

KEY COLLEGE VOTERS IN SWING STATES ♦ AT HOME IN PORTLOCK ♦ THE BUSINESS OF GAMBLING
VAN WICKLE'S NEW OUTDOOR CLASSROOM ♦ ROSIE BUKICS RETIRES ♦ FALL WEEKEND MOMENTS

Lafayette

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

FALL 2024



A LEOPARD'S LEGACY

The College celebrates 100 years
of the Lafayette Leopard,
and all that it means to be one.

MISSION AND VALUES

Effective with the 2024-25 academic year, Lafayette has a new mission statement and formal expression of College values. Following extensive discussions across the College community, these were approved in May by the faculty, staff, students, and Board of Trustees.

Mission Statement

Chartered in 1826, Lafayette College is dedicated to excellence in undergraduate education. Students are engaged in a transformative educational experience that bridges the liberal arts, engineering, and interdisciplinary study. The College fosters intellectual inquiry, artistic exploration, scholarship, and personal growth in a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive community. Lafayette students become critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, and responsible citizens of the world.

For more information: about.lafayette.edu/mission-and-history.



LAFAYETTE

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COVER PHOTO AND THIS PAGE LAFAYETTE COLLEGE ARCHIVES; ILLUSTRATION BY FERNANDO COBELO



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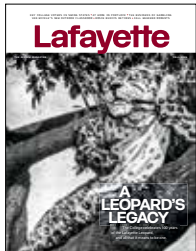
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM ATKINSON



Early career experiences, supported through the Lafayette College Fund, ensure students are job ready once they graduate. Charlize Cramer '24 (left) and Elle Lansing '26 (right) participated in an externship this year hosted by Krista Ortwein '05, director, corporate social responsibility at Olympus Corporation of the Americas (center).

YOUR GIFT SHAPES STUDENT SUCCESS

Every contribution to the Lafayette College Fund fuels our mission, ensuring each student benefits from rich, transformative experiences that foster their intellectual and personal development. These experiences empower students to emerge as exceptional leaders and compassionate change-makers, ready to make significant impacts on the world.



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LAFAYETTE



Sending regards

In the year that’s passed since we redesigned *Lafayette* magazine, I’ve had the opportunity to hear from many alumni. While the majority of exchanges are through email, I’m always pleased to find an envelope or two in my office mailbox. One in particular was from Allan Ishac ’78, a writer living in New York. He sent me a copy of his new book, accompanied by this note: “Leopards write. Even old ones.” That sentiment made me laugh, but also had me thinking about the shared characteristics of Lafayette alumni. Senior writer Bryan Hay digs into that very question as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Leopard [p. 42]. By all means, Pard is proud—and especially about their work. That passion is seen in Brian Pinkard ’15, who is tackling the dangerous forever chemicals crisis [p. 34]; and evident in the group of students analyzing young voters in swing states [p. 28]. By the way, the College will be emailing a short survey about the magazine to readers soon. We hope to hear from even more of you. —Amy Downey, editor, *Lafayette* magazine

Margaret Wilson
“Inside the Gov Lab,”
p. 28

In her first feature for the alumni magazine, Wilson captures timely student research taking place in Lafayette’s Gov Lab—specifically, exploring what motivates young voters on college campuses in swing states. Wilson, who joined Lafayette’s Division of Communications in January, centered her college and graduate school studies on the role of government and policy in protecting the environment.



Adam Atkinson
“In All the World,”
p. 54

Take a peek at any photo throughout the magazine and there’s a good chance it was snapped by Adam Atkinson, Lafayette’s director of photography and videography. One of Atkinson’s images in this issue happens to be the largest: a gleaming Leopard statue amid brilliant fall foliage. To find out how to get a copy of this spectacular photo mailed to you, head to page 54.



Lafayette

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

FALL 2024

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Lafayette College complies with all applicable federal and state legislation and does not in any way discriminate in educational programs or in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, national origin, age, or disability.



Building on strengths

Provost Laura McGrane, Lafayette’s new chief academic officer, walks the Quad with President Nicole Hurd.

NH: You began this role in July. Why were you originally interested in the position?

LM: At Lafayette, knowledge lives across spaces—across the liberal arts and engineering; across libraries, galleries, laboratories, and theaters; and across our communities in the Lehigh Valley and beyond.

NH: With your experience in strategic planning, what excites you about our future?

LM: I’ve spent time in Lafayette’s ecosystem, and so many things come to mind.

The College, for example, is in the early stages of figuring out how AI pertains to scholarship across the disciplines, and how faculty and students can come together to ask questions about what these new technologies mean for us.

NH: Good leaders, like you, have an incredible ability to cast a vision.

LM: Looking ahead, programs will continue to change as they push the boundaries of their disciplines. We want to

ensure that we are building a faculty that brings new ways of learning to us.

NH: You have a background as an English professor and read *The Biography of a College* by David B. Skillman. Understanding Lafayette’s history is going to help inform moving into our Bicentennial.

LM: Yes, and it’s about going from strength to strength. I’ve been especially obsessed with the chapter on Pardee Hall. Within 18 months of the 19th-century fire, we had fundraising, plans redrawn, and construction complete. The building was better than before—and under budget. Lafayette moved forward. So this moment of crisis became strength and brilliance.

NH: The power of ‘and’ includes being embedded in the campus *and* community. In what ways did you do that at Haverford College?

LM: As the founding director of Haverford’s Visual Culture Arts and Media, I helped create a space that brought together cross-disciplinary faculty and students inside an old campus gymnasium that we completely reconstituted. It became a place of theorizing, learning, and making—both for Haverford, and for artists in the Philadelphia area.

NH: In our roles, we get to see so much of the College. What’s it like being able to watch the incredible scholarship happening here?

LM: Being able to “watch scholarship” is truly amazing: seeing faculty and students create archives; read from their fiction and scholarly monographs; build bridges; study rocks from local formations; make podcasts and political shows—it’s a privilege and learning experience every day.



GET TO KNOW LAURA MCGRANE

McGrane served as the associate provost for strategic initiatives at Haverford College, outside Philadelphia. She was also a former chair, humanities center director, and longtime faculty member in Haverford’s English department.

EXPERTISE

McGrane has 20-plus years of academic and administrative leadership experience.

NOTEWORTHY

She was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, earning a BA in English and a master’s degree in comparative and international education there. Later, she received her Ph.D. from Stanford University.

FOR FUN

A fan of music, especially indie and folk, she recently toured the Martin Guitar Museum in Nazareth, Pa.

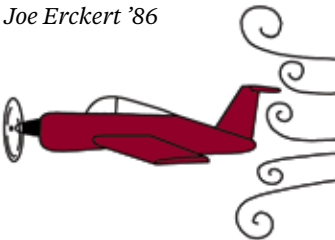
LAST WORD

“Lafayette students are doing things right from the beginning,” McGrane says, “and that’s because our faculty are there to imagine possibilities every step of the way.”





Thank you to the Class of 1974 for blazing the trail [Summer 2024, p. 36]. My wife, Irene '86, and I may never have met without all of you: Deirdre Bradbury Jacob '74, Alma Scott-Buczak '74, Meg Axelrod '74, Darlyne Bailey '74, and so many more pioneers. You made Lafayette better and changed countless lives of Leopards who arrived after you.
Joe Erckert '86



Island intrigue
I read with interest the article “Off the grid” [p. 28] regarding the Brazilian island developed by Fernando Lee, Class of 1924. As an avid diver, I would be interested in the ocean waters and marine ecosystems surrounding the island. You might want to contact Dr. John Caruso '69, a former Lafayette biology professor. Dr. Caruso is an avid ichthyologist and marine biologist who might have some insight on the sustainability of the island's surrounding marine life.
Catherine Hanlon '79

Olympian mail
J. Alfred LeConey, Olympian and Class of 1923 [Summer 2024, p. 63], was a distant relative of my husband's father, George J. LeConey Sr. There is a street and circle named after him in Palmyra, N.J., known

MAKING HISTORY

I'm grateful to the women who made it possible for me and other women to attend college. The women's rights movement was not that long ago. I find it so important, at this moment in time, to look at the past to guide us to a more inclusive future.

JILLIAN GAETA '07
Activist and co-founder of Roots to Revolution, an educational organization led by women

as LeConey Avenue and LeConey Circle. A few years back, we were able to acquire the U.S. postage stamp that he was on.
Virginia LeConey

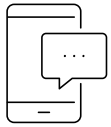
Al LeConey's stamp was also included in the August issue of *The United States Specialist*, a monthly journal published by the United States Stamp Society.
As a kid, I always knew it was illegal to depict living persons on postage stamps—my dad, Bill Rufe, Class of 1922, was postmaster at Sellersville, Pa., and both of his parents were postmasters, at different times, at Riegelsville, Pa. I learned at an early age that the 1932 Arbor Day stamp



was the poster child for this violation. The stamp, showing a boy and a girl planting a tree, generated considerable controversy.
A few years ago, my daughter, Bonnie O'Donnell, donated the first college football helmet back to Lafayette, and I was invited to view the College's philatelic archive. Some of my philatelic interests are posted on my website, SpecialHandling.weebly.com.
Bob Rufe '67

PHOTOGRAPH BY LAFAYETTE COLLEGE ARCHIVES (OLYMPIC MEMORABILIA)
ILLUSTRATION BY ANTONIO PINNA

In 1961, I broke the Lafayette freshman 100-yard dash school record. It sent me on a quest to understand the Lafayette sprint champions of yore. Al's name, of course, was prominent, but only if you dug into the Lafayette archives. My interest was renewed many years later, while I was still competing among the masters programs and the internet provided a trove of information, such as the 1922 article in *The New York Times*, “LeConey Will Equal World's Record, Says Lafayette Coach,” two years before the Olympics.
Months after the 1924 Olympics, LeConey broke the 100-yard dash world record only to have it nullified with much disagreement. The facts are compelling enough. He, remarkably, beat the two foremost sprinters of the first quarter of the 20th century,



ON THE WEB
Exploring an island with such a unique history must be fascinating. Thanks to @laf_engineering for these amazing opportunities!
-Pete Marin

Charley Paddock (100-meter world record holder) and Loren Murchison. I believe Al had not received the permanent recognition and ongoing commemoration of his deeds on campus. So, in 2012, with the assistance of famed pop artist Peter Max, I designed a commemorative poster to be bestowed to Lafayette's top track and field athlete each year, and the poster incorporated Al's famed stamp. I hope this sidebar helps tie up in a pleasing bow author Bill LeConey's informative article in the summer alumni magazine.
Richard S. Koplin, M.D. '64

Artificial intelligence
I had the privilege of contributing to “The generative generation” [p. 42] about the evolving role of artificial intelligence in education. AI, when leveraged thoughtfully, can significantly

enhance learning, but it also brings challenges that require careful consideration. The story made me reflect on my time in the classroom, both as a student as well as a faculty member. It's an honor to be part of a dialogue with experts in the field, exploring how academia can harness AI to benefit students.
Chris Shumeyko '10

WRITE TO US Have feedback or a story idea? Email lafayettemagazine@lafayette.edu or use the following mailing address: Lafayette magazine, Communications Division, Alpha Building, Easton, PA 18042. Letters published in Lafayette magazine should be a maximum of 250 words and may be edited for length and clarity.

The Northampton Street Bridge, also known as the “free bridge,” lit up in maroon for Commencement [Summer 2024, p. 54].



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED GREENBAUM



FOR MORE
Check out the latest content from news.lafayette.edu

► **Photo gallery**
A recap of October's Fall Weekend on College Hill.

► **Faculty news**
Getting to know Lafayette's 19 new tenure-track faculty members.

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Exploring the latest sustainability efforts on campus.

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THE ARTS
AT LAFAYETTE

INSIDE

Noteworthy news and happenings on campus. **p. 10**—Bicentennial announcements. **p. 13**—2024 Maroon Club Hall of Fame, faculty named to endowed positions, and more. **p. 15**—Angela Busheska '25 shines in tech, Lehigh Valley Space Fest.

On the Hill



Rosie's Retirement

Rosie Bukics, Lafayette's longest-serving female faculty member, has a sentimental send-off.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUGLAS BENEDICT



LAFAYETTE COLLEGE
1826 • 2026

CELEBRATION

Bicentennial plans

In preparation for the College's 200th anniversary, Lafayette has lined up special programming and activities starting with the Bicentennial kick-off during Fall Weekend, Sept. 26-28, 2025, and extending through fall 2026, including:

- › visiting campus speakers
- › World Lafayette Day
- › academic and athletic caravans
- › commemorative projects like a student time capsule
- › events in select cities in the U.S. and Europe

For more information on plans, visit lafayette.edu/bicentennial.

President Hurd moderated a bipartisan discussion with prominent political analysts Harold Ford Jr. (left) and Michael Steele (right) at Colton Chapel. The 90-minute recording of the event, "Dialogue Across Difference: Countdown to Election 2024," can be found at news.lafayette.edu/election2024.



STRATEGY

Strategic and campus master planning

In October, faculty, staff, and students attended virtual listening sessions about the proposed priorities and action steps for the strategic plan. The College is moving forward to complete the official plan with the community's insights in mind and will release the strategic plan narrative document in November; the community can then review and endorse the final priorities and action steps through an online process. (Visit becoming.lafayette.edu for more information.)

Meanwhile, Lafayette's campus master plan will also be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval. Priorities include collaborative academic and living spaces; extensive renovations to Pardee Hall; and reimagining Metzgar as a campus combining

athletic, recreational, and wellness opportunities and where learning and research capitalize on the area's potential as a "living laboratory."

ATHLETICS

Football heads west

As Lafayette begins the celebration of its Bicentennial year, the football team will face two Football Bowl Subdivision foes in one season for the first time in the Patriot League era. The Leopards open next season at Bowling Green on Aug. 30, 2025, and will face PAC-12 opponent Oregon State on Oct. 18, 2025. The trip to Corvallis, Ore., is the farthest west any Lafayette football team has traveled since Lafayette began playing in 1882.

LEADERSHIP

Dean of students introduced

Walter Snipes was hired as Lafayette's new dean of students, effective Oct. 1. His 20 years of experience in higher education include roles at Davidson College, Oxford College of Emory University, and University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



FACULTY

Notable retirement

Rosie Bukics, Thomas Roy and Lura Forrest Jones Professor of Economics, joined the faculty in 1980 and is the longest-serving female faculty member in the history of the College. Her esteemed career was recognized over Fall Weekend with a formal retirement celebration at the Dyer Center and an acknowledgement on the field at Fisher Stadium during the football game.

STUDENT LIFE

McCutchen Foundation

Lafayette has launched the McCutchen Foundation Women+ in STEM Program through the Hanson Center. The funds will further enhance programs for women in STEM in the following ways:

- › **Research Scholars Program**, a paid summer research internship to work with BIPOC alumnae
- › **STEM Peer Mentoring Program**, which supports first-year students
- › **Lecture series**, featuring visiting faculty and business leaders from various fields

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM ATKINSON

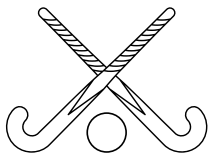


More than 2,100 alumni and families registered to attend Fall Weekend. New this year: Homecoming, Family Weekend, and Fall Fest, sponsored by the Lafayette Activities Forum, all took place simultaneously Oct. 25-27. And they will again in 2025, on Sept. 26-28.

SUSTAINABILITY

Addressing single-use waste

In an effort to reduce the number of disposable plastic water bottles used on campus, the Office of Student Involvement distributed reusable bottles to first-year Lafayette students during move-in weekend. When the bottles are refilled at water stations around campus, students can track their usage by scanning the bottle's QR code; every scan prompts a donation from the Fill it Forward Co., helping to bring clean drinking water to developing nations.



BY THE NUMBERS

100

Number of career wins achieved in October by field hockey head coach Jennifer Stone '04.

DISCOVERY

Searching stem cells

Ezra Lencer, assistant professor of biology, and three student-researchers are investigating one of biology's most burning questions: How do stem cells acquire different fates? "All humans start as one cell that divides into multiple cells that express different genes," Lencer says. In their lab, the team is specifically looking



PHOTOGRAPHS BY (FALL WEEKEND, STEM CELLS) ADAM ATKINSON; BOTTLE BY OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

at a newly discovered (and not widely researched) gene called KLF17, which Lencer says "could potentially be playing an important, yet unidentified, role in the development of neural crest cells, which make the skeleton of our face."

Lencer and Bergh Family Fellows Emma Dinolfo '27, Sophia Guitar '25, and Hazel Yang '27 have been using CRISPR technology to selectively modify KLF17 in zebrafish and study how it affects the fish's development. "This has all sorts of implications for biomedicine," Lencer says. "It could give us insight into a variety of hereditary diseases in humans—like cleft lip and palate, melanoma, and Hirschsprung's disease—and potentially some kind of remedy somewhere down the road."

