

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS | SUMMER/FALL 2025

KEENE STATE TODAY



FOUNDATIONS OF THE FUTURE

The Legacy of Our
Comprehensive Campaign



FEATURE

10 Opportunity Starts Here: A Campaign for Keene State College

In this issue: This issue celebrates the extraordinary success of Keene State College's fundraising campaign, which exceeded its \$20 million goal by reaching 140 percent with support from more than 6,000 donors. Highlighting the impact of this achievement, this edition of Keene State Today showcases how the campaign's priorities—student support, academic excellence, and high-impact learning experiences—are transforming lives across the campus and beyond.

TO OUR COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN IMPACT STORIES

Student Support

11 Logan Phillips '25: Making Music Turns to Teaching Music

12 Nicole Graczewski '24: A Path Paved with Scholarships

12 Teachers Helping Teachers is Nelson '59 and Dorothy '58 Megna's Way of Paying it Forward.

Academic and Programmatic Excellence

14 Owl Athletics

15 Baseball Program Has Friends on All the Right Bases

16 Precision Optics Lab One-Year Certificate Program Is a New Fast-Track Option

16 Cohen Institute Just Getting Started: Internships, Graduate Fellowship, Scholar Program

High Impact Learning Experiences

17 Ellis Faith White '28: Two Weeks, Five Cities, 'Such a Blast!'

19 Building Careers and The NH Workforce: Sustainable Product Design & Innovation Internships

IN EVERY ISSUE

4 Letter from the President

20 News from the Nest

22 In Memoriam

24 Class Notes

29 Upcoming Events

30 From the Archives

NEWS & STORIES

6 The KEA Welcomes New Trustees

7 KSC Alumni Association Updates

8 Alumni Awards Celebrated At Reunion Weekend





DESIGN

Boston Impressions
bostonimpressions.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jessica Bigaj
Paul Miller
Hilary Shepard
Andrea Vickers-Sivret '01

PHOTOGRAPHERS

William Wrobel '11
Ethan Davis '25

BRAND CONSULTANT

Katie Arsenault

PRESIDENT

Dr. Melinda Treadwell '90

Front cover: Timing can be everything. At Commencement 2025, on May 10, clouds parted, and a persistent, at-times heavy rain broke less than an hour before proceedings on Fiske Quad began. A few hours later, more than 600 degree candidates had walked the stage to receive their scrolls. Among them was Fiona Acton, senior class vice president, seen in the photo on these pages. Among our newest alumni, Fiona earned a degree in sociology with a specialization in social work and minoring in psychology, addictions, and criminal justice. At Keene State, Fiona said she found the intellectual community she wanted.

**KEENE STATE TODAY IS
PUBLISHED BY KEENE
STATE COLLEGE**

POSTMASTER:

Please send address changes to Keene State Today, 229 Main Street, Keene, NH 03435-2701, Or update your contact information at www.keene.edu/alumni/connect/update



Dear Keene State Community,

The Comprehensive Campaign; Opportunity Starts Here

Opportunity Starts Here, our first-ever comprehensive campaign, began with high ambitions to make a bigger impact. It centered on sturdy pillars that supported simple themes: That more is possible together, excellence is earned, not given, and the promise of a Keene State education to build futures and deliver on dreams must endure.

But it takes a team ... one big, generous, and awesome team.

With tens of thousands of alumni and friends who still care about the college and remain engaged, we have that.

We have legacy, tradition, and extraordinary Owl pride.

The campaign results bear that out. With more than 6,000 donors contributing, the campaign—riding waves of momentum but consistent throughout—surpassed its goal, finishing at 140 percent of the target.

You didn't just scale the mountain and reach the summit; you went beyond and touched the clouds.

Our alumni and donors never stop surprising us with the heights they help us to achieve.

The Campaign outcome is a remarkable accomplishment, and as such, we proudly dedicate some pages in this issue of Keene State Today to celebrate and highlight examples of your kindness and genuine goodwill at work.



Nicole Graczewski '24



Ellis White '28



Logan Phillips '25

Our spirits are buoyed as we look to the future, knowing that we have resources, scholarships, and a stronger endowment to be adaptive and nimble in the ways we know these times will require. We are prepared for challenges ahead, and because of all of you who give, and with your voices, help to raise the visibility and reputation of Keene State, we are better positioned to remain student-centered long into the future.

Enjoy this issue.

The stories within speak to Keene State's story, to ways in which philanthropy gives flight to so many student Owls.

In the Morris-August Honors Program, first-year student Ellis White '28 found academic challenge and small classes certain to help forge stronger connections with professors and peers.

Get to know how scholarship was pivotal for recent graduates Nicole Graczewski '24 and Logan Phillips '25, whose aspirations to become classroom teachers have been realized.

Our donors are also driving academic and programmatic excellence by ensuring that smart and sensible academic initiatives can get off the drawing board, and athletic facilities and experiences are top quality. The Cohen Institute is taking off with supported internships, a new graduate fellowship, and a new Student Scholar program for undergraduates. And buzz is growing about a new one-year precision optics certificate.

It's all going on because of you: Fresh approaches, new spaces, timely and topical programs, and exciting cultural adventures. Read more inside.

Keene State is a special place where passion and potential collide and where amazing is possible.

It is also your forever college home.

Dr. Melinda Treadwell '90
PRESIDENT, KEENE STATE COLLEGE

A Message from the Keene Endowment Association Board of Trustees

As we enter the 68th year since the establishment of the Keene Endowment Association (KEA), the momentum of the board's work builds at an inspiring pace. Steered by our mission to empower student success, the KEA is committed to growing the endowment to support a greater number of Keene State students and programs each year.

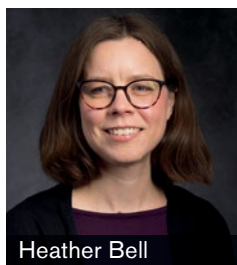
Over the past five years, the KEA's investment portfolio has grown from \$17 million to more than \$25 million with 99 endowed funds that support scholarships and programs. Throughout the past fiscal year, more than 180 Keene State students have benefited from more than \$450,000 in KEA scholarship awards, and programs have received \$229,000.

The KEA objectives align with the Keene State College Strategic Plan by stewarding funds that open student access to academic and experiential learning opportunities, augment programmatic excellence, and create high-impact learning environments. The KEA Board of Trustees remains dedicated to enabling Keene State students to reach higher, go further, and pursue excellence through a liberal arts education energized by real-world experience.

We invite you to join us in supporting current students and future alumni! Please contact the Advancement Division at 603-358-2620 to learn more about donating to existing endowments or creating your own.

With gratitude,
THE KEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The KEA Welcomes Three New Trustees



Heather Bell

Heather Bell is vice president and second generation owner of Electronic Imaging Materials, Inc. (EIM) with her husband Alex Henkel. She

is a UNH graduate with a BA in English and Women's Studies and an MA in English Writing. Heather has presented at several Keene State undergraduate business management classes, and EIM was recently recognized by the Keene State College Alumni Association with the Outstanding Service Award for guest lectures, practice interviews for graduating seniors, class project feedback, and paid internships that frequently were extended into additional semesters or full-time employment. Heather has served on the board of the Monadnock United Way and more recently as an Impact Monadnock Business Ambassador, promoting family friendly business practices and policies throughout the state.

Torrey Greene is a Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor® designee with over 25 years of experience in the financial services industry where he has worked as a partner and officer for both large and small organizations. In 2004, Torrey opened his current business, Greene and Associates Integrated Retirement Strategies, in Newport, New Hampshire. Greene and Associates specializes in retirement planning and investment management for individuals and businesses. Torrey recently merged his practice with another planner to create more business efficiency and business continuity planning. Torrey is a past president of the NH chapter of the International Association for Financial Planning and past president of the Northern New England Financial Planning Association. He earned a BS in Financial Management from UNH.



Torrey Greene

Heather Gilligan is a Professor of Music at Keene State College and formerly served as Chair of the Music Department. She oversees the areas of composition, theory, aural skills, and music technology.



Heather Gilligan

Heather is an active composer whose chamber, orchestral, and vocal works have been performed across the United States. In 2023, she received the KSC Distinguished Scholar award. Three of her newest works have recently been named as Finalists in the 2025 American Prize competition, including Cerulean Rhythms (wind ensemble division), Movements in Motion (orchestra division), and Rise Up, My Love (choral division). She is working on a commission from the Grand Monadnock Youth Choirs and Zenith Ensemble for a combined choral work that focuses on native cultures of our region. Heather has a DMA in Music Composition from Boston University.

