARS OF THE MAYERSON STUDENT PHILANTHROPY PROJECT

TOTAL AGENCIES FUNDED

331

TOTAL CLASSES INVOLVED

216

TOTAL STUDENTS INVOLVED

3,200

Here are just a few of the ways NKU students have given back to their community through the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.



1
CUSTOM
CURTAIN FOR
STAGE SHOWS

2012-13



\$1000
for STRAY ANIMAL
CARE

2004-05



40
DOLLS +
HAND-SEWN
CLOTHES

2015-16



33,000 CRAYONS

2004-05



800
FAMILIES
FED

2009-10



70
SERVICE
HOURS
spent painting walls and
constructing clothes racks

2013-14



10
NEW
E-READERS
reached 550 students

2011-12

Data provided by the
2015 Mayerson Student
Philanthropy Annual Report.

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Say hello to Macy Hamblin, the
Horizon League's 2015-16
Player of the Year.

[PHILANTHROPY]

LEARN BY GIVING

NKU's Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project has invested \$1 million in community agencies. // **By Jayna Barker**

For the last 16 years, Northern Kentucky University has taken pride in its commitment to community engagement through the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, which launched in 1999 as a way to teach students about philanthropy in hopes they would become lifelong stewards of their communities. Since then, more than \$1 million has been invested in community organizations and agencies.

Here's how it works: Students are required to identify a need in the community and determine which nonprofits in the area are working to fulfill that need. Most classes receive between \$1,000 to \$2,000 and award smaller grants themselves. Some classes use an indirect model, in which students work with the donor to guide the donation.

Over the years, NKU's professors have found new ways to incorporate service learning into the classroom across numerous disciplines.

"The quick measure of the project is the money invested: over \$1 million in 16 years," says Mark Neikirk, executive director of the Scripps Howard Center for Community Engagement. "That's impressive, but other numbers tell a fuller story. The percentage of students whose eyes are opened to community needs is consistently high. So is the percentage of students who learn their course material more thoroughly because the philanthropy component was added to a class, connecting classroom theory to real-world issues and need."

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 8-26

"The Star Spangled Girl," Stauss Theatre. This comedy follows the lives of Andy and Norman, two young men living in San Francisco in 1966 who are struggling to make a living publishing a not-so-popular magazine. A love triangle forms when Sophie, an all-American girl and self-described "religious follower of *Sports Illustrated*," moves in next door. *For more information, visit commonwealth.nku.edu.*

JUNE 25

Black and Gold Safari, Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden. Join fellow alumni, faculty, and staff at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden for the annual Black and Gold Bash! Enjoy animal encounters, appetizers, a scavenger hunt, a photo booth, balloon artists, and more. Tickets are \$25 each and include all-day admission to the zoo, parking, and event activities. *To purchase tickets, visit supportnku.nku.edu.*

JULY 6-24

"Some Enchanted Evening," Stauss Theatre

Re-live the best of Rodgers & Hammerstein's music all in one night. This musical revue includes musical theatre classics from "Carousel," "Cinderella," "The King and I," "Oklahoma," "South Pacific," and many others. *For more information, visit commonwealth.nku.edu.*

JULY 16

Jeff Dunham, BB&T Arena

With many handcrafted sidekicks, the wildly popular and internationally acclaimed comic/ventriloquist Jeff Dunham is sure to entertain. Watch Walter, Achmed, Bubba J, and Jose Jalapeno take over the stage. *For more info, visit thebbtarena.com.*



CAMP TIME, NKU STYLE

There are kids' camps galore available this summer that will test young students' logic, communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills. No matter what your children's interests—from science, to sports, to art, and beyond—there is a camp adventure for all tastes.

CINSAM

The Center for Integrative Natural Science and Mathematics hosts a variety of summer camps for 3rd-12th grade students that focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)-related topics. Through July 29. *For more info, visit cinsam.nku.edu.*

SPORTS

Sports fans in grades 1-12 can learn the fundamentals of volleyball, baseball, soccer, and basketball this summer from late June to early August. Students can meet new friends, increase skills, and make memories. *For more info, visit nkunorse.com/camps.*

YOUNG REMBRANDTS

Young Rembrandts partners with local schools, and community centers to teach art to young students from ages 6-12. This summer, Young Rembrandts will be teaching art lessons ranging from fashion design to anime cartoons. June 16 to July 23. *For more info, visit communityconnections.nku.edu.*



INTRODUCING NKU'S NEW PODCAST

Ask NKU is a new monthly podcast that invites the finest academic minds at NKU to share their knowledge about any number of subjects with you in a fun, engaging, relatable way. The professors and faculty who appear on the show have spent years amassing a wealth of highly specialized knowledge, and we invite them into our studio on campus to distill all of that information to you, for free! You can find all episodes on Soundcloud, iTunes, or on our website, and recommend topics or send your own questions or suggestions to asknkupodcast@nku.edu.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, COLLEGE OF INFORMATICS

Calling all Informatics alumni, faculty, friends, and fans! Join us this October when we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the College of Informatics and the 5th anniversary of Griffin Hall. The College of Informatics has much to celebrate, having garnered national recognition in areas ranging from media/journalism and mobile app development to cybersecurity. Stay tuned for more information about the upcoming anniversary celebration.



ALUMNI AWARDS

Each year, the NKU Alumni Association recognizes distinguished graduates for their contributions to the University, their community, and society. This year's Alumni Awards Celebration was hosted in February in conjunction with NKU's homecoming activities. Congratulations to this year's recipients!

OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS AWARD

Garren Colvin '96, Haile/US Bank College of Business President & CEO St. Elizabeth Healthcare

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

John Wagner '73, Haile/US Bank College of Business Former Vice President, Labor Relations, Kroger

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNUS AWARD

David Spaulding '06, Chase College of Law Manager of Business Development and Legal Affairs, Turner Construction Company