ACADEMICS

Visiting scholar

The Hanson Center has welcomed Dr. Ebony McGee, Professor of Innovation and Inclusion in the STEM Ecosystem at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Education and its Department of Mental Health, as its 2024-2025 visiting scholar. McGee is the author of *Black, Brown, Bruised: How Racialized STEM Education Stifles Innovation*. Her groundbreaking research explores the experiences, along with the mental and physical health impacts, of STEM education and careers for Black and other historically marginalized individuals. McGee will be giving a campus-wide presentation about her work in March.



THE ARTS

Marquis exhibition

Ana Ramírez Luhrs, co-director, Special Collections and College Archives, spent this summer examining the College’s collection of items from Lafayette’s Farewell Tour of America. She was assisted by Ricardo Reyes, director of Galleries and curator of Collections, and together they curated an exhibition to reflect the material culture from that period: well-preserved gloves, ball invitations, and other symbolic items. *Return to ‘The Land of Genuine Freedom’* will be presented in Williams Center for the Arts through Dec. 6.



ON CAMPUS

Smart upgrades

Over the summer, Skillman Library added a private study booth on its lower level. The booth, which can be reserved, has white noise to dampen ambient sound, along with integrated power outlets to charge devices. Additionally, on its second floor, white boards were replaced with glass, thereby producing less residue but more surface area for notes.

ACADEMICS

Better together

The Lafayette Teaching Squares program returned this fall, encouraging instructors from diverse disciplines to form a teaching square (groups of three or four faculty members), observe one another’s classes to reflect upon their own teaching practices, see other methods of teaching at the institution, and build community.

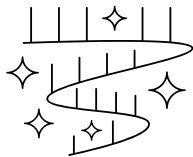
Renowned actor, writer, and producer Daveed Diggs visited campus in September to meet with students and faculty and share a preview of his upcoming docuseries called *The Class*. The series, which he executive produced with President Hurd, follows high school students during the pandemic and shines a light on the struggles of shutdowns and the importance of student opportunity. It will air on PBS in the spring.



COMMUNITY

Grant for trail planning

Lafayette was awarded \$75,000 from Northampton County to begin the planning phase for a multimodal trail that will connect the College Hill and West Ward neighborhoods of Easton with Palmer and Forks townships, including Lafayette’s Metzgar Fields Athletics Complex and LaFarm. “Identified as a priority in Lafayette’s new campus master plan, this project will close gaps in the region’s trail network—providing safe, alternative transportation options and helping meet College and community environmental sustainability goals that reduce reliance on carbon fuels,” says Audra Kahr, executive vice president of finance and administration. “In addition, it will facilitate ongoing research and learning by Lafayette faculty and students to study and protect the Bushkill and adjacent natural areas.”



DID YOU KNOW?

Due to a strong geomagnetic storm, the campus was treated to an evening of northern lights in October.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MCGEE; (LIBRARY, MARQUIS) BY ADAM ATKINSON

ALUMNI

Maroon Club Hall of Fame

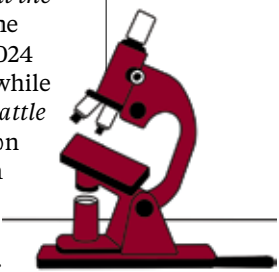
John Gaydeski ’69, Arthur Fischetti ’75, Christine Sieling Demareski ’94, Stephanie Tinney Robinson ’02, Emily Myers Royle ’03, and Joe McCourt ’05 are set to be inducted into the Maroon Club Hall of Fame on Nov. 22. Gaydeski was an NCAA qualifier in the javelin and played defensive end in football. On the diamond, Fischetti was a two-time All-District II selection who rose as high as AA in professional baseball. Sieling earned all-rookie and All-Patriot League honors on the hardwood. Tinney was a two-time league defensive player of the year, leading women’s lacrosse to three straight titles. Myers was a three-time

All-Patriot League women’s soccer selection. McCourt, Lafayette’s second-all-time leading rusher, helped kick off a run of three straight Patriot League football titles.

IN THE NEWS

PBS39 segments

Lafayette students produced two special episodes for Lehigh Valley’s PBS affiliate, which aired to viewers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey ahead of the presidential election. *Democracy at the Edge of AI* analyzed the impact of AI on the 2024 political campaigns, while *Campus Crossroads: Battle of the Ballot* focused on how young voters can make a difference at the polls. Watch them both at wvlt.org.



FACULTY NEWS

Six faculty members were newly named to endowed positions.

This type of support facilitates research-related travel; sustains research projects and the number of students working in labs; offsets costs associated with book projects; funds new areas of field study and scopes of work; and helps the College continue to attract top-flight faculty.



David Sunderlin
John H. Markle
Professor of
Geology



David Brandes
Air Products/
Seifollah Ghasemi
Chair in Engineering
for Interdisciplinary
Teaching



David Nice
Charles A. Dana
Professor of
Physics



Lisa Gabel
William C. ’67 and
Pamela Rappolt
Professor in
Neuroscience



Jennifer Talarico
Marshall R. Metzgar
Professor of
Psychology



Michelle
Geoffrion-Vinci
Thomas Roy and
Lura Forrest
Jones Professor
of Languages and
Literary Studies



SUSTAINABILITY

Local lunch

The second annual LaFarm to Table luncheon took place inside LaFarm’s greenhouse on Sullivan Trail over Fall Weekend. A three-course menu featured an heirloom tomato salad dressed with minted pea puree and olive tapenade, sourced from the campus farm.

CELEBRATION

Save the date

Founders’ Day events will take place around the country on March 9, 2025.

In the first-floor lounge of the recently opened McCartney Street Housing, Phase II, Isabel Sorrells ’23 painted a colorful mural depicting a pair of leopards in a rainforest setting.



AWARDS

Women in STEM

Washington Monthly recently recognized Lafayette among “20 Best Colleges for Women in STEM” in the U.S. In the rankings, the College was named America’s fifth best college for women in chemical engineering and sixth best college for women in mechanical and civil engineering. Comparing more than 1,000 U.S. colleges

and universities, *Washington Monthly* determined its rankings based on the percentage of recent program graduates who are female, percentage of the institution’s female student population, and median earnings for both men and women five years after graduation. Lafayette is the only undergraduate-only institution included in the magazine’s ranking of the nation’s top 20 engineering programs.

BY THE
NUMBERS
300

The Simon Center for Economics and Business room number recently dedicated to Rosie Marie Bukics, professor emeritus of economics.

PHOTOGRAPH (LAFARM) ACADEMIC IMAGE; (MURAL) ADAM ATKINSON; ILLUSTRATION BY ANTONIO PINNA

IN THE NEWS

Student earns *Glamour* award

Angela Busheska ’25 has earned recognition as one of *Glamour* magazine’s College Women of the Year. A full-ride scholarship brought Busheska to Lafayette in 2021, where she became the first woman at the College in the last 30 years to take on a dual major in electrical engineering and computer science.



Her vision leverages technology as “a tool to help solve some of the world’s greatest problems.” Busheska has held internships at Google and Microsoft, where she worked on improving accessibility in various software programs. She delivered keynote speeches at events like the Google Developers Conference and Bloomberg Green Festival to demonstrate how tech can be used for social good. In 2022, she made it to the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 list for creating an app that measures the amount of carbon emitted in everyday activities.

As a junior, Busheska was named a Neo Scholar—the first in Lafayette’s history—joining one of the strongest communities of tech leaders in the nation.

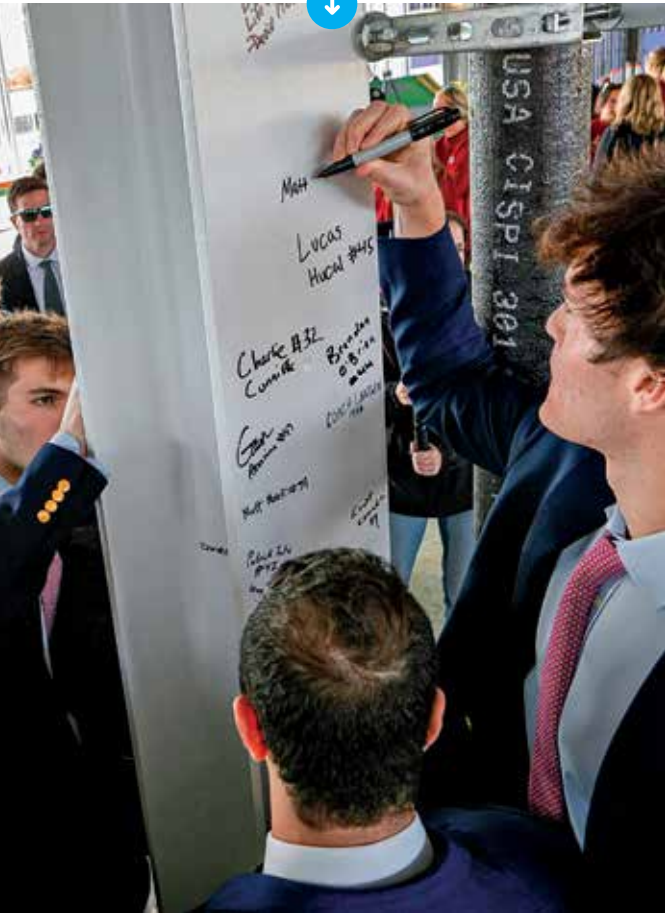
DIVERSITY

Connecting to cultures

International Education Week was celebrated by Lafayette in November with a series of events to help students explore different cultures. One of the functions was an evening of dancing and music to a Tokyo-inspired theme

PHOTOGRAPH (BUSHESKA) ADAM ATKINSON; (SPACE FEST) ROSETTA CERRANO; (WALLACH) RICK SMITH; (PUMPKINS) GENAMARIE MCCANT

During Wallach Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center’s groundbreaking ceremony, beams were signed by alumni, student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. The beams will remain exposed in the new facility.



night at Pfenning. (It was hosted by the International Students Association with support from the Office of Intercultural Development and the Division of Inclusion.) “International Education Week is a valued time for us to celebrate the diversity that enriches our Lafayette community,” says Kimberly L. Weatherly, executive director of intercultural development. “Cultural and identity awareness weeks or months foster not only a celebration of our differences but also an opportunity for meaningful learning and growth.

BY THE
NUMBERS

\$22.6
million

Marquis Society members contributed more than this amount last fiscal year to elevate the student experience.



COMMUNITY

Stargazers unite on campus

Last month, the College hosted Lehigh Valley Space Fest at Rockwell Integrated Sciences Center, Hugel Science Center, and Anderson Courtyard. For two days, visitors had a chance to speak with NASA ambassadors, view different telescopes, and attend discussions with space experts, including Lafayette professors. Brooks Thomas, associate professor of physics, presented on Dark Matter 101: A Guide to the Invisible Side of Our Universe; while Caleb Gallemore, associate professor of international affairs, discussed Watching the Earth from Space: A Half-Century of Remote Sensing.

STUDENT LIFE

Seasonal spirit

For the second year in a row, students were surprised to wake up to an October “pumpkin patch” on the Quad, and were treated to cups of warm apple cider, courtesy of Lafayette College Dining Services.



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ottery tickets, sports betting, and a trip to the casino—it may read like the schedule of someone pressing their luck, but it’s actually the syllabus for the First-Year Seminar “Gambling: Here & Everywhere” with Derek Smith, professor of mathematics.

This seminar, versions of which Smith has taught for nearly two decades, investigates the social, economic, and psychological impacts of gambling. “The motivating question for the course is whether the proliferation of gambling in its various forms is good for society,” Smith says.

When the Supreme Court overturned the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act in 2018, opening legal and regulated sports gambling to all states, the subject matter in Smith’s course became even more relevant.

“It’s now as easy as a ‘click’ to legally wager on sports, and not just on whether a team will win by a certain number of points, but also on whether individual players will perform at certain levels,” Smith says. This outside expectation to win—games, money—has placed added pressure on athletes across the country, including those on college campuses. He explains that the nature of sports gambling can more easily lead to student-athletes being targeted or harassed. What’s



more, according to the NCAA, one in three student-athletes have experienced betting-related harassment.

Gwen Cahill ’28, who is taking the seminar this fall, was sympathetic to learn about student-athletes being caught in the crossfires of gambling. “It’s a lot of pressure for them to know they have money being placed on them,” she says.

Another sobering statistic: University of Buffalo reports that 10% of college students have a gambling disorder. So as Smith’s course explores ethical concerns, it also exposes the dangerous dimensions

of gambling. “Are there ways to better protect students and student-athletes from these harms?” he asks.

For example, Smith has students consider how state lotteries might affect low-income citizens. According to a 2022 study from the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, University of Maryland, lottery retailers in almost every state are concentrated in neighborhoods that are disproportionately home to Black, Hispanic, or low-income residents. He explains that these lotteries tout state benefits, such as revenue being earmarked for

good causes like public education. “But, in the end,” he says, “the effect is a relatively small source of state revenue that takes a disproportionately large share of money from communities that tend to be poor, non-white, and less educated.”

Through class discussion and writing assignments, students are tasked with developing their own takes on the state lottery business. The first assignment asks students to evaluate whether or not a state without a lottery—Alaska, Alabama, Hawaii, Nevada, and Utah—should implement one.

Makenna McCall ’27, who took the course last year, focused on Alabama. “I was surprised by how interdisciplinary the project was,” McCall says. “We had to take the time to learn about some of Alabama’s specific cultural influences, and economic and political issues that the state is facing.”

Two-thirds of the way through the course, students take a class trip to Turning Resort Stone Casino in Oneida, N.Y. In the weeks leading up to the excursion, students complete a project pitching a new casino game to executives. To successfully do so, they must include

an analysis of how much “the house,” or the casino, will make back on every dollar spent.

“Doing this assignment means realizing that the house edge is an integral part of how gambling works,” McCall says.

Participating students each receive \$25 of “free play” with which they can demonstrate their newfound understanding of the casino system.

“The students have thoroughly studied casino and game design, which is perfected to extract the maximum amount of money from players over time,” Smith explains. “Most of the students get back on the bus with none of their free play remaining, but with a much better understanding of the house edge.”

Smith hopes the course will make students aware of the risks in gambling long after the class ends. “A big motivation for me is to teach students to pause and question the propositions in front of them.”

“It may look like you have good odds, but learning the math really helps,” Cahill says. “I think it will keep me and everyone in the class from falling into games that are taking your money or that could really hurt you in the long run.” ■

Earlier in the semester, Smith’s class took their chances with various scratch-off tickets. Of the 34 students who played the Mega Millions lottery, only one student won \$2.



Exploring the odds

Prof. Derek Smith and his students unpack the high-stakes world of gambling.

BY MADELINE MARRIOTT ’24

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM ATKINSON

DRAWN TOGETHER

Author Prof. Ingrid Furniss and illustrator Isabella Lu '25 combine forces to publish a book more than a decade in the making.

BY STELLA KATSIPOUTIS-VARKANIS

A new book by Ingrid Furniss, which was released in July, utilizes her expertise in Chinese music archaeology and is the culmination of nearly 12 years of impassioned research. In it, the dean of the faculty and professor of art history—who specializes in early Chinese art and archaeology—explores the complex history of lutes, along with the instrument's links to social, cultural, ethnic, and religious marginality in China.

The book, titled *Lutes and Marginality in Pre-Modern China: Art History, Archaeology, and Music Iconography*, also features more than 60 hand-drawn illustrations by Isabella Lu '25. For Lu, working on a project like this, and becoming a published illustrator, was a dream realized. "I never expected for it to happen so soon," says Lu, who has a dual major in anthropology and sociology and art history, as well as a minor in classical studies.

Here, Furniss details how the duo brought together their talents for a truly special collaboration.

After having worked closely with you on the book, Lu says she particularly admires your dedication to your research. So much so, it spurred her to revive a personal project from high school: a webcomic about ancient Rome. What's the source of your passion?
I'm a musician—I've been a violist most of my life. I like to joke that I'm kind of like that kid from *The Sixth Sense*: I see musical instruments everywhere. Whenever I'm visiting a museum or another country, I enlist the help of friends and family to find musical instruments in works of art. My extensive travels to East Asia, India, Turkey, Egypt, Cyprus, Mexico, and much of Western Europe gave me the opportunity to look at works of art through the lens of my love for music. We might not be able to reconstruct ancient



PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM ADKINSON

musical tunes, but the instruments reveal so much about people’s everyday lives and views of the world.

