

Alfred

MAGAZINE

FALL 2025

LEARNING BY DOING

Academics at Alfred combine theory with practice



In this Issue

2 Campus Digest

10 Features

- Experiential Learning
- Are you Experienced?
- Practical English
- Business Experiential
- Let's Try This, Let's Try That

27 From Z to AU

28 Athletics

32 Class Notes

38 In Memoriam

40 Heritage Circle

Cover:

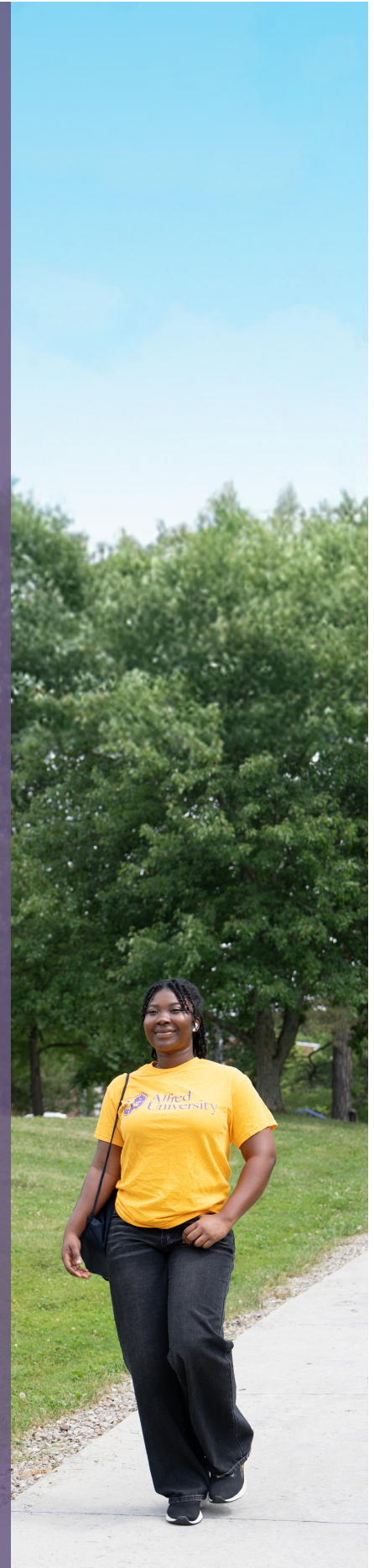
Ruby Kavanagh '27 in Inamori Professor of Materials Science and Engineering Scott Mixture's lab in McMahon Engineering Building.

Facing Page:

The Alfred University faithful were out in force for the football team's Homecoming game against Hartwick on October 4. The Saxons rewarded their fans with a 45-24 victory over the visiting Hawks.

To the Side:

A student strolls through campus past the Fiat Lux! sign.



Alfred

MAGAZINE

FALL 2025

Executive Editors

Andrea Fagon
Erin Martinovich

Contributing Writers

Carol Marcy
Rob Price
Mark Whitehouse

Design

Michael Riina

Photography

Tay Cady
Rob Price
Carole Volpe

Alfred Magazine, copyright 2025, is published 2 times per year by Alfred University, Alfred, New York. The magazine is mailed free of charge to alumni, current parents, and friends of Alfred University.
Circulation: 8,000

We reserve the right to edit all letters and articles submitted for publication in Alfred Magazine.

Alfred University
1 Saxon Drive
Alfred, NY 14802
607 871-2103
news@alfred.edu

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to:
University Advancement
Alfred University
1 Saxon Drive
Alfred, NY 14802



Trustees announce new leadership

At its meeting in May, the Alfred University Board of Trustees elected new Board leadership, effective July 1. Steve Heine '81 was elected Board Chair and Bill Giles '81 was elected Vice Chair. Carolyn Clark '90, whose service as Chair concluded on June 30, was elected Chair Emeritus.

Heine joined the Board of Trustees in 2008—after previously serving as an alumni elected trustee from 1995–98—and was elected Vice Chair in 2022. He is a past member of the Alfred University College of Business Executive Advisory Council. He earned a bachelor's degree in management and health care administration from Alfred and went on to earn an MBA from SUNY Albany. He currently serves as president and CEO of Woodsboro Bank, Woodsboro, MD.

Giles earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Alfred University and was elected to

the Board of Trustees in 2020. A certified public accountant, he currently serves on the Board of Directors of Constellation Brands. He is former chief financial officer and executive vice president, Finance, Information Technology, and Store Development for Autozone. His wife, Jill (Peperone) Giles '81, is an Alfred University alumna and former member of the university's Board of Trustees.

Clark joined the Board in 2011 and was elected Board Chair in 2022, becoming the first woman ever to lead the Alfred University Board of Trustees. She earned a bachelor's degree in communications from Alfred University and also has an MBA from Seton Hall University. She enjoyed a successful career in the field of medical communications, co-founding a medical communications company, Peloton Advantage, LLC, in 2005 and serving as chair of OPEN Health Communications before retiring in 2021.



Steve Heine '81



Carolyn Clark '90



William Giles '81

Bill '78 and Debbie Rice fund housing grants



Thanks to the generosity of alumnus and Board of Trustee member Bill Rice '78 and his wife, Debbie, first-year Alfred University students from Bill's high school alma mater,

Canisteo-Greenwood Central School, have assistance paying for housing.

The university announced in April the Rices' funding of one-time \$5,000 housing grants to Canisteo-Greenwood graduates who enroll at Alfred as first-year students for the fall 2025 semester. The announcement—which Bill and Debbie Rice joined via Zoom—was held at Canisteo-Greenwood High School and was attended by a group from Alfred University, including Mark Zupan, Alfred University president, as well as several Canisteo-Greenwood students and staff.

Nine graduates of Canisteo-Greenwood are among the first-year students who enrolled at Alfred this fall.

Bill Rice, who graduated from Canisteo High School in 1974—the Canisteo and Greenwood school districts merged in 2004—wanted to give back to students so they could have the same Alfred University experience as he did and said the housing grant would help make their first year at Alfred more affordable. Rice earned a bachelor's degree in ceramic engineering from Alfred University and is CEO and president of First Bauxite Corporation, a natural resource company engaged in the exploration and development of bauxite deposits in Guyana, South America. He previously served in several executive positions with ALCOA Inc., concluding his career there in 2012 as Vice President, Mining, Alcoa World Alumina.

President Mark Zupan reappointed to five-year term

The Alfred University Board of Trustees announced on July 9 that it had unanimously approved the reappointment of Mark Zupan as university president. The new five-year term began on July 1.

“Throughout his service to our university, Alfred has witnessed significant progress along multiple dimensions,” Steve Heine ’81, chair of the Board of Trustees, said of Zupan in making the announcement. “Uniting each of these is an understanding of the centrality of our students and the quality of their experience, the community of faculty and staff that fosters that experience, and how that experience prepares graduates to lead purposeful lives.”

Zupan was first appointed Alfred University’s 14th president in 2016. Before his recent reappointment, the Board of Trustees approved three-year terms in 2019 and 2022. Heine noted that under Zupan’s guidance, “Alfred’s extraordinary academic breadth and depth have been supplemented by new degree programs, each of which responds to marketplace demands. Importantly, the ability to integrate diverse



disciplines is now supported through the enhanced ease with which our students can pursue double majors.”

Opportunities for learning have been strengthened during Zupan’s tenure by significant investments in the university’s facilities, including major improvements to residence halls (inclusive of first-year living-learning communities); a foundry

that enables hands-on learning particularly by engineering and art and design students, set to open in 2026; and the Saxon Hill Sports Complex, a new athletics and recreation facility atop Jericho Hill in the town of Alfred, set to open next spring.

Heine pointed out that the university’s success came at a time of significant challenges: the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges to the financial aid systems (FAFSA) that help families prepare for college, and significant recent changes in federal policy with respect to higher education. “Throughout his tenure at Alfred University, Mark has demonstrated an extraordinary combination of visionary leadership together with an ability to navigate the challenges of the moment,” Heine said.

“Mark has proven himself to be a trusted and impactful leader of Alfred University,” remarked Carolyn Clark ’90, Chair Emeritus of Alfred’s Board of Trustees. “It has been a privilege to partner with him, and I look forward to continued collaboration in furtherance of Alfred’s growth and success.”

Kimberly Harvey appointed VP for Student Experience



Dr. Kimberly Harvey has been named president for Student Experience. She will begin her duties Jan. 5, 2026.

Alfred University’s Vice President for Student Experience is supported by an endowed gift from Michele HD ’18 and Martin Cohen. A member of the university’s Board of Trustees since 2001, Michele Cohen serves as chair of the board’s Student Experience Committee and also serves on the Academic Affairs, Executive, and Governance committees. In 2018, Alfred University conferred on her the honorary

degree, Doctor of Arts.

Harvey comes to Alfred from Nazareth University, where she spent more than five years leading transformative efforts to strengthen the student experience through cross-campus collaboration focused on student well-being and belonging. She began her tenure at Nazareth as Assistant Vice President for Student Engagement (2019-21) before serving three years as Associate Vice President for Student & Campus Life and Dean of Students. In March 2024 she was promoted to Associate Provost for Student Experience and Dean of Students. Prior to Nazareth University, Harvey held roles at SUNY Geneseo and Gannon University.

“I am genuinely energized by the opportunity to join Alfred University and lead the Student Experience team. Alfred’s mission of helping students realize their purpose is deeply personal to me, and the image of its founders as ‘doers’ resonates with my own leadership style,” Harvey said.

“I see a direct connection between their spirit of purposeful creation and the way I approach my work—rolling up my sleeves, building systems that support students, and bringing people together around a shared vision.”

“We are so excited to welcome Kim on board! Her passion for enriching the student experience is contagious,” Beth Ann Dobie, provost and chief operating officer at Alfred University, commented. “She is a collaborative, thoughtful leader who brings vast knowledge about higher education as well as student development. We look forward to welcoming Kim to our team as we work to advance Alfred University’s strategic goals.”

Harvey has a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from SUNY Fredonia, a master’s degree in college student personnel administration from Canisius University, and a Doctor of Education degree in educational leadership from the University of Rochester.

Foundry named in honor of Cohens to open in 2026

A ceremony was held in May to celebrate construction of a new foundry on campus that will create new intersectional opportunities for art and engineering students. The facility was officially named the Cohen National Casting Center Foundry, in honor of Michele Cohen, Alfred University trustee, and her husband, Martin, whose \$6 million gift made the foundry project possible.

The current foundry is located in a building behind Binns-Merrill Hall and Harder Hall and will move into its new home in the university's renovated former central heating plant next year.

In November of 2020, the Cohens committed \$6 million toward the foundry project, which leveraged \$8.3 million in project funding from the SUNY Construction Fund. The university later received a \$300,000 Fred L. Emerson Foundation grant to support the design and construction of a new foundry. In addition to the foundry, the Cohens' gift supported two now completed projects: the installation of a campus-wide energy-efficient distributed boiler heating system and construction of a new facilities building on North Main Street in Alfred.

The foundry—which creates the potential for new degree programs combining art and engineering, such as digital fabrication design and engineering—is expected to significantly benefit Alfred University's student recruitment and retention efforts while raising the profile of the New York State College of Ceramics, home to the School of Art and Design and Inamori School of Engineering.

Since the Cohens' commitment to the foundry project, Alfred University has received additional support, largely for scholarships for engineering and art and design students and for educational and creative programming for the new foundry. This enhances the impact of the project by building a pipeline of prospective students interested in the intersections provided by Alfred University through its STEAM offerings.

Michele Cohen, who has served on the university's Board of Trustees since 2001, retired from Cohen and Steers Capital Management in New York City and currently serves as chair of the Board of Trustees at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City. Alfred University awarded her an honorary degree in 2018. Martin Cohen, who co-founded Cohen and Steers in 1986, is the company's chair. The Cohens' son, Adam, earned a B.F.A. degree from Alfred University in 2003.

The Cohens made their \$6 million commitment to the foundry/boiler project in honor of 1954 Alfred University graduate Marlin Miller (honorary degree recipient in 1989 and 2019), Michele Cohen's colleague on the Alfred University Board of Trustees. Miller, Life Trustee and Board Chair Emeritus, is a noted businessman and philanthropist, and Alfred University's most generous donor. "He taught us so much about the importance of philanthropy," Michele Cohen said of Miller.



Mark Zupan, Alfred University president (left), joins Michele and Martin Cohen at a ceremony unveiling the name of the Cohen National Casting Center Foundry, which is expected to open in 2026. The foundry was made possible by a gift from the Cohens.

Gift endows VP for Student Experience

Michele Cohen, a member of the Alfred University Board of Trustees and an honorary degree recipient, and her husband, Martin, have established an endowed fund to support Alfred's vice president for Student Experience position.

The Cohens' \$2 million gift, announced in May, reflects their ongoing support of Alfred University, particularly in promoting and enhancing the student experience. A member of the university's Board of Trustees since 2001, Michele Cohen serves as chair of the board's Student Experience Committee and also serves on the Academic Affairs, Executive, and Governance committees. In 2018, Alfred University conferred on her the honorary degree, Doctor of Arts.

"Keeping the student experience the main focus on our campus puts an emphasis on inspiring and motivating students, fostering creativity, and transformative intellectual curiosity," Michele Cohen said of her and Martin's decision to support the vice president for Student Experience position.

The Division of Student Experience oversees several departments and offices serving Alfred University students. They include the Athletics Department, Career Development Center, Center for Advising, Center for Student Involvement, Dining Services, the Equestrian Center, Higher Education Opportunity Programs, Public Safety, Residential Communities, Student Activities, Student Diversity and Inclusion, the Wellness

Center, and the Judson Leadership Center.

The Cohens have been steadfast in their philanthropic support of Alfred University, the alma mater of their son, Adam, who graduated in 2003 with a B.F.A. degree. The Cohens' previous philanthropy has endowed the deanship of the School of Art and Design and Division of Performing Arts; established the Cohen Center for the Arts and Cohen Gallery; and launched APEX, the university's applied experiential learning program.

