

BLUFFTON

A magazine for Bluffton University alumni and friends | Fall 2022 | Vol. 19 No. 2



CONNECTIONS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



What a joy it is to be in the midst of a lovely fall semester and to see all signs of energetic student life returning to campus! This issue of the magazine is all about “connections.” We know so many special memories connect us to one another, and our shared Bluffton experiences across the generations remind us Bluffton University prepared all of us for life as well as vocation.

In May, we embarked upon the 2022 Bluffton Alumni and Friends Tour to Europe. Dr. Gerald Mast, professor of communication and director of church relations at Bluffton, was our leader and guide. As we followed the path of the Rhine through Zurich, Switzerland, and into Strasbourg, France, Dr. Mast shared the history of Anabaptist foundations and migrations. One of the highlights for me was a chance to visit the Cologne Cathedral. A few of us took the tram back to the medieval church that evening to hear Mendelssohn’s “Symphony #2.” Sitting in the pew, I closed my eyes in prayer and gratitude. I thought of the many times I had taught T.S. Eliot’s “Little Gidding” and the words:

You are not here to verify,
Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity
Or carry report. You are here to kneel
Where prayer has been valid. And prayer is more
Than an order of words, the conscious occupation
Of the praying mind, or the sound of the voice praying.

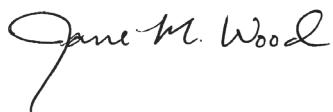
And, for me, in that space, music did indeed become prayer, and I thought of the hundreds of thousands of people praying in that space, across time, and that I became connected to both in a way that I could never have imagined. We are just starting to plan our next Alumni and Friends Tour for 2024 and would love to have you join us!

This fall we launched our Alumni Class Reunions at Homecoming, and we returned to our Alumni Awards and Athletics Hall of Fame awards as part of our weekend celebrations. It was exciting to celebrate the accomplishments of these alumni and inspiring to hear the ways these award winners carried a piece of Bluffton with them in their professional and personal lives.

I am pleased to report that our campus is vibrant and full this fall. While our incoming class was smaller (coming off three years of large classes) our total enrollment remains more than 700 students. The connections for our next generation of Bluffton alumni are flourishing.

The Knowlton Science Center construction continues, and completion is on target for fall 2023. On the academic side, we are enrolling for two new master’s programs: a master’s degree in social work (in collaboration with Goshen College) and a master’s degree in dietetics. Both programs are enrolling students for the fall of 2023. Faculty are excited for these historically strong undergraduate program areas to deliver new master’s degree programs.

Thank you, alumni and friends, for the many ways you support and stay connected to Bluffton University!



Jane M. Wood, Ph.D.
President



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Fall 2022 Vol. 19 No. 2

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BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY MISSION:

Bluffton University seeks to prepare students of all backgrounds for life as well as vocation, for responsible citizenship, for service to all peoples and ultimately for the purposes of God's universal kingdom.

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We welcome your comments!

Due to the national paper shortage the "Bluffton" magazine may look different for a while, but we are still excited to bring you good news from campus!

CONNECTIONS

- 4 Alumni and Friends – European Tour
- 8 125 Stories for 125 Years
- 10 Along the Riley
- 12 Homecoming and Alumni Weekend
- 14 Athletics Hall of Fame
- 16 Alumni Award Recipients
- 18 Alumnotes
- 22 Faculty 360: Dr. Melissa Friesen
- 23 New \$1.5 Million Endowed Chair



On the cover: Just like the connection between the figures in Paul Granlund's Constellation Earth, this issue of "Bluffton" magazine explores our shared connections as members of the Bluffton University community.

Photo by Alison King



Alumni and Friends - European Tour



View of Strasbourg from the top of the Cathedral

From May 12-23, 2022, a group of Bluffton University alumni and friends took part in a tour of the Rhine River with a focus on Mennonite migrations in Europe. Dr. Gerald Mast, professor of communication, served as the group leader.

The 18 participants visited the cities and rural communities where ancestors of Bluffton's founding faith community once lived. They reflected on the challenges associated with leaving home as well as the creativity unleashed by migration

experiences. Bluffton's Mennonite faith heritage has been profoundly shaped by the experiences of migration—of fleeing from one country to another in search of religious freedom and wellbeing. But the Mennonite churches and communities visited in Europe also showcased the legacy left by those who stayed—who found ways to maintain Anabaptist convictions even as they remained deeply committed to a specific place and to neighbors who may not have shared their beliefs. This recent journey was a reminder of the many different choices of faith and life made throughout the centuries by ancestors whose story may become our own—as we choose to continue it with our own creativity and courage, in response to the challenges of our time and place.





Memorial of Menno Simons

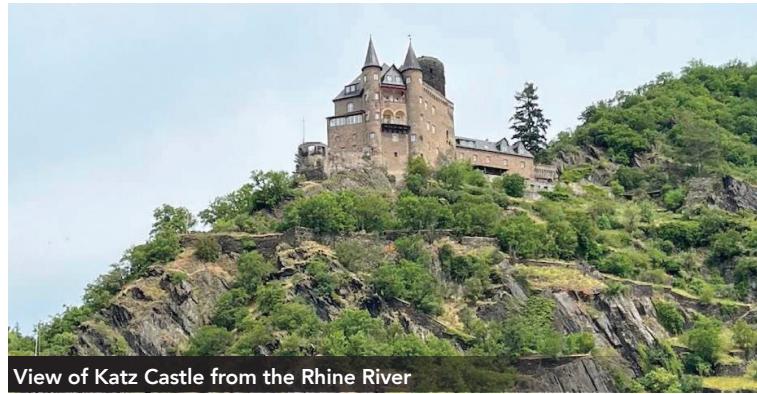
The last Bluffton class

As the youngest traveler on Bluffton's tour, Olivia Tennefoss '21, a student support assistant at Delaware Technical Community College, described the experience as her "last Bluffton class" with her advisor, Dr. Gerald Mast.

