

# DELAWARE VALLEY UNIVERSITY

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The Inauguration of  
Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D.

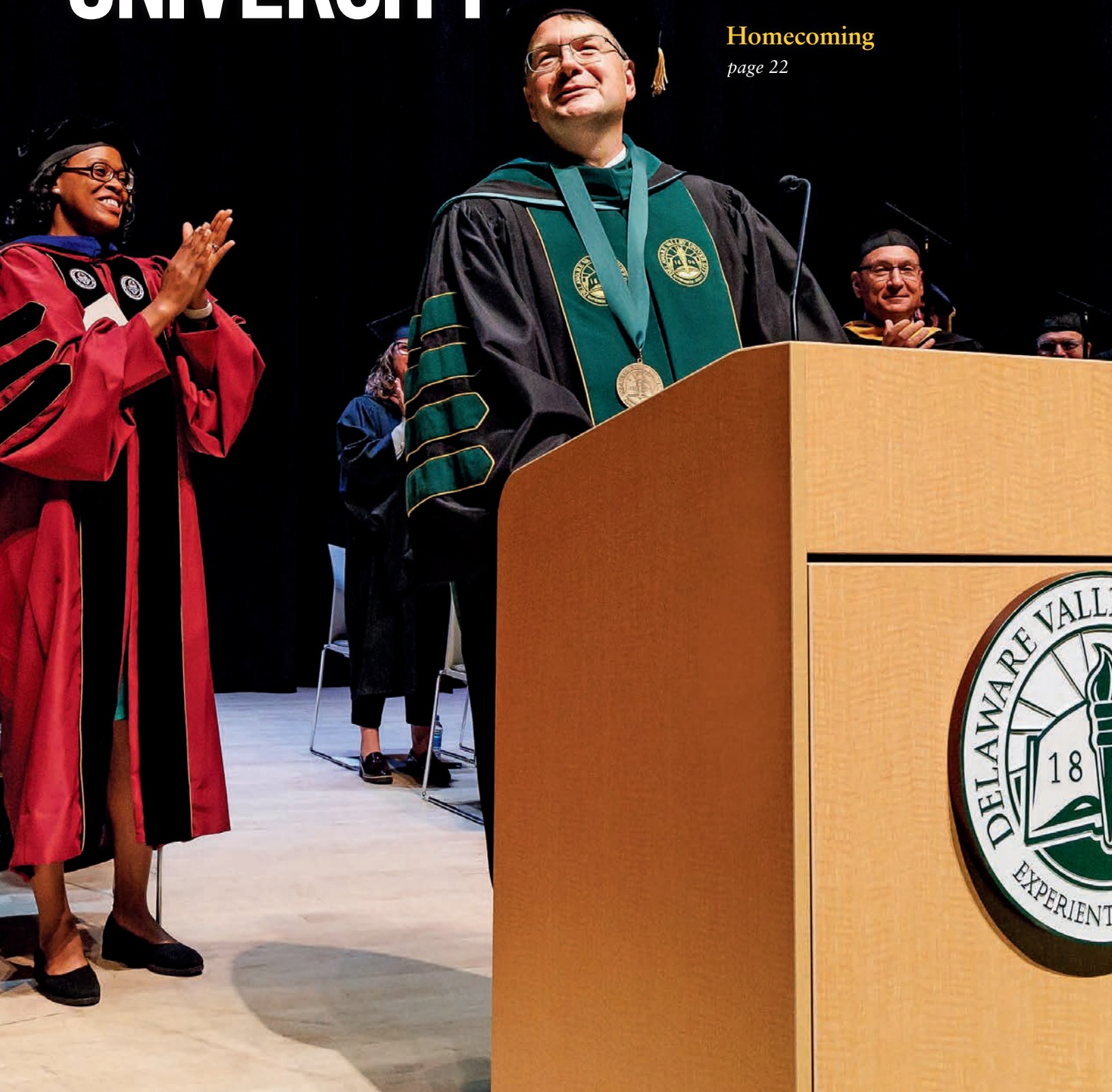
*page 4*

MANRRS Harvest Festival

*page 10*

Homecoming

*page 22*





“...we are in a unique position to build on the success we have experienced over the past year and secure our vision for the future.”

Dear DelVal Community,

This is the time for DelVal.

These are words that I said at my inauguration on October 21. I would like to share more about this statement with all of you who are part of our DelVal family. I believe “this is the time for DelVal” because we are in a unique position to build on the success we have experienced over the past year and secure our vision for the future. With all of us working together, this future will include:

**Expansion of undergraduate and graduate programs that focus on strategic growth segments of the economy and provide our students with clear paths to success:**

We are considering new program opportunities to follow the launch of our two new health science programs this year. Both programs have now received initial accreditation status: master of science in physician assistant studies, and master of science in speech-language pathology. For undergraduates, we have our first students enrolled in the new Cannabis specialization and research is currently being conducted on industrial hemp, as we look to position DelVal for success in this growing industry.

**Strategic use of DelVal assets:** We will develop relationships like Terrain, that can provide complementary revenue streams that align with our academic mission and funds to support our mission.

**Investment in our facilities, technology and our people:** We need to invest in our most important resource, our people, with training and resources that ensure we can deliver the DelVal educational experience that we know leads to success. We must invest in our facilities with energy efficiency upgrades and other improvements. And, we need to upgrade technology and other teaching tools to ensure that our students are prepared to make a contribution to society.

To support these investments, we will launch a comprehensive fundraising campaign, the planning for which is already underway. We will share more on this in the months to come.

As 2022 comes to an end, so does the wonderful 125th Anniversary celebration, and we look to the next 125 years. The future is up to all of us.

Best regards,

Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D.  
President



# In This Issue

## 4 The Inauguration of Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D.



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10 MANRRS Harvest Festival

18 E360 Student Profiles

24 Homecoming

28 Aggie Impact

- 20 Athletics
- 33 Class Notes
- 34 In Memoriam





▲ *Dr. Gloria Oikelome welcomes attendees*

# The Inauguration of BENJAMIN E. RUSILOSKI, PH.D.

*By Kathy James Howell*



Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D. was officially inaugurated as Delaware Valley University's fourteenth president on Friday, October 21, 2022. More than 400 people, including students, staff, faculty, former presidents of DelVal, Dr. Rusiloski's family, mentors and representatives from other universities and colleges attended the inauguration ceremony, which was held in DelVal's Life Sciences Building auditorium.



