

BLUFFTON

A magazine for Bluffton University alumni and friends | Fall 2023 | Vol. 20 No. 2



**STRENGTHENING
THE REGION AND
THE WORLD**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The fall of 2023 is one of great accomplishment! The opening of the Knowlton Science Center brought a sense of renewed energy for our science faculty and all students who have a vibrant new home for their science classes. The building was dedicated during Homecoming weekend, and it was very special to see many donors, alumni and friends mingling in the facility that they made possible through their generous financial support.

This fall, we also welcomed Jacob Buchanan as the M'Della Moon Chair in Botany and Environmental Science. Professor Buchanan splits his time between teaching and managing the Bluffton University Nature Preserve. Since starting in July, he has made significant impact to align his teaching and student learning by moving many of his outdoor labs to the nature preserve and drafting a survey of the species in the nature preserve. In addition, a grant-funded project is underway to remove invasive species and return the preserve to a more natural habitat. Most recently, we have received a gift of native seeds!

In this issue of "Bluffton," you will enjoy the sights of Homecoming Weekend, including the President's Banquet where donors were recognized for their lifetime giving achievements. Bluffton also honored alumni with the Professional Achievement Award and Award of Merit and inducted two alumni into the Athletics Hall of Fame.

Our first-year students returned from the third Great Adventure. This donor-funded experience remains mission-critical as we live out our faith-based mission.

Undergraduate enrollment continues to be steady, and we saw some growth in the enrollment of Bluffton master's programs (business, education, social work, nutrition and dietetics). The landscape for Christian, private higher education, especially in the Midwest, continues to be challenging. But more than ever, Bluffton University is striving to accomplish more and grow through partnerships in the region and with the financial support of our alumni and friends.

Thank you for continuing to be ambassadors in your community for Bluffton University and for your ongoing support.

Blessings for the holiday season,

Jane M. Wood, Ph.D.
President

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Fall 2023 Vol. 20 No. 2

WRITER
Tricia Bell

DESIGNER
Alison King

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Burton Andrews '70
Tricia Bell
Darius Boeke '23
Claire Clay '18, MBA '20
Ed Cunicelli
Lisa Gallagher
Autumn Graves '21
Sydney Grisier '26
Paige Jansen
Alison King
Abby Martin '27
Jena O'Brien '19
Mandy (Benton '07) Osterfeld
Karley Ramirez '25
Beth (Weigandt '20) Turner
Angel Velasco Urbina '25
Olivia Zuercher

VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT
AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT
Robin Bowlus, MBA '17
bowlusr@bluffton.edu

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!

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On the cover: Anatomy and Physiology students, ranging from biology to exercise science majors, use the new Anamotage Table during a lab in the Knowlton Science Center. The 3D virtual dissection platform includes scans of five cadavers and is one of the new tools helping to prepare students in their fields of study.

Photo by Alison King



WELCOME TO THE AUSTIN E. KNOWLTON SCIENCE CENTER

The journey to Bluffton's third science building since 1914 started in 2012, just as the Sommer Center building project was finishing up. At that time, it was the Board of Trustees who asked with great enthusiasm, "What's next?" The answer was the \$26 million Simply Innovate Campaign. The campaign moved Bluffton into the future and granted students access to a new science facility, the latest technology and the means to explore deeper. With our committed teaching faculty - and now this building to sharpen our program delivery - Bluffton students are provided with a truly outstanding education in the natural and applied sciences as they prepare for advanced study, careers and service to others.

The facility was dedicated on Oct. 21, 2023, during the President's Society Banquet, but opened to students on Sunday, Aug. 27, ahead of the first day of classes.

First-year biology and chemistry double major Logan Daugherty quickly found a homebase on campus in the Knowlton Science Center.

"There's always a few people studying or just hanging out in the first-floor lobby," said Daugherty, of Bradford, Ohio. "It's so nice. There's a big desk with outlets to charge your things, and there's a big white board you can use to study."

Addie Hilden '26, a biology major from Lima, Ohio, and Miranda Sorg, a biology major from Wellington, Ohio, agreed. They both appreciate the big windows and natural light.

"It's a good environment," said Hilden. **"It's really cozy and it's great for studying."**

"After we finish our classes, we go to dinner and then we're over there studying every night," added Sorg.

Many alumni explored the nearly 20,000 square foot building and its six labs during a Homecoming open house. 2022 graduate Ben Heck noted the Anamotage Table, which is similar to the ones used at the University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Science where he is now studying, and the chemistry hoods.

"It's super cool," said Heck of Alvarada, Ohio. "You you can fit more people in the lab and students will be able to hear and see everything on the monitors."

Larry '67 and Loius (Shank '68) Reeser, of Heyworth, Ill., spent time in the Wannemacher Food Science Lab. A home economics major, Louise learned more about the new Master of Nutrition and Dietetics program.

"It's very beautiful and a good recruitment tool," said Reeser. "I think it's going to be appealing to students to stay and get their master's."

Lauren (Selleck '03) Gajdek, of Seville, Ohio, came back to campus for the first time in 20 years. Her daughters drew a scientist on the white board in Dr. Angela Montel's biology lab while they learned more about the facility.

"It took me a few minutes to get my bearings of campus because it's been so long and there are changes," said Gajdek, "but it's really nice."

For now, physics and engineering labs will continue to be held in Shoker Science Center.



"It's exciting to have people walk by and see science happening," said Dr. Angela Montel, professor of biology, of the large interior windows cut into each lab. "We were kind of hidden down in Shoker. Now, we can feel the warmth of the lobby and see students working with the light right behind them."