FACULTY/STAFF STRONGEST INFLUENCE AWARD

Michele Day '08, College of Informatics Lecturer and Student Media Adviser, NKU

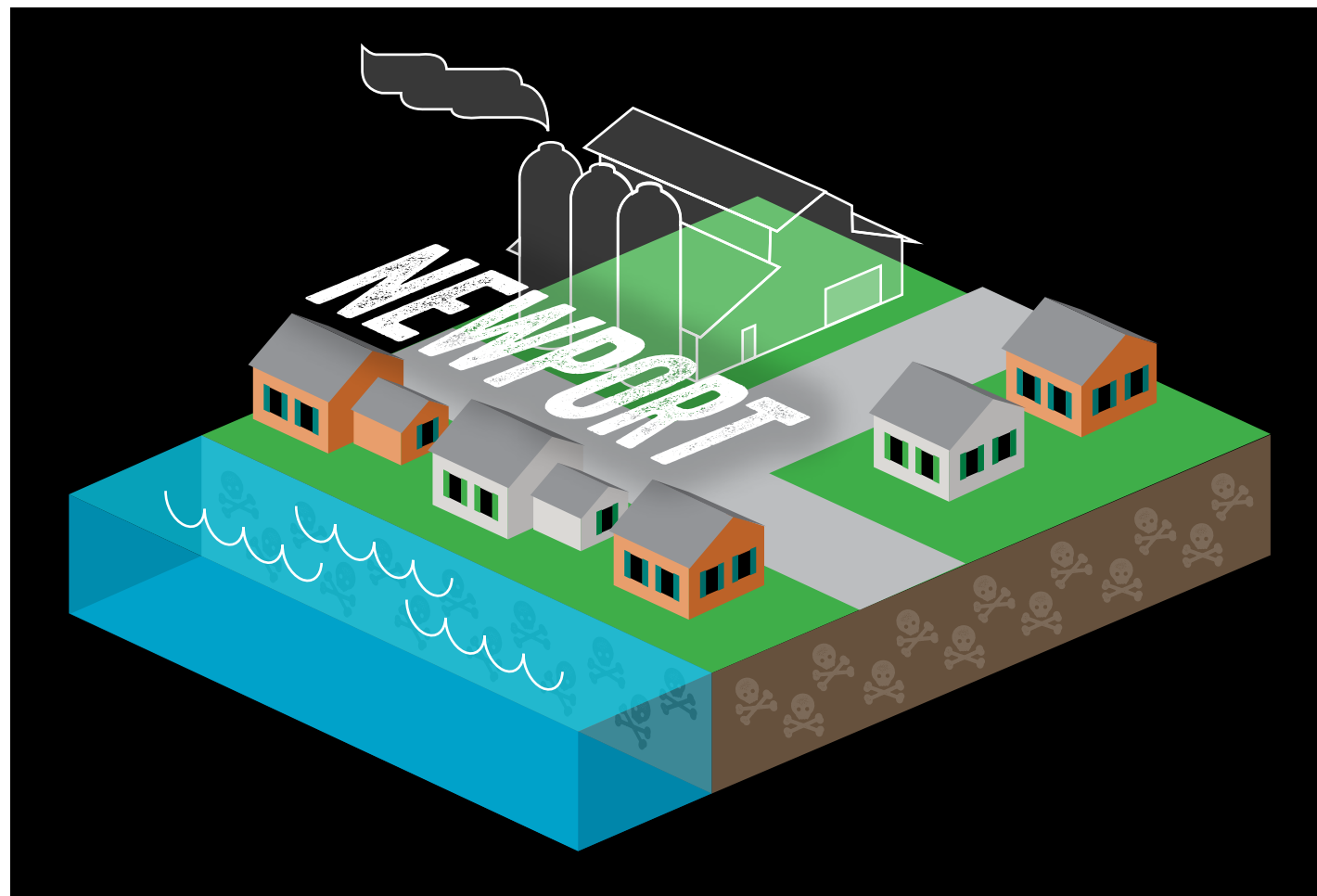


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONNE LAYCOCK

[RESEARCH]

GETTING THE DIRT

Collaborative effort finds dangerous levels of lead in Newport // By Kelsey Bungenstock

THANKS TO A COLLABORATIVE STUDY between Northern Kentucky University journalism and environmental sciences majors, some Newport, Ky., residents now know if the soil in their yards contains potentially harmful levels of lead.

NKU science students, working with assistant professor Dr. Kirsten Schwarz, tested eight residential sites near the former location of a lead smelter plant in Newport.

After the students collected and analyzed multiple measurements at each site, they found that 38 percent of the samples exceeded 400 parts per million (ppm), the EPA's recommended maximum level for children's play areas. Additionally, 99 percent exceeded 100 ppm—the EPA's recommended maximum for urban gardening.

Then-journalism student Kevin Schultz worked with the scientists to understand the testing process—and then mined public records and interviewed officials and residents to produce a news article, "In Newport, lead lingers and lingers," published in The Cincinnati

Enquirer.

The collaboration was a follow-up to a 2012 *USA Today* investigative report of how industries contribute to lead contamination of soil in the environment in urban and rural settings. The NKU Center for Integrative Natural Science and Mathematics (CINSAM) provided funding for students to begin field-testing and reporting early last year.

NKU student media advisor and journalism lecturer Michele Day, along with Schwarz and student Emily Keener, discussed the transdisciplinary project in a presentation on campus.

"Lead-contaminated soil is a much broader issue than just the communities that are living adjacent to old industrial sites," Schwarz says. While past studies have focused on industrial contributions to lead contamination in soil, there are other important sources of lead in cities, such as lead-based paint and gasoline.

Thanks to funding provided by CINSAM as well as a National Science Foundation Major Research Instrumentation Grant that

Schwarz received in 2013, environmental science students were able to measure lead levels in the sample area's soil through handheld machines called X-ray fluorescent (XRF) analyzers. XRF analyzers have the capability to quantify lead onsite, rather than having to send the samples to a lab. While the analyzers provided a great convenience, that didn't make the project easy.

Homeowners for the test sites were given the results, along with precautions to take regarding the level of lead contamination found in their yard.

One of the greater challenges for the inter-department collaboration was the element of timing. According to Schwarz, the pace of science—when compared to journalism—is "glacial." Day recalls that the NKU journalism student working on the project, Kevin Schultz (now a Hearst Journalism Fellow at the San Francisco *Chronicle*), was anxious to start getting reactions to the results when the science students hadn't even been to the research sites yet. "It took some time to adjust," Day says. "The experience gave us a better understanding of the mindset of the scientist, but we were also trying to keep the priorities of the journalist." The collaboration gave the scientists a different perspective, as well.

"Scientists struggle to find someone to tell their story in an interesting and impactful way," Schwarz says. "Incorporating journalism into the study was a logical step."

Homeowners for the test sites were given the results, along with precautions to take regarding the level of lead contamination found in their yard.

"Those of us who worked on the study benefitted from the fact that NKU has a really good reputation within the community," Schwarz says. "When we're doing these kinds of projects in the community, we have to be careful that we respect that reputation, recognizing that it is an important relationship, but also a fragile one."

According to the students' findings, urban soil lead is patchy and widespread, but intensive sampling and spatial modeling can help predict patterns of lead-contaminated soil. Schwarz says that she and her students have continued sampling around the northern Kentucky and Cincinnati region, and have presented their findings to the Northern Kentucky Sierra Club and the Kentucky Academy of Science.

Day says that the experience could lead to future journalism projects involving science. She and Schwarz are part of a transdisciplinary group of NKU faculty who have proposed creating a collaborative to fund research and communication on environmental issues.

"If we get funding for our next project, we'll be more prepared for the challenges of collaborating with people who see the world in different ways," Day says. "It takes time to understand each other and to build that trust."

"Transdisciplinary collaboration is hard," Schwarz says, "but it's worth it." 🐼



[ALUMNI]

A NEW CHAPTER FOR NKU ALUMNI

Introducing NKU's Black Alumni Council

Northern Kentucky University's alumni network is growing: for the first time, there is now a Black Alumni Council to serve and support the University's African-American graduates and students.

"There was a lot of need and interest among African-American alumni to gather, to stay connected, to give back, and to help create opportunities for African-American students," says Council president Crystal L. Kendrick ('97), a former member of the NKU Alumni Council. Other officers include Jeffrey Jordan ('96), Bradley Dickerson ('12), and Patrice McCollough ('12).

The creation of the Black Alumni Council comes at a time when NKU's student body is the most diverse in University history.

"We are proud to welcome the Black Alumni Council to our network of alumni councils and associations, which works to connect alumni, strengthen relationships, and celebrate the University and our alumni community," says Michelle McMullen, Director of Alumni Programs & Councils.

NKU's African-American alumni community is on the rise: from 1997 to 2011, the number of bachelor's degrees conferred to underrepresented minority students, including African-Americans, grew by 202 percent.

Following the launch of the University's 2013-18 strategic plan, Fuel the Flame, the number of bachelor's degrees conferred to underrepresented minority students has grown by 37 percent. Increasing diversity among the student body, faculty, and staff is a central goal of the strategic plan.

"The University has done a phenomenal job of recruiting African-American students from across the region and the state, and it has made diversity inclusion a priority," Kendrick says. "We are proud to join and support those efforts."

Kendrick says the Black Alumni Council plans to support student success programs such as NKU ROCKS, which helps first-year African-American students make the transition from high school to college. The program features a strong peer and faculty/staff mentoring component, and 77 percent of ROCKS students return for their sophomore years. *For more information, contact Michelle McMullen: mcmullenm3@nku.edu. —Amanda Nageleisen*



[D-I]

HORIZON SHINES BRIGHT FOR NORSE ATHLETICS

IN AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON MAY 11, 2015, on Northern Kentucky University’s campus, NKU President Geoffrey S. Mearns accepted an invitation from commissioner Jon LeCrone to join the Horizon League in all sports effective for the 2015-16 season. The Horizon League recognized that NKU—in both academics and athletics—is on the rise. The Norse proved that in its first year in the league.

By all accounts, the Norse exceeded expectations in their first year as members of the Horizon League. Women’s soccer, men’s soccer, volleyball, women’s basketball, and men’s basketball all surpassed their preseason rankings and advanced to postseason play in the Horizon League championships, where women’s soccer, men’s soccer, volleyball, and women’s basketball each advanced to the semifinals. Individual accolades in the fall and winter included 21 all-league or all-freshman honors, three all-tournament accolades, and six academic all-conference honorees.