My interest in Chinese music archaeology started at University of Puget Sound, where I was an Asian studies major with minors in Chinese and art history. My art history professor encouraged me to look into the field because of my musical background. In grad school, I conducted research on music archaeology at Princeton University. My first book, *Music in Ancient China*, was based on my dissertation and won the 2010 Nicholas Bessaraboff Prize (awarded by the American Musical Instrument Society).

I returned to Princeton as a research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., where my research shifted from traditional ancient Chinese musical instruments to instruments from outside of China that were absorbed into Chinese culture.

How did you know Lu was the one to help bring your vision to life with her illustrations, and what was your team dynamic like?

Isabella was in my First-Year Seminar “Silk Roads and Sea Routes,” where she demonstrated a very clear passion for classical archaeology. When I first saw her work, which mostly consisted of lovely anime drawings, I was curious how her talent would translate to archaeological illustrations. I got her involved in the project because of her knowledge about the Silk Road, archaeology, and art, as well as her great artistic talent.

She joined me the summer after her first year, which was during COVID, so for a good portion of the project we worked remotely while she was with her family in Taiwan. Whenever I had a hard time

“She brought a precision to the works and captured every detail of the objects she drew,” Furniss says.

getting reproduction rights to use an image of a piece of art that was necessary to make an important point in the book, I’d send that image to Isabella to draw. I felt the drawing would be more effective in getting the message across, and it really was. I relied on her a lot for 3D objects, like sculptures, musical instruments, and paintings.

What did Lu’s artistry bring to your book and the overall collaborative process?

Isabella’s illustrations were transformative for the book. She brought a precision and keen eye to the works that captured every detail of the objects she drew. Her technique and skill are truly amazing, and the project became so much more fun because she was involved in it. It was like I was watching her form into what she was always meant to be. She already had enormous talent; she just needed the opportunity to let it shine. That’s what my professors at a liberal arts college like Lafayette did for me. They encouraged me to pursue and combine my diverse interests of archaeology, music, and ancient Chinese culture. I love using projects like this to help students figure out and develop their strengths and interests.

Being a published illustrator is quite an impressive credential for Lu to have under her belt as an undergrad. How do you hope this experience will impact her down the road?

I hope she trusts her eye, sees how talented she is, and takes a sense of pride in what she did. She’s grown so much as a student, scholar, and artist. I’ve relied heavily on undergraduates for this project and others; 15 EXCEL Scholars have worked with me over the last 15 years, and they’ve made enormous contributions to my research. I hope this experience propels Isabella into her career as well, whatever it may be. My secret hope is it’s archaeological illustration.

How did having Lafayette as the backdrop help this project thrive?

There are so many schools out there where the expectation is that graduate students do all the research. But the talent already exists in students when they’re right out of high school. Isabella’s work was funded by an endowment established through gifts made in honor of late Lafayette President Arthur J. Rothkopf ’55 and Barbara Sarnoff Rothkopf. Here at Lafayette, students get the chance to dive into research opportunities, and use their multiple interests and passions to create a path forward into the future. ■

← Intricacy, a hallmark of Lu’s drawings, is seen in this depiction of an outdoor feast.



ILLUSTRATION BY ISABELLA LU



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM ATKINSON; (FOLDING AND DINOSAUR TRACKS) SHUTTERSTOCK

Van Wickle’s outdoor classroom

A stone-filled terrace recently debuted, offering a new learning environment for students.

BY BRYAN HAY

This fall, beneath the canopy of a katsura tree on the south side of Van Wickle Hall, geology and geosciences faculty and their students gathered on a newly installed bluestone terrace. Studying the earth, after all, is better outside.

The outdoor classroom isn’t a very common thing to see on a college campus, says David Sunderlin, John H. Markle Professor of Geology and department head, and certainly one that’s as geologically themed as this space. Sunderlin credits his creative colleagues for developing the teaching terrace, which was made possible with generous support from Dr. Charles E. Bartberger ’67 and his wife Gretchen Platt. “Geology is the study of a lot of outdoor phenomena,” Sunderlin says, “so we might as well be outside, experiencing it.”

When the Geology and Environmental Geosciences Department isn’t holding class here, the patio transforms into a natural place to congregate. “To be able

to have not just an outdoor academic space, but also a place for a leisurely lunch while being surrounded by these wonderful geologic references really captures the spirit of Lafayette,” Sunderlin says.

Lawrence Malinconico, associate professor of geology and geophysics, adds that the outdoor classroom supports the department’s outreach. “We try to show people who we are and what we do,” he says. “This facility is one more thing for people to ask, ‘What are they doing?’”

Here are some of the special details in the design.



1. The most pronounced feature is dedicated to instructing. A large chalkboard made from locally quarried slate (pictured, above) is situated next to a weatherproof video monitor (pictured, top left) that’s used for curriculum presentations.

2. Rocks around the edges of the terrace demonstrate the phenomena of folding—a geologic process that forces layers to bend and permanently deform due to outside pressure—and help students prepare for detailed field lab experiences.



3. Within the next year, a series

of dinosaur tracks will be etched into the patio to emulate fossilized footprints.



4. To study more samples,

students can wander

to the nearby rock and gravel gardens located on the north and east sides of Van Wickle Hall. The 16 boulders that populate the Pennsylvania rock garden, for example, were donated by local and regional quarries, masonries, and building material companies, and trace the rich geologic history of the state.



5. The terrace’s stunning retaining wall is

historically symbolic, as it’s made of dolomite, the 500-million-year-old Cambrian bedrock beneath campus.



A NATURAL FIT

Prof. Christa Kelleher '08 and students travel to Wyoming to study artificial beaver dams.

BY BRYAN HAY

With their instinctual drive to build dams, hardworking beavers have earned their reputation as nature's engineers. Their habitats are important for wetlands, as they naturally alleviate flooding, filter water, and help to control soil erosion. Hydrologist Christa Kelleher '08, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering, has a deep respect for these creatures and just how beneficial they are.

"Growing up in the western U.S., I've always had an appreciation for the importance of water," Kelleher says. "This has been a dream project to work with The Nature Conservancy and bring Lafayette students to such a beautiful place to observe restoration in action."

Since 2017, through her National Science Foundation-backed research, Kelleher has studied how artificial beaver dam analogs, or BDAs, can be used to improve water resources in the dry western United States, where beaver populations have declined due to human pressures.

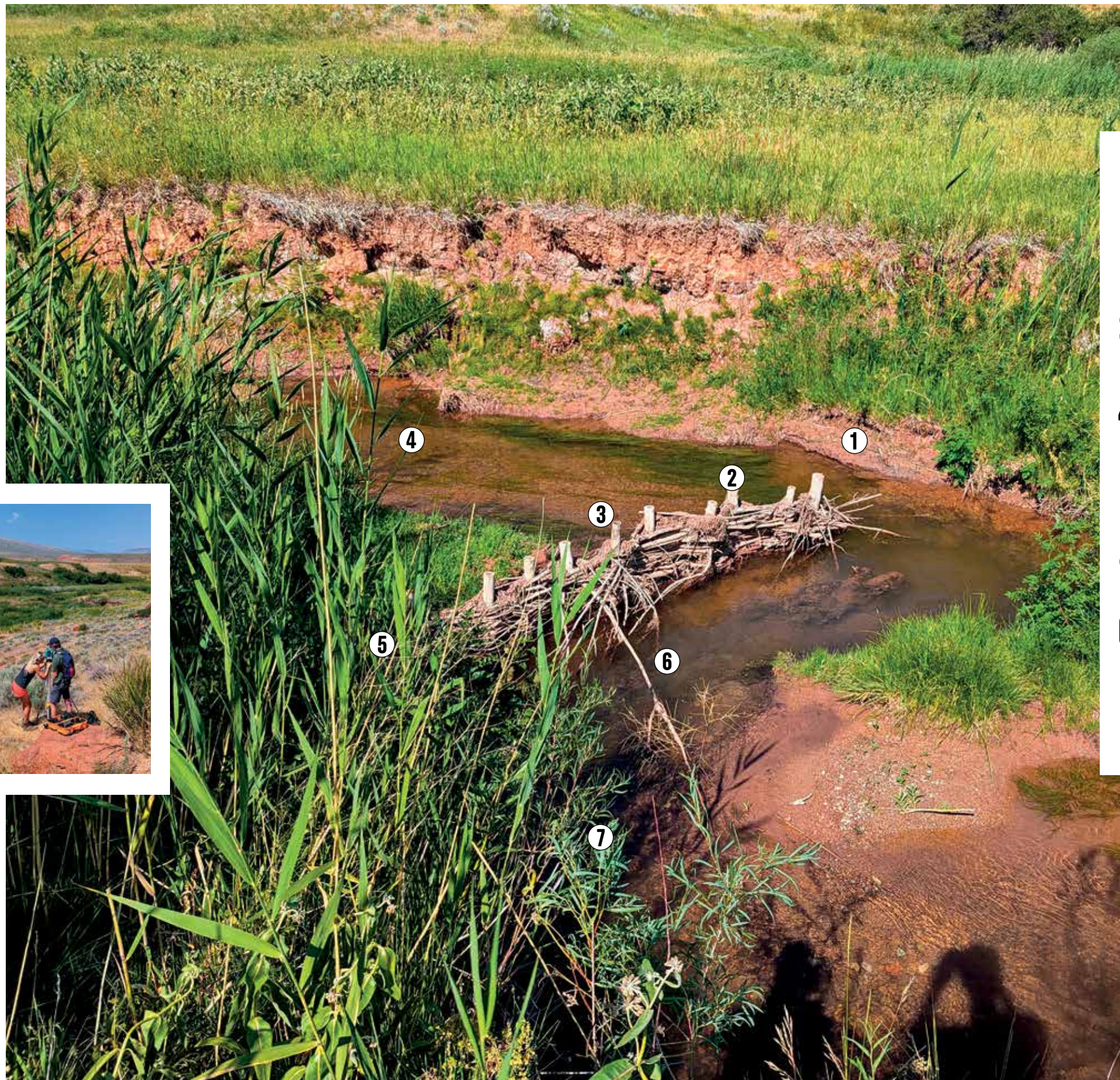
This summer, assisted by drones and surveying equipment, Kelleher traveled to the 5,000-acre Red Canyon Ranch in central Wyoming, where nearly 50 BDAs have been installed in its Red Canyon Creek since 2018. Students Sara Tippin '25 and William Blair '26, both civil and environmental engineering majors, joined her on the trip to help study the effectiveness of these man-made dams.

Their daily work involved hiking to the BDAs to take photos of changes, surveying the streambeds, and setting up control points for drone imagery.

Together they found that these BDAs are enhancing plant and animal diversity, supporting livestock grazing, and demonstrating how ranching and conservation can cohabitate. **L**



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTA KELLEHER



- 1** The Lafayette group set up various control points for drone imagery to capture the changes to stream channels.
- 2** The dams—made of the same natural materials that a beaver might choose—are typically built by driving wooden posts into the streambed. These posts are then woven with branch cuttings, including willow.
- 3** Like beaver dams, the structures are packed with local sediment (i.e., cobble, gravel, and sand) on their upstream end to prevent scouring at the base.
- 4** The group hiked to the beaver dam analogs to photograph water changes upstream and downstream of the structures. Low permeability slows the stream flow, which raises the local water table to grow ponds and improve willow thickets for beavers. Slowed sediment can also lead to deposition upstream—and help to reduce erosion.
- 5** A series of artificial dams will make a greater impact. Some BDAs will be contained within the river while others can extend into the riverbanks.
- 6** BDAs are temporary: Unless adopted by a beaver, they will eventually break down.
- 7** Benefits of BDAs take time: Results will start showing within one to three years after installation. Kelleher hopes to return to the ranch within the next couple of years to observe further changes to the stream and floodplain.

FOR MORE

View bonus photos and coverage from the trip at magazine.lafayette.edu/beavers.

LOOKING BEYOND THE GLASS

BY STELLA KATSIPOUTIS-VARKANIS



Prof. Mónica Salas Landa challenges students to view museum exhibits from a different angle.



In a 1994 *New York Times* article, German artist Hans Haacke dubbed museums “managers of consciousness.” As they present their own interpretation of history, he said, museums can be great educational institutions—or they can be

“propaganda machines.” It’s through this same lens that Mónica Salas Landa, associate professor of anthropology, designed her newest course, Museum Studies: History, Theory, and Debates.

A sociocultural and historical anthropologist, Salas Landa has long been fascinated by the history and politics of how particular artifacts end up in a museum’s vitrine. (Many relics on display worldwide, she explains, were unrightfully taken from cultures.) In her A&S 325 course, which she first taught last fall, she tackled

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM ATKINSON
ILLUSTRATION BY ANTONIO PINNA

complicated issues like how colonialism, looting, and exploitation have shaped modern museums and their collections.

By examining specific collections in natural history, anthropology, and art, and engaging in conversations about cultural restitution and repatriation, Salas Landa called on students to rethink museums’ roots and envision how they can become greater community spaces. Olivia Naum ’26, who took the course last year, adds that “by allowing these articles to remain in the exhibits without any indication of their violent pasts, museums continue to engage with imperial ideologies.”

Over the course of the semester, students studied the thought-provoking writings and curatorial work of industry professionals such as Ariella Aïsha Azoulay. They engaged with experts who guest-lectured about the digitalization, design, and curation of exhibits. And, with funding from Salas Landa’s Lafayette Arts and Technology grant, they ventured to museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they took a critical eye to other collections.

Along with learning about the ethics of museum curation, students had a chance to build an exhibit of their own. At the outset of the course, Elaine Stomber ’89, P’17, ’21, co-director of Special Collections and College Archives and College archivist, as well as Pamela Murray, distinctive collections librarian, introduced 20 artifacts from the College’s assorted collections. Each student chose one piece to research. “We kept in mind the desire for students to explore the provenance of each one and investigate the diverse communities from which they originated,” Stomber says.

Included were donations of Egyptian and Sumerian objects, imperial postcards, and relics from the Philippine-American War that had limited documentation on their acquisition. “I worked with a pair of Native American moccasins,” says Naum, who is a history and Russian and East European studies major, “which is an example of something that is commonly found in museums but often exists there through the exploitation of native people.”



Salas Landa (center) helps Lauren Kaye ’25 (left) with her exhibit. These hats, worn by Indigenous boys in the Philippines, signify status and village affiliation.

and College Archives, assisted students with physically handling and installing the objects for display at the library’s Special Collections and College Archives.

The three-week exhibition, titled *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism*, neatly wrapped up the semester-long efforts. “There aren’t a lot of templates for substantive undergraduate engagement in the professional work of archives curation and exhibit development,” says Charlotte Nunes, dean of libraries. “This is exactly the sort of work we want to support more of in years to come.”

Naum, who is now working as an assistant in Special Collections and College Archives, was so inspired by her experience that she’s planning to explore career options allowing her to work toward a better museum industry. “This will forever be one of the most rewarding courses I’ve taken,” she says.

Salas Landa is looking forward to the course’s return in fall 2025 and attracting students from a wider array of majors, including STEM and environmental studies, and taking on a new debate and different set of objects. “Last year, we worked with ethnographic and art objects to offer a critique of the art and anthropology museum,” she says. “Next time, we might work with scientific instruments or specimens to think more carefully about natural history or the science museum.” ■



Students wrote display labels intended to challenge ideas about museum practices.

Settled into place

The Portlock Black Cultural Center moved to its new location in 2022 and continues to serve as a home and hub for students.

BY AMY DOWNEY

It's been a couple of years since the Portlock Black Cultural Center opened its doors at 41 McCartney St., after the historic home was physically moved around the block and extensively renovated for its current location. "It truly is a beautiful space and it's actively used by multiple clubs and members of the community," says Naomi Yilma '26, co-president of the Association of Black Collegians (ABC).

Named for former academic dean David A. Portlock, the center supports educational and social experiences of students from historically marginalized backgrounds; Portlock's grandson, Marc Jr. '24, was one of the first residents to live here.

Take a look inside one of the most beloved buildings on campus.



← The historic timeline in the hallway downstairs dates back to 1968, when the ABC began forming at Lafayette under the leadership of David A. Portlock.



↑ The Brothers of Lafayette gather weekly in Portlock's living room. In the spring, the group was recognized with an Aaron O. Hoff Award for Student Organization of the Year.



↑ It took more than seven hours to move the 330-ton stone house from Clinton Terrace. The building was given a new foundation and modern renovations, like its signature wrap-around porch.

← Prof. Rex Ahene acquired *The Hairdresser* sculpture on a trip to his native Ghana. It rests on the fireplace mantle.



The Aaron O. Hoff Library, on the second floor, is the preferred study space for mechanical engineering major and Posse Scholar Justin Morales '26. —→



↑ One of the three upstairs bedrooms is occupied by Johanna Douge '27; Douge is also a member of Lafayette African and Caribbean Student Association.