KSCAA Board Welcomes New Members, Hosts Regional Events and a Successful 5K

The Keene State College Alumni Association is proud to announce the election of two new members to the Board of Directors: Scott Ettl '96 and Casey Michelle Brown '22.



Scott Ettl '96 is the Managing Vice President of Service Operations at Gartner, where he began his career right after graduation. A dedicated alumnus, Scott brings years of volunteer experience and nonprofit board service, and is excited to help strengthen alumni engagement and student support at KSC.

Casey Michelle Brown '22 is an Area Coordinator at Worcester State University with a passion for student affairs and Residence Life. As a young alumna and active advisor to Delta Phi Epsilon, she brings energy, event planning expertise, and a strong desire to build connections within the KSC community.



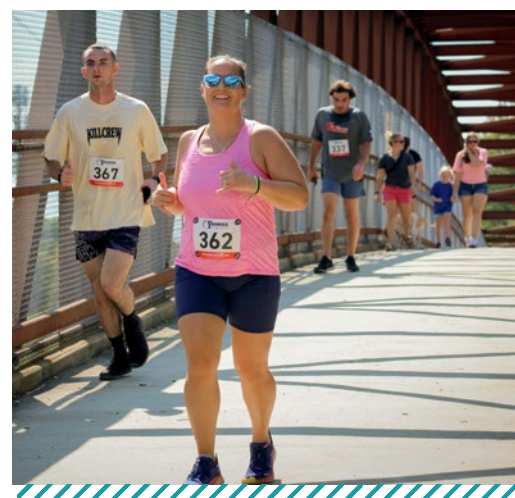
This spring, KSCAA was thrilled to host four successful regional alumni events:

- Burlington, VT, hosted by Shane Norris '13
- Portsmouth, NH, hosted by Elizabeth Mullen '10
- Newport, RI, hosted by Colin Barnett '11
- New York City, NY, co-hosted by Matt Kocyba '98 and Rob Ferragina '96

These events gave alumni across the Northeast the opportunity to reconnect, share memories, and hear updates about exciting developments at Keene State.

We also celebrated the Second Annual Hootie's Hustle 5K during Homecoming Weekend. This spirited event brought together alumni, students, and friends of the college to raise funds for the Alumni Association Scholarship, which benefits students who are children of alumni. Thanks to everyone who participated and supported this meaningful cause!

As we welcome new board members and continue building community, we thank all alumni for your continued support and enthusiasm for Keene State College.



HONORING OWL EXCELLENCE: 2025 ALUMNI AWARDS CELEBRATED AT REUNION WEEKEND

During Reunion Weekend, Keene State College was proud to honor the 2025 Alumni Award recipients and Distinguished Teacher—a group of remarkable individuals who represent the very best of what it means to be an Owl.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD **PETER HANRAHAN '73**

Peter Hanrahan '73, co-founder of the Clarence DeMar Marathon and a leader in environmental engineering, has spent his career building healthier communities. A lifelong member of the Keene State family, Peter's deep connection to the College made his recognition especially meaningful.



OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD **RODNEY OBIEN**

Rodney Obien, College Archivist, plays a vital role in preserving Keene State's legacy, ensuring that alumni stories, traditions, and memories continue to inspire future generations.

SPRAGUE DRENNAN AWARD **KRISTIN BROOKS '11**

Kristin Brooks '11 was recognized for her outstanding volunteerism, leadership, and mentorship. Her work on the Alumni Board and dedication to student support helped bridge the transition from student to alumni for generations of Keene State graduates.

ALUMNI INSPIRATION AWARD **GIANNA RICCO '21**

Gianna Ricco '21 was honored for her advocacy and service with the Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention, where she supports individuals in their most vulnerable moments—a powerful reflection of Keene State's values of compassion and community.





NORMA V. WALKER '51 M'59
OUTSTANDING ALUMNI TEACHER
AWARD CHARLES ZINITI '04

Charles Ziniti '04, recipient of the Outstanding Alumni Teacher Award, was celebrated for his creative, civic-focused approach to history education and for continuing Keene State's proud tradition of preparing impactful educators.

2025 DISTINGUISHED TEACHER
AWARD CHRIS RENNIX

Finally, Chris Rennix was named the 2025 Distinguished Teacher for his leadership in the Safety & Occupational Health Applied Sciences program. His vision and mentorship have helped build one of Keene State's most successful and enduring academic programs—connecting generations of alumni across industries.

Each of this year's honorees exemplifies Keene State's mission: to prepare students to think critically, act creatively, and serve the greater good.

Their stories and accomplishments are a powerful reminder of the lasting impact Keene State alumni and faculty continue to make.

OPPORTUNITY STARTS HERE:

A Campaign For Keene State College

To our community

A campaign is an indicator of the strength of an institution's community. And, closing at 140% of goal and with more than 6,000 donors. Keene State College's community has a tremendous amount to be proud of.

When the campaign began in July 2021, our goal of \$20 million was ambitious, but our funding needs were clear: to increase access to a Keene State College education for more students; to ensure the best possible experience once a student was on campus; and to build high-impact experiences that would serve both as life-changing experiences and pathways into the workforce.

Built alongside Keene State's current strategic plan, these funding needs created the following three campaign priorities:

Student Support

Academic and Programmatic Excellence

High Impact Learning Experiences

To have landed at **\$28 million** in support of these priorities is a show of support and solidarity from the community that we could not have imagined—and the impact of which will be felt for generations. The community built this success through unprecedented times: a pandemic, domestic and global geopolitical strife, and an uncertain financial picture.

We are incredibly proud to have closed our campaign with such strong numbers. However, the true impact is what is behind the numbers: lives changed in small and large ways.

The following stories highlight a small sampling of what donors have enabled for our students and our community over the life of the campaign. Our entire community has a part in these stories, whether directly or indirectly. We invite you to read on, and to consider where you see yourself.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOU

BY THE NUMBERS: July 2021-July 2025

STUDENT SUPPORT \$9.3M RAISED

Investments in scholarships, awards, and emergency funding for students.

ACADEMIC & PROGRAMMATIC EXCELLENCE | \$17.7M RAISED

Investments in program and curriculum development, faculty and staff, and athletics.

HIGH IMPACT LEARNING EXPERIENCES | \$1M RAISED

Investments in paid internship and experiential learning.



\$28M

raised

140%

of goal

6,196

Total Donors



12,357

gifts



1

Institute created -
The Cohen Institute

The first institute
outside of UNH



2,313

Alumni Donors

223

Student Donors

174%

growth for Keene Endowment – to

\$26.3M

23

athletic
teams
invested
in



1,250

student scholarship recipients

337

different funds invested in



18

Steinway pianos
funded achieving
All-Steinway
status for Keene

Some institutions claim they open doors for their students, but at Keene State, we are grounded in that pursuit and take every chance to prove it.

Student success stories show the pivotal role that the College plays in preparing future thinkers, leaders, and visionaries poised to make an impact.

Learning is about much more than completing tasks in the classroom. Real-world experiences, internships, and studying abroad are examples of the enriching learning opportunities Keene State offers in the liberal arts tradition.

We think of it as exploration with a purpose.

Here we look at how donor-funded scholarships helped two recent graduates advance their understanding of the world, elevate their appeal as job candidates, and begin careers in their chosen profession of teaching.

LOGAN PHILLIPS '25

MAKING MUSIC ... TEACHING MUSIC

The best thing Logan Phillips did as a student was to follow his passion for music.

It wasn't always a straight line, but in every instance, it was where he was drawn and where he returned.

Now the Keene State graduate (BM Music Education and BM Music Performance) has a "dream" first job as a music teacher at the Great Brook School in Antrim. Students in grades 5 to 8 attend Great Brook, the 2014 New Hampshire Middle School of the Year.

At Keene State, Logan discovered a love for bass and playing jazz, strengthened a passion for choral singing, and developed a vision to teach one day.

But his education was as much about learning away from the classroom, thanks to generous scholarships, important collaborations, and professional mentorship.

"Life-changing in so many ways," he said of his experiences abroad.

As a senior, Logan was awarded the Travis '94 & Gretchen Hodgdon Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) award to broaden his musicianship in Sarteano, Italy, a commune in the Province of Siena in Tuscany.

The Hodgdon family endows five separate scholarships at Keene State. The first in his family to attend college, Travis Hodgdon worked as an EMT out of high school and then served a tour of duty in the US Navy before enrolling at Keene State College at age 25. Travis is now



a doctor of osteopathic medicine and lives with his family in Cooperstown, NY.