The Cohens also gave \$6 million in 2020 to support construction of the Cohen National Casting Center Foundry. A groundbreaking ceremony for the state-of-the-art on-campus foundry was held May 15.

Advanced Power Grid Lab gets cutting-edge equipment

Alfred University's GE Vernova Advanced Power Grid Laboratory reached a significant milestone over the summer with the installation of state-of-the-art smart grid simulation equipment. The installation marks a bold step forward in the university's mission to lead the future of renewable energy education and research.

The grid control and distributed energy system developed by Spanish company EDIBON empowers students and researchers to simulate, control, and optimize a wide range of distributed energy resources (DERs) under real-world conditions. EDIBON engineers were on campus to lead the installation of the equipment in the Power Grid Lab, located on the second floor of McMahon Engineering Building. They worked closely with faculty and lab staff to integrate the system into ongoing educational and research programs.

The EDIBON system features modules for traditional steam generation, solar, wind, and hydro. Other modules simulate advanced energy storage such as thermal and flywheel and a spectrum of battery and non-battery energy storage technologies. The lab also supports existing university research in fuel cells, syngas generation, and hydrogen separation. These capabilities enable full simulation of both grid-

connected and islanded microgrids, offering a rare, immersive opportunity for students to engage with virtual power plant (VPP) models, demand response algorithms, and grid interoperability protocols.

Housed in Alfred University's Inamori School of Engineering, the system will be used immediately in upper-level courses on distributed energy resources, microgrids, virtual power plants, and advanced energy storage systems. In the Fall 2025 semester, engineering students began conducting experiments on DER control strategies, battery management, and renewable energy forecasting using the EDIBON platform. Custom lab modules and undergraduate capstone project opportunities will be offered to students in Renewable Energy Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering tracks.

"Alfred University is one of the few institutions in the nation with an ABET-accredited Renewable Energy Engineering program," said Gabrielle Gaustad '04, dean of the Inamori School of Engineering. "The energy sector today spans a wide range of sources—from traditional gas-fired and nuclear power plants to wind, solar, hydroelectric power, and emerging technologies that impact grid stability, such as batteries and electric vehicles. Our

investment in the GE Vernova Advanced Power Grid Lab sets Alfred University apart through enhanced experiential learning and research capacity and ensures our students are best prepared to enter the workforce upon graduation."

The GE Vernova Advanced Power Grid Lab, which officially opened in Spring 2024, is a cornerstone of a workforce development initiative supported by a \$466,853 grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and \$2.8 million in software contributions from GE Vernova. The lab's mission is to prepare the next generation of engineers and technologists for careers in clean energy, grid resilience, and power system innovation.

The EDIBON installation also serves as a key step in Alfred University's broader plan to create an Advanced Integration Laboratory for Distributed Generation and Storage. This expanded facility will support interdisciplinary research into grid edge technologies, including protocol testing, DER aggregation, artificial intelligence-based control logic, and system-level interoperability between smart devices and SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) systems.



Frank Guzman (left), an engineer with EDIBON, talks about a piece of equipment his company installed in the GE Vernova Advanced Power Grid Lab in Alfred University's McMahon Engineering Building. Looking on are, from left: Jordan Annlee, a junior glass science engineering and mechanical engineering major from Rochester, NY; Chevy Adriaans, a sophomore electrical engineering major from Suriname, South America; Andres Casas, EDIBON engineer; and Junpeng Zhan, assistant professor of renewable energy engineering.

Board of Trustees welcomes three new members

Three new members—Andrew “Bruce” Chamberlin, Patricia H. Nilsen ’88, and Nannette C. Stangle-Castor ’94—were elected to the Alfred University Board of Trustees in May. The Board also elected Thomas Hinman ’79 as a Life Trustee.

Chamberlin, the son of late Alfred University alumna Betsy (Stockton) Potter Chamberlin ’57 and Robert Chamberlin, serves as senior associate director of admissions at Georgetown University. He earned a bachelor’s degree in economics from Gettysburg College and master’s and doctoral degrees in education from the College of William and Mary and the University of Pennsylvania, respectively. Chamberlin served as a Trustee of Gettysburg College (2013–2025) and was recently named Trustee Emeritus. Bruce also serves on the Eisenhower Institute National Advisory Council.

Nilsen earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Alfred University and was an AU Scholar. She went on to earn a master’s degree in English from Syracuse University and a master’s degree in adult education from Elmira College. Nilsen currently serves as CEO of AVANGRID companies New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) and Rochester Gas and Electric (RG&E) and is the first woman to lead the company in its 175-year history. As president and CEO, Nilsen leads the NYSEG and RG&E teams who serve more than 1.2 million electric and 579,000 natural gas customers across more than 40 percent of Upstate New York.

Stangle-Castor earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from Alfred and a PhD in molecular pharmacology and cancer therapeutics from the State University of New York at Buffalo, Roswell Park Division. She is founder and president of IVT, a team of innovation commercialization specialists based in Raleigh, NC, supporting government and university laboratories to build businesses from their innovations. Nannette also serves as board advisor and mentor to numerous startups. Nannette’s husband — Jeffrey G. Castor ’95 — is also an Alfred University alumnus.

Hinman, who earned a bachelor’s degree in ceramic engineering from Alfred University and went on to earn an MBA from the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration at Dartmouth College, served on the Board of Trustees for 24 years. As Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, he was instrumental in guiding and supporting Alfred University’s long-range goals. His service also included membership on the Academic Affairs, Executive, Governance, Student Experience, and University Advancement committees. He also previously served on the Statutory Affairs and Government Relations Committee, as well as Presidential Search Committee (2015–16), the Provost Search Advisory Council (2018–19), and the task force to advise the president on Korean and Turkish initiatives.

Now retired, Hinman completed a distinguished career with Corning International as senior vice president, having previously served Corning Incorporated as senior vice president of Environmental Technologies, senior vice president and general manager of Diesel Technologies, and division vice president and general manager of Corning Microarray Technologies.



Bruce Chamberlin



Nannette C. Stangle-Castor '94



Patricia H. Nilsen '88



Alfred University awards three honorary degrees

Alfred University awarded three honorary degrees in May. Leo Lambert and alumnus Nick Ferreri '64 were presented their degrees during Commencement ceremonies on May 17, while L. David Pye '58, PhD '68, emeritus professor of glass science and engineering, was awarded an honorary degree in June as part of the 125th anniversary celebration for the New York State College of Ceramics.

Lambert, president emeritus at Elon University in North Carolina, was keynote speaker at 2025 Commencement exercises. He was awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.

During Lambert's tenure as president at Elon (1999-2018), a private school in Elon, NC, the university experienced significant growth and reputation, including a nearly two-thirds increase in enrollment and a doubling of the faculty. The academic climate of the campus was strengthened through investments in faculty development, teaching innovation and instructional excellence, and investments in library resources. With a focus on developing students as global citizens, ethical leaders, and creative problem-solvers, Lambert led two decade-long strategic plans as Elon built a national reputation for excellence in undergraduate education.



Leo Lambert

Ferreri, who earned a bachelor's degree in business from Alfred and has been a successful entrepreneur, received the Doctor of Commercial Science degree, *honoris causa*.

He is past president and CEO of Tanglewood Group, which comprises five senior living communities in western New York, and currently owns Field of Dreams, an innovative assisted living and memory care facility in Allegany, NY. Through Ferreri's vision, the Tanglewood Group communities became nationally renowned for innovation in senior living and memory care. Scientists and researchers at the University of Florida



Nick Ferreri

sought Ferreri out to learn from his model and invited him to be involved in their research to cure, and ultimately prevent, Alzheimer's and other dementias. Ferreri has advocated tirelessly for this cause and has secured millions of dollars in funding from the State of Florida and others to support the advanced, groundbreaking research being conducted at the university. These efforts have attracted several other universities and top researchers from around the world as collaborators in the project.

Dave Pye, who earned bachelor's and doctoral degrees in ceramic science from



David Pye

Alfred University, was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*. He was presented the degree at an on-campus ceremony on June 7, held during Alumni Reunion as part of the university's observance of the NYSCC 125th anniversary.

Pye joined the faculty in the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University in 1968, serving as an assistant professor of glass engineering science. During his tenure at Alfred University—he retired in 2002—he served as chair of the Department of Glass Science and later as dean of the New York State College of Ceramics for a five-year term, from 1995-2000. In 2000, he led the College's centennial celebration. He founded the National Science Foundation Industry-University Center for Glass Research at Alfred University (the first industry-university partnership center established by the NSF) and co-founded the university's Institute for Glass Science and Engineering and the Paul Vickers Gardner Glass Center. He is credited with creating the Ph.D. program in glass science at Alfred University, the only such program in the United States, and is regarded as having played a major role in the establishment of the Kazuo Inamori School of Engineering.

Andrea Fagon named VP for Marketing and Communications



Andrea Fagon was appointed vice president for Marketing and Communications, effective July 1, 2025. Fagon came to Alfred from the City University of New York (CUNY), where she had served since January 2015, first as chief marketing and communications officer for the CUNY School of Professional Studies and in her most recent role as marketing and communications director for CUNY Online.

"It is a privilege to join Alfred University and lead its talented, dedicated Marketing and Communications team," Fagon commented. "Alfred has a rich history, a distinctive identity as a maker institution, and a deep commitment to student success and inclusivity, all of which deeply resonate with me. I am honored to be joining a community so clearly driven by purpose and innovation."

"We are honored and delighted that Andrea is joining Alfred University," said Mark Zupan, Alfred University president. "She has a demonstrated track record of success with respect to marketing, communications, team-playing, and leadership."

Prior to CUNY, Fagon served seven years as associate director of college relations at her alma mater, the College of New Rochelle. She has a bachelor's degree in communications and a master's degree in communications from the College of New Rochelle and also a Master of Business Administration

degree from Boston University. She also has previous experience in the private sector, as director of marketing and communications for Prudential Real Estate Companies, and in the non-profit sector, as director of communications for United Way.

Ben Evans named to direct ACAM

Benjamin Evans was appointed the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum's Wayne Higby Director and Principal Curator, effective July 1, 2025. Prior to his appointment, he had been serving as assistant director and curator of the museum.

Evans' appointment followed the retirement and emeritus faculty appointment of Professor Wayne Higby, who had served since 2014 as director and curator of ACAM. The endowed ACAM Director and Principal Curator position has been underwritten by Marlin Miller '54, HD '89, HD '19 and named for Higby in honor of his significant contributions to the arts at Alfred University.

Evans, who joined the ACAM leadership in 2024, is an artist, scholar, arts administrator, and curator with 25 years of experience in the non-profit arts profession. Immediately prior to joining Alfred University, he served as coordinator for the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC) at the Ariana Museum of Ceramics and Glass in Geneva, Switzerland. The IAC is affiliated with UNESCO, with 1,000 members representing 81 countries across the globe.

Evans earned his doctorate in Philosophy from the New School of Social Research, NYC. His dissertation examined both the origins of aesthetic theory in the early modern period and the contemporary conversation about "everyday aesthetics." He holds an MFA in Mixed Media from the University of Calgary, where he also earned a bachelor's degree. He holds master's degrees in philosophy from Queen's University and in Humanities from the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

He has enjoyed numerous successes with innovative art gallery initiatives such as Eastern Edge Gallery in St. John's, Newfoundland, the Untitled Arts Society and New Gallery in Calgary, Alberta, and Nurture

Art in Brooklyn, NY, where he curated the multi-venue exhibition "The Bushwick Biennial." In Paris, he launched Projective City, curating exhibitions in unused commercial spaces. He also created Paris-Scope, an innovative way to showcase various international, site-specific gallery exhibitions at the Mixed Greens Gallery in New York City.

"I am thrilled by the possibility of curating contemporary ceramic work and also delving into the Alfred University archives to develop new ways of looking at the work of the past," Evans remarked.

"I am very happy to have someone as knowledgeable and artistically savvy as Benjamin Evans assume the leadership of the museum," Higby said. "Ben's international perspective brings an important and unique vitality of vision to both ACAM and Alfred University. It is a new era, and the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum is on the threshold of an exciting future."



Ben Evans



Wayne Higby

NAME A LOCKER LEAVE A LEGACY

Be part of the future of Saxon athletics with a \$1,000 gift to name a locker in the new Saxon Hill Sports Complex, opening in 2026.

Your gift celebrates a legacy—your own, a loved one, or that of a coach or teammate—while supporting student-athletes with exceptional facilities and opportunities to succeed. Each named locker will feature a plaque with your name and class year, along with a personal dedication or message of inspiration for the team.

Choose a locker in the baseball, field hockey, or rugby team rooms, or select one in the cross country and track & field team rooms.

NAME YOUR LOCKER TODAY!

Visit go.alfred.edu/locker or scan the QR code.



SPONSOR A NEW STALL

— LEAVE A LEGACY IN THE BARN AND BEYOND

At Alfred University, our horses are more than athletes—they are partners, teachers, and teammates for our students. Now, you can play a lasting role in their success.

With a gift of \$2,500, you can sponsor a new stall in the Bromeley-Daggett Equestrian Center at the Maris Cuneo Equine Park.

Each sponsored stall will feature a personalized plaque honoring you or someone special. The new stall design—featuring improved flooring, ventilation, and durable materials—ensures the highest standards of horse health, comfort, and safety, while enhancing the hands-on learning experience that defines Alfred's equestrian education.

SPONSOR A STALL TODAY!

Visit go.alfred.edu/stall or scan the QR code.



Applied Learning Drives Engineering Programs

BY MARK WHITEHOUSE

Experiential learning initiatives provide the bedrock of Alfred University's engineering programs. They complement classroom instruction to help create a well-rounded education where students are given unique learning opportunities that lay the groundwork for exciting and successful careers.