From Zollikon, where new converts formed the first Anabaptist congregation, to Witmarsum, the birthplace of Menno Simons, Tennefoss, along with her fellow travelers, experienced "essentially where our faith was born."

"This whole trip was a true explanation of the people and places I grew up learning about as a Mennonite," said Tennefoss. "Seeing the mountains and the terrain our ancestors crossed helped me better understand the lengths people went to for their beliefs."

The experience was similar to trips the late Dr. Delbert Gratz, head librarian and professor of history, led from the 1970s through the 1990s. However, instead of specializing in the homesteads and genealogies of trip participants, Mast focused on a broader, historical picture of Mennonite migration as the group traced a piece of Bluffton's history together.



View of Katz Castle from the Rhine River



Limmat River in Zurich, Switzerland



Key Migration Dates

European Anabaptist and Mennonite Key Migration Dates

1526-1622	Swiss and South German Anabaptist migration to Moravia (Hutterites)
1534-35	North German and Dutch Anabaptist migration to Münster
1535-1700	Moravian and Dutch Anabaptists to West Prussia (Mennonites)
1621-22	Moravian Hutterites to Hungary and Transylvania
1648-1750	Swiss Bernese migration to Alsace and Palatinate in Germany (Amish)
1683-1705	North German Mennonites to Germantown, Pennsylvania
1700-1800	Alsatian Amish migration to Hesse, Wittgenstein and Waldeck
1707-56	Swiss German Amish and Mennonites to Eastern Pennsylvania
1710-25	Bernese Anabaptists to Jura
1740-85	Jura Anabaptists to Alsace
1767-70	Hutterites in Transylvania to Russian Ukraine
1783-85	Mennonites in Palatinate and Alsace to Galicia
1784-1830	Swiss and Dutch-Prussian Mennonites to Volhynia
1787-1866	West Prussian Mennonites to Russian Ukraine
1800-50	Mennonites in Palatinate to Württemburg, Franconia and Bavaria
1817-80	Swiss German Amish to Ohio, Ontario, Indiana, Illinois
1830-60	Swiss Mennonites to Ohio and Indiana
1861-65	German Mennonites to Ohio, Indiana and Illinois
1874-79	Hutterites and Swiss Volhynians to Dakota territory
1874-80	Russian Mennonites to Kansas and Manitoba
1880-82	Russian Mennonites to Central Asia
1922-27	Russian Mennonites to Western Canada
1941-48	Russian Mennonites to Paraguay and Western Canada
1970-80	Russian Mennonites to West Germany
1991-present	Russian Mennonites to Germany and Canada (Aussiedler)

List created by Dr. Gerald Mast



Anabaptist Cave

Should we stay or should we go?

During the experience, participants walked up steep, uneven paths to sing together in Anabaptist Cave, where Swiss Anabaptists worshipped in secret, and traveled by boat down portions of the Rhine River, passing the same ancient castles Anabaptist migrants passed on their way north to more tolerant communities.

“We followed the path that a lot of Anabaptist migrants took,” said Mast. “The question was, ‘do I stay in my community and try to work out a compromise or hide my practices so I don’t get into trouble, or do I leave and find a place with more tolerance?’”

In many cases, explained Mast, the migrants had little choice. Special police forces were formed to specifically hunt down and imprison Anabaptists. Further illustrating this point, the group toured the house of Hans Haslibacher, the last Anabaptist martyr in Bern, and Trachsewald Castle, where Anabaptists were regularly imprisoned.

During the Reformation, European communities largely remained Catholic or became Protestant and, today, many of those same communities are still closely tied to the church at the center of their town.

“The tallest point in town is the church spire. It’s on the only church in town, and it’s the only religion of the town,” explained Mast, who contrasted the scene to the Village of Bluffton’s many congregations and church steeples. “The church is the unifying point of the town, so for Anabaptists to have another congregation on the side that meets in a house or a barn is a challenge to the community.”





An academic seminar in a field...

At Trachsewald Castle, Tennefoss found her mother's maiden name on a map outlining the locations of suspected Anabaptists. The map is part of an exhibit called "Paths to Freedom" which was developed by the Swiss Mennonite Conference.

Tennefoss' grandfather grew up in Switzerland, and eventually immigrated to the United States because of compulsory military service.

"His story was like a more contemporary version of the story we were learning about. He too left this beautiful place for his beliefs," she explained.

Other experiences included worshiping in Langnau, Switzerland, with the oldest continuously existing Mennonite church; touring the medieval town of Riquewihr; and visiting the Unterlinden Museum in Colmar, France, and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, to name a few.

"It was like holding an academic seminar in a field, or a cathedral or a museum," said Mast. "We shared research and notes. Some of our participants had been on the previous tours with Delbert Gratz, and I learned as much from the people on the tour as the information I provided. It was great."

Prayer of Travelers

from Swiss Anabaptist Prayer Book:
"Die Ernsthaft Christenpflicht"

Merciful, faithful God, we thank you for graciously protecting us and for granting so much goodness for our bodies and souls. Lead and direct us on this journey through the protection of your angels, that we may be safe from robbery and murder, from disease and misfortune, and from conflict and accident. Provide us with food and clothing. Lead us on the right paths upon which we are to walk. Give your blessing to our travel plans, so that everything may turn out to your honor and for the common good, along with our well-being. Keep and protect our families and grant that we may see one another again in health and with joy. To you, O God, we commend our going out and our coming in, from now to eternity, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Map of The Rhine Path from Switzerland to Rotterdam



Map by Kerry Jean Handel, used by permission of Mennonite Life, Lancaster, Pa.