Pieces of symbolic art have long been displayed in Portlock locations, like those on view in the EPI/Riley Temple gallery, named for Trustee emeritus Riley K. Temple '71. —↓



← The ABC holds its board and general membership meetings, plus some events, at Portlock.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM ATKINSON AND OLIVIA GIRALICO



Inside

Liliana Roginski '25 wasn't old enough to vote the last time the nation decided its president, but in November, she joined millions of her peers among the country's newest and youngest generation of voters. Leading up to her first Election Day, Roginski was invested in the behavior of other college-age voters. While working in the Gov Lab of Andrew Clarke, assistant professor of government and law, she and other students spent months digging into a deep and timely question: *How do*

28

illustrations by
Fernando Cobelo

Liliana Roginski '25 wasn't old enough to vote the last time the nation decided its president, but in November, she joined millions of her peers among the country's newest and youngest generation of voters. Leading up to her first Election Day, Roginski was invested in the behavior of other college-age voters. While working in the Gov Lab of Andrew Clarke, assistant professor of government and law, she and other students spent months digging into a deep and timely question: *How do*

As the Lafayette community approached the 2024 presidential election, Roginski and her fellow Gov Lab student managers were running an experiment across campus to determine exactly how to mobilize college students. This work, just the latest in a series of nonpartisan, politically focused research projects conducted by Clarke and his lab, left the group with some interesting observations.

“This research is about people my age, our impact, and what we can do,” says Emma Li ’27.

An idea hatches from the pandemic

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had started to derail in-person summer professional development opportunities, including for Julia Cassidy ’22.

Cassidy, then a sophomore, had just written a term paper for Clarke’s Political Analysis class, focusing on reducing the gender gap in political candidacy. After reading it, Clarke was impressed by its potential applications.

“I said ‘Hey, do you want to actually do something out in the world with this?’” Clarke says. “And that became Gov Lab.”

With support from Prof. Helena Silverstein, department chair of government and law, and Chelsea Morrese, executive director of the Landis Center for Community Engagement, who secured financial and logistical backing for the project, Clarke and Cassidy were able to gather a group of student volunteers to work remotely, compiling a database of political activists and local party leaders in every county throughout the United States. “Every semester, we had more people doing research,” Cassidy says.

The team used their database of party leaders and activists from around the country to solicit advice for Lafayette students interested in public service, wondering if more advice would be offered to gender-specific groups. Ultimately, they found enthusiastic support for groups like the Lafayette Women in Law Society, especially from Republican women.

Eventually, Cassidy and Clarke were able to publish a research paper on their findings in the *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*. The opportunity to be a published co-author as an undergrad is commendable, and especially outside of science fields. “You don’t write a paper for a class and feel like it’s going to escalate to this point,” Cassidy says. “But it’s pretty cool

that I inspired something like that. Not a lot of people have that experience.”

Gov Lab, as an organization, has always been student-led. Currently, four student “team leads” each manage a support staff of volunteers. As students graduate and new ones join, group projects within Gov Lab evolve. Each summer, the students identify a new topic in politics and spend the academic year researching it.

Although he is available for mentoring, Clarke emphasizes student leadership in his lab. “I take, quite seriously, giving the Gov Lab managers control over what the project will be, because they do so much work,” Clarke says. “To manage personnel, to do research designs, to do all this—I want them to be invested in the topic personally.”

From 2021 to 2023, the Gov Lab team initiated the Peer2Power Project, a study that focused on how peer networks impacted political action. The team, led by Deja Jackson ’23, built a mobile app to determine the efficacy of friend-based recruitment for political campaigns—in other words, could your social group influence you to get more involved in politics?

During last year’s Gov Lab study, students conducted a mass e-survey of leaders on education policy. This project resulted in more than 80,000 emails to public officials, school board members, state legislators, and others. In a randomized control trial, students asked those policymakers for their opinions on a variety of important topics, such as free eyeglass clinics in schools, programs to increase social belonging among middle schoolers, and the prospect of AI-informed tutoring services. The experiment found that public officials consider scientific evidence when planning educational policies.

Investment in Gov Lab, and in political research as a field, is a through line for these students. Today, Cassidy works as a legal assistant at a law firm in New Jersey as she applies to many of the top law



schools in the country. A Gov Lab team lead from 2022 to 2024, Guilia Matteucci ’24, currently serves as a researcher at the Library of Congress, after being named a 2023 Newman Civic Fellow. Other members of the group have gone on to positions at the Young Democrats of America, and Peace Corps, and enrolled in prestigious postgraduate schools.

“Gov Lab expands throughout the years, and it grows bigger and bigger,” Roginski says. “It’s getting more recognition, and it’s a great opportunity for students to create research.”

Finding meaning in an election year

Roginski, alongside fellow 2024 managers Samantha Natividad ’25, Kate SantaMaria ’27, and Emma Li ’27, came together with the rest of the team during summer 2024 to determine their research topic. As for many across the country, the presidential election was on their minds.

“This is a really precious time,” Li says of the team’s decision to focus on elections. “We won’t be in college during another presidential election. A huge part of elections is getting people involved, so this research is about people my age, our impact, and what we can do.”

Ultimately, the group decided to first measure political engagement on college campuses, particularly in swing states like Pennsylvania, Arizona, and Michigan.

“Swing states have the capability to determine the course of the election,” Roginski says. “We looked into what college campuses [in those states] have done in the past and what they’re doing now with that sort of elevated position.”



The group gathered data not only on publicly available variables, like voter turnout and voter registration, but also measures of political engagement that are harder to quantify, such as protests, turnout in student government elections, placement of alumni in government careers, and more. Schools surveyed ranged from large institutions, like University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and University of Georgia, to small community colleges and other Patriot League schools.

Alongside Dylan Groves and Stephanie Chan, assistant professors of government and law who joined Gov Lab as co-directors this year, the team analyzed the data using statistical software to discern which college campus communities stood out as particularly engaged. Once that data was collected, the Gov Lab team set out to build an experiment on campus.

"It's a pilot study of how to mobilize," Clarke says. "We ultimately decided that we really wanted Lafayette to be engaged this year, so let's figure out how to do it here first."

They settled on testing an unconventional theory: Could a sense of *competition* impact voting among students? And, in Lafayette's community, it was easy to identify what fuels the most competitive spirit—the rivalry with nearby Lehigh University.

To carry out the experiment, the Gov Lab team distributed messaging across Lafayette's campus leading up to the election, asking students to get engaged in order to "Beat Lehigh" on registration and turnout numbers. A control group was given the same information—with no rivalry messaging.

FAST FACTS

66%

Record-breaking percentage of voter turnout by college students in the 2020 presidential election

83%

Percentage of Lafayette students who voted in the 2020 presidential election

745

Estimated number of Lafayette students who applied to register to vote this year in Pennsylvania

3

Northampton County, home to Lafayette, backed the winning candidate in all but three presidential elections since 1912

The student managers wanted to build their project around competition because of its generalizability.

"Many other colleges have a rival school," SantaMaria says. "Even if they don't, they have access to competition, because nearly every college has a sports team of some sort. So we're taking this competition that already exists and seeing if we can put politics into it in a way where political engagement is increased."

In the weeks leading up to the presidential election, Gov Lab researchers utilized a variety of in-person and digital outreach methods, carefully designed to be non-partisan, to encourage their peers to get involved in the political process.

On Election Day, college students around the country showed up en masse. There was such a high turnout on campuses in the Lehigh Valley that Northampton County sent extra voting machines to both Lafayette College and Lehigh University to accommodate the crowds. Throughout the day, the Gov Lab team observed, and stood in, the long lines wrapping around Kirby Sports Center, Lafayette's polling place. They noticed many students from their Gov Lab contact list also waiting—at times, at least three hours—to vote. Over in Bethlehem, Pa., it was reported that voters, many of them Lehigh students, stood in line for up to seven hours.

Student voters are key to unlocking decisions

College students have a significant role to play in the future of electoral politics. According to the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University, 8.3 million young people have aged into the electorate since the 2022 midterm elections. And the power is only growing: By the 2028 election, the voting bloc of millennials and Gen Z will account for the majority of the electorate.

"I think that as college students, we're in this really interesting transition from being a kid to being an adult," SantaMaria says. "For a lot of students, when you walk onto campus, you will be voting in your first election. I think it presents the

perfect opportunity to learn about politics, and college campuses can be such a hub of accurate, unbiased information for students to develop their own political identities."

Because college students are allowed to change their voter registration to their campus address, students going to college in a swing state like Pennsylvania may feel that their vote can make more of a difference.

Li, who is originally from St. Louis, Mo., changed her registration to her Easton, Pa., address when she matriculated last year. "I wanted to have my vote actually matter," she says. "Not a lot of people switched my first year, but a lot of my friends are switching this year, because it's more talked about and more contentious than a typical election cycle."

According to campus organization Lafayette Votes, 82.9% of Lafayette students voted in the 2020 presidential election. During both the 2020 and 2024 presidential races, Pennsylvania's results were a pivotal deciding factor in the outcome. In the week leading up to the election, the presidential candidates from both the Democratic and Republican parties made campaign stops in the Lehigh Valley, including one to a college campus in Allentown, Pa., the day before the election.

No matter how they get engaged, student voters can have a lasting impact on the American political landscape. "Young people can definitely make a difference," says SantaMaria, who is 19 years old, "and we can have an impact on a greater scale." And regardless of the results of the election, or their research projects, Gov Lab has made a lasting impression on the Lafayette students involved with it.

"I'm grateful for this opportunity," SantaMaria adds. "One of the reasons I

chose to go to Lafayette was because I wanted to be able to have research opportunities as an undergraduate, and this has completely exceeded my expectations."

Although the election is now over, Gov Lab's student managers and volunteers will continue to work on this project into

"For a lot of students on campus, it's their first election," says Kate SantaMaria '27. "It presents the perfect opportunity to learn about politics."

winter and spring. In the coming months, the group will continue to encourage and analyze other important forms of student engagement such as attending campus political events and writing op-eds in the student newspaper. Once the research is complete, this year's team leads will work to write an article for a peer-reviewed academic journal on their findings.

"I'm aiming to apply to law school next fall," Roginski says. "So being able to say that I'm a contributing author on a working research paper is beyond my imagination. It's amazing."

Looking back on her experience and the impact her work as the first Gov Lab manager made, Cassidy encourages current and future Lafayette students to take risks.

"If there's some sort of project you've been thinking about and think there's no outlet for it, look into it and see where it can take you," she says. "You never know. You could publish a paper from it." ■



AGENT

BY DAVID SILVERBERG

OF

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SY BEAN

CHANGE

HOW ONE ALUM IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST IS
TAKING ON FOREVER CHEMICALS—AND JOINING THE
GLOBAL FIGHT TO ADDRESS THE TOXIC CRISIS
FACING THE ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN HEALTH.



For Brian Pinkard '15, his light-bulb moment struck him when he was living in a tent for six months in 2016 as part of his AmeriCorps service in rural Colorado. He was hiking up mountains as high as 13,000 feet, living with few amenities and immersing himself in nature like he was applying to be a contestant on *Survivor*.

"Hiking that much and flipping rocks and digging in the dirt will give you some time to think about what you want to do for the rest of your life," says Pinkard in an interview over Zoom. "It was then that I decided I wanted to do something to help the environment."

Fresh off graduating from Lafayette with a mechanical engineering degree, where he focused primarily on biomechanics technology, Pinkard felt closer to the natural world the longer he spent outdoors in Colorado. He enrolled at University of Washington, earning a master's and Ph.D. degrees in mechanical engineering in 2018 and 2020, respectively, and working there as a research assistant and research scientist to help develop strategies for chemical warfare destruction. "As interesting as biomechanics was to me," he says, "it didn't speak to me the way environmental issues do."

Today, Pinkard is based in Tacoma, Wash., and living up to that passion as co-founder and CTO of a startup called Aquagga. Since 2019, its mission has been to eradicate dangerous "per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances," otherwise known as PFAS, swirling around in wastewater. This family of 15,000-plus chemical compounds have been used in hundreds of industrial and consumer applications for decades. PFAS can be found in firefighting foams, waterproof hiking boots, raincoats, nonstick frying pans, dental floss, lipstick, smartphones, and medical devices. Household brands such as Teflon and Scotchgard, for example, have been identified as having PFAS-laden products.

PFAS are dubbed "forever chemicals" due to their indestructible design, which makes them beneficial in some products but also harmful to human health. Since the chemicals do not fully degrade, they can accumulate in the environment and the human body. "What makes them so bad for us is that they're bio-accumulative," Pinkard explains. "So once they are in your body, they really like to stick to proteins and are inside us for a long time."



According to the Environmental Protection Agency, exposure to PFAS can damage the liver and immune system, and has been linked to birth defects and developmental delays, as well as increased risk for some prostate, kidney, and testicular cancers. Other research revealed links between PFAS exposure and a disruption in the onset of puberty. The problem is too big to ignore: In May, the EPA confirmed 89.3 million people in communities across the U.S. have drinking water that tests positive for toxic forever chemicals.

As a result of the sheer scale of these challenges, many companies and technologies are needed in the fight against PFAS. And, in just five years, Pinkard has positioned his company to be a leader in this growing global effort.

↑ The Aquagga name combines *aqua*, for water, and *quagga*, an extinct relative of the zebra. A "zebra" company is both profitable and has a mission to help society.

The dangers of forever chemicals

Early in the conversation with Pinkard, he shares his love of a 2019 film directly related to his line of work: *Dark Waters*, starring Mark Ruffalo. The film is a fictional take on the real-life story of corporate lawyer Rob Bilott, who defended chemical companies before transitioning to be an unlikely crusader for the environment. "They did a fantastic job in showing what these chemicals are, and who was responsible," Pinkard says.

Dark Waters tells the tragedy of corporate malfeasance and ignorance. Bilott discovered how DuPont had been dumping PFAS into unlined landfills in Parkersburg, W.Va., leading to sudden health conditions facing both farm animals and farmers in West



↑ Aquagga's PFAS destruction system during field operations in Fairbanks, Alaska.

"It will take a long time for corporations to stop using PFAS," Pinkard says, "but I feel privileged there is purpose behind my work."

Virginia. The film then chronicles Bilott's decades-long battle with the chemical behemoths, which resulted in a slew of lawsuits. (In 2023, DuPont and two related companies said they would pay close to \$1.2 billion to settle liability claims brought by public water systems.)

But long before PFAS were front-and-center in legal skirmishes, or Hollywood movies, manufacturing companies had a tough time finding the right chemical formation to make materials resistant to elements like heat and water. What was needed in order to create a nonstick coating, for example, was a strong carbon-fluoride bond that wouldn't break apart.

DuPont hired several scientists to work on the challenge in the 1930s, and after World War II, these indestructible chemicals began to appear in everyday products. Manufacturing giant 3M invented PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) to prevent nonstick coatings from clumping during production. Soon, 3M began selling the material to other chemical companies.

The EPA has been slow to react to the widespread use of PFAS, since scant studies were done prior to the 2000s. Only recently, in April, did the agency announce a federal mandate: The Biden-Harris

administration introduced the first-ever national drinking water standard and allocated \$5 billion from its 2023 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to confront PFAS contamination. “Drinking water contaminated with PFAS has plagued communities across this country for too long,” EPA administrator Michael S. Regan said in a statement by the agency.

Although quantifying forever chemicals found in water can be complicated, the recent, and enforceable, mandate allows for a maximum of one drop of PFAS per five Olympic-size swimming pools, or 3.3 million gallons. Public water systems must adhere to these contamination levels by 2029, but Pinkard

“His desire to improve our world is coupled with an insatiable, fundamental curiosity,” Prof. Alex Brown says. “This combination makes him a force to be reckoned with.”

notes the agency only set these limits on six toxic chemicals—and there are still thousands out there.