"Experiential, applied learning is at the core of an Alfred University engineering education," said Gabrielle Gaustad '04, dean of the Inamori School of Engineering, who took full advantage of experiential learning opportunities throughout her time as an undergraduate ceramic engineering major at Alfred. Among them were a research fellowship with the NASA Reduced Gravity Flight Opportunities Program where she and four other Alfred University students were able to fly in a retrofitted KC-135 nicknamed the "vomit comet" out of the NASA facilities in Houston, TX.

"One hundred percent of our graduates leave Alfred with a research, internship, co-op, thesis, or capstone project—or a combination of these amazing

experiences," Gaustad said. "They teach important skillsets that are highly sought after by employers and also create opportunities for networking, leading to strong outcomes for our programs."

Ceramic engineering majors Ruby Kavanagh and Matthew Bittel exemplify the student who strives to get the most from their time at Alfred. Both have taken advantage of a number of unique and challenging research opportunities while also participating in a range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

Matthew, a senior from Wellsville, NY, and Ruby, a junior from Queens, NY, both participated in one of the keystone experiential learning programs in the Inamori School of Engineering: the Summer Research Institute. The program, in its third year, has undergraduates working alongside grad students, post-doctorate researchers, and faculty on a variety of research projects. Both have also worked with Alfred University's Space Materials Institute (SMI), a program established in the fall of 2024 to advance

the science and technology of materials in support of aerospace and outer space exploration.

During the summer of 2024, Matthew served as a business development associate for Blue Star Advanced Manufacturing, a company working on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Moon to Mars Planetary Autonomous Construction Technologies (MMPACT) program. Blue Star president Holly Shulman '87, professor of ceramic engineering, is director of the SMI, which is developing new processes that enable different aspects of space exploration in collaboration with Alfred University faculty, staff, and students along with government agency and industry partners.

In his work with Blue Star, Matthew was able to burnish his business chops, by working on the logo design for the company, creating foundational materials for its LinkedIn account, and developing the groundwork for its website. He also collaborated with another student,



Ruby Kavanagh, junior ceramic engineering major, loads a tube furnace in Inamori Professor of Materials Science and Engineering Scott Misture's lab in the McMahon Engineering Building.

Avery Sledesky, a sophomore ceramic engineering/fine arts dual major, to create a logo for the Space Materials Institute.

"Matthew has a drive to learn and explore and develop skills and apply them. He was outstanding in my engineer design class as he understood the opportunity to integrate his knowledge and research with presentation skills," Shulman said. "He helped with Space Materials Institute developing a logo and other support functions for an event. Matthew showed fantastic growth based on his participation and embracing feedback and teamwork."

SMI engages students in hands-on experiences focused on research areas including development of materials that enable or enhance space operations; materials processing off planet; and materials analysis and characterization. Ruby was one of several student interns who worked for Blue Star Advanced Manufacturing throughout the 2024-25 academic year, studying the use of microwave technology to sinter lunar regolith (moon dust) with a goal of

developing processes suitable for building on the moon.

Last fall, Shulman sent out an email seeking student interns for Blue Star Advanced Manufacturing. Ruby and two fellow engineering students—Ben Rondeau and Zoey Keagle—went to Shulman to express their interest. During the fall semester, Shulman presented the idea of establishing the Space Materials Institute.

"She (Shulman) started explaining the science: using microwave technology to cook bricks on the moon. We thought 'That's so cool!'" Ruby recalled. She said that she and fellow student interns working at Blue Star—Rondeau, Keagle, Roque Santiago '25 (B.S., materials science and engineering), and Noam Sokolovsky—played a major role in developing and executing the SMI initiative.

Shulman said Ruby worked with her in the lab for a project for NASA and participated in meetings with agency representatives. "She was already motivated, capable, and willing to learn. I believe her internship

with me and work at both Blue Star and SMI gave her experiences that have enhanced her skills beyond the typical engineering education," Shulman said.

Ruby and Matthew have been involved with a number of other experiential learning initiatives throughout their time at Alfred.

In 2024, Ruby participated in the Summer Research Institute under Scott Misture '90, '94 PhD, Inamori Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, studying ion exchange and how the process can improve the performance of supercapacitors. During the summer of 2025, she again worked with Misture, using a process called "redox"—in which oxygen was removed from the material and reintroduced— to study niobium-based materials used in lithium-ion batteries.

The redox process makes it easier to purify the materials and easier to synthesize them at lower temperatures. "It also improves oxygen defects in the materials, which is huge for battery performance," Ruby explained, noting that she is

continuing to work on the project as part of Misture's research group during the 2025-26 year.

"I was pleased to watch Ruby's knowledge and confidence grow at an impressive rate during her summer work efforts. She developed excellent hands-on lab skills and confidence in assessing her own data and results, which required independent learning to understand concepts that she had not yet encountered in the curriculum," Misture said.

Matthew's work in the 2023 Summer Research Institute—on a team led by John Simmins '84, PhD '90, director of the GE Vernova Advanced Power Grid Lab, and Steven Tidrow, Inamori Professor of Materials Science and Engineering. Research, conducted in the School of Engineering's Laboratory for Electroceramics, focused on novel energy storage devices. For the Summer Research Institute in 2004, Simmins supervised a group of students including Matthew studying the doping of barium titanate—ferroelectric ceramic material known for its remarkable electrical properties—to increase the density of energy in capacitors.

"Matt did an amazing job," Simmins recalled. "He and his research partner, (senior ceramic engineering major) Aidan Prendergast, were self-starters and fairly autonomous, which is unusual for interns who were only sophomores."



Matthew Bittel, senior ceramic engineering major, outside the McMahon Engineering Building on the Alfred University campus.

In the fall of 2024, Matthew founded the Mug Drop Club—where students design and create mugs made from ceramic material. They then test the strength and mechanical reliability of their creations at "mug drop" contests where the mugs are dropped from increasing heights, with the winning entry being the one that falls from the greatest height without breaking.

"The goal (of founding the mug drop club) was to create an intersection between engineering and art, and to give first-year students a hands-on experience they otherwise wouldn't get," Matthew said.

The club has grown to about 75 members, 10 of which attended the American Ceramic Society (ACerS) Materials Science & Technology (MS&T) Technical Meeting and Exhibition Sept. 28-Oct. 1 in Columbus, OH, where they participated in a mug drop contest.

Matthew is currently in the midst of a year-long internship with Lockheed Martin, focusing on the study of advanced sonar materials. His research, which he conducts on campus from Inamori School of Engineering lab space, involves materials processing and experiments, characterization, process improvement, and laboratory build-out and safety. The internship began in January 2025 and runs through December 2025, with

"One hundred percent of our graduates leave Alfred with a research, internship, co-op, thesis, or capstone project—or a combination of these amazing experiences. They teach important skillsets that are highly sought after by employers and also create opportunities for networking, leading to strong outcomes for our programs."

— **Gabrielle Gaustad '04**

Inamori Professor of Materials Science and Engineering

support and advisement from Alfred University's Center for Advanced Ceramic Technology (CACT), Alfred University alumnus Artemas Steere '15, a ceramic materials engineer at Lockheed Martin, and Tidrow, his academic advisor.

Experiential learning initiatives can take students out of the labs and classrooms and off campus. Ruby said she has been able to travel working with Misture's and Shulman's research groups. Through her work with SMI, she spent a week at Microwave Materials Technologies in Knoxville, TN, where scientists used low-gravity equipment (a high vacuum chamber) to simulate microwave sintering of lunar materials on the moon. "That was a huge opportunity for me," she said.

She also went with part of Dr. Misture's research group to Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago, where she had the opportunity to conduct experiments at the synchrotron beamline using high-energy x-rays to study materials' structural and chemical characteristics. Ruby noted that it is not unusual for Alfred University to offer its engineering students the opportunity to work on research equipment that is reserved only for graduate students at many other universities.

"I've built a relationship with Dr. Mixture where he's comfortable with me using the equipment," she said. "When you build that trust with a professor, and they can see your potential, it opens up opportunities. In a small community like Alfred University, it's easier for faculty to find students that they can trust."

Ruby said the variety of experiences she has been able to pursue during her time at Alfred—from space materials research, battery development, and ion exchange in the development of supercapacitors—will bode well for her when she chooses a professional path.

"I don't know yet exactly what I want to do with my career," she said. "That's what is unique about the opportunities at AU. You can really diversify your background."

Ruby and Matthew find time to participate in activities outside the classroom and lab. Both are student-athletes—Ruby is on the field hockey and women's swimming and diving teams, and previously was on the cheerleading team; Matthew is a four-year member of the men's tennis team, serving the last three years as a captain—and both are active in student clubs related to their academic disciplines. If there was any advice to give to an incoming student to Alfred, both say it would be to get fully involved in campus activities and enlist the guidance of mentors.

"The environment at Alfred makes easy to participate in activities," said Ruby, a first-generation college student whose parents immigrated to the U.S. from Ireland. She is active in Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and Keramos, the honor society for ceramic engineers. "What has really helped me is finding my people...the ones who push you to be the best version of myself."

"There are many people at Alfred who truly care about you and want to see you win," added Bittel, who says his decision to enroll at Alfred was clinched when Mark Zupan, Alfred University president, greeted him and his family at the start of their tour of the university. "Find these people and let them be your mentors."

Matthew is considering either going to graduate school or entering the job market. "I want to find a long-term leadership role that will allow me to grow as an individual and also foster the culture I was able to develop at Alfred," he said. "I'm sure when the time is right, it will smack me in the face."

Ruby said next summer she hopes to secure an internship, perhaps working in industry. "Up to now, I have only pursued research work in academia," she said.

Both students agree that experiential learning opportunities they've been able to take advantage of will prove to be invaluable not only in achieving a well-rounded education, but also in pursuing career goals.

"If I hadn't been able to take part in (experiential learning projects), I'd be lost," Ruby said.

"For me personally, I learned much more during my time with



Ruby Kavanagh, (left) and **Ben Rondeau**, junior ceramic engineering majors and interns for Blue Star Advanced Manufacturing, examine a microwave sintered lunar tile made in the Space Materials Institute lab at Alfred University.

the Space Materials Institute as I did with my classes," said Matthew. "Through my experiences outside of class, I developed hand-on skills ranging from procurement to interdepartmental communication to public speaking. Aside from the actual tangible skills, it provided me with real-life experiences. It gave me the confidence to be a better and more effective leader."

Shulman said experiential learning opportunities are key to engineering students achieving the best and most well-rounded education possible.

"It is extremely important to integrate classroom learning with hands-on productive work in the lab. Engineering requires tradeoffs to accomplish goals within constraints such as time and budget. Working tasks hands-on gives an understanding of the physical effort and reality, including deviations from the ideal or perfect scenario," she said. "The opportunities are here if the students choose to seize them."

Tidrow said Matthew's involvement in the Summer Research Institute kindled in him a passion for engineering. "It is my understanding, as his academic advisor, that he was considering whether or not engineering was what he wanted to study. Mr. Bittel came away from the Summer Research program as a motivated student," Tidrow said.

"Learning by doing requires planning, preparation, execution, understanding the results and finally communicating the successes and failures in an understandable way," Mixture said of the importance of experiential learning. "Connecting textbook knowledge to real-world research or development efforts on campus is a key aspect of developing an intuitive 'feel' for the topics, and we see this happen before, during and after the experience. There is no substitute for the experience gained by working in the field of study."



Annika Blake-Howland in the Paul Vickers Gardner Glass Center, in Alfred University Binns Merrill Hall. Anika spent two years organizing the Gardner collection, which was opened to the public in the spring of 2025. "I'm a curator, registrar, collections manager and public relations chief all rolled into one," Annika says.

Practice Makes Perfect

BY ROB PRICE

Alfred University students roll up their sleeves to learn museum and gallery practices

Annika Blake-Howland visited Alfred University during the winter break of 2023, preparing for graduate work in glass science at the New York State College of Ceramics (NYSCC). During a tour of the campus, she was shown the glass collection donated to the University in 1994 by the late Paul Vickers Gardner. Gardner, a 1930 graduate of Alfred University, had worked closely with Frederick Carder, co-founder of Steuben Glassworks, in Corning, and later served as the first curator of glass and ceramics at the Smithsonian Institute.

Annika was struck by the scope and depth of the collection, and weeks later, at the start of the fall semester, she joined a years-long effort to organize and showcase the Gardner collection. Two years later, the University hosted the formal opening of the Paul Vickers Gardner Glass Center with an exhibition curated by Annika, "The Science of Design: Frederick Carder and Paul Vickers Gardner."

"I'm a curator, registrar, collections manager and public relations chief all rolled into one," Annika says, sitting on a couch in the middle of the Palladium Room, on the second floor of Binns-Merrill Hall, which serves as home for the Paul Vickers Gardner Glass Center.

The two years Annika spent organizing the Gardner collection and curating the current exhibition exemplify the challenges and rewards of hands-on, or "experiential," education opportunities Alfred University offers its students. "I started working the collection immediately," Annika says, "meeting with people and doing interviews to learn the history of the collection. I had to learn and understand Gardner's story, his interactions with Alfred University, and his fondness for Alfred

University. What I learned eventually was how to be an effective caretaker of the Gardner collection."

"We wanted the minor to be experiential. That is such an important part of Alfred University's unique set of strengths."

— Claire Kovacs

Director, NYSCC Museums and Galleries

While the Gardner Center is dedicated to enhancing education through its exhibition of glass art and glass-based science, the Inamori Kyocera Museum of Fine Ceramics, located in an adjacent space in Binns Merrill, exhibits its own collection of ceramic materials, showcasing the history of ceramic technology and ceramic materials processes.

Both spaces exemplify Alfred University's commitment to glass and ceramic technology and art. They are two of seven museums and galleries on the campus: The Robert C. Turner Gallery and The Fosdick-Nelson Gallery are located in Harder Hall; The Cohen Gallery and Celadon Terra Cotta Building are located on Main Street; and The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum overlooks Main Street at the intersection with Pine Drive.