Alumni and Friends Tour 2024

Ireland and Scotland

The next Alumni and Friends Tour destination is Ireland and Scotland. Planning is in its early stages. If you are interested in receiving information when available, please email Julia Szabo, senior development officer, at szaboj@bluffton.edu

Stay tuned for updates in the Alumni enewsletter and other publications!



125 STORIES for 125 YEARS

To celebrate Bluffton's 125th anniversary in 2024, the university is producing an enduring collection of oral histories and interview transcriptions. The audio collection and subsequent book will explore Bluffton's history through the experiences of its alumni, current students, faculty, staff, living presidents, trustees and community partners.

The oral histories will serve as a sequel or addendum of sorts to Bluffton's official history "Dancing with the Kobzar" by Dr. Perry Bush which was published in 2000. "Dancing with the Kobzar" covers everything from the events leading up to the founding of the college to its centennial year. Kobzar and other histories focus on the administrative story or larger movements on campus.

In contrast, the 125th anniversary project examines global, national and local events on a personal level, and explores how the personal experiences of the Bluffton campus community affected the personal and vocational choices alumni and friends made throughout their lives. One hundred twenty-five interviews are being conducted in celebration of Bluffton University's 125th anniversary.



George Rable '72, a history graduate, decided to share his Bluffton story because it was where he found his calling and met his wife.

"I always say 1968 was the most important year of my life," said Rable.

Ruth Naylor '70, an English major, looked back on the good fortune of earning a Bluffton degree.

"It had seemed to be completely out of my family's financial means," explained Naylor. "But God and the college staff paved the way."

And Michelle (Lehman '75) Snyder, who grew up in Las Vegas before coming to Bluffton, hoped to inspire future generations of Bluffton students with diverse upbringings and backgrounds.

"Going from the desert to Bluffton was a real change. There were no mountains, but there was green everywhere you looked, and it rained for the first 24 hours I was on campus," shared Snyder. "It was a big culture shock, but I still felt comfortable."

These are just a few of the stories relayed to Samantha Shrider, a 2012 history graduate, during oral history interviews she conducted over the past year. Shrider, advancement associate for grants and alumni/donor relations at Bluffton, is heading up the project, which is funded by a Council of Independent Colleges NetVUE grant.

In the field of history, Shrider explained, oral history projects are debated because they rely on memory and memory is not always accurate. However, she believes the individual story of each member of the campus community is what truly makes Bluffton a special place.

"It's important to collect oral histories, to collect memories," said Shrider. "It's the closest we'll ever get to time travel. To hear somebody talk about Bluffton in the 1970s or 1980s or whenever gives us a perspective that, when all combined, builds Bluffton's larger historical picture."

So far, she's interviewed alumni from as far back as 1951 to current students. She starts each interview with the same series of questions, but participants can truly make the experience their own. Many of the same themes come up: the direct impact of professors and experiential learning opportunities such as Howard Raid and the Bluffton Slaw Cutter Company, pranks students pulled on each other and overcoming the odds through athletic competition.

"The fun thing I've noticed is over time college students really haven't changed. Students in the 70s were excited about or complaining about many of the same things as our current students," said Shrider. "It's fascinating."

The book will be available in 2024; however, audio recordings of many interviews can be found at www.bluffton.edu/memory.

Share your Bluffton story! Contact Samantha Shrider to schedule an interview at shriders@bluffton.edu or 419-358-3362.



ALONG THE RILEY



Opening Convocation

Bluffton University welcomed its 123rd class of students as official members of the campus community during Opening Convocation on Aug. 30, 2022. A Bluffton tradition, Convocation signifies the formal beginning of the academic year.

2006 Bluffton graduate and board of trustee member Bethny Ricks provided the address "Mirror, Mirror."

A corporate executive for 18 years, Ricks led multiple billion-dollar business transformations and received numerous awards and recognitions such as "Savoy" magazine listing her as one of "America's Most Influential African American Women in the United States."

Now a speaker, author and leadership expert, she shared the other side of her biography with seven lessons "forged out of my tears" because the best learning comes out of failure. Lessons included "self-doubt is kryptonite," "hard and uncomfortable are two different things" and "God is not idle in your story."

ICAA award

The Bluffton University President's Ambassadors Program has been recognized with a 2022 Independent College Advancement Associates (ICAA) Program of Excellence Award.

The President's Ambassadors program is currently comprised of 28 Bluffton sophomores, juniors and seniors who represent a variety of majors and campus involvement.



The ICAA Program of Excellence Award recognizes successful programs that "enhance the work of advancement and/or the university as a whole... The goal for this award is to celebrate people or teams that have developed innovative programs, tools and systems and additionally, to help recognize best practices in the field of advancement."

The President's Ambassador Program is an extension of the university marketing office and ambassadors assist in recruiting prospective students, welcoming guests to campus, and engaging with alumni and donors.



State of the University

Dr. Jane Wood presented the annual State of the University Forum titled "Authentically Calling In: Seeking Truth with the Ear of the Heart," on Tuesday, Sept. 6.

During the presentation, President Wood discussed ways students, faculty and staff can focus on truth by inviting or "calling in" one another for authentic conversations in the pursuit of "responsible citizenship" and "service to all peoples" as outlined in Bluffton's mission.

She primarily focused on the question: what does it mean to be educated?

"Technology has changed the ways in which we talk to each other or don't talk to each other," said President Wood. "But calling in is what we need in this digital age. Calling all of us in to dialogue, to discussion, to problem solve, to figure out things together. Where better to do that my friends than on a campus community devoted to that very practice?"



Day of Service

As part of Bluffton University's Welcome Weekend activities, student-athletes participated in an Athletics Day of Service on Sunday, Aug. 28.

Approximately 440 student-athletes from every team on campus took part. Service opportunities included preparing the Nature Preserve ahead of Bluffton hosting the HCAC championship cross country meet, mulching flowerbeds at Maple Crest and Mennonite Memorial Home, picking up trash along the three overpasses in town, and storing furniture and equipment at Bluffton Community Pool.