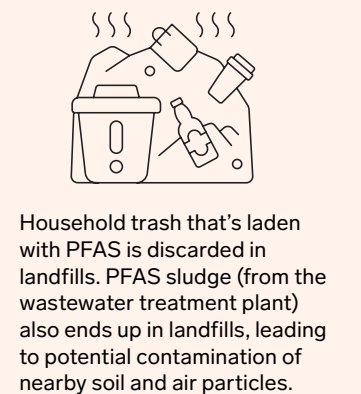
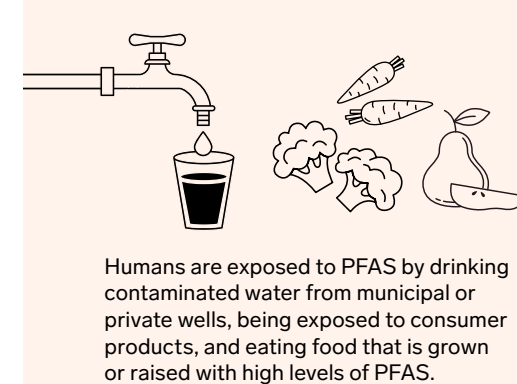
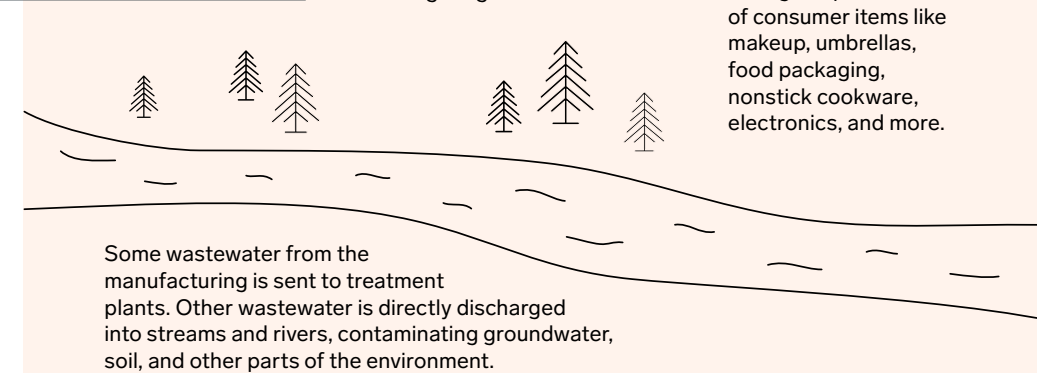
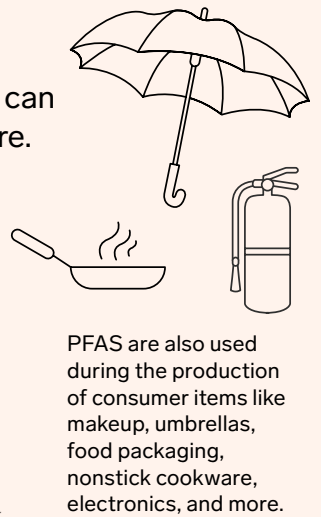
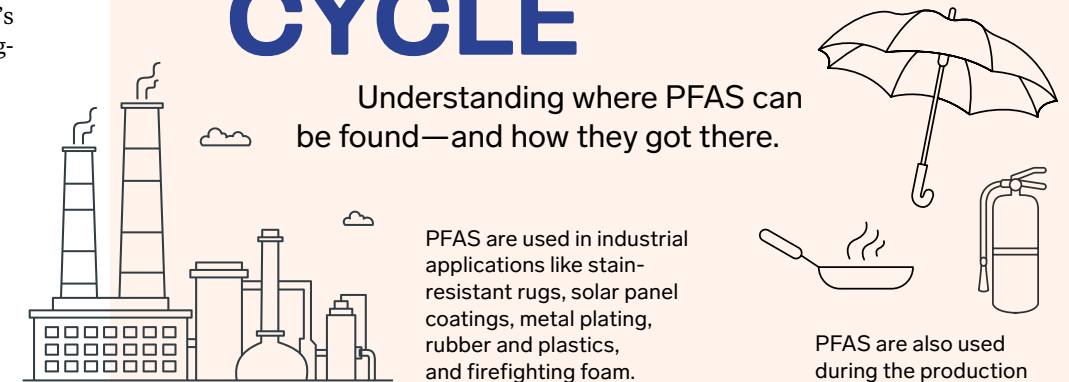
With a sense of urgency, Pinkard has found another way to combat the crisis by using technology to target and treat materials with the highest concentrations. Aquagga has several deals in the works with manufacturing facilities to help them get rid of wastewater infected with PFAS, working in Alaska and California so far. What’s more, the startup found favor with the Department of Defense (DOD), which enlisted the company to destroy the PFAS found in standard film-forming fire-fighting foam, soon to be replaced everywhere with much safer foam.



Aquagga’s hydrothermal alkaline treatment technology, which won the EPA’s Destroy PFAS Challenge in 2022, uses chemicals and hot compressed water to help break apart the strong carbon-fluorine bonds. Mobile units like the Steed Series, pictured here, can treat 10 to 100 gallons per hour.

THE PFAS CYCLE

Understanding where PFAS can be found—and how they got there.



This year, *Forbes* praised the promise and proof in Pinkard’s sustainability efforts, acknowledging him in its “30 Under 30” throughout North America list. But there’s more—a lot more—work left to do. “I know it’s going to take a long time for corporations to stop using PFAS, and many industries likely won’t go that far,” Pinkard says, “but I feel privileged that there is purpose behind my work. It’s rare to be in a sector where executing the business model leads to a positive environmental impact.”

Determined to improve lives Pinkard grew up in Puyallup, Wash., with a father who worked as a structural engineer and a mother enjoying her career as an architect. Sports and music were Pinkard’s primary interests in high school—tennis took up most of his extracurricular time—and he graded well in math and science classes.

He learned about Lafayette through his older brother, Michael ’14, who was earning a mathematics degree at the school. “Engineering was a fit for the theoretical and academic parts of my brain,” he says, explaining that he gravitated to mechanical engineering, which felt tangible and hands-on. Pinkard also co-captained the Leopards on the tennis court during his time on College Hill.

His focus on biomechanics came from a desire to solve difficult problems while impacting someone’s life. During Pinkard’s senior capstone project, he and a team of peers built a robotic tutor to teach students with learning delays how to work on handwriting; as the person’s fine motor skills improved, the robot provided less and less guidance. (The students earned a grant from the National Science Foundation to later present this project at a biomechanics, bio-transport, and bioengineering conference in Utah.) “If you develop something that can help people,” says Pinkard, “that is special to me.”

Alex Brown, associate professor of mechanical engineering, was Pinkard’s senior capstone design professor. He notes that although Pinkard, at the time, had very little experience with biomechanical analysis, he

ultimately created a versatile and accurate simulation of handwriting kinematics that proved crucial to his team’s success. “Brian’s path has been forged through his dedication to improving the lives of others,” Brown says. “His desire to improve our world is coupled with an insatiable, fundamental curiosity. This combination makes him a force to be reckoned with when presented with difficult challenges.”

Pinkard came into Lafayette with several AP credits, allowing him to graduate a year earlier than others. Leaving early wasn’t an option he had in mind until he had a conversation with his academic adviser and associate professor of mechanical engineering, Josh Smith. Having those credits was double-edged, in a

way. “Those credits gave him the opportunity but also came with the challenge of being so far ahead of other students,” Smith says.

When it came time for the department’s annual Faculty Awards in 2015, Pinkard won the Engineering Design Award. Smith notes, “That’s a testament to not just academic aptitude but to being a leader of his team for that capstone project.”

After Lafayette, Pinkard worked for AmeriCorps as a trail crew member in Colorado and then Wyoming, where his refreshed focus on environmental issues emboldened him to enroll at University of Washington. It was there he learned more about getting rid of harmful chemicals: Pinkard was part of a team tasked with figuring out how to safely dispose of barrels of nerve agents like mustard gas and VX, short for “venomous agent X,” that were strewn across the Syrian desert during the conflict in the region.

Although Pinkard didn’t travel to Syria, he tested hypotheses in a lab and found a way to use a portable reactor that could be taken to those areas and neutralize the nasty compounds on-site. His Ph.D. on hydrothermal processing riffed off solving that issue—and gave him the seed for what he would eventually launch as an entrepreneur.

Aquagga takes off

In early 2019, through a friend, he found out about NSF’s Innovation Corps, which acts as an immersive, entrepreneurial training program to embolden company founders to recognize the right application for their product or service. Laden with \$50,000 from the I-Corps, an ally in entrepreneur Nigel Sharp, and six months to interview major players in the utilities sector, Pinkard incorporated a business focused on sewage sludge removal.

From talking to municipalities, he learned that water utilities might be reluctant to take risks on new technologies. But Pinkard also picked up on choruses about PFAS and their indestructibility. “We were hearing from utility owners about PFAS being the biggest problem, and if somebody could figure out how to safely eradicate them, they would be millionaires. And we were hearing that over and over,” he recalls.

Around that same time, Pinkard read a study by Timothy Strathmann, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the Colorado School of Mines. Strathmann revealed how a process called hydrothermal alkaline treatment (HALT) could be used to destroy PFAS, similar to how it’s been leveraged for decades to get rid of chemical weapons. This powerful technique obliterates harmful chemicals via a pressure cooker-like technology that operates at 662 degrees Fahrenheit. Unlike other technologies, HALT can handle high levels of salts in water and has a safer than approach to ridding the PFAS.

Pinkard and Sharp perked their ears once they read this study, and contacted the Office of Technology

Transfer at the Colorado School of Mines to learn about licensing the approach. They agreed, and now Aquagga has an exclusive license to commercialize the technology. “I love how Brian has a very strong technical background, besides being an entrepreneur,” Strathmann says. “He doesn’t believe everything is a nail that a hammer can solve. He’s very measured.”

Now, with over \$10 million in funding, Aquagga is primarily working with manufacturing facilities in desperate need of a solution to get rid of their forever chemicals. (Think: airports that have contamination due to fire training, or industrial wastewater of large-scale companies that have historically been involved in producing PFAS.) After all, they don’t want to just dump it or incinerate it, and endure a host of lawsuits, Pinkard says.

“I have tremendous optimism for Aquagga’s future,” Pinkard says. “We’ve put ourselves in a position where we have world-leading PFAS destruction capabilities and commercial offerings.”



↑ One of Aquagga’s Steed units deployed in the field in Fairbanks, Alaska.



↑ Headquartered in Tacoma, Wash., the clean tech startup has already grown to 18 employees in just its first five years.

← Aquagga senior mechanical engineer Mike Czerski and research engineer Augusto Millevolte monitor the operations of Aquagga’s PFAS destruction system during a recent field demonstration in California.

With treatment systems they bring on-site or lease to clients, Aquagga takes in the toxic wastewater and treats it under conditions similar to a beefed-up pressure cooker (high temperatures and high pressures), eliminating more than 99% of the PFAS from water. Key to the process is cranking up the pH levels; Aquagga’s technology uses sodium hydroxide, the chemical in lye, like a catalyst. With that mixture, HALT can trigger the PFAS molecules to break down in a matter of minutes.

“What we basically make is a brine, very salty water, and we break the carbon-fluoride bond of the PFAS molecules to create dissolved fluorides, sulfates, and carbonates—common salts that you see in drinking water, baking soda, and laundry detergent. We would discharge those or send them to another wastewater facility,” Pinkard explains.

Pinkard recalls one client who had wastewater with a starting PFAS concentration of about 200 parts per million. “By the time we were done treating it, it was below four parts per trillion,” he says.

The DOD has been eyeing Aquagga intensely over the past five years. Pinkard says he has several projects currently funded by the DOD’s Environmental Security Technology Certification Program, one of which is in partnership with the Defense Innovation Unit. They are also engaged in a project funded by the National Defense Center for Energy and the Environment; and in the summer, Aquagga completed two projects at Beale Air Force Base in California.

“I have tremendous optimism for Aquagga’s future,” Pinkard says. “We’ve managed to put ourselves in the position where we have world-leading PFAS destruction capabilities and commercial offerings, and have continued to demonstrate a strong track record of success.”

Pinkard’s efforts in the global cleanup, in combination with those of other like-minded and dedicated scientists and engineers, offer the general public an important glimmer of hope: creating generational impact by offering a road map toward safer water. ■

A LEOPARD'S LEGACY

BY BRYAN HAY

PHOTOGRAPH (LEFT) ADAM ATKINSON



Celebrating Lafayette's spirited mascot, which turned 100 years young this fall.

When a leopard mascot turned up at a couple of Lafayette's football games in 1923, it instantly charged the College's fanbase with its spots, swagger, and stealth.

One year later, in fall 1924, the student council voted to make the Leopard the official mascot of Lafayette. And the big cat, now known as Roary, has embodied Lafayette fan spirit in the 100 years since that decision—and shows no sign of slowing down.

"Mascots play a significant role by serving as a symbol of school spirit and community, and I can proudly say that the Leopard embodies those qualities," says Sherryta Freeman, director of athletics, noting that its ferocity also fits well from a competitive standpoint. "Having a mascot that people are drawn to brings a different layer to the collegiate athletics experience."

The Lafayette Leopard was part of a litter of wild woodland beasts that emerged on campuses in the early 20th century, including the Columbia University Lion (1910), Princeton University Tiger (1911), and University of New Hampshire

Wildcat (1926). However, all these years later, the Leopard still stands alone: Among the hundreds of schools that have adopted mascot nicknames, Lafayette remains the only NCAA Division I athletics program with the leopard as its symbolic namesake.

Diane Shaw, director emerita of Special Collections and College Archives, has noted the alliterative properties of "Lafayette Leopard" may have influenced the choosing of the mascot as much as the collegiate cat movement. Before the leopard was canonized, Lafayette teams had simply been referred to as "The Maroon," a reference to one of the school's official colors.

Nowadays, Roary makes more than 50 appearances a year both on and off campus, and a handler is always nearby to help with the costume and make sure there's proper hydration, especially on warm days.

"It takes a physically fit person to do this," says Dave Blasic, athletic business manager, who keeps an eye out for Roary's well-being. "You are the very representation of Lafayette, not just athletics. Kids are drawn to you. Parents are drawn to you. You have to be on all the time. That takes a lot of stamina."

MASCOT MILESTONES

1923
A leopard mascot makes a few informal appearances during a couple of football games.

OCT. 22, 1924
The Lafayette publishes the first known reference to the Leopard, reporting that the Leopard was approved as the official mascot of the Lafayette football team: "This was decided last night at the regular meeting of the Student Council held in Brainerd Hall. A Leopard skin has been ordered and will be worn by a student at the Penn and W. & J. games, and was met with approval."

OCT. 23, 1924
The New York Times publishes an article titled "Lafayette Chooses Leopard as Symbol of Its Teams."

OCT. 25, 1924
The mascot makes its debut against Washington & Jefferson at Yankee Stadium, a 20-6 victory for Lafayette.

FEBRUARY 1943
National Geographic magazine reports that another wild spotted feline, an ocelot, made its way to campus via a Lafayette student from Venezuela.



The Sept. 23, 1955, edition of *The Lafayette* introduced Richard Faust '56 in his new role as the Leopard mascot and the "revolutionary new" costume with its swiveling eyes and spring-loaded tail (pictured, right). Student council had appropriated \$250 the year before to purchase the suit.

"I'll never forget how the crowd exploded with cheers when I ran onto Fisher Field as the Leopard for that Lafayette-Muhlenberg College game," he says about his debut on Sept. 24, 1955.

"That Leopard suit was produced at a Walt Disney studio, a big heavy unit, probably 70 pounds," he recalls. "I stood 7 feet in it with the head on and looked out onto the field and surveyed the crowds out of a hole in the mouth. It was always a thrill. I had the best view of anyone."

Playing the Leopard was a natural fit for Faust, who arrived at Lafayette in 1952 from The Peddie School in Hightstown, N.J., where he served on the cheer squad. Always enjoying whipping up school spirit, he enlisted as a Lafayette cheerleader in his freshman year and, at the urging of his squad members, eagerly accepted the role of the Leopard.

Strutting and cavorting through the stands, Faust never experienced a dull moment. Now 90 years old and living on an apple orchard outside Binghamton, N.Y., he recalls a standout moment from an Oct. 1, 1955, football game against Carnegie Tech at the former Forbes Field in Pittsburgh.

"We hadn't established an awful lot of the rules and regulations relating to what I could and could not do," he says. "I remember they brought the homecoming queen out in a little wagon pulled by a pony. And she got out onto the middle of the field and waved to the crowd. Well, I couldn't let that pass, so I snuck out there and



"I'm sitting pretty," said the Leopard in 1955 after the squad beat Lehigh 35-6.

crawled into the wagon with her, and there were all kinds of hoots and hollers from the stadium."

When Faust returned to the sidelines, he took off the Leopard head to get some air. He remembers it was an unusually warm October day.

"It's been a great tradition for 100 years," Faust says, "and I'm proud to have been part of the stories and the legacy."

"Someone grabbed the head and took off into the stadium," he recalls. "I couldn't catch him with the rest of that suit on, but our bus driver caught the guy and brought the head back to me. After that game, they said, 'no more taking you and the suit to away games,' thinking ahead

to Lehigh, which would have just been a disaster if I tried to do that."