"Gretch and I are very grateful for all the opportunities we have been given in life and feel creating opportunities is the best way to give back. I remember the feeling of getting scholarships decades ago while at Keene. It not only made my education financially possible, it was so encouraging to be supported by others who cared so much, like I do now, about Keene State. Creating the SURF grant took it to another level because it connects Keene, through it's students, to others in the world."

SURF grants provide financial support to sophomores, juniors, and seniors interested in conducting in-depth research projects under the guidance of a faculty mentor in their field of study. The grant from the Hodgdon family enabled Logan to attend the two-week Choral Workshop as a tenor singer in the ensemble and present scholarly and creative activity on an international stage.

Choral musicians from across the globe participated in the workshop in Sarteano. Said Logan, "Our days were filled with music, getting to know each other, exploring the town, and spending evenings at an Airbnb, drinking wine, and singing choral classics." (cont.)



MAKING MUSIC ... TEACHING MUSIC (cont.)

On more than one occasion in the picturesque region of southern Tuscany, known for its archeology, the choral group he was a part of performed in the town square.

Customs, culture, and connections merged for Logan.

"I grew as a musician and singer in those two weeks. I was one of the handful of students still in their undergraduate program at the workshop; most of the others were in graduate programs, professional musicians, or educators, so I was able to learn a lot from my peers."

Led by renowned clinicians, rehearsals were effectively masterclasses unto themselves, Logan says.

"For me, music was my hobby and I never really considered pursuing it as a career, but when it came time to finally decide what college I was going to and what I wanted to do study, I realized I wanted to do something that I had a passion for and enjoyed."

And now, he says, "I know I will love teaching middle school ... you can do so much musically with students at that age."

NICOLE GRACZEWSKI '24:

PATH PAVED WITH SCHOLARSHIPS

Having earned more than 20 different scholarship awards in high school and college combined, Nicole Graczewski has a deep appreciation and sense of gratitude for giving back and the capacity it has to help others.

Such generosity, she said, gave life to her aspirations to teach.

The Keene State graduate (Elementary Education and Dance Education) is a full-time kindergarten teacher at Andover Elementary/Middle School in Andover, NH.

Nicole received three endowed Keene State scholarships as an undergraduate student: the Sandra E. Ellison '67 Memorial Scholarship (three years), the Megna Family Endowed Scholarship (two years), and the Matthew T. Paul Resident Assistant Memorial Award (two years).

"It's impossible to describe the full impact of the support I received," Nicole said, "but being able to train my focus on my students and not worry

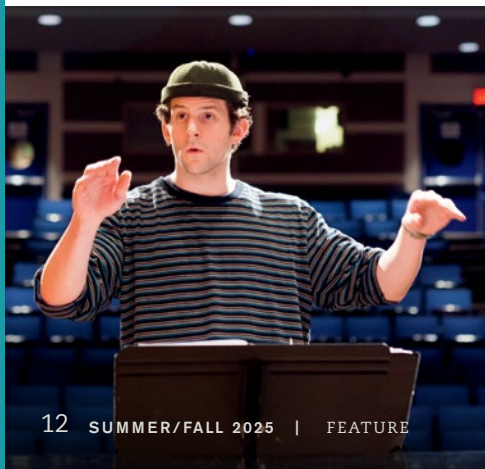


Teachers Helping Teachers: Nelson '59 And Dorothy '58 Megna Pay It Forward

Nelson '59 and Dorothy '58 Megna are two of the donors that made a Keene State education accessible to Nicole, and they know her story all too well: both graduated Keene State with their teaching degrees, and both—the firsts in their families to go to college—worked to put themselves through college.

In fact, Nelson had to take a year off from college in order to work. One silver lining of the pause was that Nelson and Dottie's first child (of four), born on Keene's campus, was in attendance as an infant at her father's graduation.

Nelson and Dottie went on to have exemplary careers in teaching, education administration, and service to their communities. Their philanthropy at Keene has been dedicated to easing the financial burden of attending college for education students.



“That moment ... when you make a connection, when a student who might be struggling gets it ... there’s nothing like that.”

about money was a major benefit of all the scholarships. I did not have to work as many hours at my part-time job and therefore had more time to dedicate to lesson-planning, preparation, and my students.”

Nicole came to Keene State from East Windsor, CT; today, she lives in Goffstown, NH.

Nicole has a lengthy resume of student involvement at Keene State, including tour guide, office assistant, and member and recruitment chair for the Education Honor Society, Kappa Delta Pi.

She enjoys baking, growing plants, boating, traveling, and learning everything she can “about the world around us.”

But she loves teaching most. It has been that way since first grade, when her New Year's resolution was to become a teacher ... not after college, but that year!

“I’ve always liked school, mostly because my teachers made it fun. Now I get to make it fun for my students. I feel lucky to wake up excited to go to work.”

“Keene State encouraged me to be the teacher I wanted. I am nowhere near a textbook teacher. Dr. Darrell Hucks and Dr. Kim Bohannon helped me learn that it’s okay to be the ‘odd duck’ of teachers. While student teaching, and even now, we make messes in class, learn outside, and get a little crazy. Most importantly, the children are learning!”

How crazy? “Like writing letters and sight words in shaving cream, to setting up tents indoors.” She has found, she added, that taking an abstract approach to teaching gets more “buy-in” from students, even the youngest.

“That moment ... when you make a connection, when a student who might be struggling gets it ... there’s nothing like that.”

Donor generosity helps ensure that Keene State students leave our campus confident, inspired, tested, and ready to make an impact. Logan and Nicole are shining examples of how students excel when donors step up to help careers take shape.

Their transformative \$500,000 gift to the endowed Megna Family Scholarship supports students in the educator preparatory program that have financial need, with preference going to students that have engaged in community service. It is the first scholarship at Keene State to be formally set up to support students for their entire career at Keene State. Nelson and Dottie's scholarship will benefit 10-15 students a year in perpetuity—an extraordinary legacy for Nelson, Dottie, and their family of more than 50 children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

“We were motivated to give back to the place that brought us together and gave us the skills to have successful and service-oriented lives,” said Nelson and Dottie. “We chose to give back in this way, in order to leave a legacy that will include something that will live far beyond either of us.”

And students like Nicole will benefit—as will the students in their classrooms once they graduate—for generations to come.



At Keene State, excellence requires not only the programs and facilities that serve our students but also those who offer their time, wisdom, and financial generosity toward educating the next generation of leaders and professionals.

Here we look at some examples, including Owl Athletics; new academic options in optics and precision manufacturing to educate job-ready students and citizens in a growing and localized field; and how donor-funded scholarships are serving our students and helping to raise the visibility and mission of the Cohen Institute.

OWL ATHLETICS

How does the expression go? Crushing it! This is Keene State athletics today.

On the fields, courts, courses, and in the pool, what a run it's been, what a year it was, what eye-popping successes and accomplishments to take pride in.

On the fundraising side, supporters are behind it all, giving Owl teams and student-athletes the little extras that make a winning difference. For example: A golf tournament that brought in \$45,000, an Athletics Giving Challenge that raised \$87,000, and a Snap! Raise campaign that poured \$141,000 into the various team coffers.

"Donor generosity enables us to do all the things we can't get to do, or accomplish necessarily, with just funds from the budget," Keene State Athletic Director Marty Testo '98 said. "The support we get is extraordinary and difference-making."

Things like new equipment, facility upgrades, improved sound systems, and opportunities for student-athletes to travel domestically and abroad. Also, to have a deeper, full-immersion post-secondary experience.



In competition, some highlights to shout about:

The women's swim and dive team saw its run of **16 Little East Conference (LEC) titles** come to an end in 2024, but began what it hopes will be a new streak when it captured conference title **No. 20 overall** this past season.

The Owl men's basketball team celebrated a **fourth consecutive LEC title** to earn a return trip to the NCAA Tournament. Its senior captain, Octavio Brito '25 of Lincoln, R.I., was later named **National Player of the Year** by the National Association of Basketball Coaches, a first for Keene State. The Owl cagers enjoyed a **33-week run** with a national ranking in the **top 20** during Brito's tenure in red and white. Brito finished his career as the Owls' **second all-time scorer (2,206 points)** and ranked in the **top 10 in 14** other KSC statistical categories.

The men's and women's cross country teams walked—er, ran—away with **best-in-conference** showings, too, as did the baseball team.