The building also includes features such as accessible work benches for students in wheelchairs, refrigeration, sinks with hot water access and an ice machine.

Biology specifically has new incubators, microscopes and dissecting scopes with detachable cameras for viewing on large monitors. In the spring, a large autoclave is being installed for sterilizing equipment and destroying spent media such as batches of bacteria.

Dr. Sarah Lehman, assistant professor of biology, is also making use of a new Anamotage Table to teach students about the body and its systems.

"There's just so much more we can do," said Lehman. "And I'm excited about the cross-disciplinary ways we can use this space outside of our department."



Nutrition and dietetics students are gaining hands-on experience in a commercial kitchen facility featuring a double deck convection oven, commercial refrigerator and stainless-steel tables.

"I did a lot of research to find the best equipment that will last us a long time," said Dr. Deb Myers, professor of food and nutrition. "Students are really enjoying the new facilities."

Myers is currently using the lab in her Commercial Foods class, and students recently made 40 dozen cookies which were donated to a soup kitchen in Lima, Ohio.

Abby Stemen, assistant professor of food and nutrition, is excited for community members to experience the food demonstration setup, featuring an overhead camera and monitors, during Lunch and Learn events.

"We've never had a proper demonstration space, so it is a much better setup for that purpose," said Stemen. "It will also be a great space for the new Cultural and Consumer Foods Course. I foresee us using this space in a lot of different ways."



SCIENCE IN ACTION

*Preparing to serve our region and our world.
At Bluffton, this is how we innovate!*



For Dr. Daniel Berger, professor of chemistry, science is science no matter the location where it's being taught. However, the new facility has advantages such as exhaust hoods and new equipment.

Next semester, Berger will make use of a new Nuclear Magnetic Resonance spectrometer with a higher resolution. The updated NMR will allow students to discern more subtle data.

"It's not the highest resolution possible but it's the highest without getting into some very expensive cryogenics and just using a regular room temperature magnet," said Berger.

Plus, the building offers plenty of collaborative spaces and study nooks.

"I think the students are enjoying the new building. I'm seeing them in here studying and even non-science majors are in here using the space," said Berger. "I have one student from my general education class that consistently shows up to study in one corner of the building."



Dr. Charles Daws, professor of chemistry, is making use of two lab spaces including an analytical lab space with equipment that won't need to be torn down and reset for general chemistry classes.

"Two or three different labs can be run in that one so if we have free time we can do research in it," said Daws. "That's a possibility we didn't have in Shoker."

His new equipment includes centrifuges and, like the other spaces, large monitors that can display PowerPoint presentations and information straight from his laptop.

He lifted up the number of Bluffton graduates who go on to graduate school and medical school.

"I think all of our science faculty are challenging the students to be the best they can be. To be successful," he explained. "We try to get students to think through a problem and the different ways to solve or approach the problem. It's not just about chemistry. They can apply these problem-solving skills hopefully in life."



A WALK THROUGH THE BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY NATURE PRESERVE

Jacob Buchanan, M'Della Moon endowed chair in botany and environmental science, splits his time between teaching and managing the Bluffton University Nature Preserve. After starting in July, he began working on surveys of the nature preserve and overhauled the General Ecology class. With labs now being held onsite, we followed students as they completed a survey of the species in the nature preserve's pollinator garden and prairie.

In a field near the Moyer Nature Center at the Bluffton University Nature Preserve, groups of students tossed a hoola hoop and recorded the species – both plants and insects – found inside the ring. Their findings characterized the ecosystem and revealed a mix of native and non-native species.

“They’re looking at the different plants – the abundance and diversity – in that area,” explained Buchanan. “What are the different flowers they can identify? How many pollinators do they find? They’ll take this information and do the same in the prairie across the road and compare them.”

Featuring a plethora of plants – goldenrod, wild carrot, fleabane daisy – the pollinator garden lives up to its name and students took note of the bees, flies and crickets among the leaves and stems.

“We want the area to be species rich,” said Buchanan. “The more pollinators, the more we can support higher organisms on the food chain.”

Having a diverse and abundant bottom of the food chain means more organisms can feed and thrive. Flowers, fruits, berries and seeds support insects. Insects support birds, small mammals, amphibians and reptiles which in turn support larger birds and mammals in an ecosystem.

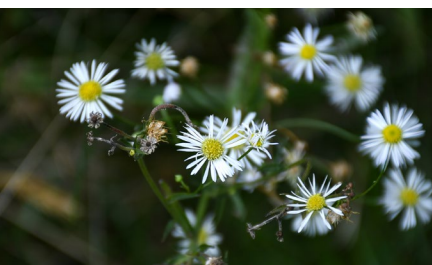
“Building up the bottom, builds everything,” said Buchanan.

The lab served as practice for future data collection. Later in the semester, each student created their own hypothesis and developed a project based on an area of the preserve of their choosing – lake, forest, river. By the end of the semester, they analyzed the data and proved or disproved their hypothesis or received an inconclusive result.

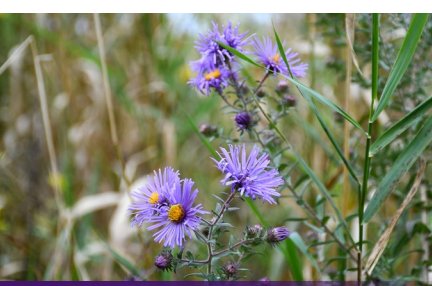
“Whether it works or not, the point is they learn from it,” said Buchanan. “Here’s how I can improve. Here’s why it didn’t work. Here’s what I learned anyway.”