The Master of Ceremonies and DelVal's provost and vice president for academic affairs, Gloria Oikelome, Ph.D., Ed.D., welcomed all in attendance and established a recurring theme that was woven throughout the various speeches at inauguration. "As part of today's ceremony, we will be sharing excerpts of DelVal's founder, Rabbi Dr. Joseph Krauskopf's writing to honor the founding principles that continue to shape our institution," said Oikelome.

## INAUGURATION



▲ *April Vari, D.Ed.*

The National Farm School was founded as a solution to poverty, and Dr. Krauskopf did not stop at ensuring educational access and affordability for students, similar to the values that guide Dr. Rusiloski's leadership of DelVal today. "I stand here today [...] to challenge our students to look beyond themselves and use their education to impact the world around them," said Oikelome.

Representative of DelVal's alumni, Dr. James Trainer '82, was inspired by another excerpt from Dr. Krauskopf's writing. "Not unison but concord in the midst of variety, not absolute sameness but harmony in the midst of difference, this is the lesson that nature teaches us in 1,000 different languages and 1,000 different tongues," Dr. Krauskopf wrote. "Alumni first come into the institution as students from many different places and backgrounds with varied interests and lived experiences. We take with us from DelVal a commitment to the common good, an understanding that we are part of something larger than ourselves, a respect for difference and an appreciation of hard work, all values we know resonate with Dr. Ben," said Trainer.

President of the Student Government Board, Areej Alfeen '24, represented the student body at inauguration and discussed Dr. Rusiloski's value in

community, support, and connection. "Our community at DelVal does not fail to show caring and compassion for others. Following in Krauskopf's footsteps, Dr. Ben has become a great example of building a strong campus community, our DelVal family. Dr. Ben, thank you for being a great role model to our community; we are excited to see how DelVal grows with your leadership and support," said Alfeen.

Dr. Jessica McCall, faculty member and co-coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program, spoke about the responsibility that comes with power. She reminded us that we are all connected, and that "...To have power is not to be great individually but a responsibility to build a better community. So thank you, President Ben, for approaching this position with the same consideration, self-awareness and generosity of spirit that we so often value in fiction, but so rarely see in the real world. Thank you, Dr. Ben."

Lisa Schell '19, M.A. '22 spoke about Dr. Rusiloski's leadership in developing the award-winning experiential learning program, Experience360, in 2012. "It was because of this program I was able to work with a community nonprofit organization that targets human suffering," said Schell. "With excitement and positive anticipation,

"I've had the opportunity to experience and witness the depth of Dr. Ben's commitment and love for this University, its promise and its people."

-April Vari, D.Ed.,

*Vice President for Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence*



▲ *James Trainer '82, Ph.D.*



▲ *Jessica McCall, Ph.D.*



▲ *Areej Alfeen '24, Biology*



▲ *Lisa Schell '19, M.A. '22*

we welcome you to lead DelVal and its students to future successes and the true difference they will make towards a prevailing society.”

Chris Becker, director of Agricultural Operations and Board of Trustees staff representative, spoke of the uniqueness of DelVal in the landscape of higher education. “There are not many institutions where one can see from one vantage point on campus: classrooms, dorms, lecture halls, labs, orchards, barns, tractors, crop fields, horses, cows, sheep... we see our students in all of those areas with true experiential learning,” said Becker. “I know the staff of DelVal is proud to call Dr. Ben our president. We are excited about the opportunities that his leadership has already afforded, and we look forward to facing the future together in the years to come.”

Dr. April Vari, vice president for Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence, said that a celebration

like this “...provides us with the space to reflect on where we have been and where we might go in the next 125 years under new leadership.” Having worked with Dr. Rusiloski for more than 10 years, “I’ve had the opportunity to experience and witness the depth of Dr. Ben’s commitment and love for this University, its promise and its people.”

Philip Luccarelli '83, chairperson of the Board of Trustees, officially invested Dr. Rusiloski and said, “Dr. Rusiloski’s commitment to DelVal will help define the next chapter in our future as we prepare our students to serve the world that awaits them.”

Dr. Rusiloski took the podium to thank all in attendance and present his reflections on this momentous day. “As the fourteenth president of DelVal, I stand on a foundation built by many great leaders. Those with us today, and those who live with us in our memories.” He thanked



▲ *Chris Becker*

prior presidents George F. West, Dr. Thomas C. Leamer and Dr. Joseph S. Brosnan for attending, and made special mention of Dr. Joshua Feldstein, who passed away in 2018.

Dr. Rusiloski thanked DelVal alumni. “We now have over 17,000 alumni and by my calculation, I have personally taught over 2,000 of them. I’ve had the pleasure to get to know many others through the years whom I did not teach, but who I know are important supporters of all we do,” said Dr. Rusiloski. “Our alumni are a crucial part of our



**“We will invest in the tools and technologies needed to provide our students with the most current practical experiences.”**

*-Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D.*

▼ *Philip Luccarelli '83, chairperson of Board of Trustees, places the presidential medallion on Dr. Rusiloski*

DelVal community. We are proud of them and their accomplishments, and thankful for the way they give back, through working with DelVal to offer internships, through mentoring, by sharing their talents, and through financial support which is critical in making a DelVal education affordable and accessible for the next generation.”

After thanking others for their support and for attending the ceremony, Dr. Rusiloski said, “The students are the reason we are all here today.”

He then spoke about the need for DelVal to grow in critical ways in order to continue to provide the relevant, hands-on education that leads to success for our students.

“This is the time for DelVal. This is the time for us to grow in a number of strategic and essential ways. This is the time for us to invest in our roots as we broaden our reach. We will broaden our reach by adding new undergraduate and graduate programs in growing labor markets and burgeoning fields where our students will find high-quality, first destinations post-graduation that will lead them on their career trajectory. This means launching new academic programs and partnerships with business and institutional leaders.”

He spoke also of launching new programs in growing fields, expanding relationships with partners like Doylestown Health and Terrain, and seeking additional opportunities for complementary revenue streams with our land assets that will help support our academic mission.

Dr. Rusiloski shared that DelVal launched a specialization in Cannabis this fall. “We know that the market in this space will be expanding dramatically in the near future. And thanks to the generosity of trustee Kate Littlefield, we have a new horticultural laboratory with state-of-the-art equipment and an endowed professorship with research already underway with industrial hemp, to position us as a leader in this field.”