New this year, the event is part of Bluffton's Virtue-Drive Athletics programming.

Additional service experiences will take place throughout the academic year such as adopt-a-family during the holiday season and High-Five Fridays at Bluffton Village Schools. The goal is for Athletics Day of Service to become an annual event.



U.S. News rankings

Bluffton University has once again been named to the top tier of Midwest Regional Colleges in the "U.S. News & World Report" rankings.

The 2023 edition of the magazine's "Best Colleges" guidebook ranks Bluffton 36 among 76 comparable institutions in 12 Midwest states. Now listed in the "U.S. News" rankings for 25 consecutive years, Bluffton has consistently ranked in the top tier of Midwest colleges.

Bluffton was also recognized in two additional areas ranking 18th in Best Value Schools for Midwest Regional Colleges and 10th for Top Performers for Social Mobility in Midwest Regional Colleges.

"Bluffton University continues to be recognized by 'Best Colleges' as a top tier school," said Robin Bowlus, vice president for advancement and enrollment management. "It is wonderful to have Bluffton recognized for its impact on social mobility and graduating students who are prepared for life and vocation. Bluffton alumni are leaders at home, at work and in their communities."



Hair studio

The Cuts at Bluffton, a new campus hair salon/barbershop for all hair types at Bluffton University is now open. Located in the Multicultural Student Development Center adjacent to Hirschy Annex, Bluffton students make appointments during the week for hair services which are provided from noon to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Services are provided by barbers and stylists from FreshNFaded in



First practice

The men's soccer team was the first team to practice under the lights at Salzman Stadium on Aug. 9. The next morning, they boarded a plane for Spain. The team trained in Valencia, toured Bernabéu and Mestalla stadiums and competed at Levante Unión Deportiva.

Lima, Ohio. They include cuts, shampooing, line ups, color, conditioning treatments, two-strand twists and re twists, braids and more.

An effort of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee at Bluffton University, The Cuts at Bluffton was made possible by a generous gift from the racial justice ministry at First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio.

"We are really excited to be offering this service right on campus. We talk a lot about having a sense of belonging at Bluffton. This new venture allows students to get the hairstyle they want within an easy walking distance," said Tyson Goings, director of diversity, equity and inclusion. "Students can present themselves in a manner they are comfortable with and maybe not have to wait until Christmas break to return home or to trust someone who isn't licensed to do their hair."

Stadium lights

Salzman Stadium was filled for Bluffton University's first football game under the newly installed stadium lights for the Beavers'



Sept. 17 home opener against Adrian College. A dedication ceremony with donors Randy and Debbie Gade took place during half-time of the event. Randy Gade is a 1973 Bluffton alumnus who competed in Bluffton athletics. The southern Florida couple is retired after selling their successful company, Accutech Instrumentation, Inc.

With the addition of stadium lights, Bluffton looks forward to many new student engagement opportunities on campus as well as serving as the competitive turf field for Bluffton men's and women's soccer and as the practice space for several other teams. The campus community also looks forward to Alumni Field possibly hosting area high school playoff games.







GO BEAVERS!

Class reunions and more were celebrated during Homecoming and Alumni Weekend, Oct. 14-16.

A few highlights:

- Beaver Tail-Gating, campus tours, food trucks, inflatables and more before and during the football game at Salzman Stadium
- Home games for football, men's and women's soccer, and men's and women's golf, Oct. 15 or 16
- Closing reception for "Polishing the Mirror" featuring faculty-artists Andreas Baumgartner '08, Jim Fultz, T.R. Steiner and Philip Sugden



BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Induction Ceremony, Oct. 15, 2022

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Ed Smoker '63



ED SMOKER was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame in 2022 for his achievements in football. Smoker was named All Conference for two years as a defensive back and standout tackler who repeatedly helped shut out opposing teams during the Coach Ken Mast era.

Described by Mast as "the best defensive back I ever coached," Smoker played alongside fellow inductees Willis (Willie) Taylor '58 and Elbert Dubenion '59. He holds the record for most single-season interceptions in Bluffton history with nine.

Smoker graduated from Bluffton in 1963 with a business administration degree. He served as the purchasing manager of R.E. Jackson Company for 24 years and was the owner/operator of the Elkhart River Queen, which operates tours on the St. Joseph River in Elkhart, Ind. Currently, Smoker owns several properties in Elkhart, Ind. He is also active as a founding member of the Viking Ski Club of South Bend-Elkhart.

A resident of Elkhart, Ind., Smoker has four children: Jeff Smoker, Robb Smoker, Kimberly Cummings and Elizabeth Bevis.



HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Denny Phillips '79



DENNY PHILLIPS was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame in 2022 for his achievements in coaching. Joining head football coach Carlin Carpenter's staff as a strength and conditioning coach in 1988 in a voluntary capacity, Phillips was promoted to assistant coach the

following year. He dedicated 25 years to Beavers football and completed his final season in 2013 as the defensive backs coach. He also served as the special teams coordinator. Phillips was the defensive backs and strength and conditioning coach when the team shared the HCAC championship in 2000, the only time Beavers football accomplished this in school

history. He was previously inducted into the Hall of Fame with the 2000 team.

In 1992, Phillips began coaching Bluffton's track and field team and served as head coach through the 1998 season. He led the Beavers to three AMC championships in his first four years as coach.

A 1979 Bluffton graduate with a major in health, physical education and recreation, Phillips was a four-year member of Bluffton's men's basketball team and served as co-captain in 1979. During his Bluffton coaching tenure, he was also a full-time teacher at Leipsic and Bluffton Elementary schools. He also coached football and track at the high school level. A resident of the Village of Bluffton, he coached many youth teams as well and is married to Kaye (Closson '80) Phillips. They are parents to Adam (Sarah Hounshell '12) Phillips '10 and Justin Phillips and have a grandson.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Allison (Lange '05) Bentley



One of the best hitters in Bluffton softball history, Allison (Lange '05) Bentley was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame in 2022 for her individual achievements as a four-year member of Bluffton's softball team.