Native: Goldenrod



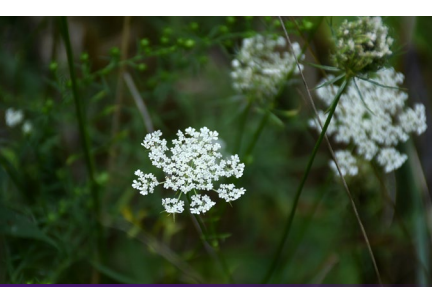
Native: Fleabane Daisy



Native: New England Aster



Native: American Pokeweed



Non-Native, Non-Invasive: Wild Carrot



Invasive: Autumn Olive

ALONG THE RILEY



\$1.8 million estate gift

Bluffton University was recently presented with a \$1.4 million gift from the estate of John and Erma Stutzman. A 1950 graduate, John was a urologist, and the couple were long-time Bluffton supporters.

In a eulogy John wrote in advance of his passing, he shared: “The entire educational experience at Bluffton College (University), among teachers and friends, helped me to develop a philosophy of life based upon the biblical teachings of Christ. The concepts of peace, justice, reconciliation and love for one’s fellow beings came from these experiences. There I also learned of God’s power in the scientific world which helped me as a physician.”

An additional \$400,000 from the estate is expected to come to Bluffton before the end of the 2023-24 fiscal year, for a total of \$1.8 million in unrestricted funds to the university. The couple also supported several Bluffton building campaigns including the construction of Centennial Hall, Sommer Center and Knowlton Science Center. Stutzman Lecture Hall is named for the extended Stutzman family.

Top Tier College

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

The 2024 edition of the magazine’s “Best Colleges” guidebook ranks Bluffton 22 among comparable institutions in the Midwest region, improving 14 spots from last



year’s list. Now featured in the “U.S. News” rankings for 26 consecutive years, Bluffton has consistently ranked in the Top Tier of Midwest Regional Colleges.

Bluffton was also recognized as a Best Value School and Top Performer in Social Mobility.

“We are grateful for our faculty, staff and students who help make this achievement possible,” said Robin Bowlus, vice president for advancement and enrollment management. “This ranking simply shows the world what we already knew: Bluffton alumni are successful in their fields, acting as leaders at home, at work and in their communities.”



Nature Preserve Restoration

The first phase of a project to support biodiversity at the Bluffton University Nature Preserve was completed over the summer. Invasive are being removed near the entrance of the preserve along Augsburg Road using a combination of cutting and herbicide application.

Habitat maintenance and management work is grant and donor funded, including a \$25,000 grant from Cenovus Energy. Current efforts will continue for the next two to three years.

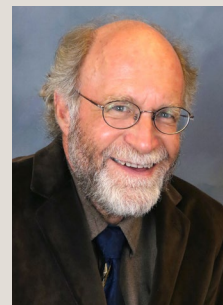
“By removing these invasive species, we can increase the diversity of the understory and provide resources for birds, small mammals and insects like bees, butterflies and moths,” said Jacob Buchanan, M’Della Moon professor of botany and environmental science.

On the west side of the entrance lane, the Oak Woodland is being restored. After removal, the area will feature widely spaced oaks with an open, park-like understory.

A second restoration effort is taking place in the East Woods area of the preserve.

Writer in (Non) Residence

Jeff Gundy, emeritus professor of English, was awarded a Writer in (Non) Residence grant from an anonymous donor through the Seattle Foundation.



The \$93,500 grant funds the position as well as administrative costs for two years. Since the title specifically states (non) residence, research and creative work will include exploration off campus.

“This grant means I can think about travel and doing some things I would not have been able to do otherwise,” said Gundy. “It’s been really energizing to have this kind of support.”

Gundy’s goal is to share new discoveries with the Bluffton community and the wider world through a series of written texts, presentations, publications and other activities. The grant has already funded travel to South Africa and Morocco.

Vocation and Collaboration

University faculty and staff from as far away as Rhodes Island, South Carolina and Winnipeg, Canada, came together at Bluffton University May 31-June 2 for the NetVUE (Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education) regional gathering, “Finding Ourselves at the



Center: Collaborative Spaces for Purpose, Work, Learning and Engagement.”

“We’re all trying to help students find their way,” said Dr. Lamar Nisly, professor of English. “We’re looking at how we make sure we’re having a shared conversation on campuses around the topic of vocation. It’s been really interesting to hear the different structures people have at their institutions.”

A program of The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), NetVUE is a network of nearly 300 colleges and universities, including Bluffton, formed to support and enrich vocational exploration and development. NetVUE funding previously supported the development of Learning in Community, the second-year course of the Bluffton Blueprint. Bluffton faculty presented on the Bluffton Blueprint, a series of classes to help students come to new understandings through action and hands-on practice.



Opening Convocation

Bluffton University welcomed its 124th class of students as official members of the campus community during Opening Convocation on Aug. 29, 2023. 1972 Bluffton graduate Thomas E. “Tucker” Lott provided the address “On Becoming You.”

A businessman, storyteller and mentor from Kansas City, Mo., Lott shared stories from



Unified Champions

Bluffton University’s team placed first at the Unified Sports Bowling Championship in September. During the annual event, more than 60 Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference student-athletes formed teams with 60 Special Olympics athletes from Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio. The championship team included members of the Logan County Braves and Beavers Softball.

his time in college, encouraged students to make positive choices, and reminded them they can always get back up if they fall “because falling happens.”