He spoke also of investing in our roots, in our institution and in



▼ *Dr Rusiloski with former presidents, (L-R) George F. West, Dr. Joseph S. Brosnan and Dr. Thomas C. Leamer*

“... our people, our most important resource, and in our facilities. We will invest in the tools and technologies needed to provide our students with the most current practical experiences. The best way to secure the future for our students and our institution is to do what we do best: Work with our external partners to understand the needs of the professional workforce and growing industries and then provide education to our students with experience in the classrooms and practice in their chosen field. We must provide our faculty with the best teaching tools available.”

Dr. Rusiloski stated that to accomplish these goals, DelVal will launch an ambitious fundraising campaign concurrent with the Centennial of our library, starting in late 2023. Working with library director Peter Kupersmith and the entire community DelVal “...will evolve this prominent structure at the head of the quad to become a modern center for teaching and learning, augmenting the informational technology sources that are currently at its heart with other technologies and resources for our faculty and students, including a new media laboratory and other technologies.” He spoke also about upgrading technology across majors and bringing more energy efficiency across campus.



“The commitment I make to you today is that regardless of where this growth take us, we will remain true to our roots, to the values that we hold dear, and that define who we are as we embark on this next chapter in the life of Delaware Valley University. This is the time for DelVal... for DelVal not only to survive, but to thrive.”

“This is the time for DelVal... for DelVal not only to survive, but to thrive.”

-Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D.

A transcript of Dr. Rusiloski’s speech and video of the inauguration may be found at [delval.edu/inauguration](https://delval.edu/inauguration).



MANRRS

### What is MANRRS?

Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANRRS) is a national society that encourages academic and professional advancement for minorities and their allies pursuing degrees in STEM-related fields. MANRRS' mission is to promote and implement initiatives that foster the inclusion and advancement of members of ethnic and cultural groups underrepresented in these fields through all phases of career preparation by providing academic and professional support. Through community, affirmation, and empowerment, MANRRS will help change the agricultural industry's future to a more equitable and diverse environment.

## Student Harvest Festival Brings Community and Fall Festivities

The Student Harvest Festival, run by MANRRS, showcased student-grown and harvested food, along with displays for clubs and organizations with activities and club information. Over 500 people, including faculty, staff and inauguration guests, were invited to join the Harvest Festival, featuring hayrides to South Campus for apple picking, pumpkins and DelVal's first-ever hemp maze. This year's festival was run by students Jacquelyn Dudley '24 and Natasha Robertson '23, as well as MANRRS advisors Dr. Melissa Wright, Dr. Carla Garzon, and Carlos Soto-Gil.



STUDENT HARVEST FESTIVAL





▲ *David Ziel, Chief Development Officer, URBN, Inc.; Pamela Webster, Director, Talent Acquisition, Mountaire Farms; Andrew F. Moyer, Assistant Dean of Students, Director of Student Involvement, Interim Director of the Center for Student Professional Development, Delaware Valley University; Billie Barnes, Executive Director, Workforce and Economic Development, Bucks County; Matthew Brink, Assistant Executive Director, National Association of Colleges and Employers; Barbara Hebel, Vice President, Human Resources, Doylestown Health; Olivia Wyckoff '22, Post Graduate Intern, Longwood Gardens*

## DelVal's Professional Partners Attend a Panel Discussion

Delaware Valley University welcomed its professional partners to a panel discussion on strategies for successful employment on Wednesday, October 19, 2022. The panel, which included local experts from various industries, discussed strategies for successful recruiting of qualified employees and shared strategies and tools with DelVal's partners to identify and retain talent within their organizations. This event was attended by more than 80 people.



▲ *Olivia Wyckoff '22, Post Graduate Intern, Longwood Gardens*



▲ Members of DelVal's Apiary Society and Horticulture Society selling DelVal products



▲ Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D.; Julia (Julie) Kelly, AVP, Business Development; Dr. Vail Garvin, President & CEO of Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce



“GPA is no longer one of the primary attributes that employers look for in candidates. What has replaced it? The behaviors that students learn through lived experiences in and out of the classroom via programs like DelVal’s Experience360. Employers want to see critical thinking, professionalism and communication.”

-Matthew Brinker, assistant executive director, National Association of Colleges and Employers



▲ Keynote Speaker Matthew Brink, Assistant Executive Director, National Association of Colleges and Employers

## 1896 Society Dinner

Dr. Rusiloski welcomed leadership donors to the 1896 Society Dinner on Thursday, October 20, 2022. The dinner, which was held on the Quad with 200 people in attendance, included the presentation of the Patricia Hilton Volunteer of the Year Award to James F. Trainer '82, Ph.D., and the Philanthropist of the Year Award to Katherine H. Littlefield, member of the Board of Trustees.



▲ Patricia Hilton '76 and Joseph "Chip" Krauskopf



▲ Justin Briggs '22, Young Alumni Trustee; Gloria Oikelome, Ph.D, Ed.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Kaitlynn Moore '23; Student Speaker Jackie Dudley '24; Andrew Moyer, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Student Involvement, Interim Director of the Center for Student Professional Development; Maddie Osatchuck '23





▲ Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D. and Katherine H. Littlefield, Member, Board of Trustees



▲ Benjamin E. Rusiloski, Ph.D., James F. Trainer '82, Ph.D. and Patricia Hilton '76

## Terrain at Delaware Valley University

The dinner also celebrated the University's new partnership with Terrain. The meal served was catered by Terrain in the Field.

Stay tuned for more updates by visiting [delval.edu/terrain-delval](http://delval.edu/terrain-delval)

And connect with us on Instagram!  
[@terrain\\_delval](https://www.instagram.com/terrain_delval)

*terrain*

GARDEN | HOME | CAFE | EVENT



## Mock Disease Outbreak

More than 60 undergraduate students participated in a Mock Disease Outbreak with the USDA on Saturday, November 5, at the close of One Health week on campus.

By Kathy James Howell

**Dr. Linda Detwiler '80**, a DelVal dairy science alumna, is a veterinarian and works for the USDA. She is a leading specialist in animal disease prevention and control including zoonotic diseases, like bovine spongiform encephalopathy (mad cow disease), that can move from animal to human, or human to animal.

DelVal is fortunate that Dr. Detwiler donates her time and resources annually to this hands-on learning opportunity for our students. She was joined by USDA veterinarian Dr. Alison Stout to lead the mock disease outbreak exercise this year.

