

# BLUFFTON

A magazine for Bluffton University alumni and friends | Spring 2022 | Vol. 19 No. 1



A WORLD OF  
OPPORTUNITIES

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The class of 2022 is very special to me. Their first semester in the fall of 2018 was also my first semester as the president of Bluffton University. If you think about it, we've had many "firsts" together.

Some of my favorite "firsts" include improving my cornhole form at the first Beaver-Tail Gating, sipping hot chocolate and singing Christmas carols at Christmas at the Houshower House, and watching students laugh and splash on their inaugural voyage in kayaks in the Nature Preserve pond.

As I write this, I am on my "first" Bluffton Alumni "cross-cultural" experience. We are with a group of alumni and friends on a tour of Mennonite migrations through Europe led by Dr. Gerald Mast. The experience is similar to trips the late Dr. Delbert Gratz, head librarian and professor of history, led in the 1970s through the 1990s. What a wonderful experience it is to travel, learn and enjoy parts of Bluffton's history together.

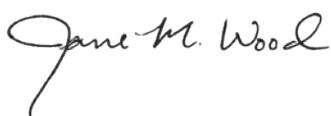
In this magazine, you'll learn more about the amazing semester-long experiences our students completed this year. From studying ancient Greek mathematicians in Athens to performing on-stage in Nashville, our students truly took advantage of a world of opportunities.

A compelling feature about Johanna (Dickey '77) Rian shares the amazing path life took her on, starting with her own study abroad experience.

You'll also read about some of our new traditions including FareWelcome Week. At the Senior Send Off, our students were given letters written by you, our alumni. What a joyous moment it was to see their smiles as they read your words of encouragement.

Congratulations to the Bluffton University Class of 2022, who have shown such perseverance in the past four years. And, thank you to the Bluffton Network of Alumni and Friends for welcoming our newest graduates into the community.

If you haven't yet, follow me on Instagram at @BlufftonUPres to see what we are up to on campus this summer!



Jane M. Wood, Ph.D.  
President



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Spring 2022 Vol. 19 No. 1

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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!

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**On the cover:** Spencer Garrison '22 (middle) and students from Central American Study and Service (CASAS) in Guatemala over look the cloud forest during fall 2021.

*Photo provided by Spencer Garrison*





# A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES



Each year, Bluffton University students take part in cross-cultural experiences. Touted to students as invitations to explore and grow, these experiences offer a journey of personal discovery into the richness and challenges of other cultures and communities. Immersed in new environments, undergraduate students experience diverse lifestyles, make new friends and learn respect for other cultures all while meeting personal challenges which build character. Many students take part in three-week experiences in May and June led by Bluffton faculty (this year's locations range from Appalachia to Czechia); however, several summer and semester-long opportunities are also available. Over the next several pages, you'll read stories from students who have benefitted from the global opportunities available to Bluffton students.



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS IN GUATEMALA

After his original plans to study in Argentina were canceled due to COVID-19 precautions, Spencer Garrison '22 of West Salem, Ohio, studied Spanish, history and culture at Central American Study and Service (CASAS) in Guatemala during the fall 2021 semester. He had an experience he "wouldn't trade for anything else."

"I'm sure I would have made connections on other experiences, but the ones I did make in Guatemala were really meaningful," said Garrison.

Garrison loves to connect with others through music. At Bluffton, he performed at Chapel and Cabaret for a Cause. In Guatemala, he played guitar for hours nearly every night with his host family and their friends.

"I learned to play and sing some popular Guatemalan songs they wanted to hear, and they knew a lot of songs in English."

The second half of the experience included a month of service. Unable to decide between options, Garrison took the advice of a Serving and Learning Together (SALT) participant who was also studying at CASAS.

"She said, 'Usually when I'm trying to make a decision about where to go or what to do, I choose the one that will make me the most uncomfortable,'" said Garrison. "It wasn't the advice I necessarily wanted to hear, but I think it helped me grow and understand the world better."

Ultimately, Garrison traveled to San Pedro Carcha in the mountainous region of Alta Verapaz and served with an organization called Odigua, which works with indigenous farmers on sustainable agriculture practices and creation care. Garrison helped tend gardens of coffee, cilantro and cabbage.

**"It was challenging at times," said Garrison. "But I decided the more comfortable I become at being uncomfortable, the more I'll get to experience in life. I think I'm going to keep doing things that are not completely comfortable."**





## STUDENT-ATHLETES LEARN AND COMPETE IN GREECE

For three Bluffton students, a short walk from their residence hall and a ride on the metro brought them to the edge of the Acropolis.

Taylor Dye '23, a sport management and business administration major from Millersburg, Ohio; Maxwell Kennedy '23, a mathematics and business administration major from Strongsville, Ohio; and Elijah Zimmerman '24, a mathematics major from Archbold, Ohio, spent the spring 2022 semester at the American College of Greece (AGOG) in Athens.