Lott also referenced the importance of decision making highlighted in the first-year summer reading “The Other Wes Moore: One Name Two Fates.”

Lott spent the day on campus and later participated in a Q&A session with first-year students.

Following the address, the names of each first-year and transfer student were read by Dr. Alex Sider, interim vice president of academic affairs. The recitation of all names is done just twice during a student’s time at Bluffton with the second being at Commencement. Faculty, dressed in academic regalia, also presented honor covenants signed by each new student affirming their commitment to Bluffton’s mission and purpose.

Emotional Wellness explored

A September Forum introduced Bluffton’s annual Civic Engagement theme: Exploring the Continuum of Emotional Wellness.



Michael Bailey, visiting assistant professor of psychology; Heather Koontz ’97, psychotherapist, and Laurel Neufeld Weaver ’83, assistant professor of social work and MSW field director, answered a range of questions from the reasons why mental health issues are on the rise to the obstacles people face in managing their emotional wellness.

Emotional wellness was chosen as the 2023-24 topic because World Health Organization data shows mental health conditions increasing across the world. Those concerning increases are mirrored in the U.S. college student population. The theme also connects to Bluffton’s five-year strategic plan, as the campus community commits to a focus on “well-being and emotional intelligence.”

BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY
Homecoming
 THE BEAVER REUNION · OCTOBER 21, 2023



VICTORY!

A full weekend of events was capped off by Bluffton's 50-12 football win and several school records for swimming and diving.

- Alumni and supporters returned "home" from across the United States including Colorado, Florida, Arizona and Eastern Pennsylvania.
- A range of reunions, from the Alumni Softball Game to Reunion Zero for the class of 2023, brought Beavers together from a variety of years and interests.

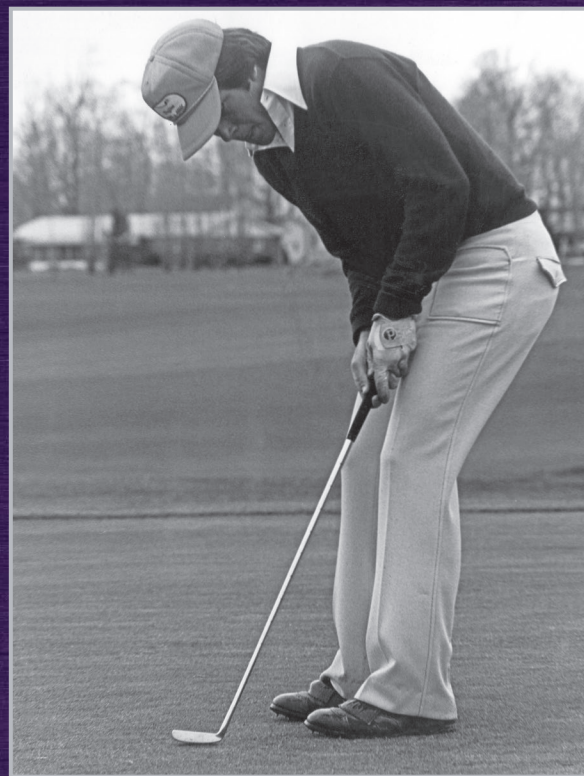




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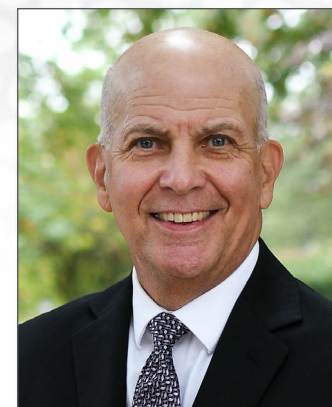
ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Induction Ceremony, Oct. 21, 2023



HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Rich Bindernagel '79



A powerhouse on the golf course, Rich Bindernagel was inducted into the 2023 Athletics Hall of Fame for his achievements in golf. He played on the men's team from 1976-79. Bindernagel earned All-Hoosier Buckeye Collegiate Conference honors all four years

and was the first men's golfer at Bluffton to achieve the feat. He was named All-National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) District 22 in 1976, 1977 and 1978. In 1977 he was the NAIA District 22 medalist and qualified for the NAIA National Tournament in Saginaw, Mich. Bindernagel was a match and tournament medalist 21 times over his

four years. During his senior year, Bindernagel was Men's Varsity "B" President and earned the A.C. Burcky Award as the top senior male athlete.

A 1979 graduate in accounting and business, Bindernagel played professional golf for a year and a half including a time on the Space Coast Mini-Tour in Florida. Upon return to Ohio, he worked in accounting and sales before becoming the owner and president of The PAR Group, Inc., for 30-plus years. Now retired, Bindernagel lives in Middleburg Heights, Ohio, with his wife Gail. They have two adult children Richard Jr. and Faith.

"Bluffton offered an opportunity for me to grow academically and spiritually as well as create many new friendships some of which have lasted a lifetime."

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Dr. Michael Anthony '07



2007 graduate Dr. Michael Anthony was inducted into the 2023 Athletics Hall of Fame for achievements in basketball. A four-year member of the team, Anthony earned Honorable Mention All-Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) accolades in

2004-05 and 2005-06 before being named First Team All-HCAC in 2006-07. That same year, he was also named HCAC Player of the Year and First Team All-Midwest District by the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC). A forward, Anthony made an impression on the record books. He's currently number 20 on the all-time scoring list with

1,183 points, and at graduation, he was the best free-throw shooter in Bluffton history with an 83 percent completion rate. Anthony also racked up an impressive 408 rebounds.