Bentley was named to the National Fastpitch

Coaches Association/Louisville Slugger All-American (2nd team) and NFCA/Louisville Slugger All-American All-Region (1st Team) during the 2004 season when the team was ranked in the top 10 nationally in NCAA DIII for much of the year. She was also a two-time All-Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference 1st Team selection.

In 2004, she was nationally ranked 5th in slugging percentage, 6th in batting average and 18th in doubles. Bentley's name is all over Bluffton softball's records book including career records of 2nd with 39 doubles and 7th with a .355 batting average and single-season records such as 1st for both a .522 batting average and .600 on-base percentage. At one point, her name was listed 30 times in Bluffton's record books. She was awarded The Kathryn E. Little Award in 2005 as Bluffton's Outstanding Senior Female Athlete.

Bentley graduated in 2005 with a middle childhood education major and is currently a math/STEM/technology teacher at Archbold Middle School. She has coached a variety of high school, junior high and youth teams. A resident of Archbold, Ohio, she is married to Andrew Bentley '05 and they have three children, Anderson, Adelle, and Archer. Bentley was previously inducted with the 2004 softball team.



Kathy (Gaines) Carr

Retired educator and administrator, Fort Wayne Community Schools

Major: Elementary education



Following her path

Over the course of her 40-plus-year career in education, Kathy (Gaines '78) Carr estimates she touched the lives of roughly 6,000 children. However, the recipient of Bluffton's Lifetime Service Award explains her dedication to the students, teachers and the larger community of Fort Wayne, Ind., as simply "my path to follow."

Carr followed a path inspired by her mother who was also a teacher. Growing up, it was a given that Carr would attend college to become a special education teacher. She never researched any other career.

"It was always in my heart that that was what I wanted to do," said Carr. "I never really wanted to do anything else."

Guided by Ruth Anne (Steiner) Sprunger, her mom's best friend and 1951 Bluffton alumna, it was also a given that Carr would attend Bluffton.

"I didn't know much about Bluffton, and I was not Mennonite," explained Carr, "but it was a small school that wasn't very far from home and that was appealing to me."

She later earned master's degrees in elementary education and elementary school administration from Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. However, Carr began her career as a special education teacher.

Pushing her 'tentacles' further

Eventually, she pursued administrative roles and served as a resource teacher, dean of students, principal and manager of human resources. Carr retired from Fort Wayne Community Schools in 2019 after five years as director of human resources but served as the interim director of exceptional learners at South Bend Community Schools for a year and a half, ending in April 2022.

"By being an administrator, you could touch every student in the building. You had contact with every teacher, every staff person. I wasn't limited to the walls of my classroom per se," explained Carr. "The tentacles went a little further, and, hopefully, the input and impact I had on people reached a little further, as well."

Making a difference

During her career, Carr was active on many boards and service organizations ranging from the Indiana Black Expo to the National Education Association to the board of directors for the Fort Wayne Rescue Mission.

"My mom was always very involved in the community as I was growing up. I think I tried to emulate her life," said Carr. "I focused on organizations that had something to do with education or children or served the wellbeing of others."

Carr's two daughters now carry on the family legacy by working in Indiana schools, and she continues to get recognized by former students. The encounters confirm that she made a difference in people's lives.

"But I know, bigger than that, there are the people who touched my life," Carr said. "Forty-two years working in the same district really framed me into the person I am."



2022 ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENT
OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI

Brandon Freytag

Founder and chief of creative monetization, Loaded
Major: Business administration

CLASS OF
2008

Passion equals success

There's a simple reason Outstanding Young Alumni award recipient Brandon Freytag '08 is successful in his career. The founder and chief of creative monetization at Loaded, a gaming management and advisory firm, found his passion early in life.

"What I do doesn't feel like a job," said Freytag. "I realize I'm privileged and proud to be in a job where I love every single minute of it."

Freytag founded Loaded in 2016. The Santa Monica-based company has more than 50 employees who work across the country, and the team exclusively manages over 30 content creators. They are big names in the gaming community including Shroud, Courage, Summit1G, Tarik, QuarterJade and Lirik to name a few. However, the business works with hundreds of additional gamers and provides strategy in the gaming space for major brands such as Adidas, Gillette and Frito Lay.

Strategic growth

To keep up with massive growth in the industry, Loaded recently raised \$20 million to develop new ventures. For Freytag, focusing on sustainable growth has always been key.

"I was very strategic with the executive team we built and how the business was built to ensure it was always profitable," Freytag explained. "In the gaming space, unfortunately a lot of stuff isn't profitable."

Today, Freytag maintains a position on Loaded's executive team but has stepped aside from the CEO role. Instead, he focuses on his favorite part of the business – platform and content deals and started with famous gamer Ninja's (Tyler Blevins) multi-million dollar move in 2019 from Twitch to Microsoft's former platform Mixer.

"My whole emphasis is thinking outside the box," said Freytag. "The streaming platforms and sometimes third parties were making a lot of money off these creators, and I didn't think that was fair. I realized there's a ton more value to their content and if you move the content somewhere else there's also value in that."

Freytag has been behind more than 60 of these deals, and it remains the biggest part of Loaded's business.



Establishing his values

Freytag began his career in high school by cold calling companies to gain sponsorship deals for his buddy's esports team. His first big deal was for five gaming mice from Razer, and he cultivated relationships that last to this day. Freytag refined his skills at Bluffton with the help of former professors Pete Suter and Bill Lyons in business and Darryl Moody in art.

And, he established his values as a member of the 2007 baseball team.