Hijinx aside, Faust says there's just something about the Leopard that brings out school spirit. "It's been a great tradition for 100 years, and I'm proud to have been part of the stories and the legacy," he says.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAFAYETTE COLLEGE ARCHIVES

As a retired custodian at the Bourger Varsity Football House at Fisher Stadium, Rick Fisher stepped into the Leopard costume in 2006 after encountering the mascot during a block party. Fisher was with his son, who was about 5 years old at the time, and it was before the first home game of the season. After seeing the mascot, Fisher considered the potential in the Leopard identity. "People can interpret the character in different ways," he says, noting that he saw an opportunity to truly engage and connect with Lafayette fans.

A longtime rodeo clown in the Nazareth area, Fisher has a gift for making people laugh and smile. He approached George Bright, then the associate director of athletics at Lafayette, and asked how someone gets selected to portray the Leopard.

"I told him I was a rodeo clown, the funny man, the guy telling jokes in between things," he recalls. "I remember George handing me the costume with instructions to 'take it to the next level.'"

So began a 15-year run, from 2006 to 2021, portraying the Leopard and inspiring Pard pride at dozens of events a year—football games, tailgates, basketball games, and on-campus and community events and festivals.

As Fisher approached retirement, the physical demands of the role kept him in good shape, from the pushups after each touchdown and field goal to handling the weight of the Lafayette flag, which, when unfurled in a stiff fall breeze, requires a strong pair of arms. ("It was like pushing a truck in the wind," he says.)

As the Leopard never speaks, only struts, the hardest part of the job for Fisher was staying silent. "I couldn't speak—and that was hard for a guy who loved telling jokes," he laughs.

His biggest thrill was the 150th edition of The Rivalry between Lafayette and Lehigh before a packed Yankee Stadium on Nov. 22, 2014. Lafayette won the day, 27-7.

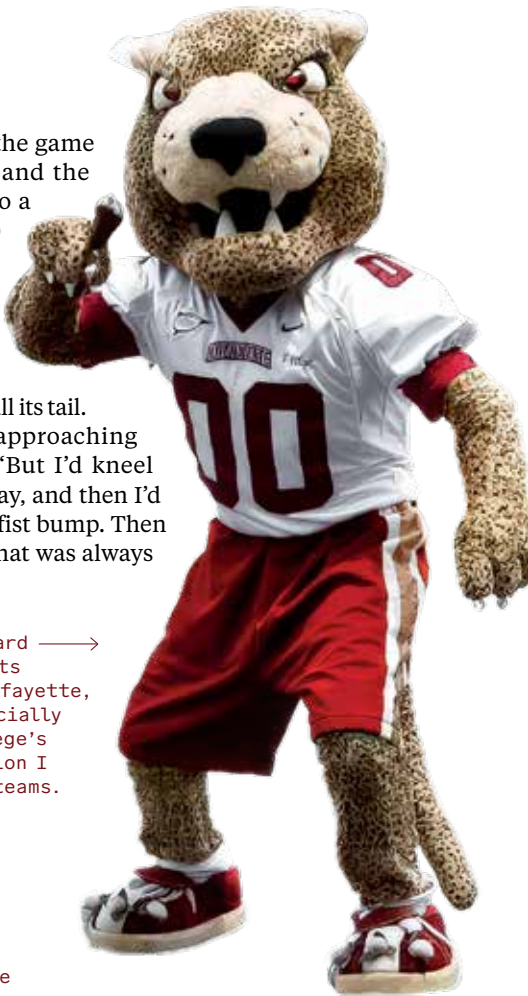
Fisher reflects that the goal was to sell out the bottom

level of the stadium, but the game sold out in a few weeks, and the teams ultimately played to a full house of nearly 50,000 spectators.

The key to being a successful Leopard is interacting with kids, Fisher says, and even the prankish ones who are prone to pull its tail.

"Sometimes a big cat approaching them is scary," he says. "But I'd kneel down, from far enough away, and then I'd shake their hand and do a fist bump. Then came a laugh or a smile. That was always a victory in my book."

The Leopard represents all of Lafayette, but especially the College's 23 Division I varsity teams.



The Rivalry with Lehigh has anchored the Lafayette Leopard name in American college football history.



PHOTOGRAPH BY (TOP RIGHT) LAFAYETTE COLLEGE PHOTO ARCHIVES

OCT. 2, 1958

The Class of 1958, known as the “Leopard Class,” dedicates a 650-pound bronze leopard statue facing toward Oechsle Hall on the hill leading down to Fisher Stadium. Members of the class still gather at the statue for reunions, a tradition since 1958.



FALL 1984

A leopard is brought to campus for a photo shoot for the 1984 Lafayette football media guide.



2004

With the help of Jay Williams '80, the full-body Lafayette Leopard logo was designed.

MARCH 2008

For their 50th anniversary reunion, members of the Class of 1958 celebrated their legacy by placing a second gift of a Leopard statue, slightly smaller than the original one, at Metzgar Fields.

NOV. 22, 2014

The Leopard makes its second appearance at Yankee Stadium for the 150th anniversary of The Rivalry between Lafayette and Lehigh. The Leopards defeated Lehigh, 27-7.

NOV. 4, 2023

Lafayette students and fans vote to name the mascot “Roary.”



When Fisher retired from the costume, Dysean Alexander, associate director of West Coast admissions and ROTC liaison, took over as the Leopard. He was the first person to portray the mascot with its new name, “Roary,” which was approved by a student and fan vote last year.

“I was attending an admissions event in 2021, and we wanted the Leopard to come and greet potential students, take photos with them and all that fun stuff,” he says. “It was at that point we learned that Rick was retiring and we had no one to replace him.” Everyone looked to Alexander, who seemed to have the energy and natural stage presence to pull off the job successfully.

“I saw the opportunity as a way to help out the admissions team,” he recalls. “It would also be my first time attending a Lafayette-Lehigh game at Fisher Stadium. I grew up in the Bethlehem area and always knew about The Rivalry but never had a chance to experience it.”

When he stepped out on the field, all of the Lafayette energy hit him at once. “Suddenly, I knew what it all meant,” Alexander says, “and I knew I had made the right choice by putting on the costume.”

Like Fisher, Alexander has a knack for making people laugh. He’s a

stand-up comedian on the side and had experience playing a lion mascot during his high school days at nearby Moravian Academy in Bethlehem, Pa. All of these transferable skills helped with his interpretation of Roary.

“I do a lot of physical comedy on stage, which translates really well with Roary, who doesn’t speak,” Alexander says. “That physical movement helped me in those close interactions with fans, especially at basketball games because they’re close to the court. Making little kids and adults giggle and laugh, while pulling out their best spirit for Lafayette, regardless of whether the team is winning or losing, that’s what it’s all about.”

“I would occasionally try to look for my tail, turning this way and that way, and getting dizzy. I always loved that routine,” he adds. “Roary wears sneakers, which makes him able to be a lot more agile and do more things.”

Alexander turned over the Roary costume this year when he moved to the West Coast. “The presence of Roary has really grown on campus, as shown by all the fans, students, and staff on campus who wear leopard prints,” he says. “Roary definitely inspires a lot of passion on the campus and a lot of excitement. I had a great run and will never forget it.”



Leopard print, plenty of which is pictured here in the 1993 *Melange*, is still a fan favorite —→ today.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY: (ROARY AND LEOPARD STATUE) ADAM ATKINSON (MAGAZINE COVER) CLAY WEGRZYNOWICZ, (TOP RIGHT CIRCLE) DAVE MEYERS,

PHOTOGRAPH BY (FAR RIGHT) RANDY MONCEAUX,



↑ During a game versus Army in the '70s, the Leopard gets into a little trouble with military police officers.

→ Roary leads alumni in the Reunion 2024 parade.

Alexander Cruz '28, who just took over as Roary this fall, was not bashful at all when he first inquired about how he could volunteer for the job.

“When I came to campus for Prologue, the overnight event for accepted students, I noticed that Dysean was the mascot,” he remembers. “So, I had asked him, ‘How do I become Roary?’” Alexander put Cruz in touch with the Athletics Department, sharing that Cruz had experience playing the bulldog at KIPP NYC College Prep High School in the Bronx.

Cruz enjoys bringing movement and gesture into his interpretation of the character.

“It’s very important to be moving around a lot, for example, when they start playing music at a sports event,”

he says. “Since you’re not able to speak, I try to be energetic when I’m

in the suit and run across the field. I dance with cheerleaders, learn their moves, and use that energy to get the crowds fired up.”

To Cruz, Roary is what a college mascot should be: engaged and instantly recognizable to fans. “School spirit is big at Lafayette,” he says, “and doing Roary is fun. It gives me an excuse to dance—I love doing salsa and bachata.”

A sports enthusiast and a member of the wrestling club, the computer science major hopes to portray Roary for his entire time at Lafayette.

“When I put on that suit, my mindset shifts,” Cruz says. “A lot of talented, dedicated folks have come and gone before me. It’s a big responsibility to represent Lafayette. You have to bring your best.”

Send us your Leopard memories: lafayettemagazine@lafayette.edu.



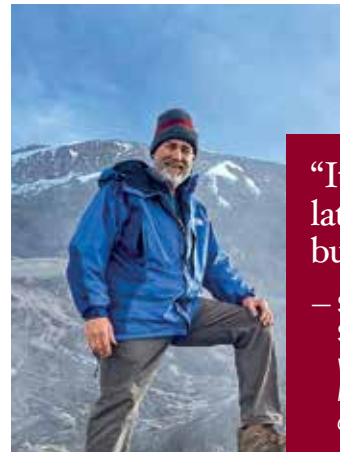
Be Part of the Conversation

- PUBLISH CAREER NEWS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- SHARE LIFE EVENTS AND MILESTONES
- CATCH UP ON CLASS COLUMNS



During the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, **Amanda Magadan Golini '17** co-captained the U.S. Women's National Field Hockey Team.

Photograph by Yan Huckendubler



"It's never too late to start a bucket list!"

— **Stephen Smetana '84**, who summited Mt. Kilimanjaro on his birthday.



The May wedding of **Jane Kirby '19** and Michael FitzMaurice.



Chirag Nijjer '20, customer lead at Google. Nijjer was named a 2024 mentor for its Startups Accelerator program.

Submit a Class Note

The Class Notes website is easy to use and mobile friendly. Alumni updates submitted online will also be considered for inclusion in the next issue of *Lafayette* magazine. ►



LAFAYETTE

INSIDE

We asked alumni to share their industry expertise. **p.50**—How botanical gardens have grown into global destinations. **p. 51**—Steps to build your brand on social media. **p. 52**—Eliminate toxic work culture.

Cur Non

A portrait of the Marquis hangs in the entrance of the Blair House in Washington, D.C., and is the first piece of art seen by visiting heads of state.



"During the pandemic, we found a true appreciation for green space. Everyone really understood how people take it for granted."

JENNIFER OZDOBA ROMINIECKI
ART HISTORY AND ENGLISH, 1995

PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCY GUTH

OUTDOOR WONDER

Open-air settings, like Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, are refuges for the community.

BY KELLY HUTH

In July, *TIME* named Marie Selby Botanical Gardens to its list of “The World’s Greatest Places.” The Sarasota, Fla., site was one of only eight U.S. spots to visit among the 100 destinations—and the sole botanical garden included in the 2024 list. The space, which was founded in 1973, is dedicated to exhibiting and studying epiphytic orchids, bromeliads, gesneriads, and ferns.

At the helm is Jennifer Ozdoba Rominiecki ’95, whose curiosity and Cur Non spirit helped lead it there. “We are just so thrilled—it’s amazing recognition for us,” Rominiecki, president and CEO, says. “I think they really responded not only to the beauty you can experience on site, but also the cutting-edge sustainability measures we’ve implemented.”

An art history and English double major, Rominiecki notes that Lafayette cultivated her curiosity. “I went into the real world with a curious mind, which was important for me in learning, taking on more responsibility, and advancing in my field,” she says. She credits mentorship she received from Prof. Bob Mattison, Marshall R. Metzgar Professor of Art History Emeritus: He cultivated her interest in art history, served as her thesis adviser, and encouraged her to apply for internships at Sotheby’s and the Guggenheim. That put her on a path to focus her career on cultural institutions. She moved into roles at the Metropolitan Opera, then the New York Botanical Garden, before arriving at Selby Gardens. Says Rominiecki: “I tell everyone, ‘I started out in visual art, moved on to performing art, and moved again to living art.’”

When she arrived at Selby Gardens in 2015, she saw tremendous opportunity. “I wasn’t looking to relocate but saw the leadership potential,” Rominiecki says. “I seized the day and never looked back.”

Here are a few reasons to be inspired by botanical spaces like Selby Gardens and visit them throughout the year.



Botanical gardens put on a variety of awe-inspiring exhibits, like Selby’s purple orchid show that debuted in the fall.

Leaders in sustainability

In June, Selby Gardens dedicated a 57,000-square-foot solar array that distinguishes it as the world’s first net-positive energy botanical garden complex, and generates more energy than the space requires. “We had the opportunity to change our infrastructure in the most sustainable way,” she says of the gardens’ three-phase master plan.

The solar array powers The Green Orchid, the world’s first net-positive energy restaurant. At the garden-to-plate restaurant, produce is sourced from a rooftop garden that is planted, designed, and maintained by veterans practicing horticulture therapy.

Modern grounds are thinking big

When she arrived, Rominiecki marveled at Selby Gardens’ vast collections and incredible location on Sarasota Bay, but identified areas of on-site improvement: parking, orientation, and dining options. “I

knew we had to reckon these needs in our master plan,” she says.

During the pandemic, Selby Gardens adopted a second campus 10 miles south, tripling its acreage and offering a place to check out native plants representing more than 5,000 years of Florida history. Each offers a lush garden experience; visitors can connect between the two bayfront sanctuaries via boat.

Future growth

A new research center, lab, and library were added to study plant life. In addition, a stormwater management vault collects and treats stormwater, returning millions of gallons of clean water to Sarasota Bay annually. Future plans also include a learning pavilion, unified pathways, a historic museum renovation, and restoration of docks and seawalls. And, as Selby Gardens recently faced the wrath of Hurricanes Milton and Helene, it reinforced an early need identified in the master plan to make the greenhouse complex—home to 20,000 plants—hurricane resilient.

The Living Museum

Just as art museums create new exhibits to encourage repeat visitors, so too does Selby Gardens. “Our team creates seasonal experiences and exhibits connecting major artists to nature,” Rominiecki says. “It’s the idea of operating as traditional art museums do—but, at a botanical garden, where everything is alive and changing.”

This approach, which was trademarked by Selby Gardens as “The Living Museum,” combines everything Rominiecki learned from Lafayette and previous roles, and has

more than doubled attendance and membership.

For example, this year’s theme of the annual orchid show is “purple” and features a jaw-dropping display of all its shades, alongside books and photographs that explore the color through history.

They’ve also created an artist-in-residence program with rock icon Patti Smith. Photographs from her book, *A Book of Days*, will be printed in large format on aluminum and displayed in the landscape through August 2025.

Supporting a critical space

Not only is Selby Gardens supporting biodiversity research and conservation, but it’s giving people a place to connect with nature in their community through mind-opening experiences. Says Rominiecki: “During the pandemic we found a true appreciation for green space. I think everyone really understood how people take it for granted.” ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCY GUTH

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTONIO PINNA

Building a standout brand

Social media wizard Emma Glubiak ’18 is the mind behind some very recognizable Instagram feeds.

BY MADELINE MARRIOTT ’24



As director of social strategy for Dotdash Meredith, Emma Glubiak ’18 spends her days cultivating the online presence of the company’s 40-plus brands, which include *PEOPLE*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, and *Travel + Leisure*.

“In every role I’ve had in my career, every day is different,” Glubiak says. “That’s the fun part and also the stressful part of working in social media. A typical day could be working with a brand on its social video strategy, or maybe there’s a viral moment we need to respond to

in a way that makes sense for the brand.”

Glubiak first found a love for food and lifestyle media while serving as the editorial director of Lafayette’s now-defunct branch of Spoon University, an online food publication with content from college students.

From a social media internship with the Food Network to Webby Award-winning work for Apartment Therapy’s Instagram, Glubiak saw several sides of the business before landing at Dotdash (later to become Dotdash Meredith) and working her way up to the director role.

Want to boost your social media branding? Here are a few of Glubiak's tips:

Know your audience.

Glubiak's biggest piece of advice is also the simplest: Find what works for your brand and its audience.

"There's so much noise out there," Glubiak says. "If you Google the best length for a TikTok video, it might say 30 seconds, but if the 30-second videos aren't working for you, then you shouldn't be doing 30-second videos."