A chemistry and pre-medicine double major, Anthony is now a podiatrist at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, specializing in foot and ankle ailments and injuries. He graduated from Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine in 2011 and is certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery. Anthony lives in New Albany, Ohio, with his wife Alisha and kids Gwen, 12; Griffin, 9; Hudson, 6; and Harper, 3.

"Seize every opportunity, even those that take you out of your comfort zone, and remember the more you give, the more life gives back."

Ruth Abaya '07

Attending physician in pediatric emergency medicine, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Senior director of health systems and community violence intervention integration, Health Alliance for Violence Intervention



Finding art in science

Taking a line from Forest Gump, Dr. Ruth Abaya describes her typical day in medicine as a being like a box of chocolates.

"You never know what you're going to get. So, for me and my personality, emergency medicine makes a lot of sense," explained Abaya. "It has variety. It is unpredictable. There's a lot of creativity. Sometimes there's a clear right thing to do, and sometimes you're making a judgement based on a number of factors."

Expanding her portfolio

In her role as a pediatric emergency physician, Abaya is often able to "fix" problems in the short term. However, after completing a stint in the emergency department where the same young man was treated twice for gunshot wounds in the span of a month, Abaya began working in public health and violence prevention, as well.

"It's completely different parts of my brain that I'm using in my different roles, and I really enjoy that," said Abaya. "One informs the other. It makes me a better clinician because I have that 10,000-foot view around the problem of violence."

Informed by Bluffton

Abaya's values as a health practitioner were also informed by her Bluffton experience.

"I had exposure to nonviolent theology while developing my own personal journey of spiritual formation and coming to an understanding of what it means to live in the world as a peacemaker," said Abaya. "I'm very grateful for that aspect of my education."

Abaya came to Bluffton University from Nigeria already familiar with the community. Her father taught at Bluffton for a short time and her family lived in the community during a couple of her elementary school years. When her brother, Esuga Abaya '05, came back to study business, she followed.

"The science department was my home, but I also had really good experiences outside of science," said Abaya. "I took piano and sang in 'Messiah' and Mozart's 'Requiem.' I took a French History class that I absolutely loved and was just riveted by. I really got to explore during college."

A lifelong learner

After graduation, Abaya earned her Master of Public Health and Medical Doctorate in Chicago at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University and completed her pediatric residency in Boston before moving to Philadelphia. She's called the City of Brotherly Love home for the past 11 years, and while Philadelphia may have a reputation for violence, the people and communities remind her of Nigeria.

"Even in the communities that see the highest levels of violence, that have been chronically disinvested in, there's a lot of light and a lot of beauty. That's what I love about Philly," she explained. "People sit on their porches and greet their elders."

Outside of work, Abaya stays busy raising two daughters with her husband, but she intentionally makes time for creative outlets such as learning guitar and reading fiction.

"I think you can't stop learning," said Abaya. "It adds such richness to your life and sets a good example for your kids to pursue a variety of interests."

Gregory Wannemacher '77

Chief executive officer, Wannemacher Enterprises, Inc.
Vice chair, Bluffton University Board of Trustees



Challenged but prepared

Even as a kid in Delphos, Ohio, Greg Wannemacher was a true salesman at heart.

"I was a paperboy, and I asked the people on my route if I could also mow their lawns," said Wannemacher. "I was always growing my business."

Now CEO of Wannemacher Enterprises, he originally came to Bluffton to play football and become a business teacher/coach. However, his student teaching experience wasn't nearly as exciting as learning from Dr. Howard Raid and serving as general manager of the Bluffton Slaw Cutter Company.

"Doc put us through a lot of challenges. We had to apply for an inventory loan," said Wannemacher. "The bank president drilled us with questions, but Doc had prepared us. He sat back and we answered all the questions."

Growth through the Golden Rule

The lessons served Wannemacher well following graduation. For 14 years, he worked for his parent's business, Double A Trailer Sales. With his siblings, they grew and expanded the dealership to be one of the top 10 dealers for their manufacturer in the country.

The sixth of 10 children, Wannemacher realized over time that he would need to set out on his own if he wanted to totally be challenged in business. He did so in 1991 by buying out a trucking business in Lima, Ohio.

"I always believed in the Golden Rule: Treat people the way you want to be treated," said Wannemacher. "So, when we expanded and designed our first warehouse, we laid it out so the truck drivers could get in and out within an hour."

According to Wannemacher, if the truck drivers are happy, they tell the dispatchers, and the resulting word of mouth leads to growth.

Wannemacher Enterprises now employs around 140 people, including eight Bluffton graduates, and provides a range of services including trucking, logistics, warehousing, distribution services and packaging. They also have a hot liquid fill facility, for processing honey, and a spray drying plant.

"We pride ourselves on having strong communication with customers and always learning about their needs," said Wannemacher. "It's all about finding your niche, doing it well and fulfilling your customers' need."

Giving back to Bluffton

While his values and work ethic were established at a young age, Wannemacher said they were reinforced and further developed at Bluffton.

"Doc Raid always told us, 'If you are a successful businessperson, you owe time back to your community.'"

So, when Greg and his wife, Donna '78, were asked to serve as co-chairs for the Simply Innovate Campaign, they accepted. And when Bluffton needed a "construction manager" for the Knowlton Science Center, Wannemacher worked alongside Phill Talavinia, vice president of student affairs and athletics, to oversee it from the contractors' bidding process clear through its completion.