Keene State claimed that prestigious honor, which measures overall institutional athletic performance among LEC members, this past year **for the 18th time**. KSC hoisted the Cup each of the first 16 years it was presented. Owl teams this year racked up big points by capturing regular-season league titles in five of 19 LEC sports. Men's swimming and diving, women's indoor and outdoor track & field, and field hockey garnered runner-up ranking points.



FRIENDS ON ALL THE RIGHT BASES

The Owl baseball team had a banner season, going on a mid- to late-season run, claiming a conference title and qualifying for the NCAA Tournament.

Coach Justin Blood said it's easy to forget all that goes into a successful season, on and off the field. He called it a shared experience that goes beyond just those in uniform.

"Staying connected, keeping the past alive, and sharing new memories is what the alumni experience should be," he said. "And we're fortunate the baseball program has that."

Take, for example, alumni Bob Simpson '73, a former Owl baseball player whose sister and son also attended Keene State.

Simpson and Coach Blood met in the summer of 2022. Sharing small talk in the dugout, Blood listened to a few fraternity stories from Simpson. Simpson asked the then-second-year coach what the program needed to be successful.

Blood pointed to a ratty, aging batting cage, noting that a double cage that was safe, spacious, and accessible to student-athletes amounted to a priority.

Bob agreed to support the project. Said Bob, "After we had landed on batting cages, and as we were walking back from the dugout, it occurred to me that it was the 80th anniversary of the Marines landing in Guadalcanal, where my dad served. I know I love baseball, and I know he fought for the freedom that we all enjoy."



Before a game in 2023, a small ceremony was held to recognize Simpson, who threw out the first pitch. A granite post in front of the cages bears the inscription "John A Simpson USMC," a son's tribute to his father. Bob was just 9 years old when his father died.

When asked why he decided to support Keene State's baseball program, Bob said: "When I was growing up, there were only two seasons: baseball and getting ready for baseball. My four years at Keene State were arguably the best years of my life. I was on the college's baseball team and part of a fraternity, TKE, which I was president of in my junior year. I have friends that I still keep in contact with."

Bob Simpson '73 didn't stop there. He wrote another check to cover the cost of new screens, infield mix, a new home plate, and mound tarps. He and Blood run into one another occasionally, as Simpson regularly attends games. Simpson and Blood, and their wives, Carol and Hannah, enjoyed a dinner together this past winter.

This past spring, Simpson drove to Harrisburg, PA., with his grandson to cheer the team on in its NCAA Regional appearance. Blood said having engaged and supportive alumni only strengthens the program's legacy.

"What a wonderful example Bob is for how our alumni and donors can make a lasting impact with a program they care so much about, all these years later. We can't thank Bob and all who give back enough."

PRECISION OPTICS LAB

Within 100 miles of Keene State, more than 30 companies thrive in single-point diamond turning machining, thin films, specialty glass, and advanced optics, with Moore Nanotechnology Systems in Swanzey and AMTEK Precitech in Keene among them.

Starting this fall, Keene State will offer a one-year precision optics certificate that provides practical skills to get job-ready quickly and help fill an important—and hyper-regional—workplace need.

Enrollees will learn in the College's new dedicated optics lab, the Kingsbury Center for Diamond Turning Excellence, on the same high-end ultra-precision lathes used in the field.

The Kingsbury Fund awarded a substantial grant to kickstart the new

learning space, which features two types of high-end diamond turning lathes that create optical components at nanometer-scale accuracy. Metrology systems are also in the lab to provide students with hands-on experience to prepare them for measuring precision components to ensure accuracy.

Nanotechnology has diverse applications, including medicine, materials science, electronics, and environmental science.

In 2024, Keene State launched a partnership with the American Center for Optics Manufacturing, Inc., to increase capacity for work-ready technicians. Keene State is the first four-year post-secondary institution



to partner with the US Department of Defense consortium, which has capacity-building goals, including upping the number of trained technicians nationwide from fewer than 50 each year to 800 annually.

Keene State is proud to be part of that frontline effort. Its new startup program, lab, and state-of-the-art equipment would not be possible without the generous financial support of donors and the strength of its local and national ties and partnerships.

COHEN INSTITUTE

Several exciting developments resulted from a transformative gift from Rick and Jan Cohen in September 2024—the largest in the College's history—which launched the Cohen Institute: Funding to support student internships, the launch of an inaugural graduate fellowship, and a new Student Scholar program for undergraduates.

This fall, three student interns from different academic programs across campus will be compensated for their work on specific projects and initiatives: livestreaming and video creation about the Institute's work; development of the Youth Leadership Institute for its summer 2026 launch; and originating workshops and materials related to the Institute's special collection in Holocaust and Genocide Studies in the Keene State Archives.

The graduate fellowship planned for spring 2026 will be fully developed this fall, said Dr. Kate Gibeault, Director, Cohen Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, noting that graduate students in Holocaust and Genocide Studies and History and Archives are eligible to apply.

The Student Scholar program will receive funding for a recipient to conduct original research to advance the field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies alongside faculty experts on campus. The first recipient will work with Prof. Jonathan Gitelson, the inaugural Cohen Institute Faculty Scholar. After the pilot year, the program will fund two or more student scholars each year.

Given retroactively to students who have done great leadership work, the award instead becomes more of a seed grant to provide recipients with resources and support to do leadership work in this area. The award will continue to be offered annually.

This year's recipient, Bianca Bostwick '27, a Holocaust & Genocide Studies and Secondary Education double-major, created a simulation activity in which high school students role-played rewriting the genocide convention in the United Nations.

Students in Katie Littlefield's genocide class at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH, participated in the interactive exercise.

"(My students) enjoyed this application of the idea of genocide in a more modern way and a different way," Littlefield says. "They were having a conversation about the definition of genocide in 2025, which is pretty meaningful, and a big takeaway from the course. I had already asked Bianca if it would be OK if I used her simulation in my courses and classes, and she said 'yes,' which I'm excited and thankful about."

Says Bianca, "This opportunity gave me hope and confidence that this is my calling. I can create engaging activities to enhance students' understanding of genocide and the world around them."

Keene State believes some of the most transformative learning experiences happen outside the classroom. Whether it is a paid internship that sets a career in motion, or a travel study experience, high-impact learning experiences can change the course of a student's life.

Here we look at two outstanding examples of high-impact learning experiences: one, an international travel experience that was part of the Morris-August Honors Program; and two, a series of donor-funded internships in the College's Sustainable Product Design and Innovation (SPDI) program.

ELLIS FAITH WHITE '28

2 WEEKS, 5 CITIES, 'SUCH A BLAST!'

Global engagement is not a buzz term at Keene State; it's a core component of a continual quest to deepen and strengthen educational experiences. Our students can choose to study outside of the United States—more than 20 destinations from the Czech Republic to Germany to Japan to Spain—with the College's university and program partners.

They may also select from domestic programs like the National Student Exchange and the Washington Center internship program. Often, tuition costs are the same as classes, and classes abroad count for academic credit.

And for students in the Morris-August Honors Program, scholarships cover much of the cost of these eye-opening, once-in-a-lifetime educational adventures.

Students return confident and inspired, and their ambitions and dreams, we learn, are stronger than ever.

Here is proof, in the form of one class and one student's exciting and transformative adventure abroad.

Ellis Faith White doesn't summon passion; it's just there. The spark stays lit.

Bright, curious, and driven, Ellis was accepted into a third-year Global Engagement Honors class—Western Classical Music—taught by Dr. Christina Wright-Ivanova, professor of music, this past spring.

"It was an awesome semester," Wright-Ivanova said.

"We studied several major composers, context, language, visual arts, and historical issues related to the development of 'art music' in Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic during the Classical, Romantic, 20th Century, and Contemporary periods."

The class didn't end there. In May, all eight students—non-music majors, except for Ellis—packed their bags and traveled to Munich, Salzburg, Vienna, Brno, and Prague for a 13-day European excursion.



It was the kind of study-based exploration not uncommon for Keene State students.

The College's Morris-August Honors Program, of which Ellis is a part, has prepared hundreds of Keene State students to be future global leaders by providing opportunities to learn about new perspectives and diverse cultures, first in the classroom and then internationally.

In its twelfth year, the program has granted more than \$2 million since its inception to underwrite scholarships, teaching and learning resources, and travel-related expenses. It is named in recognition of significant support from the William T. Morris Foundation and its president, Bruce August '13.

"The foundation is honored to support the Keene State Honors Program," said Bruce. "The funding has been used to help the best and brightest afford a highly rated college program. Many of the students will become first generation college graduates. Our hope is that after graduation, they continue to have success in their chosen career path."