Women’s soccer player Macy Hamblin added to NKU’s postseason highlights after being named the Horizon League Player of the Year and earning a nomination for national player of the year as just a sophomore. In women’s basketball, the season was one to remember for the Roush sisters, Christine and Courtney, who etched their names into the record books at NKU. Christine finished as the eighth-highest scorer all-time at NKU with 1,439 points, while Courtney’s career field-goal percentage of 50.9 percent ranks her 12th on NKU’s all-time list, as NKU posted its 33rd-consecutive winning record.

The reduced travel time has also paid dividends. Northern Kentucky’s 250+ student-athletes posted a 3.24-combined GPA, setting a new program record. It was also the third-straight semester with at least a 3.2 GPA and ninth-straight above 3.0. —*Bryan McElDowney*

ATHLETICS PARTNERS WITH ADIDAS



In February, Northern Kentucky University and adidas agreed to make the Portland, Oregon-based company the official athletic footwear, apparel, and accessory brand of the Norse through the 2020-21 season.

Ken Bothof, NKU’s director of athletics, says adidas recognizes that NKU is on the rise and will have success in Division I. “Not only does this partnership allow us to remain true to our core values,” he says, “but it helps elevate our profile among the Division I landscape.”

The partnership with adidas perfectly aligns with three of NKU’s core values: student-athlete well-being, brand awareness, and fiscal responsibility.

Northern Kentucky will outfit all 250+ student-athletes in each of its 17 intercollegiate athletics programs from head to toe with adidas apparel, equipment, and accessories beginning July 1. It also aligns the Norse brand with one of the premier athletics apparel companies in the world.

Through the agreement, adidas will also assist with an annual fundraiser and create partnership opportunities with retail outlets to align the apparel worn on the playing fields by NKU’s student-athletes, coaches and administrators to what fans can purchase.

—*Bryan McElDowney*



Support our Norse Athletics programs by visiting givenow.nku.edu.

1000-POINT CLUB



NKU SAW THREE PLAYERS join the prestigious 1,000-point club during the 2015-16 season, as Jalen Billups, Tyler White, and Christine Roush each reached the milestone.

Billups, as he did so often during his career, recorded his 1,000th point on a monstrous two-hand dunk in a game against Wright State on Jan. 9. He finished his career with 1,185 points and 599 rebounds, one of just 10 Norse to amass 1,000 points and 500 boards.



ATHLETICS SERVICE INITIATIVES REACH DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

After recording more than 2,100 hours of community service in the entire 2014-15 season, this year Northern Kentucky University’s 250+ student-athletes surpassed 2,500 hours by mid-March.

NKU’s community service initiatives were highlighted by an eight-day mission trip to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Nine student-athletes from four different teams hosted a four-day sports camp that served more than 130 kids per day.

College of Informatics professor Larry Travis teamed up with assistant baseball coach Dizzy Peyton to coordinate the mission trip through Nicholson Christian Church.

“Michel Marte, a pastor in the Dominican Republic, said one of the things he would like to see was having a baseball team to connect people in this area to the mission,” Travis says. “Baseball is their national sport, so that was kind of the highlight, but several of the athletes did a one-day soccer camp, a volleyball camp, as well as basketball.”

Women’s soccer player Sami Rutowski was grateful to be able to share the experience with her fellow student-athletes.

“Seeing people that I run into every day in the Athletic Department grow and experience something completely new was great. Coming back here, we all have that bond after spending a week together and connecting not only with the kids, but with each other on a different level,” Rutowski says. “I’m definitely doing it again next year and I hope I can bring more teammates.” —*Melissa Powell*

White joined the club in a comeback win over Milwaukee on Feb. 6, finishing with 1,114 points overall, scoring in double-figures in six of his last seven games.

Roush crossed the threshold early in the season in a win over Marquette on Nov. 21, and went on to finish eighth on NKU’s career scoring list with 1,439 points. —*Mike Anderson*

WHITAKER JOINS THE UPRISING

Meet the new head coach for Norse women’s basketball

Camryn Whitaker, welcome to Norse Nation.

Whitaker takes over the Norse women’s basketball program after serving as an assistant for the nationally-ranked Kentucky Wildcats last year, helping guide UK to a Sweet 16 appearance.

“I am delighted to welcome Camryn to Norse Nation,” says Northern Kentucky University Director of Athletics Ken Bothof. “As I have gotten to know more about Camryn over the last two weeks it became clear that she is the right fit to lead our women’s basketball program. Camryn not only has a great basketball IQ, she has also excelled in recruiting and developing her student-athletes on and off the court. Combining those elements with her ties to Kentucky and Ohio make her the right coach for NKU.”

“I am extremely grateful that President [Geoffrey] Mearns and Ken have given me this incredible opportunity to lead the Northern Kentucky women’s basketball team,” Whitaker says. “NKU has such a rich history filled with many great accomplishments and I look forward to continuing that success in this next chapter at Northern

Kentucky.”

Prior to her coaching stint at Kentucky, Whitaker was an assistant coach at the University of Dayton for three seasons, where she helped lead the Flyers to a 79-18 (.814) overall record and 42-4 (.913) Atlantic 10 mark.

Whitaker is originally from Cynthiana, Kentucky, where she was a standout player at Harrison County High School, garnering *USA Today* honorable mention and second-team all-state accolades.

—*Bryan McElDowney*



THE LEADING LIGHT

**RICH BOEHNE STRUGGLED AT NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
UNTIL HE FOUND HIS PATH.
NOW HE SHINES A LIGHT FOR OTHERS TO FIND THEIR WAY.**

// By Brent Donaldson

HE WAS STANDING AT THE EDGE OF THE ROEBLING SUSPENSION BRIDGE, over the rail, hanging on, looking down at the muddy Ohio River. Rich Boehne and his two friends were maybe skipping classes that day. He can't recall, but it wouldn't have been surprising.

At heart, Rich Boehne is an adventurer. He has a sixth sense for calculating risk, and at 18, he takes a lot of them.

Looking down again. Logs and debris careen past the stone towers. His two friends jump, one after the other, finally hitting the water nearly 100 feet below. Rich's heart pounds. To jump or not to jump. Calculated risk.

Finally, a decision: *Maybe this is one jump I'm not going to make.* He steps back and retreats from the bridge.

Who knows. Maybe everything would have been fine. His friends walked away unscathed from their adventure. But maybe not. Maybe Rich wouldn't have gone on to overcome his difficulties in school, or meet Lisa, or rise to the top of The E.W. Scripps Company. Who knows. Calculated risk.

If you talk to Rich Boehne and his family, his NKU classmates, his friends and colleagues, they paint a picture of paradoxes about the man. Complex and simple. Humble and powerful. A man who struggled with early failures, stayed steady and calm, and today leads one of the largest television and digital news companies in the country. This is Rich Boehne's story, told by those who know him best.



RICHARD ALBERT BOEHNE grew up in a modest home on Grant St. in Fort Thomas, Kentucky Like many children of the 1960s and early '70s, Boehne's formative years were occasioned by the era's profound social and cultural turbulence. By the age of 12, Boehne was a voracious consumer of the news, reading two papers per day, daily documents of racial injustice, cultural upheaval, political corruption, and war. But away from the hard news, at home in Fort Thomas with his sister, Mary, and his parents, Thelma-Jean and Albert, Boehne lived a happy and stable life.

Thelma Jean Boehne (Rich Boehne's mother): I just have to tell you the good things, don't I? He was a good boy; he liked to work. When he was about 13 he started working at the YMCA as a volunteer, helping with day camps and things like that. I don't know that he liked to work around the house too much, but he did like to work at the Y a lot.

He didn't like to read until the fifth grade when they got into history. Even those little books in grade school, "Dick and Jane." He didn't like them at all. He liked the real stuff. He wasn't interested in reading about Dick and Jane.

Rich Boehne ('81, president, chair, and CEO of the E.W. Scripps Company): The Boehne side of my family was from Germany and England. My father [Albert Boehne] worked for American Laundry Machinery in Norwood for 40-plus years. They made the old one-hour Martinizing machines—"fresh as a flower in just one-hour." Huge commercial dry cleaning equipment. My mother, from Grants Lick out in the country, comes from a farming family.

I was raised with a grace-and-mercy approach to life, rather than one that believes that what you need is hard knocks to make you tough. A very "last shall be first," Southern-Baptist kind of upbringing. Servant-leaders were the examples that I saw. Kindness and respect. My father is unbelievably patient, and I inherited his patience. You can't outlast me in a negotiation. I can just wait. You can't work me up. And that is very much from my father, who is 96 and still the same way.