"I often look back on what I was able to achieve as a result of going to Bluffton," said Wannemacher of his dedication to the university. "Could I have learned those same lessons at another college? Maybe. But I know I got them at Bluffton."



ALUMNOTES

1970-79

William Schuette '70, Versailles, Ohio, is sharing his remarkable story of hope through the book "Living with Terminal Lung Cancer." He served for 30 years in education and became an avid bike rider before hearing, "You have stage four lung cancer; it's terminal." After suffering through chemo, Schuette was introduced to ALK inhibitor drugs and has thrived.

George Rable '72, Tuscaloosa, Ala., wrote "Conflict of Command: George McClellan, Abraham Lincoln, and the Politics of War" published in August by Louisiana State University Press.

Karl Harrod x74, St. Charles Parish, La., is the vocal director for Disney's FROZEN The Musical at Hahnville High School, in Luling, La. Hahnville won a contest by Musical Theatre International (MTI), giving them the performance rights for free. The show was performed in October. Harrod is retired after serving as a middle school vocal teacher.

1980-89

Daniel Hostetler '80, Sugarcreek, Ohio, retired after 31 years as executive director of the Medina County Visitors Bureau and 41 years in the Ohio travel industry. He is on the leadership team for First Mennonite Church in Sugarcreek. His

wife, **Amy (Bessey x81)**, continues to manage the Indian Valley Schools online program. Their daughter, Emmy, is a 2004 graduate.

Martha Kleine '82, Myrtle Beach, S.C., retired after 37 years teaching in Horry County Schools.

Ronald Allen '83, Haysville, Kan., is in his second year as athletic director for Campus High School in Haysville. He previously served at Lecanto High School in Lecanto, Fla.

Greg Ring '85, Bluffton, Ohio, has been named the Dana Chair for the College of Business at the University of Findlay. The Dana Corporation established the Dana Chair in 1991 to utilize the "Executive in

Residence" concept on campus. This action-oriented programming includes company visits, meeting with leaders and comprehensive work on business operations, decision making, leadership and strategy.

Nancy Bertsche Gritman '87, Lenexa, Kan., is the chief risk management officer for the American Association of Veterinary State Boards, headquartered in Overland Park, Kan. Since January 2023, Nancy oversees risk management, legal, technology testing and human resources for the association. Nancy resides with her husband, Brad, and daughter, Abigail.

2000-09

Jaclyn Doner-Campbell '02 has relocated to beautiful Sylva, N.C. She is teaching grades 9-12 multilingual learners at Smoky Mountain High School. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, spending time with her family and studying the wildflowers of the Southern Appalachian/Smoky mountains.

Yevgeniy Kovalenkov '03, Lilburn, Ga., earned his Master of Science in Research Administration and Compliance from the City University of New York. He is currently working as a pre-award research manager at the University of Chicago.

Beth Yoder '03, Defiance, Ohio, earned a Doctorate in Education from the University of Findlay in 2022. Yoder's research included the prevalence, manifestation and associated factors of music performance anxiety in school band

directors in the United States. She married Chris Krumnow on June 24, 2023, and is in her 20th year of teaching 5-12 band, currently at Archbold Area Schools.

Benjamin "Randy" Hart '04, started a new position at the University of Michigan as a clinical assistant professor of medicine in the division of gastroenterology and hepatology. He and his wife, Dee, live in Grosse Ile, Mich., with their daughter, Anya.

Bethany (Neuenschwander '05) Dario, Perrysburg, Ohio, returned to Ohio after 15 years in the Southwest and opened Divergent Dietitian in Perrysburg. The company has grown to four providers who work together to treat and prevent eating disorders in northwest Ohio. In addition, Bethany continues to teach at Bowling Green State University.

Charles '06 and Crystal (Graber '08) Conklin, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, are currently serving in Cambodia with Mennonite Central Committee and are delighted to announce the birth of their third child, Caleb Daniel Conklin, on March 9, 2023.

Elena Siebanoller '06, Columbus, Ohio, was recently promoted to creative operations director for Orange Barrel Media in Columbus, Ohio. Married in 2011, she and her partner, Travis Craft, enjoy kayaking, traveling and spoiling their pups, Beignet and Basil.

Kyle '08 and Jenna (Patty '08) Storrer, live in Wauseon, Ohio, with their seven-year-old twins, Aiden

and Owen. Kyle has been serving as the Liberty Center Middle School principal since August 2021. Jenna is celebrating one year working as an education services manager for 7 Mindsets, providing K-12 social-emotional learning professional development and coaching for schools and districts nationwide.

2010-19

James '10 and Caitlin (Heiss '11) Bond, The Plains, Ohio, welcomed their first child, Gabrielle, on March 27, 2023.

Meghan (Forquer '10) and Jonathan Cook, Akron, Ohio, welcomed their first child, Isabella Kathryn Cook, on Aug. 1, 2023, at Akron General Cleveland Clinic. Isabella weighed 9 lbs. 4 oz. and was 21 inches long.

Philip Maurer '11, Findlay, Ohio, interviewed James Enoch Banks, who founded The Men's Workshop while serving a 20-year prison sentence in Texas, for the August 2023 issue of "The Christian Century." His interview with Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger, who does peace work with Palestinians and Israelis, was the cover story of the November 2022 issue of the "The Century."

Blake Zickafoose '11, Fort Wayne, Ind., relocated for a role as executive director of the Jackson R. Lehman YMCA after six years with the Y in Phoenix, Ariz. She has a 2-year-old daughter, Lennon, and looks forward to being closer to Bluffton so they can attend alumni volleyball events and Camerata concerts.