Instead of worrying too much about industry expectations, Glubiak says, pay constant attention to what your audience is responding to—and build on that.

Create a signature look.

According to Glubiak, visual cohesion in a social media feed is important for keeping an audience engaged. When scrollers see your trademark look, they'll think of your brand right away.

"Whether it's a signature graphic design quality, color palette, or maybe a format of video you iterate again and again, any of those repeatable elements that make the audience think of you are a good thing," she says.

Experiment with what's available.

Glubiak knows the value of utilizing different types of engagement across platforms.

"With social media, especially when there are so many new features and tools coming out every single day, it's important to experiment in a way that makes sense for your brand," she says. "Taking big swings and trying new things or content types are really good ways to grow."

Learn from others in your niche.

For anyone not sure about the next step in their brand growth, Glubiak recommends turning to other successful accounts in the same area of business.

"The nice thing about many of the social platforms is that you can see how many views a video is getting or how many 'likes' a post has even when it's not your post," she says. "Following other brands or other individuals who are in the area you want to thrive in can be helpful." ■

"Experiment in a way that makes sense for your brand," Glubiak says.



ILLUSTRATION BY ANTONIO PINNA

CONQUER OFFICE CULTURE

When C-suite executives create an inspiring work environment, says David Komar '87, it's better for employees and the bottom line.

BY AMY DOWNEY

David Komar understands culture is more than a buzzword.

The retired brigadier general, who got his commission through Army ROTC at Lafayette, spent more than 30 years on active duty in the U.S. Army. During the second half of his career, he worked at the corporate level of the Army, including two years as director of Army business operations in the Army's Office of Business Transformation.

After retiring in 2018, he started a business coaching CEOs and began deploying insights he had learned from decades in the Army, whether it was how to build trust among team members or be strategic about communications. Then, in 2022, he was hired as president of a human resource technology company called EDA Inc., in Kansas City, Mo., where he's been helping companies learn how to build exceptional cultures.

All the while, Komar, a business and economics major, was working on a book called *Conquer Your Culture*, which was published in May. He wanted to create a concise, practical guide—something that executives could read on one domestic flight—that offered a tailored "road map" to identify ways to improve what was happening in the workplace. "There's a lot of phenomenal literature out there, whether it's by John Maxwell or Ken Blanchard, about why culture is important and why we should care," Komar says. "But there's still not a whole lot about how to actually do it."

As he explains in the book, no two winning cultures are identical: Goals, philosophies, and methods are as different as the company. To that end, Komar inserted worksheets in the back of each chapter, serving as a place for CEOs to write down specific goals and next



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DAVID KOMAR

steps. "The book doesn't describe what I think the ideal culture would be, because that varies depending on the organization," Komar says. "The culture of a company that runs a nuclear power plant is significantly different than an advertising agency—and I take great comfort in that."

Here's how to avoid toxic office culture and keep the workplace thriving.

Spell out beliefs and institutions

Defining a company's culture is the first and most critical step for any organization. "In order to achieve your objective, you have to be able to describe it," he says. "Otherwise how do you know if you're on the right path?" Throughout his career, Komar has met only a few CEOs who have been able to clearly explain their company's culture to him. "We aren't just talking about platitudes of being 'empowering' and 'inclusive,'" Komar adds. "What does it actually look, sound, taste, feel, and smell like to work in that organization?"

Investing in culture is good for business

"Oftentimes, people think there's this false choice between having a great culture and being profitable," Komar says. "It's really the opposite. If you don't have

← "You have to plan for communication," Komar says. "It doesn't just happen."

a great culture, your employees aren't going to be as engaged or committed to achieving the goals of the organization."

Measuring culture can feel difficult to capture, but there are workplace metrics that can indicate underlying issues. In organizations with low employee engagement scores, he explains, there is also lower productivity, profitability, job growth, and earnings per share over time. Plus, costly issues are more likely to add up: accidents, absenteeism, and employee turnover.

Methods matter

Knowing what to say is just as important as understanding how to deliver the message. "A small tech company of 10-12 people is going to have different modes of communicating than a very large corporation," he says. While

an employee-wide email might be the appropriate vehicle for one message, another company might find an in-person meeting more effective.

On returning back to the office

After the pandemic, many companies mandated working back in the office to reestablish culture, but Komar says the move could affect employees on a deeper level. "It's a very complex problem," Komar says. "For a lot of employees, the call for the return to office makes them feel like employers don't trust them doing their work." Regardless of a company's position on working from home, the CEOs should make sure to share the reasoning behind the decision. Komar says the majority of problems that happen in organizations stem from a lack of clear communication.

He adds that while working remotely comes with certain barriers, employers should appreciate—and consider—the generational factor: "Younger generations are much more comfortable collaborating in a virtual manner. It might not be senior leadership's favorite or most comfortable way of communicating, but for many in the workforce, it is." ■

Conquer Your Culture is available on Amazon.

GROUP EFFORT

The most recent Global Workplace Report from Gallup shows the effects of low company morale

\$8.9

TRILLION
Money the world economy lost last year due to low employee engagement

62%

Employees in North America who are not engaged in their work

41%

Employees who reported daily stress

52%

Employees who say they are actively looking for a new job

In All the World



FOR YOUR WALL

For a frame-ready 8x10 copy of this photograph, courtesy of the College, send name and mailing address to comdiv@lafayette.edu.



At more than 7 feet long, the *Stalking Leopard* looks especially striking vis-à-vis vibrant foliage.

The 650-pound bronze statue was a gift from the Class of 1958.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM ATKINSON

Have a major life event or accomplishment? Share the news with fellow Pards! Go to lafayette.edu to read more alumni updates and submit your own. Alumni news highlighted in the magazine may be edited for length and clarity.

1950s

Hank Darlington '57

Darlington writes: “I just turned 89 and am still able to work out five to six times a week. I rode my bicycle from Los Angeles to Boston twice in my late 70s, then from Maine to Florida at age 80. An accident causing a brain bleed has put a halt to my bike riding. We lived six months a year in the Baja of Mexico, where I kayaked over 300 miles of the shoreline of the Sea of Cortez. I have four beautiful children, all doing great, and four grandkids who are making me very proud. I continue to be very active in our community (Medford, Ore.). My wife and I owned one of the very first decorative plumbing and hardware showrooms in the U.S. We grew it to three stores, sold it to a large wholesaler, and then did 20-plus years of consulting, teaching, and preaching in that industry. I wrote four business management and selling skills books that are still used in the kitchen and bath industry. I was honored to be inducted into two industry Hall of Fames

and still do some pro bono consulting here in Medford. I try to keep in touch with three of my Phi Psi fraternity brothers, and have great memories of my four years on the Hill. Go Pards.”

Eugene J. Peters '51

Honorable Eugene J. Peters, PE/PLS, is a 96-year-old professional who maintains his active lifestyle and continues to work full time as an engineer. Peters has served as a two-term mayor of Scranton, Pa., and also previously worked in his architectural firm. He has led his team through hundreds of projects. The firm was begun by his brother, a World War II veteran, in 1949; it continues on to this day and is celebrating its 75th anniversary. At one time, he traveled to Saudi Arabia and Europe with the U.S. Department of Energy, in pursuit of A/E projects to bring back home to citizens of the United States, and meeting with aides to the King of Saudi Arabia. Peters has also worked with White House dignitaries and met six U.S. presidents.



During Fall Weekend, many gathered for the Wallach Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center groundbreaking at Metzgar Fields Athletic Complex including (from left): Director of Athletics Sherryta Freeman, women's lacrosse head coach Katie McConnell, Dina Opici-Wallach '95, President Nicole Hurd, Andrew Wallach '95, and men's lacrosse head coach Pat Myers.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Class of 2028 represents 42 unique states and territories, a record for the College's geodiversity.

1960s

R. Edward Baumgardner '61

Baumgardner writes: “I have been selected for induction into the 2024 Greencastle-Antrim High School Athletic Hall of Fame. This is the first year for the Hall of Fame. I graduated from Greencastle in 1957, where I held three track records: pole vault, long jump, and high jump. In my senior year,



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICK SMITH

I was a PIAA State pole vault champion. In 1961, my senior year at Lafayette, I held the pole vault and long jump school records. The pole vault record was also the Middle Atlantic Conference record. After college, in AAU competition, I won several first-place medals in the long jump with a personal best of 23 feet, 2 inches.”

Eric Kimmel '67

This spring, Kimmel was awarded the Regina Medal by the Catholic Library Association for the body of his work as a children's book author. The Regina Medal is the latest honor in

a long career list, including the Sydney Taylor Lifetime Achievement Award, a five-time winner of the National Jewish Book Award, a 1990 Caldecott Honor from the American Library Association for *Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins*, as well as numerous state and professional honors. Says Kimmel: “The bedrock of any success I've achieved as a writer goes to my professors at Lafayette. Before you can be a good writer, you have to know what good writing is.”

Robert McGarrah '69

The Maryland Pro Bono Resource Center selected McGarrah as the recipient of the 2024 Distinguished Maryland Pro Bono Service Award, presented to an individual who has distinguished himself as an exemplar of pro bono service, going above and beyond the average pro bono commitment either over a period time or through extended service in a complex matter or case.

Mark Staples '67

In May, Staples published *Neighbors Revisited: A church journalist's life lessons learned from people of other cultures*. In it, he describes life lessons learned as a church journalist during travels to Africa and Asia, along with visits to countries such as Zimbabwe and Papua New Guinea, which were emerging democracies at the time. The author describes experiences that have impacted his worldview with allusions and a brief study guide for readers to think about today. *Neighbors Revisited*, which is available on Amazon, features a rich variety of photos of people the author met along the way.

Check this

Lafayette alumni share their latest work.



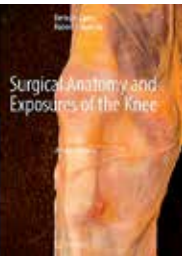
Whippersnappers

By Maya Freelon '05
Durham, N.C.
Whippersnappers: Recapturing, Reviewing, and Reimagining the Lives of Enslaved Children in the United States is on view until Jan. 25, 2025, at Historic Stagville, formerly one of North Carolina's largest plantations. The installation features 20 new works by the artist and educator, utilizing her signature “bleeding” tissue paper technique, plus printed archival photographs, monoprints, painting, collage, and sculptures.



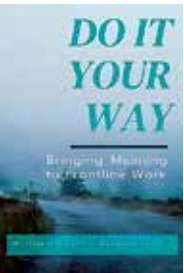
The Bomb Doctor

By Kirk Yeager '87
Regalo Press, 2024
FBI bomb expert Dr. Kirk Yeager reveals the investigative process that brings bombers to justice. Yeager, a chemistry major, earned a Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry from Cornell University, and has nearly 30 years of experience with improvised explosives.



Surgical Anatomy and Exposures of the Knee: A Surgical Atlas

By Bertram Zarins '63
Springer, 2024
Dr. Zarins, an orthopaedic surgeon at Mass General Hospital and the longtime team physician for the New England Patriots and Boston Bruins, has performed revolutionary techniques during his esteemed career. The growth of minimally invasive surgery, such as arthroscopy, has led to a decline of knowledge of anatomy. He wrote this resource to fill the knowledge gap.



Do It Your Way

By William Flis '68
Heartland Consulting, 2023
Front-line jobs are a critical part of the economy. This guide helps those workers define paths forward, from reaching personal financial goals to finding meaning and professional development in their roles.

Have a published book, podcast, or exhibit to share? Email lafayettemagazine@lafayette.edu.



Fifty years ago, it was the beginning of the end of the Vietnam War. But in that time leading up to the spring of 1975, protests and demonstrations on college campuses, like the one pictured here at Lafayette, were still reverberating across the country. Other unified efforts included silent vigils, strikes against attending class, and funeral marches.

1970s

Austin Timothy Church '70
Church has published *Religion Versus Secular Humanism: What the Psychological and Social Sciences Can Tell Us* (Hypatia Press, 2024). Church writes: "In today's contentious

climate—in which a seemingly unbridgeable gap between religious and secular worldviews persists—I discuss the relative merits and viability of religion versus secular humanism from the perspective of the psychological and social sciences. Evidence-based proposals to reduce the religious-secular gap are also offered. The discussion is

non-polemic and accessible to inquisitive lay people."

Catherine Hanlon '79

Dr. Hanlon, who is a former emergency physician, now directs the hyperbaric medicine department at Monmouth Medical



Center in Long Branch, N.J. Additionally, as a certified scuba diver for more than 40 years, Hanlon has been diving all over the world. Says Hanlon, "I've witnessed firsthand the destruction of coral reefs in every ocean I've visited. As go the reefs, so go our oceans." In an effort to learn more about the problem and to help preserve and restore reefs, she took a course with Dr. German Mendez in Cozumel, Mexico, in early August. Dr. Mendez, originally a veterinarian from Mexico City, became interested in coral reefs when he started diving in the 1980s. He started the Cozumel Coral Reef Restoration Program and has trained hundreds of divers from all over the world in reef biology and restoration techniques. Over two days, Hanlon learned to identify reef problems, safely clean corals with soft brushes, and transplant corals to new beds for growth with a special nontoxic adhesive substrate mixed underwater, which safely anchors the corals to a new base. Says Hanlon, "With enough awareness and education, we can make a difference in the health of our reefs, ensuring healthy oceans for future generations."

John Krah '75

Members of the Classes of 1974, 1975, 1976, and 1977 and brothers of Delta Kappa Epsilon met on campus for a reunion in April. Krah writes: "It was a good reason to get together as we approached our 50-year reunions. Many of us had not seen each other in years, and brothers traveled from around the country to attend." Krah notes he had a wonderful dinner Saturday night at Two Rivers Brewing, arranged by the "unofficial

Mayor of Easton," Mark Damiano '74, and thanked Bill Welz '77 for getting in touch with everyone and organizing a date.

Richard Mayer '73

Mayer won bronze at the national championships for the "Vet-70" men's foil, qualifying for the Veteran Fencing World Championships in Dubai.

Tod Mesirow '78

Mesirow just finished executive producing three episodes of NOVA, the PBS science series, which is slated to start airing Nov. 13. The shows are all about engineering—showing them in action—and the title is "Building Stuff!" More information: pbs.org/show/nova.

David Roth '70

Roth, senior managing director of SouthOcean Capital Partners, joined the Lafayette College Board of Trustees in 1994. Over the course of 30 years, Roth served on numerous committees—having served as vice chair on the Committee on Audit and the Committee on Educational Policy, and as a member of the Trustee Educational Policy, Trustee Audit, Trustee Financial Policy, Campaign Executive, and Trustee committees. In 2007, Roth and his wife, Linda, established the David M. '70 and Linda Roth Professorship Fund, which created three professorships for Lafayette faculty who are exceptional teachers, successfully mentor students (by directing activities such as independent study and EXCEL Scholar projects), and are recognized as leading scholars in their fields. The Roths also established

the David M. Roth 1970 Scholarship Fund, which provides funding to students on both a "need" and "non-need" basis. David retired from the Board after 30 years of meritorious service during which he and Linda helped to make Lafayette a much better college. He maintains a number of Board activities, many in leadership positions, in and around his home in Connecticut. David and Linda are the proud parents of two children, and grandparents of four grandchildren, who are the special love of their lives.

Lawrence Stryker '70

Stryker recently completed a book titled *The Swedish Monarchy and the Copper Trade: The Copper Company, the Deposit System, and the Amsterdam Market, 1600-1640*. It is now in print and is being published by Amsterdam University Press. Stryker studied European history at University of Virginia, where he earned a Ph.D. before entering work as a metal commodities trader in New York City. He has been active as a trader for the last 38 years and is currently the head of trading at D Block Metals LLC, based in North Carolina.

Carol Tarsa '78

Tarsa was the recipient of Lafayette's 2024 Hughes Alumni Correspondent



Award, which recognizes an effective writer who exercises leadership throughout the column, unifying classmates in support of the College. "I appreciated this unexpected award and want to thank my '78 classmates for their support of our class column," says Tarsa, who accepted the award during the Alumni Rally event in Colton Chapel during Reunion.

David Weatherby '75

Weatherby writes: "On Sept. 1, the Lafayette Bicentennial Farewell Tour visited Hampton, N.H. I was fortunate enough to find a Lafayette College T-shirt that still fit and was able to have a photo taken with the Marquis, portrayed by actor Ben Goldman. Lafayette arrived in a horse-drawn carriage, gave a short and sometimes humorous speech, and received a 21-gun salute on the town common next to the Hampton Historical Society. About 125 people attended. I found out about the tour while riding my bicycle in a neighboring town and noticing lawn signs announcing his visit. I moved to Hampton following retirement from the Army in 1995. My wife, Lee, and I have two adult daughters and two grandsons. I worked at Physical Sciences Inc. for 17 years, and on my first day there, I met Dr. Peter Nebolsine '67 and much later, Alex Mednick '11. The Farewell Tour will visit the 24 states admitted to the Union in 1824."