Thelma Jean Boehne: We were easygoing and he never really needed any disciplining. He got one spanking when he was a boy. I was in the basement doing the laundry, and he threw all of the clothespins on the floor. I told him to pick them up and he never did. And he got a swat. It wasn't much, but I have always regretted it.

Rich Boehne: I was 12 in 1968, so in essence I grew up watching the 6 o'clock news, which was the Vietnam War. And then the assassinations that ran through that period—Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy—and then the Democratic Convention, Woodstock, racial tensions. We lived through all of that. I came home from school when Kennedy was assassinated. During the Cuban missile crisis, I stood around watching adults crying and wondering what the heck was going to happen. In school I did the drills of hiding under my desk in case the bomb dropped. There were crackers and big green drums of water in our elementary school basement. Current events during that time were incredible, and I think that is what drove me towards journalism.

AFTER GRADUATING from Highlands High School in Fort Thomas, Boehne enrolled at NKU in 1974. Both he and his soon-to-be wife, Lisa, who attended NKU on a Presidential Scholarship, were first-generation college students. After graduation, Lisa Boehne was quickly hired as a journalist, and later as a communications staffer at NKU.

OPPOSITE LEFT: After Rich and Lisa graduated from NKU in 1981, they both landed jobs at local community journal newspapers. Rich moved on to the Cincinnati Post in 1985, around the same time Lisa began working as a communications staffer at NKU.

Boehne struggled to stay focused at school. After one too many false starts, he was kicked out of the University, moved back and forth between Kentucky and Florida for four years, and returned to NKU with a renewed sense of purpose. He straightened out his GPA and served as a writer for The Northerner during a banner period for the paper. It was also a period that pulsed with the anti-establishment zeitgeist—a period exemplified by the 1976 Academy Awards, where All the President's Men raked in four Oscars.

Rich Boehne: I struggled in school, a little bit early on and then definitely in high school and college. I think now they would probably diagnose me with some sort of attention deficit disorder. I struggled terribly to get things from my head onto the paper. I struggled until I reached my mid-20s and got to better know my learning style. And at that point school became easy, but until that point it was very difficult.

I've learned and learned the hard way. I got into a defeatist spiral. At NKU, I wouldn't go to class. It doesn't make sense to go to Red River Gorge on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and not to class. But for some reason it did. That was a problem.

I had horrible grades. I think the technical term is that I flunked out—a couple times. I can't remember what my grade point average was, probably a point-eight-nine or something. NKU had the wisdom to decide that it would be best if I left for a while. I came back in the spring semester of '79 and met Lisa in class.

At that point I made very good grades, pretty much all A's, and I did the things I couldn't do at 18 or 19 and into my early 20s. I followed my GPA like a meter, watched it each semester, and the moment I could get my GPA to the acceptable number I applied for graduation.

Lisa Boehne ('81): Rich had a rocky NKU experience and left and went to Florida for a couple of years. So, I had been at NKU two years, and all of the sudden Rich shows up with his flip flops and his tan, and bleached-out blond hair from being in Florida. And I thought, "This is interesting."

He was a mess. I was always dressed up like I was going to work, and he was always wearing overalls with one shoulder hanging down. So I would say we were both intrigued at the beginning, but not love at first sight. I didn't know where he was coming from with his flip flops, and he didn't know where I was coming from [being dressed up]. He was constantly asking if I was going to work.

Rich Boehne: Lisa was very attractive and fun. She had the same professional passions and similar family upbringings. Evangelical families. Her family is from Rockcastle County (Ky.), and they had a little plumbing business. Very similar Appalachian migration kind of families.

Outwardly, we were very different. I was wearing bib overalls and a dirty T-shirt and flip-flops, and she was very well dressed. But in the most important ways, we are a lot alike. I used to write her notes and drew pictures on them. I think she found me, probably, kind of intrigu-

OPPOSITE RIGHT: Rich and Lisa in the early 1980s. The couple met in class at NKU, but didn't hit it off right away. "He was a mess," Lisa says. "I was always dressed like I was going to work, and he was always wearing overalls with one shoulder hanging down."



“WHEN WE GOT MARRIED, WE WERE WORKING FOR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS MAKING \$8,000 EACH. BUT THIS WAS THE POST-WATERGATE ERA, SO A LOT OF PEOPLE WEREN'T GETTING JOBS BECAUSE JOURNALISM WAS KIND OF FLOODED. WE WERE JUST HAPPY THAT WE HAD STEADY JOBS IN OUR FIELD.”

LISA BOEHNE



ing. Or strange; one or the other.

Lisa Boehne: The first year (at NKU), Rich started making these comments all the time about my hair, because my hair was kind of a big deal for all of those years. It was blond, and I was spraying it all the time.

Back then, you could smoke in class, and there were a bunch of Vietnam vets in class who would wear their army coats in sit in the back and smoke. And Rich would come in and walk up to them and say, "You better put your cigarettes out. Lisa's about to come in, and you don't want to set her hair on fire." It was pretty funny.

And so that went for on for a while where he was making these comments. But Rich is just a really sweet guy, even though he can be a smart-aleck. Then we started actually dating, right when summer started our junior year. If you would have asked anyone, there's no way people would have thought we were dating. He was about as casual as you can be and still be dressed. In the winter, he wore socks and flip flops.

Rich Boehne: I always tell people that Lisa passed up George Clooney to go out with me, and what that literally means is that she walked past George on campus to meet me. George just happened to be standing outside the University Center when she walked by. But it's a great line, isn't it?

Rick Dammert ('81, former editor of The Northerner): It was Rich's second time around [at NKU] and he was a couple of years older than me. And that was very evident in his demeanor—he was very cool; he was very calm, calculated. He took things at ease. And he was funny and very intelligent.

Particularly my first couple of years at NKU when I was a freshman and a sophomore, there were a lot of very serious journalism students

there. People like Rich and Gary Webb and Tim Funk and others went on to pretty distinguished journalism careers.

Corky Johnson ('80, former editor of The Northerner): It took me six years to get through Northern because I was working on three newspapers. I was at the [Cincinnati] Post on the weekends. I was working at The Northerner, but then I would quit school for awhile, and then I'd go back to school. A lot of us were dropping in and out [of NKU], but on the other hand there was a seriousness to it. As a student, you want to get practical experience and be out there doing stuff. A lot of us did.

And that was the question: whether you get a degree, or whether you don't get a degree. Look at Carl Bernstein. We all came out of the Watergate era, and he didn't have a degree. It was a time of asking, what was journalism? Was it a vocation? Was it professional? What was it?

You could see in class that [Rich] kind of had it figured out. He was maybe more... erudite? I just remember his stuff being more polished. **Dr. Michael Turney (Rich's former professor and former chair of the communication department at NKU):** Rich was somebody who I think struck a number of professors as a pain in the ass, but I never felt that way about him. He was feeling his oats as a young man. He was confident, cocky, but also very laid back and very casual.

[Before he left for Florida] he wasn't a good student because he didn't apply himself. But he was very smart. He was serious about journalism, but he didn't care about the academic side. He wasn't interested in the history of mass media and how it evolved throughout the decades. He wanted to be out there doing journalism, not studying



Cincinnati Enquirer That year he accepted a

veral different things. I had come up in week

covering mostly capital markets. I wrote a



SPRING/SUMMER 2016 19



OPPOSITE LEFT: Rich Boehne walks across a bridge on his farm in Morning View, Ky.

TOP RIGHT: Katherine Ruckle, senior art history major

MIDDLE RIGHT: Delrico Hill, junior middle grades education major

BOTTOM RIGHT: Amanda Bodenbender, 2015 elementary education major

basis, I often would bring up Rich and point to him as an example. The dream C student who was not taking school seriously, but something snapped and he became interested. What he has grown into, what he has done for Scripps, and what he has done for the community and especially for Northern, is incredible. It's wonderful.

THIS PAST APRIL, the Radio Television Digital News Foundation awarded Rich Boehne its First Amendment Leadership Award. Among the five others who received awards that night in Washington D.C. were Jason Razaian, the Washington Post journalist who was recently released from Iran after being held in captivity for more than a year; and Tom Brokaw, longtime anchor of the NBC Nightly News and all-around journalism legend. A number of Boehne's colleagues in the industry spoke that night about his contributions to the field. Boehne was honored, but in typical fashion, downplayed the award.