OUR LEGACY

Bluffton alumni in the world

Hannah (Kehr '07) Heinzekehr and Jena O'Brien '19 work in strategic communications at the University of Notre Dame.

Heinzekehr recently became the program director for strategic communications for the Office of the President after serving as communications program director at Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. O'Brien is a member of the Kroc Institute's communications team where she is the communication lead for the Peace Accords Matrix program and its real-time monitoring of peace agreements around the world. O'Brien traveled to Colombia in September for a report launch on the impact of the peacemaking process on the environment.



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

Karla Funk '12 Kansas City, Kan., completed the Orff-Schulwerk Certification Levels and will be a Certified Orff-Schulwerk Teacher. With this certification, she hopes to bring more depth to her music classroom encompassing speech, singing, moving and playing within each lesson. She teaches K-5 elementary music at Midland Trail Elementary in the Turner School District.

Kevin '12 and Alison (Janzen '13) Hickman, Johnstown, Ohio, welcomed their first child, Caleb, born March 5. Kevin is a 7th grade science teacher and head cross country coach at Johnstown-Monroe Local Schools, and Alison is the dean of students at Marburn Academy.

Lauren (Canaday '13) Johnson, Bowling Green, Ohio, celebrated two years at Wood County District Public Library in Bowling Green, Ohio, as the bookmobile and outreach supervisor in August 2023.

Ashley (Noe '13) Nusbaum, Royal Oak, Mich., and wife, Hillary, welcomed their first child, Noella Brette, in March 2023.

Kerry (Bush '15) Roseberry married Jeff Roseberry in a small ceremony near their home in Bluefield, W.V., on Sept. 9. Kerry runs a photography business called Songbird and Swallowtail.

Jessie (Madzia '18) Thomas, Wilmington, Ohio, married **Hayden Thomas '17** on May 28, 2023.

Hannah (Minor '19) Ritchey, West Salem, Ohio, married Daniel Ritchey on June 10, 2023, and are homeowners as of January 2023.

Thomas Wagler '19, Sturgis, Mich., is working for Abbott Laboratories as a quality engineer. He started in January and loves the position.

2020-23

Takayla Gadberry '20, Milford, Ohio, is working for Hamilton County Job and Family Services as an assessment worker.

Alana Holsapple '21, New Madison, Ohio, earned her Master of Clinical Psychology (PsyM) at Wright State University's School of Professional Psychology in August 2023.

Adam Shanaman '22, Bellevue, Ohio, married Leslie (formerly) Childers at the Pickwick Place in Bucyrus. They were thrilled to have some Bluffton friends serve as groomsmen and have even more attend the wedding!

IN MEMORIAM

Hildred (Eversole '46) Cassel, Landsdale, Pa., passed away May 19, 2022, at the age of 97.

Treva (Zuercher '49) Frank, Orange, Mass., passed away May 8, 2023, at the age of 96.

Miriam (Earley x50) Cady, Hudson, Ohio, passed away April 18, 2023, at the age of 94.

Lila (Jackson '52) Miller, Northfield, Ohio, passed away Oct. 16, 2023, at the age of 78.

Ernest Porzelius '52, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Oct. 13, 2023, at the age of 94.

JoAnn (Vore '53) Bassett, Lima, Ohio, passed away April 16, 2023, at the age 91.

Albert Samuel Bauman '53, Columbus, Ohio, passed away Oct. 3, 2023, at the age of 92.

Gene A Wayner x53, Washington, Ill., passed away June 19, 2023, at the age of 92.

James Benroth '55, Findlay, Ohio, passed away May 3, 2023, at the age of 89.

Millard Moser x55, Berne, Ind., passed away Sept. 16, 2023, at the age of 89.

Jack Earl '56, Lakeview, Ohio, passed away June 17, 2023, at the age of 88.

Larry Blunden '58, Lima, Ohio, passed away Aug. 27, 2023, at the age of 88.

Cynthia (Conrad x58) Corfman, Toledo, Ohio, passed away May 3, 2023, at the age of 86.

Connie (Diller '58) Lybarger, Delaware, Ohio, passed away May 8, 2023, at the age of 86.

H. Thomas Reichenbach '58, Bethesda, Md., passed away Sept. 3, 2023, at the age of 87.

Martha (Emerick '59) Ropp, Normal, Ill., passed away Aug. 15, 2023, at the age of 87.

Kenneth Geisinger '60, Bradenton, Fla., passed away July 14, 2023, at the age of 88.

Harvey Porter '60, Greensburg, Pa., passed away April 1, 2023, at the age of 90.

Gary A. Brown '61, Ada, Ohio, passed away April 25, 2023, at the age of 84.

James Jump x61, Heath, Ohio, passed away April 12, 2023, at the age of 84.

Donita (Luginbuhl x63) Luginbill, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Oct. 19, 2023, at the age of 82.

Russ Gregory '64, Denver, Colo., passed away May 9, 2023, at the age of 81.

Nancy (Rocke '64) Nafziger, Hopedale, Ill., passed away Feb. 2, 2023, at the age of 80.

James "Jim" Rivers, Jr. '64, Wadsworth, Ohio, passed away Sept. 27, 2023, at the age of 86.

Thomas Bechtel x65, Goshen Ind., passed away April 11, 2023, at the age of 80.

Linda (Gratz '65) Holman, Elida, Ohio, passed away June 10, 2023, at the age of 80.

Doug Court '66, Galion, Ohio, passed away July 5, 2023, at the age of 78.