Each space requires a unique set of curatorial responsibilities, which in turn present educational opportunities for Alfred students. Recognizing the potential of those opportunities, The School of Art & Design inaugurated this semester a minor in Museum and Gallery Practices. Claire Kovacs, director of the

NYSCC Museums and Galleries, says the minor was designed in part to take advantage of the many museums and galleries on the Alfred campus. Working in those spaces, gaining curatorial and management experience, would be a vital part of the minor. “We wanted the minor to be experiential,” Kovacs says. “That is such an important part of Alfred University’s unique set of strengths.”

The new minor is open to students across the university, so that students studying studio art in NYSCC, or American History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences would augment their education with hands-on experience in museum and gallery operations, as well as exhibition design and practice. Each student minoring in Museum and Gallery Practices also is required to complete a practicum in museum practices, which they can satisfy through an internship associated with the Turner Gallery, or by applying to earn credits through work at a museum, gallery, or related institution either on or off campus.

The minor is overseen by an advisory group of faculty and staff members drawn from across the University, reflecting a multi-disciplinary enthusiasm. Art History Professor Meghen Jones, chairperson of the group and academic advisor to the minor, points to the large number of galleries and museums of the Alfred University campus and says, “Alfred is an ideal place for this minor.” The practicum in particular, Jones says, will give students the hands-on experience valued at Alfred University. In the course of growing the minor, she expects the University to develop relationships with other galleries and museums, so that a network exists to help students fulfill the practical responsibilities of museum and gallery management.

Initial enthusiasm for the minor is high, Jones adds. At least 15 students have already signed up for the minor’s new Museum and Operations course in the current fall semester.

Beyond the Museum and Gallery Practices minor, Alfred University traditionally has encouraged students to dive into their academic work through internships within and outside the University.

The Alfred Ceramic Art Museum, for example, has been hosting since 2022 an undergraduate internship supported by Laura Ackerman-Shaw in honor of her father, Jerome “Jerry” Ackerman (’52 MFA), a designer-craftsman whose artistic collaboration with his wife, Evelyn Ackerman, was at the heart of California’s midcentury Modernism movement.

Ackerman interns work under the supervision of Susan Kowalczyk ’70, ACAM curator/research coordinator, who maintains an extensive system of digital and paper records documenting each of the thousands of ceramic pieces in the museum collection. In the spring semester of 2025, then-junior

student Heather Denaro, an art student from Acton, MA, held the internship and assisted with the installation of the current ACAM exhibition *History: a Legacy in Motion*, celebrating the 125th anniversary of the NYSCC.

Now a senior, Heather also worked on reorganizing the museum’s collection of 460 pieces of Glidden pottery, inventorying ACAM’s collection of stoneware, dinnerware and artware created by the Glidden company, which had been founded by Glidden Parker ’39 and was based in Alfred in the mid-20th century. She double-checked and confirmed records



Alfred University senior **Heather Denaro** worked with the collection of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum, serving as a museum with the support of the Jerome Ackerman scholarship, provided to the university through the generosity of Laura Ackerman-Shaw in honor of her father, **Jerome “Jerry” Ackerman (MFA ’52)**.

pertaining to the collection were accurate. She confirmed individual pieces were stored on shelves identified in digital and written records.

She calls her experiences at ACAM “amazing.” She applied for the internship, she adds, “because I wanted to work hands-on with the art.”

With a minor in education, Heather hopes to teach ceramic art at the high school level, or general art in elementary school. Her internship and additional experience working at the front desk of the ACAM have helped round out her overall education at Alfred University. Professionally, she says, her life will probably take some unexpected turns, and she expects her experience in museum curatorship will support her future flexibility in navigating careers.

“It’s just something that’s another door, another option,” she says. “Staying in place isn’t a great option for anyone.”



Practical English

BY ROB PRICE

Alfred University English Professor Allen Grove guides students through rigors of book production in his Publishing Practicum. His students have created three dozen published volumes over the years, and graduated into publishing jobs.



Ellie Woznica works at her horse farm near Sayre, Pa. Now employed by McGraw Hill, Ellie says Professor Allen Grove's *Publishing Practicum* gave her practical skills that helped her transition into professional writing after graduating.

Ellie Woznica '18 was an Alfred University English major when, in her junior year, she signed up for English Professor Allen Grove's seminar-styled *Publishing Practicum*, a course Grove had designed to give students experience in editing and designing actual books. The finished volumes are published by Grove's company, Whitlock Publishing, which secures for them an ISBN number and distribution through Ingram.

"It was something I'd always wanted to do," Ellie says. "I've always been a big reader, and I'm a bit of an overachiever."

By the end of the semester, she had edited, designed, and assembled an anthology of 19th-century articles on equestrian etiquette for women, *Horsewomanship in 19th-Century America*. ISBN number: 1943115265. The book is available on Amazon.

The following year, Ellie had an idea for a second anthology, which she worked on while studying with Grove's honors

class in horror literature, *A Dark and Stormy Night*. The result by the end of the semester: *The Alfred Book of Ghastly Tales*, a collection of Alfred University faculty and student ghost stories set on the Alfred campus and in the surrounding woods. Stories in the collection include short stories by Grove himself ("Waste Not") and English professors Juliana Gray ("We Are Outnumbered by Their Dead" and "TFW Bae is a Ghost") and Susan Morehouse ("Stereoptican, Shotgun, Blender"); also students such as Tori Pellegrino '21 ("Parallel to the Past") and Ava Hameister '21 ("Man, You're Alfredy in Debt"). *The Alfred Book of Ghastly Tales* was also published by Whitlock Publishing and is available on Amazon. According to one blurb, the tales are full of "unexplainable mirrors, creepy paintings, and townspeople with a ghostly past."

Grove uses proceeds from book sales to finance publishing expenses, which include printing and obtaining the ISBN

numbers. He estimates the *Publishing Practicum* has overseen the production of more than 30 books by AU students.

"When I designed the course," he says, "I wanted it to give our students practical skills, applying their research and writing abilities to produce something concrete."

In general, he steers students away from writing their own books. Instead, students research and collect works that have been out of copyright and unavailable on the general market. Many students create original anthologies focused on areas of personal interest. All members of the class write well-researched introductions, construct timelines of important contextual events, and assemble lists of complementary reading materials.

"They learn layout, typography, basic graphic design, and other elements of book publishing," Grove says. "Writing the introduction requires so many of the skills we teach in the English Division. And when they're done, they have a book that's for sale and a great credential for a job in publishing or writing, or graduate school."

Ellie Woznica cites her undergraduate work with Grove as a major factor in her professional success. She has been busy in the publishing and media field since graduating from Alfred University and recently accepted a job offer from the publisher McGraw Hill. She received her Masters of Professional Studies degree in Publishing in 2020 from George Washington University, and she runs her own company, *Counting Hoofbeats Photography*, and freelances for equestrian-related publications including Heels Down Media. When McGraw Hill offered her a full-time position, she was working as a graphic designer for Koehler Books Inc. She works from her home in Gillett, PA, where she and her longtime companion,

Matt Chabot '16, own and manage a horse farm.

Other students who have converted their work with Grove into professional success include Kristen Kovatch Bentley '10, who did an independent publishing study with Grove before he began teaching the Publishing Practicum on a regular basis. Kristen describes her project as an anthology of 18th-century love stories written by women. "The texts hadn't been reprinted or anthologized since their original publication," she explains. "We wanted the writers to have their moment in the spotlight."

She and Grove picked stories by Aphra Behn, Penelope Aubin, and Mary Davys, and Kristen transcribed the texts from facsimiles of the original works. She researched the lives of the writers, wrote their biographies, and the result was *Four Amours: Early Amatory Fiction by Women*.

“There are basic things you have to learn as you get your feet under you in any job, like learning how to work with other people.”

— **Kristen Kovatch Bentley '10**

At the same time, she was riding on the Alfred University equestrian team – which Ellie Woznica would join several years later – and after graduating she began sending submissions to the online equestrian magazine *Eventing Nation* while continuing her stable and coaching work at the Bromley-Daggett Equestrian Center, Maris Cuneo Equine Park.

“At the time I was pursuing a professional teaching and training career in the equestrian industry, but I thought writing for *Eventing Nation* would keep my writing skills sharp,” she says. Eventually, she decided to back away from teaching and training equestrians and accepted an offer to join *Eventing Nation*’s sister site, *Horse Nation*, as a managing editor. In 2018, she began working as Communications Manager for the Edgewater, MD-based Retired Racehorse Project, and in March of this year, she was appointed managing director of the organization.

“I was an English major, and my work with Allen showed me there were other things to do with an English degree besides studying literature,” she says.

Ellie Woznica echoes that insight. She says Grove’s Publishing



Kristen Kovatch Bentley at work with her laptop on her farm near Jamestown, NY. Kristen studied book publishing with English Professor Allen Grove and transitioned into equestrian journalism after graduation.

Practicum gave her practical skills that significantly eased the transition from the undergraduate world to working professionally. “It not only helped me gain an editorial perspective. It also gave me practical experience in learning the important publishing apps, such as InDesign – the standard now for presses. Just having gotten my feet wet in that experience was crucial.”

Grove has designed the Publishing Practicum so that students gain practical layout and design experience in Herrick Library’s computer lab, where he encourages and supervises their early experiments in book creation as they prepare their projects for print-on-demand publication through Ingram. Students develop age-old layout skills such as kerning and leading, and Grove’s goal is for them to finish their publishing projects in time for the spring Undergraduate Research Forum, where they can display their published books alongside other Alfred University students’ presentations. At the 2025 Forum, six of his students presented posters describing overviews of their projects, and five had their books in hand.

“Probably no other school in the country offers an undergraduate class like this one,” Grove says of the Publishing Practicum. “But it’s a natural for the English Division. We celebrate our Maker Culture at Alfred University, and in this course, we’re really making something.”

Beyond the Classroom

BY MARK WHITEHOUSE

College of Business emphasizes *real-world* experiences.

Learning by doing. It's a lynchpin of Alfred University's business program, which provides students opportunities to take what they've learned in the classroom and apply it in real-world business settings.

"In a world where artificial intelligence tools and endless online resources are changing how information is accessed, students don't need more textbooks — they need hands-on, real-world experience," Mark Lewis, dean of the College of Business, said at a ceremony last spring marking the launch of the College's Institute for Experiential Entrepreneurship (IEE), a program which reflects Alfred University's commitment to providing students from all academic units valuable experiential and applied learning opportunities.

"Real-world exercises allow students to engage with current challenges that marketers face in real time, offering insights and experiences that can't be fully captured through quizzes or even traditional case studies," said Shelly Freyn, associate professor of marketing. Experiential learning opportunities "equip students with a variety of tools and hands-on experience in a dynamic, ever-changing discipline, while also building their confidence to apply these skills in their future careers."

Senior marketing majors Izzy Santella, Keirsten Campbell, and Connor Bacon can each attest to the value of these experiences and how it is preparing them for successful careers in business.

"It's been super beneficial," Santella, a senior from Middleport, NY, said of the marketing projects she has worked on, including an Integrated Marketing Communications class taught by Brittany Thierman, assistant professor of marketing, where she and classmates conducted market research for Olean hair salon Aquaria.

In Izzy's and Keirsten's current marketing practicum, students are working with The Neighborhood Museum, a newly-planned children's museum and playground in Olean. The students are conducting focus groups working with parents of young children at Alfred University as panelists to gather research and build strategies for this new non-profit. Keirsten and Connor are among a group of Freyn's students in Market Research who are researching and building surveys to assist The Old Mill Inn restaurant in Alfred Station owned by Noah Heyman '18.

Freyn teaches a number of courses in which students gain experience working directly with area small businesses and start-ups and other community-based programs. They have included a Creativity and Innovation class, which has developed strategic

"Classes can be so structured. These projects get me out of my comfort zone. In real life, you need to be able to think on your feet. This reinforces what we've learned in class."

— Izzy Santella '26

initiatives for Alfred University's Foster Lake recreational area; Strategic Marketing; Integrated Marketing and Communications; Market Research; Consumer Behavior; and a Marketing Practicum. All are designed to get students to apply what they've learned in the classroom to real businesses.

Freyn is one of three co-directors of the IEE—along with Jean Ellefson, assistant professor of analytics, and Jason Morrison,

assistant professor of finance. With support from the IEE, several student-run businesses were started over the summer and will be developed over the coming academic year. (See story, Page 23).

“Classes can be so structured,” Izzy said. “These projects get me out of my comfort zone. In real life, you need to be able to think on your feet. This reinforces what we’ve learned in class.”

“It’s not normal,” Keirsten, a senior from Cuba, NY, said of the wealth of hands-on learning initiatives offered through the College of Business. “I have a friend who goes to Penn State and she says she never gets anything like this. It’s mostly large lectures.”

Connor and Keirsten both took an Integrated Marketing Communications class taught by Freyn last fall, in which they worked with N’Dulge, an Alfred coffee shop, helping the business develop a marketing plan. Keirsten said students talked with prospective customers—she was among a group that surveyed local residents; other students focused on groups such as students, and faculty/staff.

“We started by talking with the owner, to see what she wanted to get out of it, and we’d go back to the classroom to break down and discuss what we talked about. Then we hit the ground running, splitting into groups and coming up with ideas” of how

to market the business to the various target audiences,” Keirsten explained. “At the end of the semester, we combined it all, worked out the kinks and presented our proposal to the owner.”

Keirsten said better use of social media, adding new menu items, and developing new packaging were among the recommendations students made. “It went really well. The owners have taken a lot of what we recommended and put it to use.”

“We’ve gotten to work with real companies,” Connor, a senior from Sidney, NY, said of his experiences, which in addition to the project with N’Dulge has also included a Market Research class in which students collaborated with the owner of Trout Run Campground in Wellsville to collect research, build online surveys and run statistical analysis to develop strategies for the company. “The value comes not only from building connections with established businesses, but in learning more about how a business is run.”

Students in the College of Business dive into real-world experiences the moment they first step into the classroom. Contemporary Business (BUSI 106) is a required course for all first-year students and is offered in the spring semester. Ellefson often teaches the class and also works with numerous local businesses for MBA students’ capstone projects. BUSI 106 follows another first-year mandatory class—Business Perspectives (BUSI



Shelly Freyn, associate professor of marketing in the Alfred University College of Business, discusses a project with senior marketing majors (from left) **Connor Bacon**, **Keirsten Campbell**, and **Izzy Santella**. The students met in an interview room in the first floor of the Olin building, used to conduct surveys for market research projects.