Robert Williams-Neal '70

Williams-Neal writes: "This past June I celebrated my 50th ordination



PRIMETIME PROMO

MK Asante '04 is behind Monday Night Football anthem

At least 20 million viewers watched ESPN's Monday Night Football 2024-25 season opener in September—and millions more continue to tune in weekly throughout the NFL season. Before kickoff, hype builds with an official MNF video, scripted by award-winning author and filmmaker MK Asante. The highly visible spot, which also played last season, features a mashup of "In the Air Tonight" vocals by Chris Stapleton, a performance by Snoop Dogg, and drumming by Cindy Blackman Santana.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LAFAYETTE COLLEGE ARCHIVES

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MK ASANTE; ILLUSTRATION BY ANTONIO PINNA

anniversary as a minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA). As it happened, the ordination service was two parts: one part inside Colton Chapel and the second part outside on the lawn.” At Lafayette, Williams-Neal was a math major, McKelvy Scholar, and active in the College church.

1980s

Louise Seto Coles ’81

On July 5, in South Hero, Vt., Lafayette was well represented at the Celebration of Life for Raymond Jacoby ’57, father of Peter Jacoby ’81. In addition to Peter, his friend Rob Sweetman ’81 came up from Massachusetts. Also there from our local alumni club, of which Ray was a president for years, were Louise Seto Coles ’81, Dave Jensen ’82 (also a fraternity brother of Pete’s), and Matt Bartle ’05. “It was a great ceremony reflecting a lot on all Ray did, but also his great love of Lafayette,” Coles writes. “It was great catching up with everyone and just seeing the whole Jacoby family.”

Eileen Nelson Farley ’81

Farley writes, “It was fun to reunite with fellow class alums Joe ’81 and Des Karabots McNulty ’81 in June. Joe’s nephew’s marriage to my niece brought us together for a fun-filled weekend in New Hope, Pa.”

Bob Mahr ’83

Mahr set out from Richmond, Va., on one of the hottest days of 2024 to walk the 51.7-mile Virginia Capital Trail

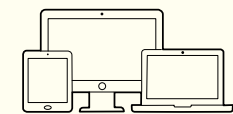
to benefit the Williamsburg House of Mercy, a complete care center for the homeless in Williamsburg, Va. He completed the trail in 17 hours and 47 minutes, and is considering making the walk an annual event.

Beth Mowins ’89

ESPN and CBS play-by-play announcer Mowins participated in the first all-female broadcast team in Chicago Cubs history during the July 7 game against the Angels. The trio of broadcasters also included game analyst Elise Menaker and field reporter Taylor McGregor.

Kathleen Squires ’88

After decades as an award-winning freelance food and travel writer, Squires has joined *The New York Times* as a staff writer for Wirecutter, where she is covering all things kitchen and food. Over the years, her work has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Food & Wine*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, and many other publications. She has also co-authored numerous cookbooks, including the IACP-winning, James Beard Award-nominee *The Book of Greens*. Previous to her freelance career, she was a book editor at Bantam Doubleday Dell and Macmillan Publishing. Squires is also the co-producer of the award-winning documentary film *James Beard: America’s First Foodie*, which she made with Beth Federici ’86, for PBS *American Masters*. She is currently at work on a film about the iconic Manhattan



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restaurant Raoul’s, to be released in 2025. Squires and her husband, Ronnie Rodriguez, operate the private dining venue Chef’s Dinner Table in Downtown Manhattan, out of which she runs a popular literary salon, “Read the Room.” She has been a Manhattan resident for 35 years.

1990s

Diana Kauppinen Dobin ’93

Dobin, co-CEO and chief sustainability officer, Valley Forge Fabrics, has been announced as the 2024 “Icon of Industry” by NEWH, The Hospitality Network. The award celebrates the annual leader of the manufacturing side of the hospitality industry worldwide, who has uniquely made an impact through their innovative

work, consistent dedication of their time and efforts to the community or industry outreach through education and/or corporate giving, and have been doing business in the hospitality industry for more than 30 years.

2000s

Danielle McWilliams ’04

McWilliams writes: “This September, I celebrated my 20-year anniversary at Novità Communications. The NYC-based integrated marketing agency was founded by Christine Abbate, a 1985 graduate of Lafayette College. Many thanks to the Career Services Department for the connection to Novità and to Chris. If it wasn’t for the externship program my sophomore year, I may have never had this opportunity to find a career that I adore so much and to work at an agency with such an incredible group of PR/marketing professionals (including many Pardis over the years: Chris Abbate ’85, Dania Ahmad ’98, Sammy Kantor ’15, Cody Suher Latour ’14, Alexis Cassola ’14, Jenna Seybert ’15, Abby Perham ’16, Bianca Buecklers ’19, Emma Krasinski ’22, Brooke Nani ’24).”

Heather Pizzillo ’07

Together with her 7-year old daughter, Siena, Pizzillo founded Only With Love, a clothing company that supports water.org with every purchase. The hat and apparel company only uses organic and upcycled

materials for their products, along with eco-friendly packaging and 100 percent carbon-neutral shipping. For more information, visit onlywithlove.org.

Tyler Vernon ’00 and Casey Schlaybaugh ’01

After 27 years, the chase is over! Vernon and Schlaybaugh were married Memorial Day 2024 in Jupiter, Fla., where they now reside. They were engaged in Kirby Hall, Room 107, where they first met.



2010s

Ariel Aguiar ’12 and Gregory Bernstein ’12

Aguiar and Bernstein welcomed their daughter, Hailey Ellen Bernstein, Dec. 26, 2023.



Maggie Evans ’17 and Quentin Bubb ’18

Evans and Bubb were married April 20, in Chapel Hill, N.C. It was a joyous occasion surrounded by over 30 of their Lafayette classmates.

Jillian DeBarba ’14 and William DeBarba ’17

The DeBarba family welcomed their second baby boy, Emerson Cole DeBarba, May 20.

Amos Han ’14

Han relocated from Bergen County, N.J., to Sarasota, Fla., in January 2023 to start his new job as a transportation planner for Sarasota County. Despite relocating, he has continued to make efforts

to attend Lafayette football games in person, attending a total of four games during the 2023 season. On April 20, he attended Lafayette football’s spring scrimmage. Upon returning to Florida, after landing at Tampa

International Airport, he stopped at a pizzeria near University of Tampa. “While waiting for my food, I started chatting with another customer who turned out to be the son of former Lafayette football assistant coach Paul

Shaffner, who coached under Bill Russo from 1988 to 1999,” Han writes. “I immediately emailed coach John Troxell ’94, who confirmed he had Coach Shaffner as one of his coaches during his playing days.”

Alumni Memoriam

Notices received by the College since the last issue of *Lafayette*.

1949

Frank J. Peragine P’84

Frederick W. Patterson
Norman W. Riley
Stanley G. Student

1965

Dennis I. Greene
William K. “Bill” Ryan
Dr. Stephen D. Smith
John F. “Buzz” Yurasits

1976

Kenneth D. Perry

1950

Dr. W. Edmund Carver
Donald O. Kennedy P’78
William T. Payne Jr. P’80
Richard L. Shappell
William A. Wyatt P’84
John S. Wynn Jr.

1957
Cyrus L. Blackfan Jr.
Henry R. D’Alberto
Dr. Victor Garber
Quentin L. Patterson
Robert L. Ragot
Walter H. Swayze Jr.

1966

Stephen A. Olean Jr.
1967
Richard Scott Colbert
Robert “Bob” Moser
Robert J. Sikora

1977

Donald A. Afflerbach
Stephen Fundakowski
Susan Boles Roy

1978

Scott E. Johnson

1951

H. Marvin Riddle III P’80
Joseph R. Skrapits

1958
W. Mackey Skinner III
Clifford L. Wollard

1968

Joseph B. Cady Jr.
Dr. Roger H. Mitchell

1982

Michael J. Freed
Charles D. Mills
Nancy Pretzfelder Tingley

1952

Ralph J. Furness
Bryson B. Hoff
Dr. Peter D. Schindler

1959
Dr. Stephen Rosenberg
Selton Scott Stevens Jr.

1969

Alan Emmet Flynn
James W. Lee
Willard Y. “Mac” McFarland
Roger A. Peck

1986

Ellen Longbine Waugh

1990

Allison Y. Moore

1953

Dr. George H. Drake Jr.
Alfred E. Fletcher
Donald R. Mildrum
F. William Walker

1960
Jeffery P. Broderick

1970

Burson W. Bell
John Joseph Delatush
Robert Jay Heiple
David L. Kelley
Thomas D. Meisner
David L. Smith

1991

Dr. Gregory S. Ahearn

1954

Hon. Maxwell E. Davison P’84
Edward G. Hantz P’94
Raymond P. Pennoyer

1961
William D. Bartron
Robert B. Frack P’78
Ronald E. Geesey P’87

1962

Morris A. Halpern

1997

Daniel V. Jones II

1956

Dale R. Albright P’85
Lee E. Kane P’88, GP’23

1964

Edmund G. McElroy Jr.
R. Jay Meddaugh

2002

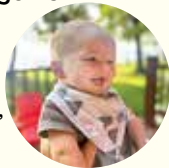
Cristen Place Charnley

FACULTY/STAFF

Eleanor McHale

Death notices may be emailed to classnotes@lafayette.edu or sent to Lafayette magazine, Communications Division, Alpha Building, Easton, PA 18042.

Stephen Hodge '15
Hodge welcomed baby Patrick Robert Hodge, May 12.



Matt Maley '16 and Jacqueline Maley '16
In August, the Maleys celebrated the birth of their son, Matthew III. Matt and Jacqueline met at a Leopards football tailgate in 2015 and have been together ever since. They were married in fall 2021 in a beautiful ceremony on Cape Cod, surrounded by New England's picturesque fall foliage. Their new family lives just outside Washington, D.C., where Jacqueline works at the U.S. Green Building Council, and Matt works in the U.S. House of Representatives. They are thrilled to welcome their first child just before their third wedding anniversary.



Pictured earlier: The Maley family visits Mount Vernon, home of George Washington, a close friend and mentor to the Marquis de Lafayette.

Connor McNamara '13
McNamara joined the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) as a research staff member in the Science, Systems, and Sustainment Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center. McNamara earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering; master's degree in mechanical engineering from Drexel University in 2016; and his doctoral degree in materials science from Lehigh University in 2024. IDA is a nonprofit corporation that operates three federally funded research and development centers in the public interest. IDA answers the most challenging U.S. security and science policy questions with objective analysis leveraging extraordinary scientific, technical, and analytic expertise.

Elizabeth Rentschler '13 and Tom Brinkerhoff '13
Rentschler and Brinkerhoff were married June 7. They continue to stay connected to the College and will enjoy returning to campus (especially for football and basketball games) as a now married couple!



Matt Soloway '16 and Venita "Gigi" O'Hanlon Soloway '16
The Soloways welcomed their daughter, Sylvia Frances Soloway, Aug. 30.

Cody Suher '14
Suher married Henry Latour June 29, in Manchester, Vt. Nearly 30 past Leopards were in attendance, including the bride's father, Rob Suher '77, his Sigma Nu fraternity brother Scott Greenberg '78, and several of Suher's classmates from the Class of 2014.

Shira Wein '19
Wein earned her Ph.D. in computer science in May 2024 from Georgetown University. She has since

started a new role as an assistant professor of computer science at Amherst College.

Emily Pizzino Yarbrough '12
Yarbrough and her husband, JR, welcomed their second child, John Ray III, June 8. John-John joins big sister Annie. The family lives in Reading, Pa.

2020s

Jake Bloss '22
In June, right-handed pitcher Bloss made his Major League Baseball debut with the Houston Astros against the Baltimore Orioles. Bloss played his first three collegiate seasons at Lafayette; he was selected in the third round of the 2023 MLB draft.

DaRon Gilbert '23
Gilbert, a Detroit native, signed with the Detroit Lions as an undrafted free agent in May and competed in the organization's training camp this summer. Gilbert was a safety and linebacker for the Leopards.



THEN & NOW
Built in 1929, John Markle Hall of Mining Engineering originally housed the Metallurgy and Geology departments. It changed to the Markle Administration Building in the '60s and continues to be one of Lafayette's busiest buildings. Last summer—thanks to a bequest from Charles “Charley” Hugel '51 and his wife, Nina—Markle unveiled the new Hugel Welcome Center on its first floor, serving as a destination for guests on campus.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF LAFAYETTE COLLEGE ARCHIVES AND ADAM ATKINSON

Marquis Collection

Stephen Biale '82, P'12 has been collecting Lafayette football memorabilia since the early '80s. Here are some of the rare Rivalry items found in his personal library.

BY AMY DOWNEY

WRITE US Do you own a special Lafayette collection? Tell us about it at lafayettemagazine@lafayette.edu.

“My collecting interest ramped up significantly as we were planning the 150th meeting between Lafayette and Lehigh,” says Biale (pictured), who is a Friends of Lafayette Football founding member and 2007 inductee into the Maroon Club Athletic Hall of Fame. The former offensive lineman and co-captain played in three Rivalry games, including the dramatic 1981 win at Lehigh that propelled the 9-2 team to the final No. 8 national ranking in NCAA Division 1-AA.



— In the late 1880s, when the Rivalry began, game programs were preceded by score sheets. Pictured here is Biale's score sheet from Nov. 21, 1885, when the Pard matched up against Lehigh for just the fourth time in history.



— Biale has 60 vintage Rivalry programs dating back to 1905 and, within the next couple of years, expects to have amassed the largest known collection. In his lot are programs from 1921 and 1926—both years that a perfect record was attained. “During those two years, Lafayette won the national football title as the best team in the land,” Biale says, noting that the third national championship occurred in 1896. Another notable piece is the 99th Rivalry program from 1963: The date was changed due to the assassination of John F. Kennedy.



— The Rutgers vs. Lafayette football game ticket from 1883—the sixth game ever played by the Pard—is perhaps Biale's most cherished piece of Lafayette football memorabilia: “The game represents the very first win of our fledgling football program,” he says, adding that it was played on the Quad with 4 inches of snow on the ground.



— He also treasures the Oct. 28, 1911, ticket against the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, accompanied by his photo of Carlisle's star athlete, Jim Thorpe, on March Field.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF STEPHEN BIALE



IMPACT ACROSS BORDERS

As she prepares to become a lawyer for women in Liberia, Peaches Dargbeh '27 is on a path to empower others.

BY STELLA KATSIPOUTIS-VARKANIS

● AND...

When she embarked on her cross-continental journey from Liberia to Lafayette, Peaches Dargbeh '27 had a dream in tow: to one day return home as a human rights lawyer and advocate for victims of gender-based violence.

Dargbeh, who grew up in a low-income family with a single mother, has earned a full scholarship from SHE-CAN, an organization that provides access to U.S. college educations for high-achieving young women from Liberia, Cambodia, and Guatemala.

Only in her second year, the international affairs and history double major is already using her talents for the greater good. As a Dyer Fellow, she's partnering with the Dyer Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship to kick-start a non-profit aimed at helping single mothers in Liberia attain financial independence. She also helps Lafayette's minority students feel at home as a member of both the International Students Association and Association of Black Collegians.

Dargbeh even runs her own hair styling business called Peaches' Braids and Twist. "It's another way to give back to the Black and African student community," Dargbeh says, explaining that she offers her services at an affordable price. "If they have someone to take care of their hair, they have one less thing to worry about."

In her work with the Landis Center for Community Engagement, Dargbeh assists Easton-area high school students with college applications. And last summer, she conducted research with the Office of Sustainability and LaFarm on food insecurity in Easton as a Sustainability Fellow, helping distribute food to local families in need.

"I came to America with the mindset that only people in Liberia need my help," Dargbeh says. "But I realized no matter where you are, there's always some way you can make a difference."

Dargbeh plans to delve into women's, gender, and sexuality studies to learn how she can advocate for the rights of not only women, but also members of the LGBTQIA+ community, who continue to face persecution in countries like Liberia.

"The most important thing I learned at Lafayette is to be my authentic self," Dargbeh says. "You can be and do anything here. Whatever drives you, follow it." ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM ATKINSON

THE **BICENTENNIAL** OF LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

The College will soon be celebrating 200 years, and we invite you to be part of the exciting plans to commemorate this historic anniversary. Special programs and activities will be taking place through fall 2026, beginning with an array of campus events **Sept. 26-28, 2025**.

See the plans today, and learn about the new announcements as they emerge, at lafayette.edu/bicentennial.



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