The recent European trip was largely funded by the Honors Program, covering travel, lodging, concerts, transportation, and other experiences. Students like Ellis have to fund their meals and optional items like side excursions or souvenirs, so the two-week trip cost Ellis about \$600.

KSC music professor Dr. Sandra Howard also accompanied the students, whose majors included History, Political Science, Visual Arts, Architecture, Education, and Sustainable Product Design & Innovation.

ELLIS FAITH WHITE '28 (cont.)

A Concord, NH, native, Ellis is president of the Class of 2028 and counts building with Legos among her favorite hobbies. Preferring to stay busy, Ellis also tacked on a minor in psychology. Ellis is driven and considers it “a unique privilege to have one of my greatest passions, music, be my education and future career.”

Ellis said the recent “formative” trip, which kicked off in Germany, was filled with cultural enlightenment and personal growth of the kind unimaginable in such a short time.

“We had some amazing artistic experiences at museums like the Alte Pinakothek in Munich and the Belvedere Palace in Vienna. They provided more context for the value of the arts in Western culture.”

“I’d love to learn more about the culture of all types of music, Western and otherwise, and travel to other locations to gain a wider perspective on how culture influences and is reflected in music. I believe authenticity is such a crucial part of music-making. The trip gave me the confidence to feel safe in large, foreign cities, and to know I can travel independently.”

Ellis and the other trip-mates saw six professional performances. “It was fascinating to see the risks and choices taken in European art and performance,” Ellis said.

A favorite performance was Leoš Janáček’s opera *Jenůfa*, at the National Theatre in Prague. It featured world-renowned actors and musicians, and was held in a stunning hall. “Breathtaking,” Ellis said. “It was interesting to see how architecture and visual art styles connect back to the musical styles of composers from the three countries during different periods.”

Be it visual, performance, or musical arts, Ellis’s creative spirit takes many forms. At one time, acting was on Ellis’s “what-I-want-to-do” list. But her musical roots are strong and pull Ellis back.

“My Nana was a pianist and choir director. While I’m not amazing at piano, her musical legacy lives on in me, and I think of her whenever I create music. To honor a loved one in such a unique way. It’s a constant reminder of a woman I loved so much.”

Ellis hopes to teach music in a school, and voice or flute lessons on the side. Becoming a music therapist has some appeal, too, but later on. “Most importantly, I just want to use music as a vehicle to help others and bring them joy.”

It’s been a full-immersion first year of college, that is for sure.





BUILDING CAREERS & THE NH WORKFORCE

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCT DESIGN & INNOVATION INTERNSHIPS

A destination major for students, SPDI is the only program in New England that combines industrial design, project management, and manufacturing engineering technologies with the lens of sustainability and sound business practices.

The SPDI program, which offers both a major and a minor, embodies the interdisciplinary lens that sets so many of Keene State's programs apart—and sets students up to be leaders far into their careers and lives.

SPDI students graduate with hands-on, project-based experience that prepares them for careers in a fast-moving environment. The SPDI program is therefore a key driver of workforce development in the Monadnock region, which boasts a highly diverse and sophisticated manufacturing sector that plays on a global scale.

A critical component of the program is its internship program for majors, which gives students real-world job experience at an area company. And, thanks to donors like Engelberth Construction, SPDI internships are accessible to all.

For many Keene State students, an internship can be out of reach from a financial standpoint, whether it is the cost of taking time away from another paying job, or finding transportation funds or purchasing workplace appropriate attire.

But donors like Engelberth Construction are removing this barrier, for the good of the student and the region.

Said Engelberth CEO Pierre LeBlanc '78, "Keene State was my first foray away from home and it was a good experience for me. It's nice to give back and I hope this funding allows students to have a similar experience as me, and helps them to have one less thing to worry about."

Engelberth's investment also took advantage of a generous \$500,000 match created through a gift from the Krantz family in honor of KSC professor Dr. Delmar "Del" Ogg.

Asked what he values about Keene State, Pierre said "It's quite a valued resource for New Hampshire and the region. Here at Engelberth we have several Keene graduates employed, including our safety director. I'm hoping that future students have it as good as I did. That's why I have supported Keene State over the years."

It is gifts like Engelberth's that make the program even more attractive to students, and makes their experience while in it all the more powerful. SPDI program students go through the program seeking to answer one critical question: "How can we best live without degrading our life-support system and create conditions that nurture the flourishing of other beings and of future generations?"

Thus, SPDI graduates have, and will continue to have, a forward-thinking positive impact on the world around all of us for years to come.

NEWS FROM THE NEST



Honors student panel: Ellis White '28, Chloe Roy '25, Eric Brown '25

Keene State College Hosts Celebrate Momentum, Highlighting Scholarship Impact

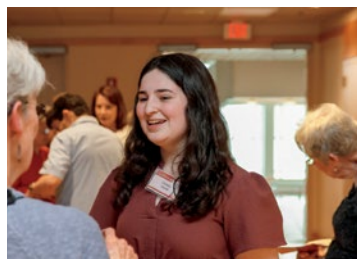
In April, some of Keene State College's most generous donors gathered on campus for a special event that connects them with the students who benefit from their philanthropic support. Now in its 13th year, this annual celebration is organized by the Keene Endowment Association (KEA) and the College's Advancement Department to showcase the transformative power of giving and how it opens valuable opportunities for both students and the broader campus community.

The event kicked off with a reception, providing a chance for donors and students to mingle before the program began. The highlight of the evening was the recognition of Nelson '59 and Dorothy '58 Megna for their enduring commitment to education through their endowed scholarship. Their generosity continues to support the next generation of students at Keene State College.

The program also featured a panel discussion with three Morris-August Honors students—Ellis White '28, Eric Brown '25, and Chloe Roy '25—who shared their enriching experiences in the Morris-August Honors Program. These students, whose global experiences are funded by the Morris Foundation, illustrated how travel opportunities complement and enhance their academic journeys and career aspirations. Their stories offered a powerful reminder of the far-reaching impact of philanthropy on student success.



Giovannangeli Family Scholarship donor Jean Pollock '57 meets student scholarship recipients



Scholarship recipient Chelsea Gerali meets her scholarship donor, Carol Jue



2025 LeVine Mellion Parent Award recipients and their nominators with one of the award donors: Angela Heinselman, Cole Heinselman '25, Paul LeVine Mellion '72, Cynthia Teeter, Shealyn Teeter '25

LeVine Mellion Parent Award

The LeVine Mellion Parent of the Year Award was established in 1983 by four children, three of whom were graduates of Keene State College, Bruce '69, Paul '72, Joan '74, and Dan. Now in its forty-second year, the award honors their parents, Dr. Gilbert LeVine Mellion and Ruth Berman Mellion for raising them with love, encouragement and commitment to their children's education.

This award is presented annually by Paul LeVine Mellion and the Advancement and ASPIRE departments to selected parents of students who participate in the ASPIRE program or its equivalent at Keene State College. Nominating students submit essays demonstrating how their own parents exhibit the same supporting qualities, ultimately leading to the students thriving in Keene State's programs. The endowment has grown over the years and now two parents per year are recognized with their names on a plaque and a cash award, which Paul LeVine Mellion always stresses must be spent on themselves.

The ceremony is intimate and particularly compelling because honored parents are surprised by the award. Parents arrive believing they have been invited to see their children recognized. Then the students read their nominating essays, and the actual honorees are revealed. The students, parents, and invited guests then share a celebratory meal, exchange stories, and leave feeling appreciated and energized for the future.

Reunion Weekend Summary:

Reunion Weekend, "Where Memories Meet and Friends Reunite," was a wonderful celebration of connection and community. Alumni from across the decades returned to campus to revisit familiar places, reconnect with classmates, and create new memories. Highlights included a Friday night meet-up at Lab n' Lager, a Veterans lecture by alum Rodger Martin, a KSC TV archives reception, and celebrations honoring the 100th Anniversary of Greek Life. The weekend served as a heartfelt reminder of the lifelong bond between Keene State and its alumni.



Golf Highlights

Keene State's 34th Annual Golf Classic Brings in Over \$40,000 for Owl Athletics

The Keene State College community hit the greens on June 13, 2025, for the 34th Annual Keene State Athletics Golf Classic, proudly presented by Chartwells. Hosted at the beautiful Keene Country Club, the event welcomed 140 participants, including alumni, faculty, staff, friends, and sponsors, selling out the tournament.

Under sunny skies and ideal weather, golfers enjoyed a fun and competitive day on the course, followed by a spirited outdoor barbecue to wrap up the event.