Brian Lawlor (senior vice president of Scripps broadcast division): Rich is the perfect CEO for Scripps. Because Scripps has always been, from the day it started, about giving a voice to the little guy. Our responsibility is to be the defender of the little guys.

Gary Pruitt (president and CEO of The Associated Press, where Boehne serves on the board of directors): Rich, first and foremost, was a journalist. And he's still a journalist today. He also happens to be CEO. But he's a journalist. Sticking up for the right of the people to know, and not being intimidated by the rich and the powerful and the strong. I think what Scripps is showing is that you can be a strong successful thriving business and still pursue strong first amendment rights and values in journalism. That's Rich's great contribution.

Ellen Weiss (vice president and bureau chief at Scripps Howard News Service): Let's face it: newsrooms are a pain in the ass. They make trouble. They make things uncomfortable. And in this shifting media landscape, it could be much easier to focus on the profits than on the mission. But that is not how Rich Boehne runs Scripps. You feel Rich in your head saying, *Go there. Make it matter. Make it count.*

Ken Lowe (chairman, president, and CEO of Scripps Networks Interactive): He's never forgotten what it was like to be in the role of reporter. In the course of getting the facts, if he has to blow some stuff up, yeah, he'll do that. Because at the end of the day, Rich is about battling injustice and getting to the truth. If we had to have one individual, in the entire history of E.W. Scripps, that embodies the slogan of "Give light and the people will find their way," it's Rich Boehne. 🍷

was at a time when the competition was cutting costs wherever they had to. This focus on the need to produce quality journalism, and remain true to the mission of E.W. Scripps, is really another hallmark of Rich.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Rich Boehne and the Scripps Howard Foundation donated \$1 million to the Boehne Family First Generation Scholarship fund, first established at NKU in 2012. The gift is the latest contribution to the University from the Boehnes, which also includes Rich's roles on NKU's Board of Regents, volunteer work with students, and the hiring of dozens of NKU student interns and alumni at Scripps.

Rich Boehne: We could have put the money in our pocket, but we owe the university so much. When I walk around on campus today, I see students who are there who, as Geoff Mearns says, come to campus carrying their dreams. We've done fine. I hope it's not the last money we give the University.

Everyone in (our) journalism classes at NKU, those were all hard working, entrepreneurial, blue collar, no-sense-of-privilege kind of students. It was just a fantastic environment. To me, the value of a high quality, affordable education... How do you go from where I was to chairman of a company in one generation? It was thanks to an affordable, high quality public education.

Geoff Mearns (president of Northern Kentucky University):

Thankfully for us, there are many ways our graduates support NKU. Some alumni give back through service to the University, while others enhance our reputation through professional and community service. And of course, many support their alma mater directly through philanthropy. But Rich and Lisa Boehne are exceptional—they contribute to the University generously in all three respects. We are so grateful to them.

Nathan Smith: The University, being a younger institution, has not had a lot of alumni who are in the upper echelons of the business world. And it's very easy for people to find themselves, when they work in the industry he does or that I do, who like to say, "Oh, I went to Swarthmore." And Rich and I love to tell everybody, "Oh? We went to NKU." Rich represents Northern's coming of age, its growing up. And Rich is very proud of that, and proud of the institution that he attended.

Lisa Boehne: NKU gave Rich a second chance—they took him back after not having a great track record. And then Scripps straight up offered him a job from reporter to corporate. Obviously, if you are ranking our life, then those two [events] are key to anything we've achieved.

And for me, they kept me in town. I might have been off somewhere and not had the life I've had at all because of that scholarship. It was definitely a God thing all the way around with the school. We're very much indebted and we love the school because of that.

Michael Turney: When I was still advising students on an active

ONCE IN A GENERATION

First generation students face unique challenges.

One student fought homelessness and depression. One dodged gangs to avoid violence in the streets. Another struggled as a single mother to raise her infant daughter.

Not all stories of first generation students at Northern Kentucky University are this dramatic, of course. But for the nearly 50 percent of all NKU incoming freshman who are the first in their family to attend college, the obstacles they face can be extremely challenging.

As first-generation students themselves, Rich and Lisa Boehne stepped up to help students face these challenges when they created the Boehne Family First Generation Scholarship in 2012.

To be eligible, applicants must be a degree-seeking student with a minimum GPA of 3.0, as well as a minimum ACT score of 23, or SAT score of 1050. Of course, the applicant must be a first-generation student.

"NKU gave me chances when others wouldn't," Rich Boehne says. "It was just a fantastic environment. To me, the value of a high quality, affordable education... How do you go from where I was to chairman of a company in one generation? It was thanks to an affordable, high quality public education."

If you would like to learn more or make a contribution to one of the many scholarships that foster student success, please visit financialaid.nku.edu/scholarships.html, or call (859) 572-5143.



To learn more or make a contribution to one of the many scholarships that directly support our students, please visit financialaid.nku.edu/scholarships, or call (859) 572-5143.



chair and associate professor of history at Northern Kentucky University.

For the ongoing archaeological excavations that began last spring, NKU history and geography students and faculty are joined by their anthropology peers as well as those from the NKU graduate program in public history. Together, for the first time in an academic setting, they are examining the extensive Parker family archive. In another first, Drs. Jones, Hackett, and Landon are working to mentor Dr. Peggy Brunache, a postdoctoral scholar from Scotland who recently received Ford Foundation funding to visit NKU and the Parker site over the next year. Brunache will collaborate with the Freedom Center and continue Parker site excavations, lab work, archival work, and public outreach for the project.

DISCOVERED BY: NKU students



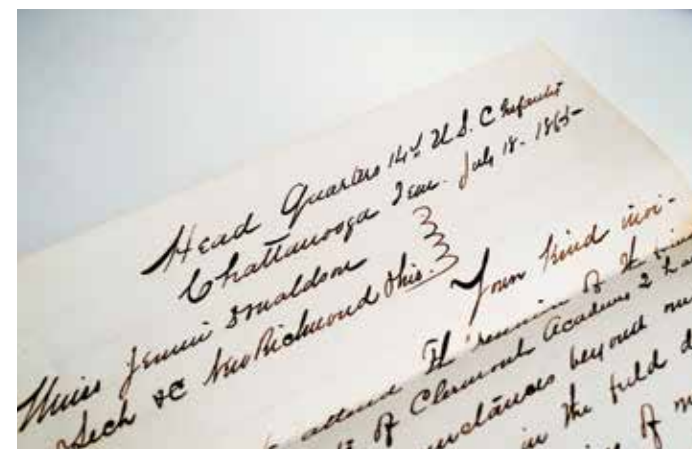
DISCOVERED BY: NKU students



DISCOVERED BY: NKU student



A LETTER WRITTEN TO THE PARKER ACADEMY by Colonel Henry Corbin, a white officer stationed with the 14th U.S. Colored Infantry. As a graduate of the Parker academy, Corbin was asked to return to be a guest speaker at a reunion of graduates. In this letter, Corbin declines the invitation, but writes that he thinks highly of the academy and speaks fondly of the experiences he had there. He writes about the patriotic spirit that took over the school, complete with cheers and marches, when the students heard about Fort Sumter. Corbin also talks sadly of his classmates who died in battle and now lay in "graves dug by traitors." He states that he has no love of the South and the "evil they brought to the earth." After the war, Corbin stayed in the army, rising to the rank of Adjutant General—the army's highest ranking officer. Corbin was the Commanding General of the United States Army during the Spanish American War, the Philippine Insurrection, and the Boxer Rebellion.



COLONEL HENRY CORBIN



CONTINUED FROM PG. 24 »

“THIS COMBINATION

of hands-on archeological experience, archival training, historical interpretation and preservation, and in-depth research, offers students from our region and the across the country a unique opportunity to experience history in real and impactful ways,” Landon says.