"That defined who I was and what I value and the realization of how it can all be taken away in an instant. At the time, President Harder, Coach Grandey and the entire faculty developed a support chain through that whole difficult process," said Freytag. "I try to do the same today. We treat our clients the way we would want to be treated."

ALUMNOTES

1950-59

Ishaq Al-Qutub '57, Dublin, Ohio, earned a master's degree from City College of New York and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University. He taught at universities in Jordan, Kuwait and Palestine for more than 30 years and served as a UNESCO consultant in Egypt. Al-Qutub founded Arab Student Aid International with his brothers and is celebrating its 46th anniversary. Along with his wife, he has three children and eight grandchildren. His son, **Hussam**, is a 1993 Bluffton graduate.

1970-79

Ed '72 and Linda (Butler '70) Bratt, Leipsic, Ohio, celebrated their

50th wedding anniversary on June 17, 2022, at Findlay College First Church of God. In both 1972 and 2022 they had their reception in the church fellowship hall. Ed, an English education graduate, and Linda, a home economics graduate, have both retired from teaching. They have two children Melissa (Bratt '96) Meyer and Brian Bratt '98. They are teachers at Leipsic Local School and Van Buren Local School, respectively. They also have two grandchildren.

Carol Keeney '77, Edmonds, Wash., has been working in health care as a medical coder and auditor for the last 20-plus years. After 23 years in Indiana, she moved to the Seattle area to be near family. Retirement is still a few years away.

Scott Smith '78, Fairfield Glade, Tenn., is an associate professor and sport management program director at Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, Tenn. Smith recently received his Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) certification from the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association in Indianapolis.

1980-89

Terry '83 and Lauren (Mast '84) Hershey, Boise, Idaho, have lived in the state for the past 24 years. They have four adult children and two grandsons. Lauren works on the administrative side in the College of Arts and Sciences at Boise State University. Terry is an independent



OUR LEGACY

Bluffton alumni in the world

Megan Stauffer-Miller '99, art teacher at Groveport-Madison High School, and Ohio Arts Council embedded artist Juliellyn Byrne created a legacy installation called "The Hill We Climb." The sculpture is comprised of a handmade, tiled arch with a bench in front.

Inspired by the writing of Amanda Gorman, the art piece echoes the vision of the school: For all Cruisers to discover their unique purpose, achieve success in life and positively impact their communities.

Megan is on the right.



financial consultant and estate planner. He also works with his son developing software.

1990-99

Victoria (Napier '94) Meadows, Huron, Ohio, was recently recognized for 25 years of service with the Huron City Schools as their elementary music teacher. She lives in Huron with her husband, Thomas, and their three children, the oldest of whom graduated high school in May.

Amy Lehman-Mikesell '96, MAEd '99, Bluffton, Ohio, is a teacher at Kenton City School and is the Lighthouse Team co-facilitator for Kenton's Leader in Me program. Last spring, Kenton Elementary School was awarded "Lighthouse Status," an international certification from FranklinCovey Education. Lehman-Mikesell helped lead a team of staff who enabled students to take ownership of their learning.

Bobbie (Coles '98) Hepler, Ephrata, Pa., married her childhood sweetheart, Shawn, on July 28, 2021. They live in Ephrata with their three children.

2000-09

Sara (Ramsey '03) Endicott, Mansfield, Ohio, is the director of rehabilitation in a skilled nursing rehab facility in Mansfield.

Brianne Kramer, MAEd '09, published the text "Children and Trauma: Critical Perspectives for Meeting the Needs of Diverse Educational Communities" with co-editor Jennifer McKenzie with Myers Education Press in April 2022. Kramer earned her Ph.D. in social

foundations of education from University of Toledo in 2017. She is currently an assistant professor of social foundations of education at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah.

2010-19

Brent '10 and Christy (Rupp '10) Householder, Hailey, Idaho, moved to Idaho where Brent took a job as the senior director for finance and human resources at Mountain Humane. Christy is a certified veterinary technician for Sawtooth Animal Hospital in Bellevue.

Aaron '11 and Joni (Martin '11) Yost, Goshen, Ind., are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Maisie, born Aug. 8. Two-year-old Winnie is a proud big sister. Aaron works as a data services manager at AMBS, and Joni serves as an EL teacher at Waterford Elementary School.

Jonathan Cunningham '12, MBA '17, Findlay, Ohio, and Kari Cunningham welcomed their daughter, Charlotte, in March 2022.

Karla Funk '12, Salina, Kan., was awarded a grant from the American Orff-Schulwerk Association and a scholarship from the Kansas Association of American Educators to attend the Orff-Schulwerk teacher education course to complete Level 2 at Baker University in June 2022.

Shahad Aldoori '13, Lexington, Ky., got married on June 24, 2022, and moved to Lexington. She is the associate director of alumni and family engagement at Centre College in Danville, Ky.

IN MEMORY OF LAWRENCE TEMPLIN



Dr. Lawrence Templin, professor emeritus of English, died on July, 5, 2022, at his home in Bluffton. He was 100 years old.

Born on April 4, 1922, in East Weymouth, Mass., to Ralph and Lila Horton Templin, he spent most of his childhood in India where his parents were missionaries for the United Methodist Church.

Templin graduated from Bethel College in 1948 with a degree in social science. During World War II he was a conscientious objector.

Prior to his academic career, Templin lived with family at Glen Homestead in Yellow Springs, an experiment in sustainable community living on land owned by Antioch College. He worked as a printer for Antioch Bookplate Company for eight years.

Templin earned his doctorate in English at Indiana University and became a George Eliot scholar. At the age of 42, he started a new career as a college professor.

Dr. Templin taught at Bluffton from 1961-88, retiring in 1984 but continuing to teach one course per semester for several years.