Students were divided into four groups to work on different parts of the challenge. One group, comprised largely of animal science majors, acted in the role of veterinary epidemiologists. They created an epidemiological questionnaire, took a history and were in charge of examining the affected sheep and cows to take swabs and note clinical signs.

A second group, comprised largely of conservation and wildlife management majors, surveyed the pens and surrounding areas to see if other wildlife was present and may have played a role in the outbreak.

Environmental science majors evaluated environmental impacts and methods for disposal.

A third group, comprised of agribusiness students, was responsible for estimating the total cost of the outbreak, including value of livestock lost, cost to remedy the outbreak, and other expenses like supplies and lab work.

The fourth group, comprised of students from multiple majors including media and communication, were charged with managing the press and preparing press releases and media updates.

Unlike prior years, these students were not given the name of the disease in advance. They were challenged to figure out the disease based on facts and data provided by Drs. Detwiler and Stout, and lab results.

The group split into two so that half of the students worked at the dairy facility and the other half worked with the sheep. All of the students learned how to don and doff PPE at the site and create a line for 'clean' and 'dirty' zones, as each group worked on their specific challenge.

The animal science students were completely "hands-on" in the pen, examining the animals, taking temperatures, checking heart and





respiration rates and assessing overall health. Other groups carried out their observations and duties based on their task. The conservation and wildlife management students observed that there were rodent droppings in the barns but saw no sign of sick, wild animals at the site.

After time in the field, everyone reconvened in Mandell 114 and the groups worked on their assignments with the ability to ask questions of faculty from each area. The students developed a list of differential diseases based on the (mock) results of the lab bloodwork and their onsite observations, and necropsy photos of diseased organs.

Additional information was provided to the students to assist in diagnosing the disease: First, two students who work in the sheep pens and/or dairy were currently ill as well. They were also told that a visiting student from Africa had recently been on campus and visited both the dairy and the sheep pens. This student fell ill the evening of her visit.

The students were then challenged to determine the disease. One of our students correctly surmised that the mock disease was “Rift Valley

Fever (RVF)”. RVF is a disease found primarily in Africa, not America, but it is zoonotic, so it can pass between humans and animals. The disease can be spread by mosquitos.

Once the mystery of the disease was determined, there was a robust discussion on what remedy was necessary. The students acting as the veterinary epidemiologists recommended that the entire sheep population on campus be euthanized as they were experiencing widespread losses. They recommended that the cows be vaccinated under an emergency order.

The agribusiness students developed the cost estimates and the media team drafted multiple press releases to manage communications.

Professor Reg Hoyt, who directs DelVal’s One Health initiative, closed the session by telling students that this exercise was an excellent example of what One Health is all about: the interdependency of animals, the environment and people. And, the teams illustrated the need for an interdisciplinary approach, with experts from diverse fields, to manage something like this mock disease outbreak.

Additional faculty working with students for this event were Dr. Jennifer Shelly, Dr. Kimberly Reichner, Professor Julia Krout, Dr. Anthony Franceschelli, Dr. William Fritz, Dr. Melissa Wright, Dr. Jessica McCall and Samantha (Sam) Yankocy.



## Robert Bright '23 Pursues Lifelong Goal of Serving and Protecting the Community

Real-world experiences inspire criminal justice student to pursue the Police Academy



**Robert Bright '23**, a criminal justice major at DelVal, plans to become a state trooper with the Pennsylvania State Police Academy. Bright's real-world experiences and in-depth knowledge of the American justice system put him on the path to success in the field of criminal justice.

Through DelVal's award-winning Experience360 program, Bright gained valuable skills through the Central Bucks Sheriff's Department in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. He spent his time doing clerical work for the department and partook in ride-alongs. Bright is passionate about becoming a law enforcement officer after graduation and his Experience360 made him feel even

more confident in his decision. He describes his E360 as a snapshot into his career.

"My E360 experience prepared me for what I want to do for the rest of my life," explained Bright. "Seeing firsthand how beneficial our police are to local communities made me feel great about my career choice and would not have been possible without the E360 program."

Bright appreciates Dr. Megan T. Demarest, chair of the Department of Criminal Justice, for helping him every step of the way in finding and securing an internship with the sheriff's department.

"Her willingness and drive to help me find an internship by reaching out to her connections showed me how dedicated she is to this University and its students," said Bright.

At DelVal, Bright has been awarded the Board of Trustees Scholarship, the Beulah Arbogast Segraves Endowed Scholarship, the DelVal Mission Scholarship, and The Class of 1984 Scholarship. Bright is a member of the University's baseball team and the newly added DelVal Criminal Justice National Honors Society.

Bright enjoys the personal attention he receives at DelVal, as well as the cleanliness and scenery of campus. The class sizes and individuality

students have on campus is what piqued Bright's interest in DelVal.

"I feel like a real student and not just another number in the crowd," explained Bright.

One of Bright's biggest goals was to obtain a minor in a field closely related to criminal justice to make the most of his college experience. He decided on a psychology minor at DelVal. Bright hopes to influence change and make a difference in lives with a career in the criminal justice system.

"Serving and protecting the people of my community has been a lifelong goal and I'm very excited for the opportunity to do so," said Bright.





## Discovering New Species and Friends Along the Way

Senior Biology Student Shares Her Experience as a Student Researcher and Friend

**Madison “Maddie” Osatchuck ’23**, an undergraduate biology student at DelVal, says her biggest, yet simplest, goal during her time at DelVal is to be the best person, student and friend she can possibly be. Achieving just that, Osatchuck is involved in numerous groups and organizations on campus, has a passion for furthering her knowledge in academia, and serves as a mentor for first-year students.

The University’s small class sizes, hands-on learning, and unique offerings of majors, specializations and minors made it an easy decision for Maddie to attend DelVal. “I feel like I’m able to develop a deeper understanding of my academic content when I’m able to apply it, see it, and practice it,” explained Osatchuck. “One of my favorite parts of DelVal!” she adds.

For her Experience360, she recently completed a research project with Dr. Jason Downs of the biology department. The project reviewed the comparative anatomical description of tristichopterid fossils from the Late Devonian Era. Osatchuck explains, “Initially, we thought we were just going to be diagnosing a group of undiagnosed fossils to an existing

species. However, our work changed paths about halfway through the project when we realized we could not diagnose it as an existing species, so we decided to describe a new species of *Eusthenodon*!” With Dr. Downs, Maddie will be a part of publishing a 50-page manuscript and creating a species name.