Perhaps more importantly, he says, students are gaining a better understanding of the

complexities our nation faces today. “As much as anything else, we’re learning about true change agents. The Parkers had a vision for their community and in the face of great obstacles and resistance, they built bridges that forever changed the course of history. One person can make a difference, and there is no better proof of that than the Parker Academy.” 🍷

A LETTER WRITTEN BY PRISCILLA PARKER IN 1847, addressed to her “beloved brethren and sisters” who were members of a church association in “Mount Virginia.” Parker implores the readers to consider their position on slavery, and discusses her complex feelings about the impending Civil War. *“As the day is fast approaching when we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Why should we fear to speak to each other about the great sin of oppression that has not only crept into many of the churches, but stalks abroad at noon day with shameless front declaring it is of God appointed origin... I do not think we give that clear and pointed expression of our conviction of the sin of slavery that the times require. I am not satisfied that we clear our own shirts tho I very much fear we have not done this of the blood, of these crushed and bruised ones. I want to send out a voice that will sound in thunder tones wherever there is an oppressor to tremble or a slave to suffer. We have declared before the world that we are Christ’s people, and that He has made our spirits free from the bondage of sin and death. Then why should we fear to make an expression against this vile bondage that subjugates thousands of our poor brethren and sisters soul and body to the evil dominion of a fellow mortal.”*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SMALL, INTRICATE

METAL BUTTON with dog and puppies. This item is likely from a child’s coat or shirt, ca. 1840-1850.

DISCOVERY DATE: May 2015

LOCATION: By the foundation of the schoolhouse

DISCOVERED BY: NKU students



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

VARIETY OF SHOT AND

BULLET CASINGS recovered from around the Parker Academy school house and men’s dormitory. These items suggest that both hunting and conflict may have been part of daily life at the academy. The large shot in particular may indicate that it was necessary to defend the Parker ideals of freedom and equality; these items were found in the doorway to the school house.

DISCOVERY DATE: May 2015

LOCATION: Men’s dormitory and school house

DISCOVERED BY: NKU students



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A FRAGMENT OF A SLATE

FOR WRITING. → Note the ruled lines where the handwriting would have gone, this would have been especially helpful for someone who did not know how to read or write. A student would gain skills by practicing on this just as students use paper today. The item likely dates to the 1850’s.

DISCOVERY DATE: May 2015

LOCATION: Found behind the school house and men’s dormitory

DISCOVERED BY: NKU students



REFRAMING DIFFERENCES

Parker Academy’s inclusive approach to education continues at Northern Kentucky University, which embeds a framework for addressing diversity, inclusion, and equity into its mission and operations. At NKU, the model is known as “inclusive excellence.”

NKU strives to attain inclusive excellence by preparing all students to live, work, and flourish through engagement in an increasingly multicultural and globalized community. These conditions allow all members of the NKU community—irrespective of identity, background, or institutional position—to thrive.

In August, 2014, President Geoffrey Mearns appointed Dr. Kathleen Roberts the first senior advisor to the president on inclusive excellence. “In order to be truly inclusive,” Mearns said, “we must expand diversity to include gender, religion, culture, sexuality, geography, socio-economic status, and political and philosophical beliefs. We must also ensure that everyone, irrespective of these characteristics, has an equal opportunity to be heard in our governance processes, because including different perspectives leads to better decisions.”

Roberts sees inclusive excellence as a widening of our worldviews—an expansion of our sense of self—and much of her work revolves around teaching others to develop the capacity to appreciate differences. “When we engage in new behaviors, our brain default is to recoil—fight or flight,” Roberts says. “I’m asking people to enter a space of uncertainty for a longer period of time. I see it as a vision and practice where diversity, equity, and inclusion are reframed as vital to an outcome of institutional excellence.”

TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL

THE COOLEST CLASSES ON CAMPUS ARE AS FUN AS THEY ARE CHALLENGING.

By JAYNA BARKER // ILLUSTRATIONS BY DIONNE LAYCOCK

Think about it: Without the ingenuity and discoveries of teachers and professors, where would we be as a society? We count on the creativity and dedication of professors and researchers to prepare each new generation for a better future. At Northern Kentucky University, innovative and challenging programs are why we produce the best graduates, and why NKU is consistently ranked among the top universities in the nation by *Forbes*.

NKU's course catalog is filled with classes that challenge and enlighten. But if you look hard enough, you'll find a few classes that truly turn

conventional teaching methods on their heads. Classes that pair pop culture with critical thinking, or connect human cultures through the deconstruction of a single meal.

We scoured the course catalog to find a few examples of these unconventional courses. The kind of classes that make you want to come back to school. The classes that not only sound cool—*Harry Potter*? *Board game design*? *Sign me up!*—but also provide new ways of teaching and thinking about the world.

MEDIA MARVELS

COURSE: HNR 303, *Super Men and Wonder Women*
INSTRUCTOR: Andy Miller

You've probably noticed that superheroes have taken over Hollywood. They've also commandeered the entertainment, toy, and fashion industries through comic books, television, T-shirts, socks, mugs, glassware, posters, keychains, and pretty much any consumer product you can imagine.

While superhero branding may seem superfluous, their popularity isn't hard to explain. Today, we all need to heroes we can count on, enemies we can identify, and wars we can win.

Students discuss these themes and study our modern fascination with superheroes in Andy Miller's honors course, *Super Men and Wonder Women*. In it, Miller asks students to dive into the superhero phenomenon to study their impact and popularity in American culture. Students discuss superhero behaviors and their consequences, how they relate to American culture, and how the representation of superhero women in comics has evolved in recent years.

"Why do these larger-than-life characters have such an appeal to all of us?" Miller asks. "Do these iconic characters step in as a substitute for mythology in our society? We're looking at American culture in a different way, and it's amazing."

SPB
200



BAD BLOOD

COURSE: SPB 200, *Rivalry and Rituals: International Sport*
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Joe Cobbs

When the Cincinnati Bengals bungled the AFC wild-card play-off game against the Pittsburgh Steelers last year, it was a particularly crushing blow for Bengals fans. Not only was the loss ugly

and self-inflicted, it was against the Bengals' most reviled rival.

Sports are, of course, all about competition, but rivalries take competition to a new level. So, what does it mean to be rivals? And what influence do rivalries have not only on players and teams, but on the fragile psyches of devoted fans?

Dr. Joe Cobbs and his students study the political, sociological, psychological, and cultural factors that influence athletic competition in his Sports Business course, *Rivalry and Rituals*.

In his class, Cobbs welcomes a wide range of majors to the course to enhance discussions and insights. He often partners with other departments to offer different perspectives on sports rivalries.

"We use the socially prominent context of international sports to examine cultural development, influence, and conflict within and across persons and geographic boundaries," Cobbs says. "As a whole, these elements are very important for sports business professionals—and really any global citizen—to understand, specifically because of their influence on event management, public relations, marketing strategy, and facility security."

NRS
339L

NO DUMMIES HERE

COURSE: NRS 339L, *Clinical Reasoning I*
INSTRUCTOR: Gina Fielier

Imagine it's your first day on the job as a nurse in a community clinic. You grab your first patient's chart and visit his bedside. You tell him you're going to take his vitals and begin taking his blood pressure.

Suddenly the patient goes into cardiac arrest. What do you do?

High-risk medical situations like this happen every day in the nursing simulation lab at NKU. Here, students are able to learn basic and complex skills in a hands-on environment and apply real-world advanced care in a safe space.

The lab, designed as a functional modern clinic, is home to many classes in the College of Health Professions—including Gina Fielier's Clinical Reasoning I course. The course requires students to assess varying medical conditions and disorders in real patient case studies. The students then transition to the simulation lab to provide for that patient—in this case a mannequin programmed by professors who can respond in real time to the decisions students make during the simulation. Students participate in a debriefing after each simulation where they can receive feedback on their decisions.

"When students come into the lab, they're no longer students," Fielier says. "They function as medical professionals, whether they're a nurse, respiratory therapist, or radiologic technician. There is a pretty big gap between theory and practice. We can create any learning situation in the simulation lab. They learn more this way—the experiential learning piece helps them retain more information."

HIST
309



CHEW ON THIS

COURSE: HIST 309, *World History in a Dozen Meals*
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Jonathan Reynolds

Too often, the lessons of history are used to highlight differences between cultures. A few years ago, award-winning NKU history professor Dr. Jonathan Reynolds set out to change that. All he needed was a good meal.

His course, *Around the World in a Dozen Meals*, incorporates the history, culture, and food choices of regions across the world, and tops it all off with a freshly made meal at the end of each class.