Thanks to the outstanding support from everyone involved, the Classic raised more than \$40,000 to benefit Keene State Athletics. This year's proceeds will support upgrades to facilities, post-season travel and meals, student-athlete support services for our athletic teams, and helping our student-athletes look and feel their best as they represent Owl Nation on and off their playing surfaces.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to all who played, sponsored, and volunteered—you continue to make a lasting impact on our student-athletes and the entire Keene State community.

IN MEMORIAM

TIMOTHY N. ROBERTSON
1/29/25

NANCY J. VAN UDEN
12/24/24

GEORGE F. LEWIS 1951
11/13/24

MARGUERITE MCGUIGAN FINLEY 1953
4/10/25

HARRY E. VAN KLEECK 1953
2/9/24

HELEN MOYNIHAN PRACON 1953
3/26/25

CAROLYN LEES FLEMING 1954
1/26/25

JACQUELINE J. KINNEY RAY 1955
1/25/25

BARBARA RYANS BRACKETT 1957
5/31/25

CAROL A. FENTON GUY 1958
11/1/24

DOROTHY PATAT SOMERO 1960
1/6/25

RAYMOND E. CLARKE 1961
1/31/25

ELAINE CHICADERIS ELLIS 1961
5/3/25

JANE ROSS KAGELEIRY 1961
4/6/25

MARGARET ROYCE PARENCHUCK 1962
1/8/25

BARBARA BROWN DOIRON 1964
1/4/25

EARLE A. EMERSON 1965
3/14/25

EUNICE P. NELSON 1966
2/19/25

BARBARA A. GREEN CHAPUT 1967
6/6/24

DOROTHY M. PROCTER 1967
2/20/25

CAROLYN J. SCRUTON 1967
5/13/25

RALPH D. HALFORD 1968
2/13/25

CHRISTINA L. NELSON 1969 8/1/12	THOMAS MOORE 1977 1/12/25
JOAN MILES NORCROSS 1970 11/13/24	PAUL G. HUARD 1978 1/23/25
ELIZABETH CHICKERING 1971 4/16/25	SHEILA K. GARAFFA 1979 2/24/25
ALVAH W. NIEMELA 1971 2/19/25	THOMAS C. COLLETTA 1980 1/28/25
NANCY J. CHASE DAVIDSON 1972 1/11/25	MARILYN A. YOUNG 1981 9/20/24
PATRICIA S. HARTE 1972 3/7/25	TIMOTHY J. AESCHLIMAN 1998 5/23/24
FRANCES E. MURPHY 1972 3/4/25	KENNETH J. SWYMER SR. 1998 11/21/23
LINDA J. SNYDER SIMPSON 1972 1/26/25	DAVID J. ECK 1999 5/5/25
LINDA KIESSLING LEIGH 1973 5/15/22	ELENA L. FISKE 1999 1/19/25
BRADLEY G. MOUSSEAU 1973 10/16/24	BENJAMIN P. VON SUCK 2006 9/24/24
CHRISTOPHER M. VON SUCK 1974 4/19/22	BRENDAN J. DONOVAN 2023 5/4/25
DONNA M. BOYD 1977 11/25/19	

CLASS NOTES



CLASS OF 1942

Marguerite Smith; class of 1942. Marguerite celebrated her 104th birthday in April of this year! She remains cognitively sharp, and still gets around with her walker. She always speaks fondly of her days at Keene, and in 2018, she returned to her alma mater one last time. She currently lives in St. Augustine, Florida, our nation's oldest city!

CLASS OF 1955

Jacqueline (Kinney) Ray passed away in January of this year. Her teaching career was spent in Connecticut where she also obtained a Masters of Arts in Special Education and a sixth-year Certificate of Advanced Study from the Department of Education. Jacqueline returned to New Hampshire after retirement and enjoyed traveling through both the US as well as Europe.

CLASS OF 1956

Margaret (Russell) Ramsay passed away in October 2023. Margaret was a proud and loyal supporter of KSC and remained active in college affairs for much of her life. She was a founding member of the Alumni Association and served on the committee that brought the Redfern Arts Center to the campus. The renovation of the College Camp was another one of her endeavors and the porch is named for her. Margaret's family has donated to the Alumni Center a generous collection of information that she had collected about the class in her role as class secretary.

CLASS OF 1961

Dorothy Bean Simpson | drsimpson2@yahoo.com

Thank you for supporting our Scholarship Fund. To date we have given over 32 scholarships to young students pursuing the vocation of teaching. Our fund continues to grow supporting more students every year. Please remember to mark your donations to Class of 1961.

If you look at the 'In Memoriam' section of Keene State Today you will notice the many wonderful class mates we have lost.

John Woods taught, coached, went into construction and became chief operator of Plymouth Water Works.

Ray Clarke went on to earn his Doctorate degree in Education from the University of Maryland, received many awards one of which was the Community Service Award for volunteering in over eight organizations, and served as President of the Kent's Retired Teachers Association. He and Pat traveled to many Countries. Ray was a generous contributor to our Class Fund.

Judy Desmarais Wilson's professional life included research and teacher training for Stanford University's Achievement Test for students across New England. She was on the Lebanon Housing Authority Board for 29 years, and President of Lebanon's, A Better Chance, hosting and supporting underrepresented young people of color from across the country.

Jane Ross Kageleiry taught hundreds of students in Derry. She was active in youth sports, Boy and Girl Scouts, and active in town meetings. Her interest in history and culture led her to travel with her family to all regions of the country.

Elaine Chicaderis Ellis became a creative school librarian. She was an adventurous traveler, active in St. George's Greek Orthodox Church and loved gardening.

Classmates, please remember every five years we have a planned KSC Class of 1961 reunion. Watch for the 2026 date. It will be our 65th. Imagine!!!

CLASS OF 1966

Dick Swasey is recovering from hip replacement. He and Lisa hope to get back to antique flea market activities this summer.

John Bennett and Carol travel between homes in Claremont, NH, Camden, Maine and Florida.

Am happy to hear from **Marsha (Hinman) Cizmadia** who lives in Georgia.

Leslie "Tess" (Wolcott) Buswell was surprised with an 80th birthday celebration from her friends at her winter "paradise" at Harbor Cove, Florida. The surprise was doubled when her two daughters made the trip to be part of the celebration. She spends her summers back in Maine at her camp on St. Froid Lake where she's been going for 60 years. Family visits throughout the summer make it wonderful.

Sadly, we mourn the passing two classmates: **Martha (Farrell) Dix** who lived in Sun City, AZ, and **Anne "Cubby" McCooey** who lived in Portsmouth, NH.

Our personal note: We moved to Concord, NH during the worst weather in February. We are at Heritage Heights, a continuing care community where assisted living and/or nursing home care is available if needed. For now we have an independent cottage that's small but cozy.

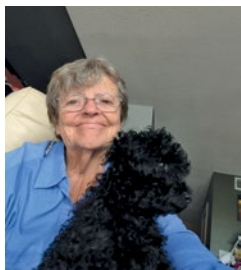
Would love to hear news from other folks from our class. Send me a note or an email:

Roberta "Bobbie" (Luce) Barry and Jack Barry

149 East Side Drive #354
Concord, NH 03301
Barry_roberta@yahoo.com

Susan Cross: After retiring and moving to Maine, my husband of 46 years died of PSP. I thought my life was over until I met a man from Richmond, NH. We have begun to travel to all the places I thought I'd never see - Seattle, WA, Alaska, Niagra Falls, and a trip from Canada down to New Smyrna Beach, FL. We were able to drive through much of the devastation in SC, GA, and into FL. To experience it firsthand was something I will never forget. I am often in Keene now, and love being back near the college where I began my teaching career forty-six years ago. I still love Maine and the ocean. Guess I have the best of both worlds!

CLASS OF 1967



Freida Atwood has published a new book with a title sure to spark curiosity: *Never Teach a Pig to Sing. It Is a Waste of Time and It Annoys the Pig*. The book is available now on Amazon Kindle and is waiting to be discovered and put to use by educators and lifelong learners alike.



ABOUT THE BOOK:

The answer has always been right in front of us. Over the years, Freida's students taught her more than 30 effective ways to create a safe and productive learning environment, as well as over 28 smart, practical strategies to help students develop strong habits and practice them to the level of mastery—regardless of grade level, labels, or politics.