As Osatchuck continues to excel in her academics at DelVal, she enjoys finding new ways to stay involved on campus. She is the treasurer for the class of 2023, the founder and president of Sisters in STEM Club, a member of Biology Club, Chemistry Club, and Animal Lifeline Club, and she works a campus job as a small animal lab technician. She is also a RAMbassador, which is a group of DelVal students who help prospective students understand what it’s like to be an Aggie, providing campus tours, helping with orientation and being enthusiastic ambassadors of all things DelVal.

In addition to all of the clubs and organizations Maddie takes part in, she is the Student Representative to two committees of the Board of Trustees.

“I think the most essential part of my education at DelVal is having a good support system. Academically, our faculty and professors are so supportive and encouraging to students. We also have supportive staff in offices like the Registrar, Bursar, and Financial Aid.”

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**“I think the most essential part of my education at DelVal is having a good support system.”**

*-Madison “Maddie” Osatchuck ’23*

## New Facilities Energize Fall Teams for Success

Prior to students returning to campus for the fall 2022 semester, Delaware Valley University Athletics saw a variety of renovations completed to enhance facilities, and the teams on campus immediately trended upward in their first year utilizing them.

*By Chris Elliott, Director of Sports Information*



▲ *First Team All-Conference goalie Olivia Sherwood '23 warming up before a 1-0 win over Cairn at home*

At James Work Memorial Stadium and Robert A. Lipinski Field, the home bleachers were replaced and updated while the turf field and track were upgraded. Inside James Work Gymnasium, both the men's and women's locker rooms saw major renovations thanks to a generous gift from 1957 baseball alumnus Dr. Thomas W. Watson and his wife Judee Wales Watson. Additionally, the weight room was outfitted with all-new modern equipment to better suit the needs of our student athletes.

Women's soccer, led by first-year head coach Ben Wilson, earned the first win on the new turf with a 1-0 victory over Cairn on their opening night on September 1. They continued their success two days later with a 2-0 shutout win over Manhattanville. The team put together a great start to the season, posting a 6-3-1 mark over their first ten games. In their final contest of the season, senior goalkeeper Olivia Sherwood broke the program's single-game save mark with 27 stops against the number one team in the country, Misericordia. She finished with 186 saves on the year, falling three short of the single-season program mark. Her impressive numbers earned her first-team all-MAC honors as a goalkeeper, while teammate Jess Williamson earned second-team recognition with 14 goals and five assists on the season.



▲ *Men's soccer Dan Arone '23*

Men's soccer improved their win total by two this year and started off the season with a number of impressive victories. After a 1-0 triumph over Cabrini to open the season, Chris Zirpoli's squad rebounded from two losses by winning four in a row, including three by way of shutouts. The team earned a thrilling 2-1 win at King's in their second MAC Freedom contest thanks to a Dan Arone penalty kick goal with 25 seconds left. Goalkeeper Andrew Roberto took home MAC Freedom defensive player of the week honors in the first week after a shutout win over Cabrini and led the conference with 99 saves.

Rachel Menin took over for women's volleyball as head coach and immediately made an impact on a young and improved squad. After finishing the 2021 season with just three wins, women's volleyball quadrupled their win total to 12. It was the program's highest win total since the team won 13 games in 2013. The most exciting victory came on their home court at James Work Gymnasium over King's College in their season and conference opener. After falling behind 2-1, the Aggies won the final two sets to knock off the Monarchs for the first time since 2013. Olivia Deffendall finished the season with the third most kills per set in the conference and earned MAC Freedom honorable mention recognition.



▲ *Gretta Schneider '25 and Cat Nemil '23 celebrate volleyball's conference win over King's College*





▲ *Field Hockey celebrates during a 3-0 MAC Freedom win over Lycoming College*

Carol Di Girolamo, in what ended up being her final season as head coach, propelled a young field hockey team to its best finish in eight years. The team posted five more wins than in 2021 and narrowly missed out on the MAC Freedom playoffs due to a three-way tiebreaker in which they finished tied for fifth with a 3-5 league record. The Aggies tallied their most exciting win of the season on October 19 when they defeated Misericordia 3-2 after the game remained tied through two overtime periods and had to be settled with a penalty stroke shootout. With the team trailing late in the game, leading scorer TJ Smith sent the game to overtime with a goal and fellow senior Sadie Strober won the game for the Aggies in the sixth round of penalty strokes. TJ earned second-team all-MAC honors after the season. Keeper Alyssa Rudd was stellar in the shootout, helping to preserve the win.

On the gridiron, the football team continued their dominance on the new turf field. Head Coach Duke Greco and his team continued their impressive conference winning streak, growing it to 40 after a home shutout over Lycoming, 21-0. Two more wins expanded that mark to 42 with two games remaining in the regular season. After nine weeks of the season, the team sat at 8-0 overall and 6-0 in conference, and was ranked 8th in the country by the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) poll and 14th in the country by D3football.com. After the season-opening win, sophomore Micah Bootman took home MAC Special Teams Player of the Week honors after a big fumble return set up a key Aggie touchdown. Fellow sophomore Jay White, thanks to a career-high 217 rushing yards as well as two touchdowns against Lebanon Valley in week seven, earned MAC Offensive Player of the Week recognition, as well as, a spot on the D3football.com Team of the Week.

Men's and Women's cross country competed in the MAC Championships at Lebanon Valley College and saw some impressive individual numbers. Justin Kaufman, Justin Rosenberger and Matthew Skikus each recorded a personal-best mark and Alyssa Blackmon turned in a career-best time on the women's side.

On the links, men's golf finished the season trending upward, as the team posted its best score as a group since 2013 with a 320 against DeSales. In that match, Ethan Saxe fired a career-low 75. Teammate Robby Meredith, a day after shooting a career-low 77, one-upped himself by penciling in a 76 to help the team to their impressive finish.



### DeVal Athletics Dedicates New Dr. Thomas W. Watson '57 and Judee Wales Watson Locker Rooms

The new Dr. Thomas W. Watson '57 and Judee Wales Watson Locker Rooms serve 17 men's and women's DeVal Athletics programs, as well as visiting teams and student-athletes that come to compete against our Aggies. The renovations were completed just before the start of the fall season. The project enhances the student athlete experience with modern wood lockers and benches, athletic flooring with inscribed logos, improved bathroom areas, new wall and ceiling finishes, suspended LED lighting fixtures, improved perimeter heating, and technology upgrades for teams to watch film and prepare for upcoming contests.