105)—offered in the fall. BUSI 105 teaches students the basics of business and steers them toward a major by helping them understand the variety of business disciplines (e.g., finance, accounting, marketing, analytics, equine business management) and the career opportunities they present.

“In a world where artificial intelligence tools and endless online resources are changing how information is accessed, students don’t need more textbooks — they need hands-on, real-world experience.”

— **Mark Lewis**
Dean of the College of Business

In BUSI 106, students build on their experience from the fall semester by putting what they have learned into practice, creating a product and building a business from the ground up. In late spring, the students sell their products on campus at small pop-ups, with the money they earn donated to charity. Izzy said her BUSI 106 class made and sold tote bags, earning more than \$1,200 for the Environmental Defense Fund.

In last spring’s Strategic Marketing Class, Keirsten was among a group of Freyn’s students who developed Alfred Market Insights (AMI), a student-run market research group, by evaluating benchmark institutions and market trends, building strategy models and eventually creating a marketing plan along with collateral and a web site. AMI, which is housed under the IEE umbrella, utilizes space on the first floor of the College of Business Olin Building to run focus groups for small businesses, non-profits and student start-ups. Freyn is currently training students to conduct focus groups during this fall’s marketing practicum course with plans to have AMI up and running in the spring with trained students.

Keirsten said her experience working to build Alfred Market Insights helped her settle on a career path. “Because of that class, I decided I wanted to get into market research and strategic marketing. I gained a lot of knowledge on how to conduct research well,” Keirsten said, adding that her work with Alfred Market Insights helped her excel at an internship with Paychex in Rochester over the past summer.

“Due to my participation (in Alfred Market Insights), my internship manager said I stood out, especially regarding my experience in competitive analysis,” she said.

One of Connor’s experiences has already led to him landing a job in marketing. Over the past summer, he had an internship in the marketing department at Amphenol, one of the world’s

largest designers and manufacturers of electrical and electronic connectors for the military and space industries, located in his hometown of Sidney, NY. The company employs over 1,000 at its Sidney facility and more than 125,000 worldwide. In his internship, Connor supplied customers with quotes and put together purchase orders. His supervisors were so impressed with his work that they offered him a full-time position as a marketing trainee, starting Jan. 5, 2026.

“I’ve learned to problem-solve without the answer being readily available,” Connor said of what he has learned at Alfred by working in the business world. “You have to think about a problem and come up with a solution. It has prepared me to communicate well with people in different positions, not just peers.”

Izzy, who is attending Alfred University as an AU Scholar, plans to pursue her MBA, and is considering attending grad school at Alfred. “Long-term, I’d love to do marketing for the National Park system,” said Izzy, who became interested in marketing after working the summer after high school as an adventure desk concierge at a hotel near Zion National Park in Utah.

She said Alfred has prepared her well for whatever career path she pursues. For her Marketing Practicum work, she was required to become certified through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program, which provides training on ethics and compliance with regard to market research. “This is great for my resume,” she said.

Keirsten said she wants to embark on a career focused on strategic marketing and analytics after graduation from Alfred. “I’d say all the experiences I’ve had have helped prepare me” for her desired career.



Noah Heyman '18, owner of the Old Mill Inn located in Alfred Station, talks with a group of students who toured his business in September. The students, in Associate Professor of Marketing Shelly Freyn’s Market Research class, conducted research and surveys for the Old Mill.

These students mean Business

BY MARK WHITEHOUSE



A group of students, faculty and alumni outside the Alfred University College of Business's Olin Building, following a presentation to members of the College's Advisory Board on student-run businesses. Pictured from left are: Jason Morrison, assistant professor of finance; Jean Ellefson, assistant professor of analytics; Zach Harrington '14, Advisory Board member; Niamul Haque, master's student in electrical engineering; Nicolas Toribio, a senior computer science major; Mark Ungurian, a senior computer science and marketing major; Anna Koreiba, a junior marketing and communication studies major; Dave Stirpe '93, Advisory Board member; Sabrina Hryhorieva, sophomore finance and marketing major; Mark Lewis, dean of the College of Business; and Shelly Freyn, associate professor of marketing.

Over the summer, a group of Alfred University students learned what goes into running a successful business, thanks to support from an applied learning initiative unveiled last spring.

The Institute for Experiential Entrepreneurship (IEE), housed in the College of Business, provided funding for a project in which students created and ran their own start-ups. Students were supported in their summer projects by a gift from alumnus Joseph F. Smith Jr. '66 and Alice Smith to fund experiential learning initiatives. The Smiths' gift, in addition to investments in entrepreneurship and student business development from alumnus Lance Shaner '75, helped support the IEE.

In September, five students who started three fledgling businesses made presentations of their entrepreneurial endeavors to faculty and two alumni members of the College of Business Advisory Board—Zach Harrington '14 and Dave Stirpe '93. Harrington earned a degree in finance and is a partner and financial advisor at Rise Advisors, LLC, in Rochester. Stirpe earned a degree in business administration (public law minor) and is a serial entrepreneur in

Central New York, with a current focus on the restaurant industry.

Mark Ungurian, a senior computer science and marketing major from Odessa, Ukraine, and Nicolas Toribio, a senior computer science major from Sao Paulo, Brazil, talked about their business, Fliply, a student-run developer of business websites. Ungurian said he and Toribio created the Fliply website and also websites for student-run business, es: Albrin English; and Alfred Market Insights, a student-run not-for-profit housed in the College of Business which conducts market research for area businesses.

"We built real things for real clients. We agreed on goals, hit milestones, fixed problems, and got advice from professors along the way," Ungurian said. "It felt like a real job, and it gave me skills and confidence I can use right after college."

Albrin English is an online English language tutoring platform for students from Ukraine considering attending college in the United States, with a special focus on proper pronunciation, vocabulary, and conversational English. The site offers instruction on English

proficiency over four weeks with two classes each week. The classes are in the form of podcasts that the business creates, edits, and uploads to its website. Sessions for users to practice English are also offered.

The business is run by two Ukrainian students—Anna Koreiba, a junior marketing and communication studies major from Kyiv, and Sabrina Hryhorieva, a sophomore finance and marketing major from Dnipro. Koreiba and Hryhorieva are both familiar with the impediments that can arise when cultural and language barriers exist. They are among a growing group of students from Ukraine who have enrolled at Alfred since war broke out there in 2022 following the Russian invasion.

“Opportunities like this are what make Alfred so amazing and unique. This program sets us up for success while we are still studying and saves us years in the future by guiding us through the first steps of our careers. It also allows us to explore potential outcomes early on and develop our potential to the fullest.”

— Sabrina Hryhorieva '28

Naimul Haque, master's degree student in electrical engineering, presented his business, Gradmate, a website designed to ease the process of applying to graduate school. The website, gradmate.ai, helps students find their best match for grad school, connect with faculty who share similar research interests, and navigate the process for finding paid graduate assistantships.

“It will simplify the application process,” Haque said, explaining that the website has artificial intelligence tools that assist users in completing application materials—including writing statements of purpose; and drafting emails, cover letters, and personal statements. It also facilitates mock interviews, and has online sessions aimed at improving reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

Students will continue developing their businesses throughout the 2025-26 academic year. They say the exercise of running their own business will help them in their careers and future entrepreneurial endeavors.

“I believe entrepreneurship is best learned through experience rather than theory alone,” Naimul commented. “Experiential learning opportunities are especially valuable in college because students have the time and freedom to try new ideas. Such opportunities develop problem-solving skills, creativity, resilience, and practical understanding—all essential for success after college.”

“In the age of technology, it is easy to access large databases full of theory. But in the business world, what matters most is

experience,” Hryhorieva added. “Opportunities like this are what make Alfred so amazing and unique.”

College of Business faculty Jean Ellefson, assistant professor of analytics, Shelly Freyn, associate professor of marketing, and Jason Morrison, assistant professor of finance, are co-directors of the IEE. Morrison, who supervised the students in their work over the summer, was pleased the work they put into developing their businesses and in presenting to alumni.

“Working with our students this summer was an outstanding experience,” he said. “Each group brought incredible energy and focus, tackling challenges with creativity and asking thoughtful questions along the way. Their final presentations to Alumni were not only polished and professional but also earned enthusiastic feedback.”

Morrison believes the IEE can benefit all students at Alfred, not just those enrolled in business programs.

The IEE, launched in May, reflects Alfred University's emphasis on combining classroom instruction with applied learning to best prepare them for their meaningful and fulfilling careers.

“Experiential learning is at the heart of our business program,” said Ellefson. “By immersing students in real-world challenges, we help them build not only academic skills but also the confidence and adaptability they need to thrive in an unpredictable world. In the College of Business, we're also researching the impact of applied learning—examining how it shapes student capability, improves problem-solving under uncertainty, and accelerates readiness for futures beyond the classroom.”

“We believe it is vital to be able to go beyond the theories about business, and to have practical experience. Those experiences prepare our graduates for the expectations and challenges that await them after they enter the workforce,” Mark Lewis, dean of the College of Business, remarked.



Junior Anna Koreiba (left) and sophomore Sabrina Hryhorieva give a presentation on their student-run business project. The initiative is supported by the Institute for Experiential Entrepreneurship in Alfred University's College of Business.

Let's Try *This* Let's Try *That*

BY ROB PRICE

Artist, administrator Sandra Murchison dove into the experience of art at Alfred University. *The diving never stopped.*

Sandra Murchison '94 arrived at Alfred University in the fall of 1990 planning to concentrate on drawing and painting for her BFA degree. Her first look at the wondrous equipment in the printmaking studio in Harder Hall made her reconsider.

"I was a kid in a candy store," she recalls from her office at Eastern Michigan University, where she serves now as director of the School of Art and Design. "It was kind of like walking into a small factory. Each press could be as big as your dining room table, and there was a kind of no-limits spirit. I saw Alfred University and the School of Art & Design as a place for finding my own voice and my own imagery."

She immersed herself in the art of printmaking under the mentorship of Professor of Print Media Joseph Scheer, who encouraged her to explore the myriad processes of that ancient craft. She became interested in etchings: images printed from plates on which different textures and values are incised into the surface of the matrix. Scheer encouraged her to keep exploring different possibilities.

"In art school, you learn through experience," she says, "and Joe encouraged me to make my own experiences. I arranged my own field trips to places like the botanical gardens in Buffalo. He encouraged me to just get outside and find more information, more images. He encouraged me to explore my own research paths."

"Sandra arrived with a background in painting," Scheer says, "and in the print shop she discovered a way of bringing her painterly sensibility to bear in an art form that embraced new possibilities."

She also brought a willingness to work hard.



Alfred University alumna **Sandra Murchison** serves as director of the School of Art and Design at Eastern Michigan University. Sandra says she felt "like a kid in a candy store" when she began working in Alfred University's printmaking shop as an undergraduate art student in the School of Art & Design.

"She was part of group of amazing students with incredible intellect, energy, and work ethic," Scheer continues. "They really challenged each other – in an amazing, gentle way. Sandra got to class early and stayed afterwards wanting to know more. She had this driven, inquisitive nature and curiosity about things. She wanted to be a monitor, so she could get the keys to the studio and keep working."

Sandra puts it this way: "At Alfred, I lived and breathed the studio."

By the time she received her BFA, in 1994, her years at Alfred University had helped her clarify a sense of her future. "I knew that I wanted to teach," she says. "I knew I wanted to be a college or university professor." Part of her ambitions stemmed from Scheer's own example and teaching. "I can't tell you how much Joseph Scheer formed my life," she says.

After graduating from Alfred, she accepted an offer to pursue her MFA at Louisiana State University, and when she moved to Baton Rouge she started in the painting area. "But I made

“I wanted to work in a serious-minded environment where magic could happen.”

— Sandra Murchison '94

myself known to the printmaking artists, so I had two studios. And eventually, I was invited to switch over to printmaking.”

From that point on, the work she had started as an undergraduate led her from one experience to the next. There is an element of improvisation in any career, but there was also an arc of action in Sandra's work that built on what had come before.

In 1998, following her work at LSU, she accepted a teaching position at the Interlochen Arts Academy. In 1999, she joined the art faculty at Millsaps College, in Jackson, Miss., where she served as chair of the Art Department from 2008 to 2013. While living in Jackson, she also founded and served as the first director of the Purple Word Center for Book and Paper Arts, managing all aspects of a not-for-profit organization including funding, publicity, and community outreach.

In 2016, she moved to Ypsilanti, MI, to join the art school at Eastern Michigan University (EMU), serving as both professor and director of EMU's School of Art & Design. Two years later, she was appointed director of EMU's Parsons Center for Arts and Sciences. In that position, she is responsible for programming, artist residencies, and EMU summer courses at the 86-acre satellite campus in Northern Michigan.

She says she has become “quite capable” at running budgets. ... I learned that at Alfred too.”

And along the way, she developed another high-value skill in both the art and academic communities: fundraising. She spearheaded building projects at both Millsaps College and EMU, and as a result, both institutions now have new art buildings serving both students and art faculty.

“I like working with donors,” she says. “At its best, fundraising is a creative partnership, and I got pointed in numerous creative directions and processes during my Alfred University days. In printmaking, you don't always know what the finished print is going to look like. Careers can be a little like that too.”

She remains a practicing artist, focusing more on relief prints than the etchings she featured in her senior show at AU. Her ongoing body of work can be seen on her website, www.sandraemurchison.com: Complex, artfully constructed images constructed from materials she finds on trips through Northern Michigan.

“As a printmaker, I build my plates out of different artifacts, and for me that includes texts – rubbings of historical markers, for example. I pull the text off and just grab the history of the place. I can combine layers of my own drawings and residuals of photographs to build up a plate until I'm ready to apply the ink. The magic of the process is all about that transference from plate to some other material through the ink.”