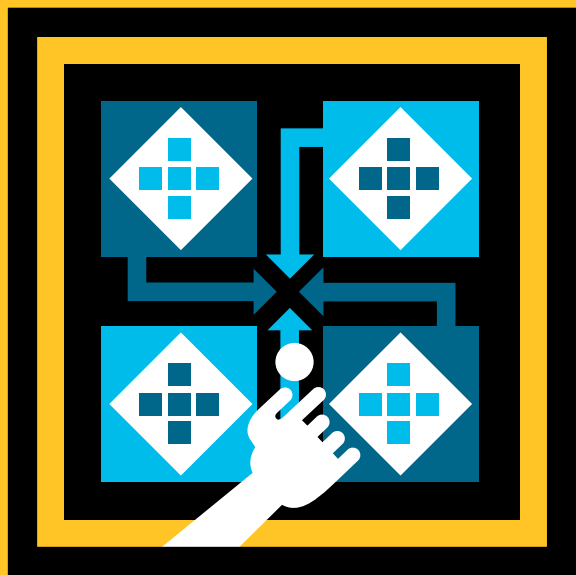
Here's how it works: students examine human culture and history through a dinner seminar during the semester, alternating roles each week and taking turns leading discussions on regional, national, or ethnic history. They also study the ecological or environmental history of a meal's ingredients, and the social aspects of the processes by which the meal is produced.

In the end, Reynolds wants his students to develop a greater understanding of the variety and complexity of human cultures.

"I have a couple of big goals for the class," Reynolds explains. "One is to get students to realize that what we think of as 'national cuisines' are really very modern things. It's not like French and German and Chinese foods have always been a certain way. Quite to the contrary, they are very much a result of modern exchanges and cultural developments. Second, I want students to realize that every time they eat, they are experiencing world history. When you eat a bite of chocolate, you are actually tasting a history that spans from Central America to Southeast Asia, and which involves events as unpalatable as the Atlantic slave trade and colonialism."

HNR
303





MIN
394

THE GAME OF LIFE

COURSE: MIN 394, Board Game Design

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Alexis Pulos

When it comes to our free time, a lot of our fate is determined by a roll of dice, the flick of a spinner, the cards we're dealt, and where the chips fall. While mobile and platform gaming may attract all of the buzz, contemporary tabletop games are still an entertainment staple in most households.

Dr. Alexis Pulos' Board Game Design course teaches traditional game design by examining two basic questions: What is a game? And what rules need to be in place for it to work?

Working in groups and individually, students use that framework to fix existing games, create their own, and find ways that information can be layered to create complex systems. Students learn how the discipline of informatics requires them to think critically about context. Pulos tries to teach his students how to use the design process as a metaphor in their daily lives.

"Game structures teach us something about the world around us," Pulos says. "They teach you how to be a critical thinker in complex situations—to be aware of where we are, and what moves we can make and can't make. They require us to ask how we make intelligent moves and meaningful interactions."



HABEAS CORPUS

COURSE: LAW 858, Facts, Storytelling, and Persuasion

INSTRUCTOR: David Singleton

A well-told narrative is the most powerful tool a lawyer can use. As humans, we're hardwired to communicate (and thus make sense of the world) through telling or listening to stories. But when it comes to the courtroom, stories are less about the storyteller and more about the listeners—the jury.

David Singleton, professor of law at NKU, teaches this mindset in his Facts, Storytelling, and Persuasion course. The class focuses on how to pull a jury into the narrative of a story. Singleton uses a real-life, high-profile case to engage his students and asks them to step into the shoes of defense lawyers by using facts to develop a powerful narrative. For the first three or four weeks of the class, students pore over the facts—police reports, videotaped statements, and evidence.

But the facts are only a small building block in the defense's story. "We spend so much time in school thinking about the law—which is important and does matter—but it's not why we win," Singleton says. "Cases are not decided based on law, by and large, but on emotions that come from those facts."

Once students have developed their theory of defense, the rest of the course is spent putting that theory into practice. Students are asked to practice storytelling in ways that could help throughout the trial—jury selection, opening and closing statements, cross-examination, etc.

Singleton wants his students to spend time thinking about how they can weave a fact-based defense theory with supporting emotional themes.

"Once you've done that, everything else falls into place," Singleton says. "The principles of everything you do in the trial have to be governed by your case theory. If you don't have the ability to figure out what story you're going to tell, you're not going to win your case and be an effective advocate for your client."



THE GREATER GOOD

COURSE: SWK 565, Compassion, Empathy, and Forgiveness

INSTRUCTOR: Diane Wright

It's not always easy to be compassionate. All of us carry experiences and presumptions that might make it challenging to accept and respect others without judgment.

Diane Wright's Compassion, Empathy, and Forgiveness class puts recent research to the test and calls for students to apply those challenges to their own professional and personal lives.

Wright asks students to perform a random act of kindness or compassion each week throughout the course. Students aren't required to spend money or put themselves at risk, but instead make a difference in the lives of the people they encounter on a daily basis. Over the course of weeks, the numbers add up, and students log hundreds of acts of kindness—big and small—by the end of the semester.

One of the bigger assignments in the course requires each student to write an objective letter using the four steps of non-violent communication. The letters won't be mailed but are addressed to someone whom students might have a difficult relationship with, such as a partner, roommate, boss, or family member.

"It's about taking a moment to take a breath and put yourself in a place where you will be able to engage that person with compassion, empathy, and respect," Wright says. "It's a challenging thing. We talk about compassion a lot, but when the rubber hits the road, it's not always easy. A lot of students have said it's the most powerful assignment they've encountered."

The best way to learn something is to teach it, right? Students take time to develop their own program model in which they teach a targeted population about compassion, empathy, and forgiveness.

Wright hopes that students tune into their lives in a different way and that when they are confronted with difficulty in their life—whether it's professional or personal—they will be able to approach situations with more consideration and kindness.



APARECIUM

COURSE: ENG 302, Literature and Film

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. John Alberti

Many people in their 20s or early 30s bookmarked the end of childhood with J.K. Rowling's final Harry Potter novel in 2007. Anyone who read the books—or went to each midnight screening of all eight films—grew up with Harry, Ron, and Hermione. At NKU, students can relive that magic through Harry Potter on the Page and on the Screen, a literature and film course taught by Dr. John Alberti.

In the class, students spend their time immersed in the world of wizardry, analyzing the book series and their respective film adaptations. But the core of Alberti's class focuses on the themes presented in each novel—faith, morality, death, love, and failure.

Ultimately, Alberti wants his students to think critically about the ethical lessons the books and films present and how those lessons influence our own decision making processes.

"Stories are more than just entertainment," Alberti says. "They are how we organize our understanding of the world, our values, and what constitutes a meaningful life. For millions of young readers around the world, the Harry Potter experience has been a profound part of growing up and finding a place in the world. In the class, we engage students in a discussion of how and why these novels and movies have had such a powerful impact on us, enriching our experiences of Harry Potter and also increasing our understanding of the role of art and culture in our lives."

WHY FUN MATTERS

ONE NKU PROFESSOR OFFERS HIS TAKE ON UNCONVENTIONAL, INNOVATIVE CLASSES AND THE RESEARCH THAT PROVES THEY'RE WORTH TEACHING.

Sure. Some of us will be skeptical about "fun" college courses and may even question the value they lend to a student's overall education.

Dr. John Alberti, professor of English and director of the English department at Northern Kentucky University, politely disagrees. Alberti sees nothing wrong with classes that allow students to study creative concepts that might track with a traditional career path.

"I think it's both interesting and a little sad that we have come to think that education needs to be unpleasant or that a learning experience can't be fun and challenging at the same time," Alberti says. "On the contrary, all the evidence suggests that we learn the

most and push ourselves the hardest when we engage with material that we have a deep personal connection to. I teach an Honors class on feminist punk rock and women's protest music, and the final assignment is a creative project. In the spirit of punk rock, I encourage people to consider writing and performing a song, and some do—along with blogs, 'zines, art projects, even costume design. The day of the presentations are always the most emotional and amazing days of the year. Students still tell me how that experience affected their lives, made them more confident, and had a positive impact on their other coursework."



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LIFE OF THE PARTY

Josh Heuser's AGAR takes the art of celebration to new heights

Back in the day, when Josh Heuser ('01) was throwing parties in area bars, it never really crossed his mind that within a few years he'd have a private audience with the president of his alma mater, or that the two would share plans to prepare events for Northern Kentucky University.