◀ *Dr. Thomas W. Watson '57 speaks with student athletes*



◀ *Fullback Walt Truxell '23 celebrates a home football win over Westminster College in the home opener*

## DeVal Football Celebrates Homecoming Triumph

On October 22, 2022, the Delaware Valley University football team earned its 43rd consecutive conference victory with a thrilling 27-14 win over the visiting Wilkes University Colonels in front of a packed homecoming crowd. Over 4,000 students, fans and alumni piled into James Work Memorial Stadium for the homecoming festivities.



► Homecoming Royalty  
Nicholas Choi '25 and  
Jessica Williamson '25



▲ First row (L-R): Jim Harteis '65; Ann Mossing; Bill Edmunds '68;  
Denise Edmunds; Second row (L-R): Bill Long '94; Rick Osman '74;  
Steve Peters '69; Don Goss '64

▼ James Trainer '82; Joan Hock, M.S. '05;  
Pete Duane '72



## 2022 Alumni Achievement Awards

The morning of Homecoming, the Delaware Valley University Alumni Association hosted its alumni award breakfast. Recipients listed below:

### Animal Science

**Brittany A. Conover '14**

### Business Administration

**Anthony J. D'Amico '00 and  
Joseph J. D'Amico '02**

### Continuing Education

**Matthew Riddick '20**

### Staff Appreciation Award

**Joan Hock, M.S. '05, Retired Director  
of Financial Aid**

### Plant Science

**Kenneth (Ken) S. Petersen '92**

### Science

**Dennis N. DeSimone '72**

### Secondary Education

**Stephen (Steve) J. Flavell '04**

### Arthur Brown Award

**Gerald Skoda '63**

### President's Distinguished Alumni Award (2)

**James R. Hoover '61  
William M. Dougherty '69**

### Congratulations to the 2022 Alumni Council Student Scholarship Recipients:

**Kimberly Sauers - Freshman  
Paige Thompson - Freshman  
Imani Walker - Freshman  
Riley Ferrara - Aggie Spirit Award**



## Next call for Alumni Council nominations

The Alumni Council is excited to announce that we will begin our nomination and election process of new Council members on an earlier timetable moving forward! Our next call for nominations will begin in February 2023. Our slate of candidates will be announced, and voting will begin early May. Ballots will close mid-June and our new Council members will be announced at the annual meeting, held the last Saturday in June. New candidates will be on-boarded over the summer and will assume their position at the annual meeting on October 21, 2023.

**If you are interested in running in our next election or would like more information, please contact the alumni office at [alumni@delval.edu](mailto:alumni@delval.edu). We look forward to hearing from you soon!**



▲ Dr. James Diamond '61

▼ *Matthew Riddick '20 and his supporters*



## **We've Moved!**

We are pleased to share that the Division of Development and Alumni Affairs has moved from Burpee House to the President's House on Campus Loop Road. This move provides more space to meet with alumni and the chance to be closer to the action on campus. Want a tour? Contact us at [alumni@delval.edu](mailto:alumni@delval.edu).

**Thanks,  
Joe Fiochetta and the Development  
and Alumni Affairs Team**

## New Board of Trustees Officers and Members

The Delaware Valley University Board of Trustees announced new officers and members. Effective July 1, **Philip Luccarelli '83** is chairperson; **Andrew Dougherty '00** is vice-chairperson; **Jimmy Cheek, Ph.D.** is secretary; and **Joy Levy** is treasurer. The following individuals have been elected as new Trustees:





**Louis (Lou) Hegyes '70**

Lou earned his B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture and Environmental Design from DelVal in 1970 and is a member of the DelVal Athletic Hall of Fame for both track and cross country.

Lou is recently retired after a successful 44-year career in college admission and enrollment. He served as director of admission at the University of the Sciences (USciences) for 24 years and served in the same capacity at both Lehigh Carbon Community College and Rosemont College. He also worked as a regional representative for the University at Albany. Lou established both the cross country and women's softball programs at USciences and was inducted into the USciences Athletic Hall of Fame in 2019. He is currently a Trustee of Delaware Valley Science Fairs, Inc.



**Jun Iwata '91, CPA, CISA, CFE**

Jun earned his B.S. in Computer Information Systems Management, with a minor in Accounting, from DelVal in 1991.

Jun is currently managing member at JI International LLC, assisting small- and medium-sized businesses with financial accounting, computer system implementation and technology integration, and fraud examination and litigation support. A Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), and Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA), Jun has previously worked at Resources Global Professionals, GMAC Commercial Mortgage, Sumitomo Bank, CIGNA, and Price Waterhouse. Jun has served on the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Area Chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners.



**Gary Ostroff '76, Ph.D.**

Gary earned his B.S. in Biology from DelVal in 1976 and his Ph.D. in Biology from the University of Delaware in 1982.

Gary is currently professor of molecular medicine at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, where he leads laboratory teams researching cures for infectious diseases, cancer, inflammation and, from his DelVal agricultural roots, food security solutions. For 40 years, Gary has built and led academic and industrial biopharmaceutical research and development groups that have led to over 100 peer reviewed publications, 50+ patents and 15 products in the agricultural, animal and human diagnostic, device, nutraceutical and pharmaceutical industries. Gary has served on Worcester Polytechnic Institute's Biotech Advisory Board and the Eden Research plc Scientific Advisory Board.



### Blair T. Rush '91

Blair earned his B.S. in Business Administration from DelVal in 1991.

Blair is currently president, Southeast Region at C&N Bank. He has worked in banking for more than forty years, including past leadership positions with Covenant Bank, National Penn Bank, FirstService Bank, CoreStates, and Bucks County Bank. Blair is deeply involved in the Bucks County community and is a past chairman of the Board of the Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce and the Washington Crossing Boy Scouts of America. He is currently treasurer of the Grand View Health Board of Trustees, President of the North Penn Valley Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors and a member of the PA Bankers Association Board of Directors.



### Justin Briggs '22

Justin is a Young Alumni Trustee, giving a greater voice to students and young alumni on the Board.

Justin graduated from DelVal this year with a B.A. in Media and Communication. He currently oversees social media and the website for 8840 Fitness Club, a personal training business.