She describes her recent work as

“similar to artistic quilts. I print more on fabric these days, so the whole process has become very tactile.”

And she continues to divide her art practice between printing and painting. “When I was at Alfred, I was split between printmaking and painting. All along, though, my faculty mentors helped me learn I didn't have to choose between one and the other. I could work in both fields and even combine the fields, so that painting is part of my printmaking and my printmaking can be part of a larger painting.”

That was one of many lessons she learned from her experience of an Alfred University education. “The things I learned at Alfred included going out and seeking the answers. I had that mind set reaffirmed in me over and over.”

“She didn't just challenge herself,” Scheer says. “She challenged me. She wasn't afraid to say, ‘No, that's not what I was trying to do, that's not what I meant.’ Teaching her, experiencing her presence in the studio or the classroom, meant having an intense dialogue. She had curiosity, a need for the knowledge. She was always hungry, and working with her was like, ‘Let's see what we can do. Let's try this, let's try that.’”



Print by Alfred University alumna Sandra Murchison.

FROM **Z** TO AU

We Learn by Doing

BY MARK ZUPAN

Held every October, The Night of Science and Arts is a celebration of hands-on learning and discovery. Co-sponsored by Alfred University and the Society of Women Engineers, this year we welcomed nearly 500 local elementary and middle school students and their families to participate in fun demonstrations of engineering, arts, and sciences. The delight on attendees' faces as they watched thermite reactions create "elephant toothpaste" or explore sound creation by playing multiple musical instruments was equally matched by the evident joy of Alfred students who provided the demonstrations. As Aristotle famously stated, "we learn by doing." Nowhere was this philosophy more evident than at The Night of Science and Arts.

At Alfred University, we rely on a special combination of theory and practice in our teaching philosophy – just as Aristotle encouraged. We are renowned for our hands-on education and for faculty mentors who encourage students to test theories and create knowledge by doing. According to the World Economic Forum's 2025 The Future of Jobs Report, the combination of theory, practice, and communication is a core requirement for post-graduate success.

This teaching philosophy permeates each of our academic units. Our top-10 ranked School of Art and Design immerses first-year undergraduate students in Foundations, a year-long art practice using an extraordinary array of methods (drawing, painting, photography, design, ceramics, glass, printmaking, video, sonic arts, metal arts, and mixed media sculpture). This diversity of experience sparks the creative muse and prepares students to engage deeply in the art world beyond their individual practice.

In our Inamori School of Engineering, students begin their studies with a problem-oriented course covering every engineering discipline we teach -- mechanical, renewable energy, biomaterial, ceramic, glass science, material science, and electrical engineering. In this team-taught course, students learn to help solve the real-world problems of companies such as Corning Incorporated, Lockheed Martin, and SpaceX – all of whom have research partnerships with Alfred University.

In our College of Business, students manage real money through the Student Managed Investment Fund (SMIF) team.

SMIF originated with a generous \$100,000 philanthropic gift and has now, through investments managed by the student team, attained a value of more than \$1 million. In addition to SMIF, faculty guide every student to create an entrepreneurial business plan as well as to provide, in teams, pro-bono consulting guidance to area organizations.

In the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, biology students learn to diagnose and treat ailments using our virtual cadaver lab – the same technology used by Stanford's medical school. The cadaver lab provides experience with multiple species, from cats to horses to humans and offers valuable hands-on learning to students interested in the medical and veterinary fields. Students also can stargaze and learn astrophysics at the John Stull Observatory; sharpen communication skills through our Prunty-Russo Media Lab; and deepen computer science and data analytic acumen at our Castle Lab.

Key to our emerging 2027-2031 strategic plan is a framework for allowing students to curate experiential learning from their first through senior years, together with enhanced mentorship by faculty, staff, and alumni, and preparation for post-graduate opportunities. This ambitious strategic plan will be enabled partly by two important funding sources: (1) the significant amount of research grant funding secured by our faculty – nearly \$40 million over the past three years – which earned us the new Carnegie Classification of Research College/University; and (2) generous ongoing philanthropic support for applied/experiential (APEX) grants enabling students to participate in internships, service learning, research, and study abroad.

Bill Giles '81, vice chair of Alfred's Board of Trustees, recently reflected on his time as an Alfred student. An accounting major, Bill also rolled up his sleeves as a dorm resident assistant, disc jockey for campus radio station WALF, and lead organizer for Alfred's legendary Hot Dog Day celebration. According to Bill, this hands-on approach was key to landing his first accounting job at Price Waterhouse Coopers – but he didn't stop there. His distinguished career culminated as chief financial officer for Auto Zone, the Fortune 300 firm headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee.

The reason that Bill and other trustees, alums, and supporters contribute their time, talent, and philanthropy to Alfred University is because they know that our educational model works. It produces the knowledge, experience, and teamwork skills so critical to a successful life of purpose. Together with the commitment of our faculty and staff, their investment ensures that Alfred University will continue to make knowledge work for generations to come.



FIAT LUX!
Mark Zupan

Progress Continues at Saxon Hill Sports Complex



Construction continues on the Saxon Hill Sports Complex, Alfred University's \$30 million sports and recreation facility atop Jericho Hill in the town of Alfred. Once completed next spring, Saxon Hill will be home to four new intercollegiate sports teams while providing new recreational opportunities for the campus and local communities.

"The complex is taking shape as we now see the amazing facilities come to life," said Deb Steward, associate vice president for Student Experience, Athletics, and Recreation.

In 2023, the Alfred University Board of Trustees gave its approval for the construction of Saxon Hill, a project that is expected to significantly enhance the University's student recruitment and retention efforts. Excavation at the 200-acre site located approximately three miles south of campus began in October 2024. LeChase Construction of Corning, NY, is serving as construction project manager.

FieldTurf DoublePlay series synthetic turf—renowned for replicating the speed, line, and bounce of a baseball on a natural surface—has been installed at the baseball field, where dugouts have been constructed and fencing installed. Field turf has also been installed in the infield of the track, where the new field hockey team—currently

playing its inaugural season—will host games beginning in the fall of 2026. Turf at both fields was installed by Chenango Contracting Inc., Johnson City, NY. Binder for the outdoor track has been poured and milled; LED sports venue lighting has been installed throughout the Saxon Hill facility by Oskaloosa, IA, company Musco, a leader in sports and large area lighting; and footers for the baseball press box, Saxon Sports Center, and grandstand serving the track and rugby field have been set.

Other work done over the summer includes installation of wayfinding lighting throughout the facility; grass seeding of the rugby field; installation of three scoreboards—at the baseball and rugby fields and the track; asphalt surfacing of the main roadway and parking lots; and construction of throws areas (hammer, discus, and shot put) and installation of the binder for the javelin runway.

For more information—including project details and updates, 3D animated video, photo and image galleries, and a live construction camera—check out the Saxon Hill website at go.alfred.edu/saxonhill

Work will continue throughout the fall and winter. It will include installation of signage; goalposts, safety netting, and fencing for the rugby field; construction of the baseball press box, Saxon Sports Center, and grandstand



serving the track and rugby field, and completion of interior work (plumbing, wiring, carpentry); hardscaping and landscaping work; completion of utilities providing water and power to the facility; and the pouring and striping of the track surface.

Once completed, Saxon Hill will have facilitated the addition of four new intercollegiate varsity athletics teams: baseball, men's and women's rugby, and field hockey. The baseball team began competing in the spring of 2024 and will begin playing at its home field at Saxon Hill in spring 2026; women's and men's rugby began competing as an intercollegiate varsity sport last fall; and field hockey began competition this fall.

The complex will positively impact roster growth for the men's and women's track and field teams as the facility will provide them with a home practice and competition facility.

Saxon Hill will provide valuable practice space for other field sport teams—men's lacrosse, women's lacrosse, men's soccer, and women's soccer—that currently practice and compete at Yunevich Stadium on the Alfred University campus. An existing cross country course will be redesigned around the new complex and used for practices. In addition, the Saxon Hill Sports Complex will provide space for intramurals and club sports as well as other recreational activities. The complex will host sports camps and provide opportunities for facility rentals.

The facility is expected to be a boon for student-athlete recruitment and student retention, with the University estimating it will increase enrollment by approximately 170 students over the first six years of its opening. The complex will complement nearby existing sports, recreational, and academic facilities located in the area atop Jericho Hill. These include the Bromeley-Daggett Equestrian Center at Maris Cuneo Equine Park, home to Alfred University's world-class equestrian program, and Foster Lake, which provides the campus community with numerous recreational and co-curricular opportunities.

Oscar Wolter '25 signs pro basketball contract



Oscar Wolter '25, former member of the Alfred University men's basketball team, signed a contract to play professional basketball for the ROTH Energie Giessen Pointers of Germany's Regionalliga. While competing overseas, Wolter will have an opportunity to practice with the Giessen 46ers of ProA, which is the second-highest level of formal basketball competition in Germany.

"I am really excited about this next chapter," Wolter said. "I know that my time at AU over the past two years will help me in playing a leading role this next season."

Wolter, from Munich Germany, played two seasons for the Saxons before graduating in May with a bachelor's degree in computer science. For his career at Alfred, he scored 468 points and pulled down 275 rebounds. He was the team's Empire 8 Conference Sportsman of the Year both of his seasons in a Saxon uniform.

School-record 168 students-athletes earn All-E8 academic honors



The Empire 8 Conference recognized students for excellence in the classroom last spring. A record 168 Alfred University student-athletes were named to the Empire 8 Spring 2025 President's List.

To be named to the President's List, a student-athlete must have a GPA of 3.75 or higher.

In addition to the individual honorees, there were 21 Alfred University teams that earned recognition with having cumulative team GPAs of 3.20 or higher. The dressage equestrian team led the way with a 3.74 team GPA, while women's alpine skiing, men's and women's basketball, women's cross country, women's soccer and women's indoor and outdoor track & field all eclipsed a 3.50 or higher team GPA last spring.

Other teams that accumulated a GPA of 3.20 or higher were: men's cross country, hunt seat equestrian, men's lacrosse, women's lacrosse, women's rugby, men's soccer, softball, men's swimming and diving, women's swimming and diving, men's tennis, women's tennis, women's volleyball, and Western equestrian.

Hall of Fame Class of 2025 Set to Be Honored



Chrissy Behr-Kranefeld '15



David Coombes '15



Mi'Asia Hillman '15



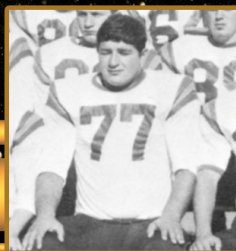
Ryan Thon '11



Alison Wickwire '15



1988 Men's Soccer Team of Distinction



Lambros Touris '70 Silver Saxon



1990 Men's Soccer Team of Distinction

Alfred University will welcome six alumni into its Athletics Hall of Fame during an on-campus induction ceremony November 16. In addition to the five Hall of Fame inductees and one Silver Saxon honoree, the ceremony will also recognize the 1988 and 1990 men's soccer teams.

This year's Hall of Fame inductees include: Christina Behr-Kranefeld '15, M.S. '18, women's swimming; David Coombes '15, men's swimming; Mi'Asia Hillman '15, women's track and field; Ryan Thon '11, football, and Alison Wickwire '15, softball. Lambros Touris '70 will be honored as the Silver Saxon inductee.

At the time of her graduation in 2015, Christina Behr-Kranefeld held four individual school records and was part of five relay school records. Out of those nine school records, only two of them have been broken. She still holds the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard freestyle individual school records. For relays, her teams' 200-yard medley relay, 400-yard medley relay, 200-yard freestyle relay, 400-yard freestyle relay, and 800-yard freestyle relay

all are current records. Behr was an Empire 8 Champion in the 50-yard freestyle, earning All-Empire 8 First Team in 2015 and added a Second Team recognition in the 100-yard freestyle. She was also the 2014 50-yard freestyle State Champion. Behr totaled 67 individual and relay wins throughout her stellar career. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and master's in clinical family counseling, both from Alfred.

David Coombes was a four-year member of the Alfred University men's swimming & diving program. Upon graduation, he held five individual school records and four relay records. In total, he won 57 individual and relay events. Coombes currently holds the 100-yard freestyle school record and was part of teams that hold current school records in the 200-yard freestyle relay, 400-yard freestyle relay, and 800-yard freestyle relay. He earned three All-Empire 8 Second Team honors in 2015, finishing second in both the 100 and 200-yard freestyle races as well as the 400-yard freestyle relay. Coombes earned his undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice Studies in 2015.

Mi'Asia Hillman participated in outdoor track for four years and indoor track for three seasons. For her career, she won 34 events, including 14 conference championships. She was crowned the Empire 8 Outdoor Track Athlete of the Year in 2014. Hillman currently owns outdoor school records in the 100-meter and 200-meter races and ran on the team that holds the school mark in the 4x100-meter relay. Hillman held the Empire 8 outdoor records in both the 100 and 200-meter dashes. She has the current Alfred University indoor records in the 60-meter dash, 200-meter dash, 300-meter dash, and 400-meter run. Hillman was a six-time Empire 8 Champion, a seven-time New York State title winner, an Eastern College Athletic Conference outdoor champ, and as a senior, competed in the NCAA Division III outdoor championship. Hillman earned her undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice Studies in 2015.

Ryan Thon was a four-year receiver for the Alfred University football program who helped the Saxons win back-to-back Empire 8 titles in 2009 and 2010 and appearances in the NCAA Division III championship tournament. In his sophomore year of 2007, the Saxons claimed the 2007 ECAC Northwest Bowl Championship. Thon's greatest season was his senior year of 2010, when he led the Saxons with a school single-season record 73 catches for 949 yards and 15 touchdowns (a single-season record that has since been broken). That season, the Saxons advanced to the quarterfinals of the NCAA tournament, falling to top-seeded Mount Union. Thon earned D3football.com Honorable Mention All-American honors in 2010, as well as All-Empire 8 First Team and All-ECAC First Team recognition. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration in 2011 and an MBA in 2013, both from Alfred University.