He also served as chair of the English department for many years and was the author of "Adagio," a volume of poems self-published in 2021. Although he taught many different branches of literature during his tenure at Bluffton, former students particularly remember his Enchantment of India course.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Orletta, who worked in Musselman Library throughout the 1970s and 1980s and died in 2015. He is survived by three children: **Sara (Baldemar '69) Velasquez '71**, **John Templin '75**, and **Mary (Douglas Swiatecki) Templin '81**; four grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Stay connected! Visit www.bluffton.edu/update to stay in touch!

IN MEMORY OF R. ARDEN SLOTTER



Dr. R. Arden Slotter, professor emeritus of chemistry, died on July, 5, 2022, at the age of 90.

A 1954 Bluffton College graduate, Slotter returned to campus after earning a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Michigan. He taught in the science department for six years before moving with his family to Turkey where he taught at Robert College for seven years.

In 1971, the family returned to the United States for a one-year interim position at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pa. After, they moved to Evanston, Ill., where Slotter continued in academia at Northwestern University for 14 years.

The Slotters returned to Bluffton in 1986 where he served as dean for three years and professor of chemistry for 11 years. Arden and his wife Joan (Gratz) retired to Denver in 1999.

In retirement, Arden and Joan continued their travels with extensive trips in the United States and abroad. Slotter enjoyed playing the trombone, singing, dancing and writing. He was also active in gun violence prevention programs.

Survivors include his wife of nearly 68 years and their three children, Susan Slotter of Santa Fe, N.M., Sharon (Slotter) Gordon of Loveland, Colo. and Steven (Ann Rosewall) Slotter of Castle Pines, Colo., as well as two sisters, a brother, twin grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

He was born to John Franklin and Elsie (Clymer) Slotter in Souderton, Pa.

Adam '13 and Jessica (Deeter '13)

Litwiller, Minier, Ill., welcomed their third child, Minna Mae Litwiller, on April 16.

Jesse '13 and Katie (Steenrod '14)

Maust, Goshen, Ind., welcomed their daughter, Lydia, in 2021 and moved to Goshen. Jesse is working for Everence, and Katie is teaching at Middlebury Community Schools.

Nick '17 and Natasha (Yoder '17)

Jones, Glenford, Ohio, married on July 1, 2022, in Coshocton, Ohio.

Brianna (Keith '18) Ferris

Bluffton, Ohio, and her husband moved back to Bluffton where she started with Bluffton University as the transfer counselor and admissions special projects manager.

2020-22

Von Thomas '20, Dayton, Ohio, has been the running backs

coach/offensive quality coach at Wilmington College since Dec. 2020.

Ky Gurley '22, Lima, Ohio, is continuing her education at Grand Canyon University to earn a Master of Science in Sociology with an emphasis in education. Her goal is to become a college professor.

Austin Hernandez '22, Marion, Ohio, enjoyed his time at Bluffton and wouldn't trade it for the world. His advice to cross and track athletes: stick with it no matter how hard it gets and keep up the good work.

Taylor Shimp '22, St. Marys, Ohio, is taking a gap year before attending Otterbein University to obtain her Master of Science in Athletic Training starting in May 2023.

IN MEMORIAM

Rachel (Criblez '41) Crow, Findlay, Ohio, passed away on July 12, 2022, at the age of 103.

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ALUMNOTES

New career?

Promotion?

Birth? Marriage?

Retirement? For all exciting announcements, we want to hear it! An Alumnote in the "Bluffton" magazine is the most popular way to share your news. Make all updates at www.bluffton.edu/update



Mary (Gallagher '50) Bauman, Berne, Ind., passed away on Aug. 5, 2022, at the age of 92.

Sara (Huser '51) Amstutz, Lima, Ohio, passed away on July 27, 2022, at the age of 92.

Betty (Thompson x51) Boorse, Quakertown, Pa., passed away on July 1, 2022, at the age of 92.

Aldine (Zimmerman '51) Combs, Bloomington, Ill., passed away on July 20, at the age of 94.

Onnolee (McClintock '51) Kantner, Canal Winchester, Ohio, passed away on June 21, 2022, at the age of 95.

June (Gerber x57) Bixler, Ann Arbor, Mich., passed away on Aug. 18, 2022, at the age of 88.

Ronald Bowers '58, Delphos, Ohio, passed away on Aug. 8, 2022, at the age of 85.

Robert Pickens '59, Brookville, Ohio, passed away on July 15, 2022, at the age of 85.

Jeannette (Sprunger '63) Bechtel, Goshen, Ind., passed away on May 17, 2022, at the age of 82.

Robert Kaple '65, Ottoville, Ohio, passed away on Aug. 17, 2022, at the age of 82.

Philip Krouskop '65, Lima, Ohio, passed away on Sept. 3, 2022, at the age of 79.

Rodney Richards '65, Findlay, Ohio, passed away on Aug. 28, 2022, at the age of 78.

Ruth (Fissel '67) Koenig, Danville, Ill., passed away Sept. 9, 2022, at the age of 95.

Sharon (Clements '70) Nolin-Taylor, Pioneer, Ohio, passed away on June 11, 2022, at the age of 74.

Melva (Stuber x75) McMillen, Shreve, Ohio, passed away on Aug. 17, 2022, at the age of 69.

Charles Welch x75, Crestline, Ohio, passed away on Aug. 27, 2022, at the age of 70.

Patricia Emert '81, Sidney, Ohio, passed away on May 18, 2022, at the age of 63.

Julie (Tracy '91) Butterfield, Harrod, Ohio, passed away on July 29, 2022, at the age of 53.

Leroy Moore III '97, Ottawa, Ohio, passed away on July 17, 2022, at the age of 46.

Brian Hitchcock '99, Van Wert, Ohio, passed away on July 30, 2022 at the age of 45.

Heather Oatman '07, Columbus Grove, Ohio, passed away on July 27, 2022, at the age of 50.

Heather Sieker '10, Wauseon, Ohio, passed away Sept. 3, 2021, at the age of 49.