While at DelVal, Justin was a member of the football team and served as president of the Black Student Union. He attended LeaderShape and worked to embrace and empower diversity on campus. Justin was a resident hall assistant and enjoyed mentoring freshmen and helping them successfully transition to college life. He also made a positive impact on campus by helping students at the Writing Center.



### Francie Babik '10, MBA '14

Francie is the Alumni Trustee, and serves as a liaison between the Board of Trustees, the Alumni Council, and the entire alumni body. She earned her B.S. in Business Administration from DelVal in 2010 and her MBA from DelVal in 2014.

Francie is currently a Strategic HR Consultant with Danforth Advisors. Her many years of experience in human resources leadership include past positions with Amplity Health, Publicis Health, ICON plc, Anthony & Sylvan Pools, Teva Pharmaceuticals, The Thompson Organization, and LA Weight Loss Centers, Inc. She is a member of both the Bucks County Senior HR Leader Roundtable and the Society for Human Resources Management.

## Faculty and Staff Board Representation

The Board of Trustees is also pleased to welcome to its membership Dr. Cory Kieschnick, chair of the Department of Equine Science and Management, and Dr. Jessica McCall, faculty member in English and co-coordinator of Interdisciplinary Studies, as Faculty Representatives to the Board and Chris Becker, director of Agricultural Operations, and Kelly Hojnacki, assistant dean of Student Development and Accessibility Services, as Staff Representatives to the Board.

## Former President Ensures DelVal's Impact Continues



Former President of Delaware Valley University, Thomas C. Leamer, D.Ed., has served higher education for much of his adult life. Beginning his higher ed

journey at the State University of New York (SUNY), where he worked for 28 years, Dr. Leamer served as a faculty member, department chair, academic dean, vice president for Academic Affairs, executive vice president, and acting president throughout various schools within the SUNY family.

It was during his time at SUNY that Dr. Leamer first connected with DelVal. "I was a member of the National Association of Teachers and Colleges of Agriculture and was elected the Northeast Regional Director. They meet each year at different college campuses, and it happened that the year I was elected, they met at DelVal," Dr. Leamer recalls.

"I was so impressed by the institution and the faculty members, and I came home and said to my wife, Sue, 'I'd like to work there someday,' and it turns out that came true," says Dr. Leamer. In 1997, Dr. Leamer became President of DelVal and led the University for 10 years.

"I certainly was humbled to be selected for the role as president. One of the things that impresses me most about DelVal is that students receive an education, not just a degree. It's a joint effort between academic affairs and student affairs to help develop and guide students through their

transition from college and beyond." Dr. Leamer also admires DelVal for its small classes and hands-on, experiential learning, which he says set it apart from many other institutions.

Humbled by the University's outstanding efforts to provide an affordable, high-quality education for all students, Dr. Leamer and his wife, Sue, understand the importance of giving back, to ensure DelVal's impact continues. "We think it's important to continue to support the campus and we want to do that for as long as we can. You find that the more time you spend at DelVal, your love for the campus and students grows deeper and deeper," says Sue.

Dr. Leamer and Sue have given to many areas on campus, including the Joseph Krauskopf Memorial Library, the Henry Schmieder Arboretum, athletics, the Chapel and more. Additionally, an endowed scholarship was created at DelVal in honor of the Leamers' service to the institution, which they, among many others, give to each year.

"The highlight of the year for us is receiving letters from students who have benefitted from our scholarship.



**"One of the things that impresses me most about DelVal is that students receive an education, not just a degree. It's a joint effort between academic affairs and student affairs to help develop and guide students through their transition from college and beyond."**

*- Thomas C. Leamer, D.Ed.,  
Former President of  
Delaware Valley University*

They're grateful, and it makes you realize how your gift is truly worthwhile. It means everything to hear from them," Dr. Leamer affirms.

## Supporting the Next Generation, Honoring the Past

**Dr. A. Ronald (Ron) Attarian '69** believes in the concept of paying it forward, especially when it means providing an affordable education to deserving students with limited financial resources. This is partly what motivated Ron to start an endowed scholarship at the University. As an alumnus of DelVal, Ron had a deep interest in plants from an early age, and the University's focus on agriculture appealed to him.

"I remember the day my parents and sister dropped me off at DelVal for the first time. As we were moving into the dormitory, this gentleman came by to check on us and it turned out to be Dr. Feldstein," Ron explained referring to the former, late president of DelVal, and at the time, one of Ron's professors. "We ended up bonding beautifully," he added. Ron enjoyed the close-knit relationships he was able to build with his professors at DelVal, and the way his fellow students helped him develop a newfound confidence.

"Kids would come to my dorm room to study with me, and I couldn't understand why. I finally realized it was because they thought of me as someone who was smart, and I never saw myself that way before. That was one of the great things that DelVal helped me realize," he reflected. After Ron graduated from DelVal, he continued to follow his passion for horticulture, earning his master's degree and Ph.D. from Penn State University. "I was lucky enough to get an assistantship with Penn State, so they paid for me to go to school while I was completing my master's and Ph.D.," Ron explained.

After earning his advanced degrees, Ron decided to pursue teaching. He began working at W.B. Saul High School in Philadelphia and taught greenhouse management there for 20 years. Ron then earned his certifications as supervisor, director, and principal of vocational education, which led to him becoming an assistant principal and principal in schools throughout the greater Philadelphia region. After retiring as a principal, Ron returned to his beloved alma mater and became an adjunct professor at DelVal teaching "Methods in Teaching Agriculture." "I work with agriculture majors who are preparing to student teach," Ron said.

Ron also became a mentor for student teachers at DelVal as well as St. Joseph's University. As Ron prepares the next generation to continue teaching all things agriculture, his desire to give back continues to grow.

"I started thinking, what can I do as payback to DelVal, the school that treated me so well and did such a good job at developing me into a better person?" Ron discovered his answer when he learned that he could establish an endowed scholarship that would continue to help students complete their education at DelVal. "I wanted to do it in honor of my late son who I adopted many years ago. He passed away and I wanted to establish this scholarship in his memory," Ron reflected.

Ron adopted his son from an inner-city environment. "He went through really tough times and with his parents' permission, they let me adopt him. I did my best to support



him before he passed away. If I could do something like that on a more continuing basis, that would mean so much to me," Ron said.

With the help of Kevin Ladden, DelVal's major gift officer, Ron established the Dr. Attarian Endowed Scholarship in July 2022 in memory of his son. Ron looks forward to supporting students pursuing their education, and he's excited to see the impact his scholarship makes on their future. President of DelVal, Dr. Benjamin Rusiloski, was especially grateful to Ron for giving back to the University in this very special way.