Alison Wickwire was a four-year member of the softball team and was one of three seniors on the record-breaking, historic 2015 squad that won a school-record 40 games, claimed the Empire 8 Conference title, and advanced the NCAA Division III College World Series. She was also part of the 2014 team that earned a trip to the NCAA Tournament. Wickwire graduated with five individual school records and one Empire 8 school record, including

single-season marks for home runs and walks which still stand. At the time of her graduation, she held school career records for walks, home runs, and doubles as well as the Empire 8 single season homerun record. Wickwire was an All-American in 2015, when she also earned All-Region, ECAC, and Empire 8 first team honors. She was also named to the All-Empire 8 First Team in 2013 and 2014 and the ECAC Upstate First Team in 2014. Wickwire graduated with degrees in biology and psychology.

Lambros Touris will become the fourth former student-athlete at Alfred to be inducted as a Silver Saxon.

This award, created in 2018, honors student-athletes from early eras (40 years prior to the current Hall of Fame class year) at Alfred University for outstanding athletic achievement, but may lack statistical information that puts nominees at a significant disadvantage when assessing them against contemporary student-athletes. A defensive standout on the football team in the mid-to-late 1960s, Touris was instrumental in the Saxons becoming the 1966 Conference and Upstate Small College Champions as they outscored opponents, 175-55, finishing the season with a record of 6-1-1. The Saxon defense, spearheaded by Touris totaled 24 shutout quarters against opposing offenses and was ranked among the top 10 in the nation. Touris graduated from Alfred with a bachelor's degree in political science.

The 1988 and 1990 men's soccer teams are recognized as Teams of Distinction. The 1988 squad remains the winningest team in the history of Alfred University men's soccer. The team posted a 14-1-3 record with its only loss coming in the NCAA Division III Men's Soccer Championship Tournament. The Saxons finished the regular season ranked third in New York and 16th in the nation. The Saxons outscored their opponents, 49-11 and, prior to the NCAA tournament, didn't allow more than one goal to an opponent all season. Two members of the team, goalkeeper Tony Coccitto '92 and assistant coach William Ruffle '88, are in the Alfred University Athletics Hall of Fame. The 1990 Saxons finished the season with a 11-5-1 record, holding opponents scoreless in eight games. The team earned a bid to the ECAC championships in 1990, advancing to the championship. The title game was canceled due to snow and Alfred and SUNY Plattsburgh were declared co-champions.

Class Notes

1965

Golden Saxons Reunion

Jack Henion (B.A., chemistry) was awarded the 2025 John B. Fenn Award for a Distinguished Contribution in Mass Spectrometry by the American Society for Mass Spectrometry (ASMS). He was honored for his pioneering work on pneumatically assisted electrospray ionization, which significantly advanced the integration of liquid chromatography with mass spectrometry (LC-MS) and established atmospheric pressure ionization (API) techniques. award recognizes the conception, development, and application of this technology, which he co-invented with Thomas R. Covey and Andries P. Bruins in 1987. An emeritus professor of toxicology at Cornell University, Jack's work on Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (LC-MS) and API sources has been foundational for the field for nearly four decades. Jack received his award at the ASMS Annual Conference, held in June in Baltimore. His award lecture highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts between academia and industry in driving scientific progress.

1977

Golden Saxons Reunion

Garth D. Ehrlich (B.A., biology) is active in a number of organizations focused on microbiology. This year, he was made a fellow of the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society and was elected to serve as a member of the Board of Electors for the American Academy of Microbiology (term to run from 2025-2029). He had previously been named a member of the American

Society of Microbiology Distinguished Lecture Panel (term to run from 2023-2025) and in 2022 was made a fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology.

1979

Carl S. Dziekan (B.S., accounting, economics) and his daughter, Carly J. Dziekan-McDonald, were both duly admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on April 28. The ceremony was held before the court's nine justices with the Hon. Chief Justice John Roberts presiding. Carl Dziekan, a partner in the Utica law firm of Steates Remmell Steates and Dziekan, earned his Juris Doctorate from the Albany Law School and a Master of Laws degree in tax law from Syracuse University. In May, he was granted Emeritus status from Utica College of Syracuse University, where he retired after 39 years as a professor of practice. His daughter is the in-house counsel for the Mohawk Valley Health System in Utica.

Elana Herzog (M.F.A.) is one of three Fall 2025 International Artists in Residence at Artpace in San Antonio, TX. Herzog began her residency July 21. Her exhibition opened to the public on Sept. 11 and will remain on view through Jan. 18, 2026. Elana, a native of Toronto, Canada, who lives and works in New York City, holds a B.A. from Bennington College and an M.F.A.



Five 1970 alumni from Alfred University's nursing program met in the spring to celebrate their 55th year since earning their degrees. The group, which gathered for lunch at The King and I restaurant in Rochester, are (front from left), **Cheryl Utter** and **Lorna (Raquet) Calletto** and, rear from left, **Susan (Dierken) Ames**, **Mary (Scheer) Smith**, and **Cynthia (Bryant) Luehman**.

from Alfred University. She received a 2017 Guggenheim Fellowship and was profiled in Sculpture Magazine's Summer 2020 issue. Her work was the subject of a 30-year survey exhibition at Koffler Arts in Toronto Canada, from February 13 through May 11, 2025. Elana's solo and two-person exhibitions include Cathouse Proper, Brooklyn; Sharjah Art Museum, UAE; Western Exhibitions, Chicago; The Boiler (Pierogi Gallery), and Smack Mellon, Brooklyn; The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca, New York; Diverseworks, Houston, Texas; Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, and the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art in Missouri. Her work was recently included in group shows at the Brooklyn Museum, Albertz Benda Gallery, New York City; Mindy Solomon Gallery, Miami, FL; and the David Rockefeller Creative Arts Center at The Pocantico Center, Sleepy Hollow, NY. Elana has been included in international group shows in the Republic of Georgia, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Canada, Chile, and the Netherlands, and shows at institutions such as, Museum of Arts and Design,

1983

David Dahlquist (B.F.A.) had artwork selected for an exhibition at the 2025 American Architecture Pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy, one of the most prestigious international stages for art and architecture. The work is from a public art installation, Do Something Good for Your Neighbor, in Lake Como, Fort Worth, Texas, created in collaboration with artist Matt Niebuhr, RDG Dahlquist Art Studio, and RDG Planning and Design. The installation, built in 2021 and owned by Fort Worth Public Art, was one of 54 projects selected for the exhibition, "PORCH: An Architecture of Generosity," which was commissioned by the United States State Department and organized by the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design at the University of Arkansas, in partnership with DesignConnects and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. David's career has been remarkable—first as Artist-in-Residence at the Des Moines Art Center, then as Assistant Professor of Art and Design at Iowa State University, and later as founder of Dahlquist Clayworks, which grew into a nationally recognized public art practice and eventually merged with RDG Planning and Design, where David served as a Managing Principal. In 2022, he retired as Principal Emeritus to return to his personal ceramics practice full time. David's achievements have been recognized nationally, including the Governor's Arts Award from the State of Iowa (2016) for Career Achievement and Excellence and Innovation in the Arts.

1987

Vincent Pimpinella (B.S., ceramic engineering) is a coach for the United States Youth Soccer, PA West, Olympic Development Program (ODP). Vincent, who played four seasons (1983-86) in the Saxons' men's soccer team, is one of the Western Pennsylvania region's most highly accomplished soccer coaches. He has actively guided competitive soccer teams since 1998 and has been a PA West staff coach with ODP since 2021 working with both the boys' and girls' programs. He has coached at the high school and club levels, including serving as head girls' soccer coach at Greater Latrobe (PA) Area High School for 10 seasons, from 2007-16. Previously, in 2002, he established Loyalhanna United Soccer Club as a PA West community club with their own four field complex in Latrobe. Vincent is currently



*The Phi Epsilon Pi Class of 1970 spent a weekend last winter at the home of Ron Zapletal in Wolcott, CO, just 10 miles down I-70 from Vail. This was the 18th year that the group has been getting together for a long winter weekend at Ron's house. Shown in photo (from left) are Class of 1970- alumni **Wes Martens, Alan Stern, Sandy Reinauer, Howard Gershon, Ron Zapletal, Geoff Grey, Gil Roessner, and Ken Campbell.***

New York City; The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery in Saratoga Springs, NY; the Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC, and the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI.



The "Core 4," a group of Kappa Nu fraternity brothers, get together regularly, about three or four times per year. In the photo above, taken over the summer on City Island in the Bronx, are (clockwise from front-left): **Steve Chaleff '61**, **Steve Steinberg '62**, **John Sprung '63**, and **Bob Meltzer '63**. Steve Chaleff and Bob Meltzer are Life Trustees at Alfred University.

the head girls' soccer coach at the Kiski School near Pittsburgh. He has completed multiple levels of coaching education including national licenses through PA West, C-license and National Youth License with US Soccer and goalkeeper coaching with United Soccer Coaches.

1988

Elizabeth "Liz" Heintz-Riter (M.A.) was honored as an Outstanding Italian American by the Paolo Busti Cultural Foundation of Genesee County for her countless hours of community service. Liz received her award at the Foundation Scholarship Dinner on June 10 at Batavia Downs in Batavia, NY. Community Involvement led to Liz's commitment to make Batavia and Genesee County a better place. Liz moved to Batavia after graduating from Alfred and has been involved over the years in the Batavia Area Jaycees, serving as Individual Development Vice President and Community Services Vice President. She began her career at GCASA, The Genesee Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (now UConnectCare). Her role as Prevention/Student Assistance Counselor at Notre Dame High School in Batavia led to her role as the Chief Compliance and Quality Assurance Director. She also served as Secretary,

Vice President and President of the Board of Directors of the Genesee County Mental Health Association. Liz volunteered for the Parent Teacher Organization at Robert Morris Elementary School, serving as Vice President and later President. She has continued to give, volunteering for Genesee Cancer Assistance and the Batavia Rotary Club. Liz and her husband, John, have chaired the YMCA Invest in Youth/Strong Communities campaign together several times and Liz has served on the United Memorial Medical Center Quality Committee Board for the last three years.

The late **Eric Recktenwald** (B.S., ceramic engineering) was honored in the spring by his long-time employer, Kyocera International, which dedicated in his honor a new building at its Hendersonville, NC, location. Eric was employed by Kyocera as a ceramic engineer for many years before his passing in October 2023. Eric's brother, Mark Recktenwald '89, and his family attended the Recognition and Building Dedication ceremony at the Kyocera plant in North Carolina, where friends, colleagues, and family gathered to celebrate his lasting impact. They shared reflections about Eric's passion for engineering, his steadfast dedication to Kyocera's mission, and the deep respect he earned from all who had the privilege of working alongside him. A Kyocera press release described Eric as "a valued colleague, mentor, and friend. Eric's leadership, unwavering commitment to excellence, and tireless work ethic have left an enduring legacy within our organization. His influence continues to guide our teams and inspire our future."

1993

Julie Francis (B.S., business administration) was appointed on July 21 to serve as president and chief executive officer of MGP Ingredients, Inc., a provider of branded and distilled spirits and food ingredient solutions. Julie joined MGP with more than 30 years of leadership experience in the branded food and beverage industries, with a track record of driving growth. She was previously chief operating officer at Schwan's Company, a leading producer of frozen foods. Prior to Schwan's, she served as senior vice president of commercial and category development for Constellation Brands' Total Beverage Alcohol platform. She previously held multiple leadership positions at The Coca-Cola Company and Coca-Cola Enterprises, where she played a key role

in the integration of the U.S. segments of these two companies to create the Coca-Cola Refreshments (U.S.) subsidiary. Julie was a star goalkeeper on the Alfred University women's soccer team. A four-year starter, she holds the school's career record for saves and shutouts and was elected to Alfred University's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2005.

Michelle Plucinsky (B.F.A.) and her husband, Chris Nordin, are founding partners of The Glass Academy, a privately-owned working glass studio and Gallery in Dearborn, MI, which hosted the 17th Annual Glass Pumpkin Fest Show & Sale across two weekends — October 4–5 and October 11–12. Guests enjoyed free admission and free street parking, live glassblowing demonstrations for all ages, and the chance to purchase hundreds of one-of-a-kind collectible glass pumpkins. The Glass Academy is a 14,000-square-foot facility that serves as both a production hub for original glassware and a destination for live demonstrations, hands-on classes, and signature events that attract visitors from across Michigan and beyond. The Michigan Room is featured inside the Glass Academy as an event space and functional beverage counter serving soda, coffees and cocktails in originally designed glassware from the Glass Academy.

2001

Honored Reunion Year

Elaine Hardman (B.A., communication studies, sociology) is Research Lead, Archives & Special Collections, and Senior Curator for Reveal Digital, a small innovative company that uses a unique library crowd-funded model to support the development of open digital collections. Reveal Digital is a division of JSTOR—both are affiliates of Ithaka, a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing access to knowledge. JSTOR, in partnership with libraries, raises funds to digitize, clear rights, and make available special collections that have been aggregated from universities and other institutions. Reveal's open-access collections are hosted on the JSTOR platform. JSTOR Seeklight, the AI-powered collections processing technology within JSTOR Digital Stewardship Services, is the 2025 recipient of the C.F.W. Coker Award from the Society of American Archivists (SAA). The award recognizes finding aids, finding aid systems, innovative developments in archival

description, or descriptive tools that enable archivists to produce more effective finding aids.

2003

Leo Tecosky (B.F.A.), a Brooklyn-based glass artist, hosted a weekend of free public glassblowing demonstrations at Flint Institute of Arts (FIA) Hotshop, Flint, MI, on August 2 and 3. Leo—known for fusing Hip-Hop aesthetics and graffiti culture with traditional glassmaking techniques—created original works live alongside the FIA Hot Shop team. Visitors had the rare opportunity to see this boundary-pushing artist in action and learn more about his distinctive process. Leo has exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum and Cooper Hewitt, with works in the collections of the Chrysler Museum and the Flint Institute of Arts. He is the recipient of the 36th Corning Museum Rakow Commission and the 2023 Maxwell/Hanrahan Award in Craft.