Faculty

Sally Reeder, Lima, Ohio, passed away on April 7, 2022, at the age of 90.

NEW MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Bluffton University will offer a Master of Social Work (MSW) graduate degree with a mental health specialization starting in the 2023-24 academic year. The program will be conducted in partnership with Goshen College.

With an emphasis on spiritual and religious integration, the program will prepare social work professionals to positively connect with and assist clients of diverse backgrounds.

"The need for mental health providers with MSW degrees is immense," said Dr. Jeanette Harder, MSW program director. "This highly interactive program will prepare students for careers as knowledgeable, skilled and compassionate social workers."

Students will gain advanced clinical skills and complete their master's degree in as few as 12 months if they hold a Bachelor of Social Work degree from an accredited college. Students with a bachelor's degree in a field



other than social work can also earn their MSW at Bluffton with additional coursework.

The program is designed to train students in the nine core competencies as outlined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Coursework will prepare students to sit for licensure in any state. Applications open in January for a fall 2023 start.

To learn more, visit: www.bluffton.edu/msw

FACULTY 360

Dr. Melissa Friesen

What is your process in choosing a theatre production for Bluffton?

Oh, my...it's a difficult process for me. I envy directors who have mental lists of the productions they'd like to do. I gather ideas whenever I can, then spend time primarily in the summers reading scripts. I'm looking for plays that are accessible yet achievably challenging for our student actors, designers and crew. I want plays that are stimulating emotionally, visually and intellectually. I love plays with vivid language and at least a bit of humor. Will I look forward to spending lots of time in this imagined world? Do I think our production team and audiences will, too? Will the cast and set fit physically on the Ramseyer Auditorium stage? Am I programming enough variety from year to year? Then either a printing deadline arrives or the semester begins, and I have to make a choice!

What memorable moment in your life shaped who you are today?

I was blessed to have frequent opportunities to learn leadership and communication skills growing up, which continue to serve me well today. Whether performing in a violin or piano recital, or serving as a worship leader or scripture reader in church as a teenager, or being encouraged by my parents and teachers to take those AP classes and audition for that play, I had the chance to stretch myself and learn through doing. I love that Bluffton University's general education curriculum encourages students to prototype their interests by trying out quick, low-stakes experiences to discover what gives them energy and inspires their curiosity. Having those kinds of opportunities helped me make meaningful life choices.

What new interest(s) are you pursuing?

Cooking—well, baby steps in that direction. During the pandemic shutdown I tried out a meal kit service which delivers all the ingredients and easy-to-follow recipes right to my door each week. Cooking is much more manageable and enjoyable when I don't have to shop or think about ingredients, and the meals are pleasantly healthy and delicious. During the May 2022 cross-cultural experience in Washington, D.C., I got to share meal preparation responsibilities with my student housemates! A valuable learning experience for all.

Dr. Melissa Friesen is the Mary Nord and Joseph Ignat endowed chair in theatre.



New \$1.5 Million Endowed Chair

Your continued support as alumni and donors allows Bluffton University students to flourish in many ways. In the last five years, we have added athletic teams, additional student life programming, made our physical campus spaces more vibrant, and created new academic curriculum for our students to explore. Those investments make a big difference in the student living and learning experience.

This issue of the magazine has highlighted the many ways in which we build connections with others similar to and different from ourselves. In addition to our interpersonal connections, we encourage our students to develop a relationship with the outside world, and what better place to do that than on our very own 160-acre Nature Preserve.

I am pleased that last month President Wood announced the establishment of the M'Della Moon Endowed Chair in Botany and Environmental Science thanks to generous funding from anonymous donors. The \$1.5 million dollar gift will fund a faculty chair who will divide their time equally between managing the Bluffton University Nature Preserve and teaching university classes.

The endowment is named after M'Della Moon, a long-time member of Bluffton's science faculty from 1921-61. Moon also served as head of the department of biological science and was a former dean of students at the college and served on the administration and curriculum committees. She attended Central Mennonite College, Bluffton's predecessor and graduated in 1914. In a citation honoring retiring faculty, Moon was commended for having an influence on campus far beyond her classroom activities.



This gift will allow faculty to better utilize the Nature Preserve as a learning laboratory, increase efforts in sustainability and native plant restoration, and enhance learning in the natural sciences across the academic community, student groups and community volunteers.

The endowment will provide annual salary and benefits for the holder of the chair as well as funding for professional development, scholarly research and the development of teaching and learning resources through a five-year appointment, which may be extended.

I am also excited to discover what opportunities Bluffton University has to impact the local community through educational programming, as well as support faculty in developing new "green" majors to attract the next generation of Bluffton students. In my position, I can see what prospective students are interested in studying, and now more than ever, high school students are interested in exploring the natural sciences. This gift will truly impact current and future students, alumni and our surrounding community.

Enclosed in this issue is a giving envelope, and I invite you to consider making a year-end contribution before Dec. 31 to help us continue to expand the learning opportunities of our students and work to welcome and graduate the next cohort of Bluffton alumni next fall.

Robin Bowlus

Robin Bowlus, MBA '17
Vice president of advancement
and enrollment management



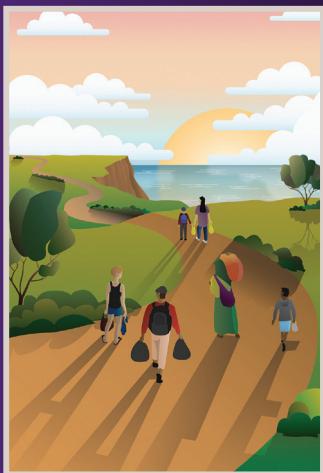


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Exhibit includes
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the new hymnal
"Voices Together"



Save the date!
"Voices Together" art exhibit
at Bluffton University
Jan. 11 – Feb. 19, 2023