In a hand-written note to Ron, Dr. Rusiloski wrote, "Thank you, Ron, for remembering your son in a manner that supports our students in realizing their potential and their dreams. Thanks too for all you do personally supporting and mentoring students on a daily basis."

"That was such a thoughtful thank-you to receive," said Ron.

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**If you are interested in starting a scholarship, please contact Kevin Ladden at [kevin.ladden@delval.edu](mailto:kevin.ladden@delval.edu)**

# Your Connection to DeVal is Lifelong

Visit [delval.edu/classnotes](http://delval.edu/classnotes) to share your news

## 1980s



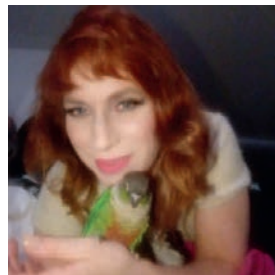
**Tim Fekete '81, Rick Cuneo '81, Loren (Edelstein) Frasco '81, Jenny Nicholas '81, Dan and Karen (Kendus) Persons '81** met for lunch at New Britain Inn on February 27, 2022.

**John Erwin '83** accepted the position of professor and Chair of the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture at the University of Maryland in College Park. The department includes teaching and research activities in horticulture, agronomy, plant biology and pathology, ecology, and landscape architecture. He previously served as a professor of horticultural science at the University of Minnesota for 30 years and as a Minneapolis Park Commissioner for 12 years.

**John Siegler '84** accepted a position as Psychological Advisor at Magellan Behavioral Health.

**Diane Lilro Safar '86** retired after 22 years as an agriculture instructor. She taught in Carroll County, Maryland and was selected as part of the opening team for a new high school. Over her 22 years, she built an award-winning program and served as State President of the Agriculture Teachers Association in Maryland. She functioned as the only instructor in the Department of Agriculture, and taught all classes related to CASE animal science, CASE plant science, wildlife and environmental science, and agriculture mechanics shop.

## 1990s



**Renee Kazokas '91** has been working in the plastics department at Lifetime Products as a line operator for four years. She also works as a promotional model doing events and in-store demos, and as an actress.

**Lisa C. Gerity '92, DVM** has hit a milestone of 23 years employed at Greater Annapolis Veterinary Hospital. She has also recently accepted the position as managing DVM for the small animal practice located in Annapolis, Maryland. She is excited about the next level of her career. Dr. Gerity is married to Greg

Dolce, Ph.D., M.S., MBA and has three daughters and seven pets, including three dogs and four cats.

## 2000s



**Kevin Rambo '09** has accepted the position of senior director of drug product manufacturing for Ocugen Inc. He has overall responsibility for drug product manufacturing for the organization's leading BLA, Covaxin, a whole virion inactivated COVID-19 vaccine. Additional responsibilities include the manufacturing development of Ocugen's modifier gene therapy platform that has the potential to treat multiple retinal diseases, such as wet age-related macular degeneration, diabetic macular edema, retinitis pigmentosa, dry age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy.

## CLASS NOTES

### 2010s



**Glen Botterbrodt '11** had the opportunity to support the USS Gerald R. Ford CVN 78 with flight operations as the pilot of the Big Iron, MH-53 for the World Famous Vanguard HM-14.



**Emily Anne Ponomarev '12** and **Nicholas Ponomarev** excitedly welcomed their first child, **Karlíe Raye Ponomarev**, in June 2022.

**Jillian McNellis '19** has been working full time at a racehorse breeding facility, Erdenheim Farm, in Flourtown, Pennsylvania since January 2021. She also had a beautiful baby boy named Caleb with her fiancé of almost five years. They got married in October 2022 and have two Bernese mountain dogs, Nova and Apollo.

### 2020s

**Jillian Gullo '21** is now working as Research Specialist at Princeton University within their Department of Microbiology. "I look forward to progressing within the University hopefully soon to different titles in different departments," she said.

**Amanda Kala '22** accepted a position as Assistant Director for Recruitment and Digital Outreach at Bucks County Community College.

**Alicia Fenske '22**, a conservation and wildlife management alumna, had four impactful internship experiences while at DelVal. She took an internship with the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, the Valley Forge Watershed Association, and Elmwood Park Zoo, where she was a conservation education intern. She also worked with Dr. Vincent Aloyo at DelVal's Apiary on campus. In these positions, she gained hands-on experience in her field. She is currently working for the nature camp at the Bucks County Audubon Society, and hopes to find a full-time educator position.



**Jordan Farlow '22**, a business administration alumnus, developed and presented a business plan for his start-up company, Guard Gear.



**Sophia Shannon '22** and **Justin Pakosh '22** are pursuing vet school after DelVal.



**Steven R. Hinkle '22** recently started studying at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. Prior to being accepted to Cornell's program, Hinkle interned at AARK Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center.

## In Memoriam

Dr. Jere W. Hohmann  
Emeritus Trustee

Vincent C. Henrich, Jr. '41

LeRoy D. Porter, Sr. '52

Kurt J. Sonneborn '55

William "Bill" J. Mahon '56

Mauri E. Pouttu '56

Chan Ho Lee '59

Charles "Charlie" A. Gerth '61

Steven "Steve" S. Katz '61

Peter A. Caldwell '63

John R. Bayliss '64

Scott M. Berger '66

Jerome "Jerry" J. Bullock '66

Charles "Charlie" M. Kaufman '67

Steven "Steve" P. Daniels '69

Michael "Mick" J. Hannan, III '70

Robert M. Goodman '71

Raymond "Ray" W. Gotthardt '71

Douglas A. Hilliard '72

David S. Price '72

William "Bill" N. Briegel '73

Joseph "Joe" R. Ballantyne '74

John C. Gaskill '74

William "Willie" T. Spicknall '76

John E. Rodenbaugh '77

Janice "Jan" J. (McCarthy)  
Windh '79

Edward "Ed" J. Schmitt '81

Honor Brush '89

Richard L. Brittain '90

Mark D. Furry '90

Rodney D. Anderson '93

Matthew H. Carr '10

Justin J. Guerrini '13

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**DECEMBER**  
**2022**  
**Month of Giving**

**WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?**

**Decide how you want to support DeVal:**  
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**Athletic Area/Team**  
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