Keep in touch

Please send us your family activities,
professional moves, achievements,
and photos.

EMAIL

whitehouse@alfred.edu or
alumni@alfred.edu

NOTE: When emailing alumni@alfred.edu, please label your subject as "**Class Note**", so we can be sure to include it in the next issue of Alfred Magazine.

SNAIL MAIL

Mark Whitehouse
Director of Communications
1 Saxon Drive, Alfred, NY 1802



An exhibition opening this fall at Craft Contemporary gallery in Los Angeles highlights the work of late renowned midcentury designers **Jerome '52 (M.F.A.)** and **Evelyn Ackerman (M.F.A.)**, Wayne State University).

The exhibition,

"Material Curiosity by Design: Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman," opens at Craft Contemporary on Nov. 15 and will remain on view through May 10, 2026. Celebrated for their vibrant contributions to California modernism, the Ackermans partnered for decades on bold designs that brought warmth to midcentury interiors. The Ackermans' work in ceramic, textile, mosaic, wood, and metal will showcased with select pieces by three

contemporary artists, including Alfred University alumna **Jolie Ngo '22 M.F.A.** Ngo earned her Master of Fine Arts degree from Alfred precisely 70 years after Jerome. Originally from the Detroit area, the Ackerman's moved to Los Angeles after Jerome graduated from Alfred and set up their art studio. The duo epitomized the designer-craftsperson ethos, bridging their studio art training with efforts to scale production for broader markets. Over fifty years, they designed a diverse body of work ranging from colorful mosaics and wall hangings to graceful ceramics and wood carvings. Featuring final products along with preparatory materials—many of which will be shown for the first time—this exhibition offers intimate explorations of the Ackermans' techniques in different media. It invites visitors to consider the interplay between design concepts and material sensitivity that underpinned the couple's success. The exhibition includes a suite of workshops and drop-ins which emphasize the use of natural materials and sustainable, upcycled creations. Program highlights include workshops

In addition to her master's degree in school counseling, Roz also earned an advanced certificate in mental health counseling from Alfred University. She earned a bachelor's degree in exercise science from the University at Buffalo and is currently pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership, administration and policy at Fordham University.

2019

Emily Rarity (B.F.A.) is owner of Potomac Clay, her home-based pottery studio in Mount Jackson, VA, which she opened in spring 2024. Prior to opening her studio, Emily was a production potter, combining custom and production work for hotels, cruise ships and boutique restaurants. She uses artisan skills and her knowledge of chemistry to create custom, utilitarian pottery. Emily said in an interview for a recent story in Northern Virginia Daily that the goal of Potomac Clay is to show people that handmade pottery can be used in everyday

life. "That's the idea behind Potomac Clay, everything for the tabletop and kitchen," she said.

2020

Jessica Wilcox (B.A., communication studies, MBA 2021) has been appointed head softball coach at Keuka College. She joins Keuka after serving two years as an assistant coach at Buffalo State University. Jessica played five seasons (2017-21) at Alfred University and is one of the top pitchers in the history of the Saxons' softball program. She holds the school's career record for wins, strikeouts, and shutouts and has single-season records for strikeouts and shutouts. She was an All-American in 2021 and during her time at Alfred earned All-Empire 8 honors three times, including being named the conference's Pitcher of the Year in 2021. Jessica served as the Empire 8 Assistant Commissioner during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years through the NCAA Division III Ethnic Minority & Women's Internship

Grant program. She helped oversee the Empire 8's public relations, graphic design, video, social media, and marketing programs in addition to the conference's sports information department and helped oversee the Empire 8 Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and annual Empire 8 Student-Athlete Summit.

2021

Sami Tsang (M.F.A.) had work in a solo exhibition at Claire Oliver Gallery in Harlem, New York City. The exhibition, titled "Our Family Portrait," was on view at the gallery May 24-June 26 and featured new large-scale, richly layered figurative and allegorical works in ceramic sculpture, painting, and installation. "Our Family Portrait" examines Sami's exploration of the domestic sphere as both a site of comfort and constraint. Using humor and symbolism, her sculptural works reflect the psychological complexities of family life, evoking themes of transformation, resilience, and adaptation. Drawing from childhood memories, Chinese proverbs, and cultural symbols, Sami challenges traditional roles and societal expectations, creating a deeply personal yet universally resonant narrative.



Alfred University alumni from the GNP Graystar – Special Materials team were at the 2025 Ceramics Expo in Novi, MI, proudly representing their alma mater. Shown above, from left, are Peter Benoit '14 (B.S., ceramic engineering), sales engineer; Allen Drake '96 (B.S., ceramic engineering), vice president; Brian Hauer '92 (B.S., ceramic engineering), technical sales director; and Rick O'Neil '93 (B.S., ceramic engineering), president; GNP Graystar, located in Amherst, NY, is a premier global supplier of raw materials for the ceramic, abrasive, and refractory markets. The Ceramics brings together suppliers, manufacturers, and end-users from across the ceramics supply chain to drive innovation forward.

STAY CONNECTED STAY SAXON



Join Alfred University's online alumni community and reconnect with your AU family. Explore the classmate directory, alumni-owned businesses, regional and campus events, job postings, and the latest campus news. See what your peers are up to and connect with alumni near you—it's easy!

Discover more at
alumni.alfred.edu and reconnect.

In Memorium

1946

Kalope "Pope" (Giopulos) Jamesson,
April 24, 2025

1950

Lucille (Peterson) Macera,
Aug. 22, 2025

1951

Peggy (Griffith) Crosby, July 17, 2025
Nellie M. Melko, April 11, 2025

1952

Eleanor Lynwood "Lyn" (Byers) Hart,
June 28, 2025

1954

Dale A. Edwards, July 25, 2025
Anlee (Fischler) Marcus,
June 20, 2025

1955

Mary Jane (Villareale) Mackey,
Oct. 24, 2025

1956

Stanley Small, April 11, 2025
Virginia E. Hill, April 13, 2025
Don S. Weaver, April 14, 2025

1957

Eleanor Lynwood "Lyn" (Byers) Hart,
June 28, 2025

1958

Judi Loomis-Allen, June 13, 2025

1959

Mark Bohanan, May 17, 2025
Steve Cohen, Aug. 7, 2025
Barbara A. (Miller) Hoagland,
May 9, 2025
David W. Phelps, April 12, 2025
John H. Scroxton, July 27, 2025

1960

George "Bud" Graves Jr., Aug. 14, 2025
Alan J. Kitchen, May 23, 2025
Burt Kroll Rein, Aug. 27, 2025

1961

Howard E. Miller, June 8, 2025

1962

Joe C. Green, July 1, 2025

1963

Douglas G. Burton, June 11, 2025
Roblyn "Robbie" (King) Potter,
Sept. 6, 2025

1964

Gary S. Grimes, May 25, 2025

1965

Gail F. McArthur, June 13, 2025
Roger G. Mead, July 8, 2025
Dianne (McConville) Weiss,
July 26, 2025

1966

Nancy (Herb) Wells, June 7, 2025

1967

Diane (Gottschling) Bradley,
July 22, 2025
Bob G. Scott Jr., Aug. 24, 2025

1969

Robert "Peter" Sohngen, July 25, 2025

1970

Geoff Brunger, May 26, 2025
James R. Woughter, June 13, 2025

1971

Lt. Col. Michael Erskine Wright,
June 4, 2025
Walter J. Cook, May 23, 2025

1973

Brooke (Sullivan) Tetz, May 20, 2025

1976

Terence Leahy Griswold, Sept. 22, 2025

1977

John H. Olson, July 9, 2025

1978

James D. McGuffin-Cawley,
June 27, 2025

1981

Helen (Martin) Warren, April 14, 2025

1985

Daniel C. Iverson, April 16, 2025

1988

William S. Clemens, June 11, 2025

1991

David M. Henn, July 25, 2025

1997

Kathleen A. Janicki, April 8, 2025

2000

Tane R. Robinson, June 2, 2025

2003

Margaret A. (Honti) Quinn,
Sept. 4, 2025

2019

Megan L. Whetstine, April 26, 2025

2020

Leslie S. Rollins, Aug. 13, 2025

Shine a Spotlight on Alfred's Finest!



Alumni Award recognition at Reunion 2025 (from left): Mark Zupan (president); Robin Mazejka (associate vice president, philanthropic relationships) accepting for Katherine Fabor '75; Wayne Higby (professor, School of Art and Design/Director and Chief Curator of the Alfred Ceramic Art Museum) accepting for Hongwei Li '07; J. Russell Fahey '58; Joanna Carroll '15; Dr. Shan K. Sundaram accepting for John Vienna '91, MS '93; and Danielle Johnson-Kutch '03, president, Alumni Council.

Do you know an Alfred University alum who's breaking boundaries, giving back, or making waves in their field? Now's your chance to help us recognize their impact!

Now accepting nominations for Alfred University Alumni Awards:

- ➔ Award for Distinguished Achievement
- ➔ Award for Distinguished Service
- ➔ Rising Alumni Award
- ➔ Abigail Allen Award for Service to Women
- ➔ Lillian T. Nevins Award for Lifetime Service to Alfred University

- These prestigious awards will be presented at Reunion 2026—and we want your help finding the alumni who deserve the spotlight.
- **Nominate someone today:** www.Alfred.edu/alumni/programs/form
- **Deadline:** January 31, 2026 - Nominations received after this date will roll over to the next Reunion year—so don't wait! Let's honor the spirit, service, and success that define our alumni. Nominate someone remarkable today!
- For more info about the awards, visit go.alfred.edu/alumniawards

PAYING FORWARD A SECOND CHANCE

BY CAROL MARCY

Andrew Burns '87 is one of Alfred University's youngest donors of endowed scholarships. Just nine years after graduating, he created The Andrew E. Burns '87 Endowed Scholarship Fund for the Humanities and Social Sciences. His motivation came from a simple truth he's carried with him since the day he arrived on campus: someone at Alfred took a chance on him.

That chance meant everything. Dealing with his parents' divorce in high school, Burns didn't come to Alfred with a perfect academic record. "I remember telling the admissions officer, 'Look, I just need somebody to give me a chance,'" he recalls. That chance came in the form of conditional acceptance to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, where he found his path in political science and history. It was a turning point that would shape his future.

Once on campus, Burns quickly discovered a place filled with opportunity. He dove into student life—making his mark on campus radio at WALF, building friendships in Zeta Beta Tau, and stepping into leadership as the fraternity's Student Senate representative, a role that led to his election as president in both his junior and senior years.

"Everywhere I looked, there was opportunity. And I just kept saying yes," he said. Those experiences connected him with lifelong friends, trusted mentors like Dean for Student Affairs Don King, President Edward Coll, history professor Gary Horowitz, and faculty who helped him discover his voice as a writer. Most



Andrew Burns '87

importantly, he felt seen and supported in a way he never had before. "I felt welcome, I felt safe, and I knew this was an environment where I was going to thrive."

After graduation, Burns began a career in finance, working his way up from floor reporter at the New York Mercantile Exchange to a trading position with Louis Dreyfus Energy in Connecticut, before returning to college to answer his true calling as a history teacher. In those early career years, Alfred stayed close to his heart. "When I started making some money, I thought: if I do well, I've got to do something good with it. What I'd love to do is help another student with tuition—someone who just needs a chance, like I did."

That dream became reality when a young AU development officer met with him in the mid-1990s. Burns made his first gift to establish a scholarship fund. "It wasn't

the \$10 million I had dreamed about, but it was a start," he laughs. Since 1998, the scholarship has been awarded annually to a student.

Today, Burns continues to look back on Alfred as the place where his life's trajectory changed. "I wish I could find that admissions officer from 1983 and thank her. Just to let her know what her decision gave fruit to." His scholarship carries forward the gift that he received, giving other students the chance to grow, to lead, and to call Alfred home.

Burns holds a B.A. in political science from Alfred University and earned an M.A. in Education from Fairfield University and an M.A. in Global Studies from the Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. Since 2004, he has held National Board Certification, the teaching profession's most respected credential, earned by just 3% of U.S. teachers. Now retired from teaching in Colorado's Cherry Creek School District, Burns and his wife, Gabriele, make their home in Tetonia, Idaho.

"Knowing that someone believes in my potential means so much, and I'm deeply thankful for the difference you've made in my life."

— **Jordan Gertge '28**, political science major, and recipient of the Andrew E. Burns '87 Endowed Scholarship.

The Magic Returns....



Alfred University
MostArts
Festival

MostArts Festival International Orchestra
Young Pianist Competition Evening Concert Series
Chamber Music Series
Music Under the Stars
International Guest Artists



JULY 12-18
www.alfred.edu/MostArts

REUNION 2026

Because the best conversations start with 'remember when...'

Calling all alumni! Reunion 2026 is happening June 11-14! From inspiring alumni speakers to hands-on campus experiences and unforgettable entertainment, it's a weekend packed with connection, celebration, and something for everyone.

Honoring all class years ending in 1 and 6!

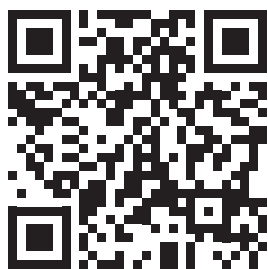
Class of 1976 celebrates their 50th year Reunion!

Special Group Celebrations

Alfred University's Golden Saxons – Graduates from 1975 and prior.

All Greek Reunion

- All fraternities and sororities are invited to celebrate during Reunion.
- Back by popular demand—Klan Alpine-sponsored Band Night!
- Gather with your brothers and sisters. Let the “remember when” conversations flow.



Visit our Reunion page at go.alfred.edu/reunion or use the QR code. Check in often to see the plans as they develop.

Want to help make Reunion 2026 the best one yet? Do you have ideas for special group celebrations? Become a class or special group coordinator—or volunteer—by contacting the Office of Alumni Engagement at 607-871-2144.

Purple and Gold Runs Deep! Mark your calendars to come home again.