Jerilyn (Younkman-Yoakam '68) Oliver, Greenville, Ohio, passed away May 13, 2023, at the age of 76.

J. Rodney Landis '69, Franconia Township, Pa., passed away July 12, 2023, at the age of 76.

Jeanne (Waidmann '69) Long, Westlake, Ohio, passed away July 27, 2022, at age 75.

Harry Osborn '69, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away July 23, 2023, at the age of 76.

Deborah Herr x76, Lima, Ohio, passed away Aug. 10, 2023, at the age of 68.

Deborah (Maxwell '76) Jermyn, Melbourne, Fla., passed away July 15, 2023, at the age of 68.

Ronald Williams '80, Orrville, Ohio, passed away June 25, 2023, at the age of 66.

Linda Newman '82, Marion, Ohio, passed away Oct. 20, 2023, at the age of 63.

Gregory Hale '85, Bradford, Ohio, passed away May 25, 2023, at the age of 60.

Kathryn (Lambert '85) Huston, Vanlue, Ohio, passed away July 12, 2023, at the age of 60.

William "Bill" Swyers x91, Rushville, Ohio, passed away Oct. 8, 2023, at the age of 54.

Nicole Wallace x99, Oneida, Tenn., passed away April 16, 2023, at the age of 46.

Stephanie Zoller '00, Dayton, Ohio, passed away Feb. 10, 2023, at the age of 68.

Jacqueline "Jackie" Fox '02, Lima, Ohio, passed away Aug. 19, 2023, at the age of 58.

Amanda (Mills '03) Bryan-Combs, Marion, Ohio, passed away Oct. 27, 2023, at age 42.

Ezekiel "Zek" Davis x20, Columbus, Ohio, passed away Aug. 4, 2023, at the age of 24.

Employees

Julie DeGraw, East Lansing, Mich., passed away Aug. 28, 2023, at the age of 57.

Darrell Huber x63, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away July 1, 2023, at the age of 82.

EllenMae Miller, Pandora, Ohio, passed away Oct. 21, 2023, at age 91.

SAVE THE DATE

OCT. 4-6, 2024

Join us as we celebrate our 125th anniversary during Homecoming!

We want to hear your stories. Share about your time at Bluffton and how it shaped your life. Your story will be recorded, transcribed and possibly included in a book to guide Bluffton University into the future. This oral history project aims to inspire future generations to live out their own stories. **Contact Samantha Shriders at shriders@bluffton.edu or 419-358-3362.**



FACULTY 360

Dr. Paul Neufeld Weaver

What type of cross-cultural learning did you do as a student and how did it impact your life?

When I was 19, my sophomore year of college, I spent a semester in Honduras, Central America. This experience had a major impact on my life as it was my first time being immersed in another culture and language. It also was my first time encountering deep poverty and starting to understand that hard reality of many people's lives. Ever since then, my life has been focused on Latin America and the people of that region, on language learning, especially Spanish, and on teaching and building intercultural connections to further world peace.

What is the best piece of advice you ever received?

In Honduras, I was trying to figure out my major and a wise Honduran friend and mentor told me, "Human beings have advanced so much in the hard sciences, but our understanding of social science, particularly how to get along with each other, has not kept pace." This helped me set my path in college, declaring a self-designed major at Bluffton in international studies.

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

When I was 22, I again spent time in Latin America, this time for 11 months. After studying and traveling for 10 months, I ended up volunteering in a refugee camp in Honduras. There I came into contact with families who had been displaced from their homes by the war in El Salvador and were living in tents, not knowing if or when they would be able to return to their homes. It was sobering to realize that my tax dollars were helping fund the bombs and bullets the U.S. government was sending to the government of El Salvador which were being used against their own citizens. From this experience, I decided to dedicate myself to work to end the massive amounts of military aid that the U.S. and other countries sent to warring countries around the world, pouring gasoline on the fire of human suffering. The fact that my tax dollars were funding the suffering made me feel a profound sense of personal responsibility.

What new interest(s) are you pursuing?

I view all my teaching and advocacy work as acts of peacebuilding. I am currently studying Swahili, in preparation for travel to Tanzania, and Arabic, out of respect for the aspirations of the millions of people who speak Arabic.

Dr. Paul Neufeld Weaver is the director of global education and professor of education and Spanish.



Almost 200 first-year students spent fall break in the Great Smoky Mountains for the Great Adventure! Led by faculty and mentors, the students spent the retreat weekend surrounded by vast natural beauty where they practiced how to engage, reflect and answer the question, "Who am I?"

Each year, alumni and donors fully-fund the Great Adventure so students can enjoy the experience at no cost to them. It is time to plan for the 2024 experience! Please support the Great Adventure by making a gift in the return envelope in this issue or by going online to www.bluffton.edu/give and selecting the Great Adventure campaign.

Invest in Bluffton students and faculty by helping to raise \$100,000 for the Great Adventure by Dec. 31.





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The 20 percent tuition discount on Bluffton University master's degree programs begins with new enrollees each academic year. Eligible programs include the Master of Business Administration (MBA); Master of Arts in Organizational Management (MAOM); Master of Arts in Education (MAEd); Master of Nutrition and Dietetics (MND); and Master of Social Work (MSW).

In recognition of the significant contributions Bluffton alumni make to the institution and in their respective communities, all alumni who earned their undergraduate degree at Bluffton are eligible for the Bluffton University Alumni Master's Degree Grant.

For additional information on Bluffton's graduate programs, visit www.bluffton.edu/ags