But such is the beauty of life.

Josh Heuser, now 37, is a graduate of NKU, as well as an entrepreneur, an expert marketer, and most of all, someone who still knows how to throw a darn good party. He's

so good, in fact, that he does it for a living. Sort of.

"It's funny—I never wanted to join a fraternity," says Heuser, an Independence, Ky. native. "Then I started playing flag football for a fraternity team, and I enjoyed the group, and then I was in the fraternity. And we would always organize these fundraisers and parties. That's what I was good at."

Heuser and his Tau Kappa Epsilon brothers became known for their themed parties. Yes, they could organize a Ladies' Night or a Halloween party, but Heuser became known



for taking a movie—such as *Ocean's 11*—and reproducing the movie poster with faces of their friends on it.

"We would take a day, like the Sunday before Labor Day," he says. "School would be closed on Monday, so all of the students would be looking for something to do that Sunday night. We'd choose a bar and market the event and we'd get a great turnout."

They'd create flyers and walk the streets, papering cars and dorm rooms with the information.

His hobby turned into a full-time job when, after graduation, Heuser worked his contacts to land a marketing gig with local restaurant owner Jeff Ruby. By 23, Heuser had opened his own nightclub, Club Clau, a popular nightspot in Over-the-Rhine. Over the next 10 years Heuser went on to open, operate, and sell two additional bars before going through a bit of a transition.

"When you become the older guy in the bar, that's the time to get out," he says.

In 2009, at age 30, he started AGAR, an agency that helps create "experiences" around brands. Named for the "red base in a petri dish that allows organisms to grow," AGAR specializes in experiential marketing and brand development.

"We create immersive experiences," AGAR's website says. "We take an authentic and holistic approach to consumer and brand relationships. Through our multiple interactive and engaging touch-points we unite brands with their audience and the audience with their brand."

With 14 full-time employees based in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, AGAR now features clients like TriHealth, Toyota, Procter & Gamble (AGAR manages the company's community sponsorship dollars), and Cincinnati staples like Lumenocity, the Flying Pig marathon, and events at Fountain Square. The company helped refurbish

the old St. John's Unitarian church on Elm Street in Over-the-Rhine, where Heuser opened a popular club and event center called The Transept.

"We want to be involved in any events that feature Cincinnati, either directly or indirectly," Heuser says. The company's bottom line has increased 20 to 30 percent each year, he says, and they are currently up 30 percent over the last fiscal year.

Heuser's success stood out to his professors and to the leaders at his alma mater. And that led to a personal meeting last year between Heuser and NKU President Geoffrey Mearns. "It was a great feeling knowing you went to a university and 15 years later you have the opportunity to contribute your skill set to enhance the university experience," Heuser says.

Recently, AGAR collaborated with NKU Athletics to develop strategic concepts that resulted in the creation of the men's and women's basketball hype videos, as well as the integration of the Gjallarhorn into pre-game athletic ceremonies. The videos, and especially the Gjallarhorn (the giant horn associated with Norse mythology, not the video game weapon), were created to instill new traditions in Norse Athletics and the University for years to come.

"We're really excited about what's going on at NKU," Heuser says. "I was fortunate enough that because of NKU, I was able to enter the professional world with no debt, and it was so important to me. With no debt, I was able to fail—and fail many times—before I had success. I was able to add to our economy versus graduating with massive student loans and being forced into the debt column of our economy."

"I mean, I was able to throw parties and get paid for it," he continued. "Ultimately, I think NKU has set me up for success."

—Ryan Clark



<LUMENOCITY: AGAR works with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra to provide in-audience engagement during LUMENOCITY, as well as pre-event promotion, social media, and videography.
>Salsa on the Square: In 2014 AGAR helped Procter & Gamble gather enough people on Fountain Square to break the Guinness Book of World Records record for the largest number of people salsa dancing at one time.



PHOTO BY PATRICK McCUE

A COLLECTOR'S DREAM

CompleteSet's Gary Darna turned his lifelong hobby into a career

Northern Kentucky University grad Gary Darna waited almost two decades to buy the R2-D2 Pepsi cooler he'd been eyeballing since he was 11 years old. He drove hundreds of miles to Pennsylvania to retrieve it, disassemble it (to fit in his car), drive it home, and piece it back together.

Darna's passion for collecting started with one Star Wars figurine and has transformed into a functioning business, CompleteSet, an online, "shoppable" knowledge base where collectors can digitally document collectors' items they have and want in one central location. CompleteSet users hail from more than 45 countries.

"There are people in countries we've never visited—people who speak languages we don't even understand—who are using a product we built," Darna says. "It's an amazing feeling."

Darna met his co-founder, Jaime Rump,

in April 2012 while they were both students in NKU's INKUBATOR program. They launched their beta site in May 2013 after they won the Cincinnati Innovates competition and received a \$10,000 grant from CincyTech.

Their turning point came in 2014 when Darna and Rump raised \$650,000 through Velocity, a Louisville startup accelerator program. They grew their team, launched an iPhone app, and expanded their audience.

But for Darna, it's more than just about the numbers in the archives.

"What is so meaningful about what we're building at CompleteSet is that there's a story behind many of the things the collectors own," Darna says. "What they're really collecting isn't objects—it's memories that remind them of a person, place, or time in their life. It's great being able to build something people care about and interact with."

—Jayna Barker

FLYING INTO HISTORY

Retired Northern Kentucky University nursing professor Beverly Reno participates in first-ever Women's Honor Flight.

When Beverly Reno was invited to participate in the first-ever Women's Honor Flight last September in Washington D.C., she didn't know what to expect when her flight landed at Dulles. Within 24 hours, Reno had received the honor of a lifetime.

Reno—a retired Northern Kentucky University professor—joined more than 100 female veterans from the tri-state area in a flight from Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport last year to visit the Women in Military Service for America Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery. During that trip, they visited many other war memorials, including the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Reno was one of four women to place a wreath on the unidentified soldier's grave that day.

"I didn't realize how big of an honor it was until the day it happened," Reno says. "The ceremony was unbelievable—the people who showed up—it was overwhelming and beyond anything you could ever imagine."

Reno enlisted in the military in 1957 as an officer when she was 20 years old after she graduated from Sisters of St. Joseph School of Nursing at the University of North Dakota. She served as a stateside nurse during the Vietnam War from 1959–1961.

Reno didn't originally have plans to end up in the Greater Cincinnati area. Her husband, Jack—a singer and host in country music radio—traveled all over the country during his career before settling down in northern Kentucky. When she first became a nursing professor at Northern Kentucky University in 1975, NKU was only seven years old and had approximately 5,000 students.



The nursing department was located in two houses—faculty offices in one house and lab in another.

A lot changed in the near three decades Reno was at NKU.

"It boggles my mind to look at NKU now," Reno says. "When I got here, all that existed was the science building and Nunn Hall."

Since retiring in 2003, Reno splits her time between properties in Florence, Kentucky, and Bonita Springs, Florida. She plans to be home this summer when her family will receive a plaque on behalf of her husband, who passed away in 2008 and was inducted into the Country Music Radio Hall of Fame in February of this year. —Jayna Barker

LIGHT THE WAY

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Did you know? **Planned giving at NKU has never been easier.** In fact, in 2015, the U.S. Congress passed a law that allows IRA owners 70 ½ and over to make a gift directly from their IRA to the NKU Foundation, tax free (up to \$100,000). Another bonus? This gift counts toward your required annual minimum distribution.

For more information, contact Julie Dials at (859) 572-6062, or development@nku.edu

NKU SCHLACTER ARCHIVES PRESENTS...

MYSTERY PHOTO!



SOLVE THE MYSTERY FOR NKU HISTORY!

The filename for this photo is “cafeteria.” And back in the day at NKU, that’s exactly what this was. Published in the 1973 edition of the NKU yearbook, *Polaris*, the photo shows the “lunch rush” in a nondescript hallway somewhere on campus (anyone remember where?), filled with busy students and faculty and staff. Can you identify these hungry patrons? Do you remember the vending machines or the tastes and

textures of the food-like objects that dropped from them? What other thoughts or memories strike you about this vintage image from the dawn of NKU? There’s an interesting story or two here that’s just waiting to be told. Help us tell it! Email your suggestions, thoughts, and answers to nkumagazine@nku.edu.