CLASS OF 1973

David Gagne '73 and his son, James, participated in the Nubble Light Challenge Swim in kayaks along the course to support swimmers. The Nubble Light Challenge Swim is an open-water, ocean swim from Long Sands to Short Sands York ME. The swimmers must traverse through the Gut (water between the lighthouse and the mainland) from one beach to another - 2+ miles.

Nice work David and James!

CLASS OF 1975

YOUR LEGACY, OUR FUTURE: THE CLASS OF 1975 ENDOWMENT FUND

Greetings, Class of 1975!

Can you believe it's been 50 years since we walked across the Commencement stage? To mark this milestone, at our 50th reunion, classmates decided we wanted to raise \$20,000 to endow a Class of 1975 Gift. This permanent fund would allow our class to determine its purpose, leaving a lasting legacy at Keene State College.

Our Class of 1975 Gift Fund is steadily growing, and we've already reached an impressive \$8,700! Here's the exciting news: thanks to an anonymous classmate, every dollar you give, up to \$5,000, will be matched! This means your contribution will have double the impact. Imagine the pride we'll feel knowing our class has created a permanent source of support for our alma mater.

This endowment will provide crucial, ongoing support for future generations of Owls, ensuring the same spirit of learning and community we experienced continues for years to come. Your gift, no matter the size, directly contributes to that enduring legacy.

Let's rally together and reach that \$20,000 mark by May 31, 2026! Meeting this deadline will allow our class to



know if the goal has been met and take the next steps in defining the criteria for either the new endowment or deciding how to use the funds within an already established gift fund.

Ready to make a difference? You can contribute to the Class of 1975 Gift fund online at giving.keene.edu/1975-class-giving or by mailing a check to Keene State College – Advancement Services, 229 Main Street, Keene, NH 03435-2701, with "Class of 1975 Endowment" in the memo.

We can't wait to celebrate this achievement with all of you!
Warmly,

Class of 1975 Reunion Committee

Eileen Oechsli Bohigian, Linda Cote, Dianne Reidy Janson, Donna Kuethe, and Henry Maier

CLASS OF 1980

Reunion Weekend
Gathering

Dan Dagenais
(left), **Peter DeBartolo** (center),
and **Jon Marston**
(far right) were



among the classmates who gathered at Longhorn Steakhouse during Reunion Weekend for a memorable evening of connection and nostalgia. The highlight of the night was having copies of *Strivings* personally signed by beloved professor Dr. Smart. His presence stirred memories of their time in his Civil War class and reminded everyone of the lasting impact he's had on their lives.

CLASS OF 1983

Better late than never, right Class of 1983? After 42 years of no contact, two Owl's Nest 5'ers ended up back in the same nest. **Jon Donovan ('83)** and **Laney Poole ('83)** have reunited after raising their families, having successful careers, and retiring in different parts of New England. They are very grateful to have rekindled a special relationship after 42 years. They are enjoying travel and special occasions together, to include the class of '83s 40th reunion where they stayed in a dorm, enjoyed breakfast at Lindy's, and strolled across the train trestle. This time not for cheap beer, M&M's, and Twizzlers but to reminisce not only about their love of Keene, but especially KSC, the friendships they enjoyed, late night laughter and card games and excitement of embarking on the foundation of what would become their next 42 years. We missed you all at the 40th reunion, but don't feel bad we represented as the only two from our class. After all we were the class with no concept of time... remember the Class of '83 didn't get our year books until five years post-graduation! We remain grateful that KSC provided the foundation for our successful lives apart and now even moreso, that we are enjoying our retirement years together. If you remember us, feel free to reach out... we'd love to hear from you! We wish you well. If you'd like to reconnect we can be reached at lcj1960@me.com or jondonovan70@comcast.net

CLASS OF 1987

Julie Hargrave (Stack), Debby Gleason (Wiley), Lisa Kunkle (Murphy), Melanie Scarpato, Chris Stevenson, Eric Tolido, Mark Francischello, and Scott Boisvert held a mini reunion of their own in Boston this past March, picking up right where they left off 40 years ago.

CLASS OF 2000/2001

Jennifer (Piccirillo) Stone '00 and **Shelley (Flint) Sheridan '01** at the CAS-CIAC High School Leadership Conference.

Conferences are so much better when done with fellow Owls! (see accompanying picture)



Kristen Burns '01, married David Barlow the summer of 2024 in Australia. They celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere on October 5 with family and a parliament of owl-alumni, including (L to R) **Alice Beltran '98, Matt Tague '99, Johanna (Lindberg) Vergoni, Alicia (Cupp) Tague '00, Kristen Burns '01, Ken Flynn '99, Matt Kocyba '98, and Andrea Vickers-Sivret '01**

The night was filled with trivia, late 90's classics, and a couple after-after parties.

May the road rise to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sunshine warm upon your face.



CLASS OF 2010

Elizabeth Mullen joined the leadership team of Prudential Advisors – Greater New England Financial Group as Business Development Manager.

CLASS OF 1999

Jim MacLeod wrote *The Visual Marketer*. This book is for people who want to learn the basics of design to enhance their business. It was published in March 2025 by Tilt Publishing. More details at <https://visualmarketer.co>

CLASS OF 2011

Justin Deflumeri completed a five-day, record-setting run from Pittsburg to Nashua, New Hampshire, covering approximately 200 miles entirely on foot to raise funds for the Heather Abbott Foundation, which supports amputees. By finishing in less than five days—faster than any known attempt—he set a new record for crossing the state.



CLASS OF 2017

October 5, **Devon Larrabee '17** and **Kaitlin Hart Larrabee '15**, both B.M. Music Education majors, were married surrounded by their Keene State friends. Congratulations to the newlyweds.



CLASS OF 2018

Sarah Otterbeck '18

The past few months have been filled with excitement here in South Carolina! My journey in the Upstate began in summer 2019, where my then-boyfriend (now husband) and I moved 1,000 miles away from family and friends to pursue graduate degrees. I started that fall as a Master's en Route to PhD student in the School of Mathematical Sciences at Clemson University, following my passion for math that began at Keene State.

In May 2021, I earned my Masters of Science from Clemson—masked and socially distanced! Around that same time, I was accepted into Clemson's PhD program in Engineering and Science Education, where I discovered my true calling in STEM Education Research. As a graduate research assistant in Clemson's Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation (OTEI), I explored faculty development, student-centered teaching, and professional development for graduate students.

This past spring, I completed and defended my dissertation and officially became Dr. Sarah Otterbeck. I was honored to serve as the Commencement Speaker at my Doctoral Hooding Ceremony in May 2025, where I reflected on how my journey began with a Keene State advisor encouraging me to attend a conference at Clemson during my junior year. You can watch my speech here: <https://youtu.be/dRTAEhIQPg?si=RxqDGqMIMQaBTX5T&t=566>

Now, I'm thrilled to be starting my career at Clemson as a Teaching Consultant at OTEI. I'm also a Research Assistant on a NSF-funded grant focusing on course redesign in Civil Engineering, and I teach Precalculus in a summer bootcamp for incoming engineering students. I am incredibly proud of how far I've come—and it all started back in 2015 as a first year student at Keene State.



CLASS OF 2020

Corinn Colford '20, who had their artwork selected for GBH's Community Canvas initiative. Colford's piece was displayed as part of Community Canvas on GBH's Digital Mural above the Massachusetts Turnpike in Brighton.



Evan McGregor '20 and **Amy (Dampousse) McGregor '20** who got married in June after meeting their sophomore year at Keene State College! (Thanks, Hootie for bringing another couple together)



CLASS OF 2021

Congratulations to **Jacob '21** and **Chloe '21 (Olean) Allen** on their June wedding. They met at KSC in Huntress Hall in the fall of 2017. Seven years later, they were married, surrounded by KSC alumni and current KSC students.

We wish you "owl" the best.



CLASS OF 2022

Kristina Clay reports: "As of this month (April) I am a published author. I wrote a personal memoir called *Journey of a Running Girl* about my life in Ukraine, what it was like living in the system, and my transition to the States." Kristina's book is available at all major retailers.

CLASS OF 2023

Michael Patnaude, B.S. Environmental Studies, Magna Cum Laude with minors in Anthropology and Geoscience.

Since graduating I have worked as an Environmental Scientist-1 for Tighe & Bond in their Wetlands & Environmental Services Group and am currently a Natural Resource Specialist with USDA NRCS in Massachusetts since Oct 2023.

This Fall I will be heading off to grad school at UCONN to pursue a M.S. in Geological Sciences. I intend to study postglacial geomorphology through an environmental anthropological lens; utilizing Indigenous stories & history as an interpretive lens, bearing witness to the changes in the environment.

Keene State College has been fundamental to my success and development. Having been a transfer student from community college, the interpersonal relationships I developed during my short time at Keene State College have proven to be one of the greatest investments I have made thus far.

KEENE STATE COLLEGE

Upcoming Events



GOLDEN CIRCLE LUNCHEON

Newicks, Dover, NH
10/2/25



HOOTIE'S ALUMNI NIGHT

KSC basketball
vs. UMass Boston
12/6/25



HOLIDAY RECEPTION AND JAZZ ENSEMBLE CONCERT

WEDNESDAY | 12/3/25

Reception: Thorne-Sagendorph Art

Gallery | 6:00 P.M.

Concert: Redfern Arts Center | 7:00 P.M.

Limited Complimentary Concert

Tickets Available



Get your tickets here!

A FREE Gift That Protects Your Loved Ones and Your Legacy

As a member of the Keene State College community, we're excited to offer you a free and easy way to secure your future and protect those you love most. We've teamed up with FreeWill to provide you with a complimentary tool to create or update your will or trust.

In just 20 minutes, FreeWill's user-friendly online platform helps you:

- Designate guardians for your children and beloved pets.
- Ensure your assets go to the people and organizations you choose, including Keene State, if you wish.
- Gain invaluable peace of mind for yourself and your family.



Ready to get started? Scan the QR code
or visit keenestate.mygiftlegacy.org.

FREEWILL

Keene
STATE COLLEGE



From the Archives

100 Years of Greek Life

Greek life at Keene Normal School began in the early 1920s, a time of growth and transformation on campus. It was sparked by the initiative of five pioneering male students—Sheldon Barker, Albert Brooks, Henry Dumont, Edgar Howe, and Harold Mayette—who recognized the value of brotherhood, leadership, and social connection. Together, they founded Kappa Delta Phi, holding their first official meeting on April 9, 1921.

Though the fledgling organization showed promise, it faced challenges early on. After just one year, the group's faculty advisor left the college, and without that guidance, activity within the fraternity dwindled. However, the bonds between the members endured, and their commitment to the ideals of the fraternity remained strong. In June 1925, Kappa Delta Phi was formally revived, laying a more solid foundation for the future of Greek life on campus.

That same year, a second fraternity, Alpha Pi Tau, was established, further expanding the presence of Greek organizations. These early groups offered more than just social opportunities—they became centers of leadership, service, and campus engagement, helping to shape student life for generations.

Over the next century, Greek life at Keene would evolve to reflect the changing needs and values of its student body. What began as a small group of young men seeking camaraderie has grown into a rich tradition, with numerous fraternities and sororities contributing to the college's culture, community service, and spirit.

As we reflect on 100 years of Greek life, we honor those first visionaries whose efforts created a legacy of connection, service, and pride that continues to this day.

Top Left:

Nu Beta Epsilon Sorority

Top Right:

Back row: Winston Lobdell, Guy Clark, Bradford Hayward, Martin Robie.

Middle row: Roswell Sadd, Harold Marden, John Frye, Ronald Nutter, Mr. Simmons.

Front row: Cecile Heath, Harold Plante, Llewellyn Brewster, Earle Jenkins, Mr. Huse.

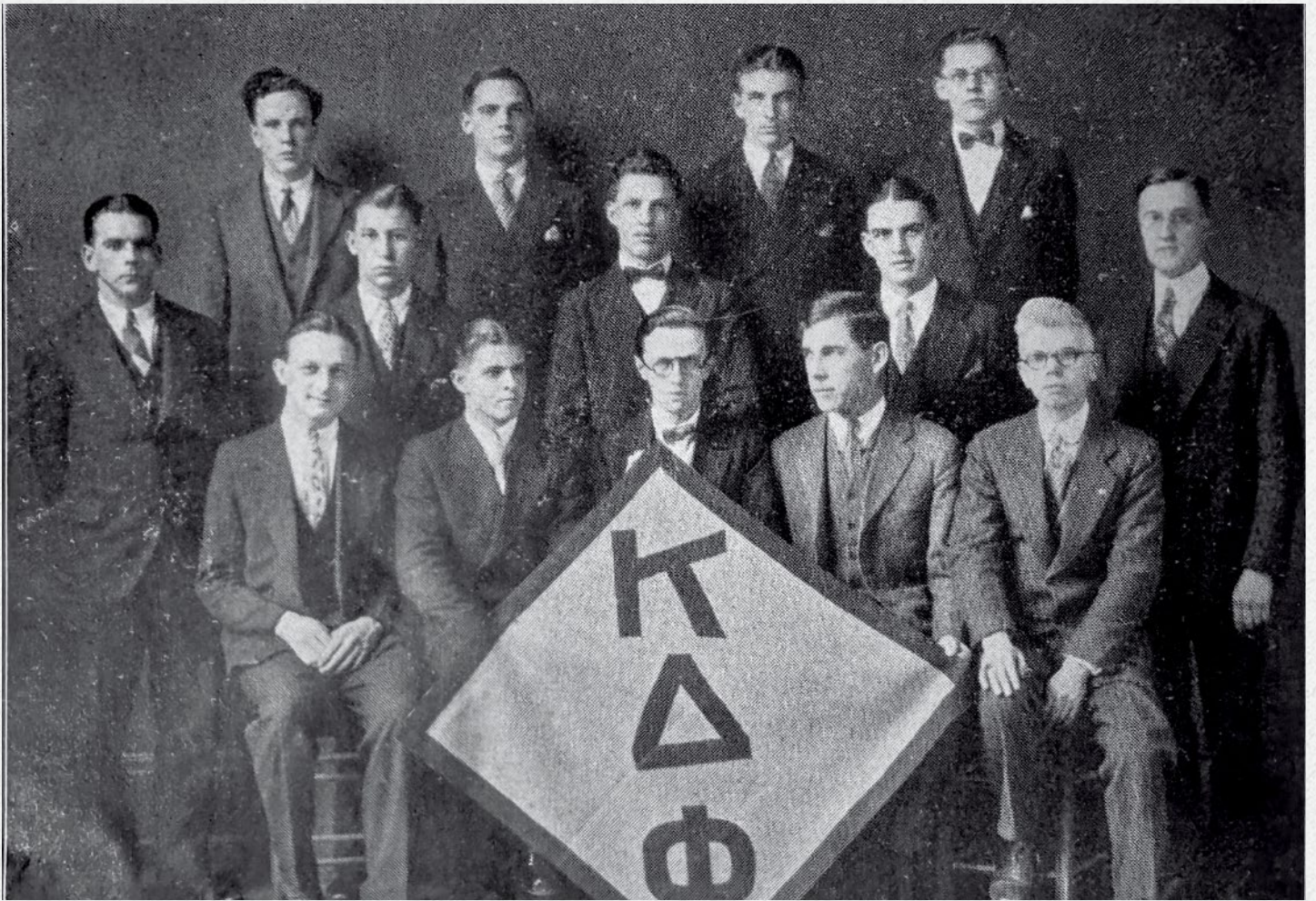
Bottom Right:

Back row: John Kenney, John Quinn, Joseph Ham, Roy Guptill, Herman Erwin, Emery Tenney, Henry Lovejoy, Desmond Anderson.

Third row: Leonard Dewyea, Alfred Holt, Robert Gervais, Simeon Bachelder, Lawrence Cornwall, Gordon Streeter, William Hughes.

Second row: James Connell, Edward Morton, Herbert Boutelle, Francis Molloy, Mr. Blackington, Berryman Minah, Albert Gauthier, Lucien Lerandeau.

Front row: Leo Bonnette, Leon Hamel, James Whitehead, Milton Sawyer.



THE HOOT

KEENE STATE COLLEGE OBSERVER

STAY CONNECTED
*to Keene State College
with THE HOOT, our
digital newsletter!*

Learn about upcoming events and peruse campus updates, and notes from your peers.

If you are not receiving the email and wish to be added to the list, please update your contact information by scanning the QR code or visiting www.keene.edu/alumni/connect/update.



Invest in Keene State's Future

Join the **1909 Society** and provide vital support to Keene State College. Your annual gift of \$1,000 or more, with special pathways available for recent graduates, directly empowers students, faculty, and programs.

As David Westover '72, USNH Alumni Trustee, shares:

***"Giving back financially helps ease their burden,
allowing them to achieve their educational goals."***



Learn more about the 1909 Society or make your gift today by scanning the QR code or visiting giving.keene.edu/1909-society.



The
1909
SOCIETY