"We almost took it for granted after a while because we saw it so often," said Kennedy. "It surpassed my expectations."

"When you think of the United States as a country, it's only about 300 years old. Greece is 2,000-plus," added Zimmerman. "Anywhere you went in the country, you were surrounded by history."

With access to public transportation, the three traveled across the country. Dye and Kennedy also traveled to Barcelona, but a visit to Santorini was Dye's favorite.





"The sunsets were just so pretty. I took a lot of pictures, but they don't do it justice," said Dye.

Classes were taught in English with peers primarily from Greece. Kennedy and Zimmerman learned some of the language, while Dye took a class focused on the Olympics.

All three are soccer student-athletes at Bluffton, and Kennedy and Zimmerman competed on the ACOG team. Without an official team for women, Dye competed in a Futsal League.

While they adapted to academics and athletics quickly, there was one thing they didn't prepare for: snow.

"It was one of the worst winters they had in a decade," said Kennedy. "We got a lot of snow that shut down the city—no cars moving, no shops open, but we built a snowman taller than any of us!"

Overall, all three made lasting friendships, fulfilled bucket-list items, and developed confidence in themselves.

**"This was a once in a lifetime experience," said Dye. "You're not likely to have the opportunity to live in another country for four months when you have a full-time job."**

"Things would go wrong, and we had to find new ways to go about what we wanted to do," said Zimmerman. "We learned to be responsible for each other and to be responsible for ourselves."





## SUCCESS THROUGH FAILURE IN NASHVILLE

Alex Rose '22, a music major from, Anna, Ohio, plans to move to Los Angeles and continue a career as a voice over artist that they began in their final semester of college. It's a path Rose feels prepared for thanks to the growth they've gained at Bluffton and Nashville's Contemporary Music Center, where they spent the fall 2021 semester.

**"Each week was spent writing a new song, revising the song and performing the song at a concert. The grind was insane," explained Rose. "It was trial by fire. There was a lot of failing, but that's not a bad thing. The CMC lets you fail in a safe, enclosed environment."**

The CMC experience, offered to Bluffton students through a partnership with CCCU Global Education, includes three tracks of study—artist, business and technical. Rose chose artist and earned college credit to write, record and gain real-world experience while learning from music industry professionals.

"Actively working with other artists, you grow by leaps and bounds because you are surrounded by people who have a similar passion," they said.

The final exam is a weeklong tour where students gain experience on and off stage. Rose, who performed in front of tour crowds, was also in charge of the team who put up and tore down the lighting fixtures.

"All throughout the experience, the big thread was about community and relationships," explained Rose. "While the program is through the lens of music and the performing arts industry, it's also about shaping people."

At Bluffton, Rose worked as a tech assistant in Yoder Recital Hall. They also sang in all of Bluffton's choral groups and were a member of Brave Space.

Rose initially had ambitions of attending a large university. However, they learned about Bluffton through a high school class which required students to visit multiple colleges. So, Rose visited Bluffton.

**"You know that feeling you get when you are comfortable somewhere, but you can't explain it?" asked Rose. "I immediately felt like Bluffton was somewhere that could be home."**



# STUDENTS GAIN MAJOR EXPERIENCE

Five Bluffton University students lived, learned and worked in Washington, D.C., during the spring 2022 semester through the Washington Community Scholars' Center.

Celesta Hartman '23, a psychology major from Lima, Ohio, interned with the Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives to stage an exhibit. The school, established in 1872, was one of the earliest schools for African Americans in D.C.

**"I chose to study in D.C. in hopes of becoming closer to achieving my dream career—working at the Library of Congress," said Hartman. "On top of the numerous connections I made, I also learned about how the need for public input and use dictates how well a place operates."**

Jake Kiger '22, a psychology and criminal justice double major from Columbus, Ohio, interned at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, where his duties ranged from filing paperwork to interviewing possible witnesses of crime.

Justine Lesniewski '23, a psychology and criminal justice double major from Mantua, Ohio, worked with the Hyattsville Police department to develop a Crisis Intervention Team and the Greenbelt Police Department on opening lines of communication within the community.

Sara Poiry '23, a graphic design major from Graytown, Ohio, worked with Washington Digital Media on projects such as starting a streaming podcast.

Noah Robinson III '23, a psychology and criminal justice major from Urbana, Ohio, served with Voices for a Second Chance. VSC supports incarcerated and newly-released individuals in their transition back to the community.

WCSC is a program run by Eastern Mennonite University which is also open to Bluffton University students. Participants lived in a house with the 10 other WCSC students in the working-class neighborhood of Brookland. They shared meals, split household responsibilities and took weekly classes together.

**"I enjoyed my time in D.C. and made lasting friendships," said Poiry. "I definitely have stories that I will keep with me."**





## STUDENT LIVES OUT CHILDHOOD DREAMS IN ENGLAND

As a child, Olivia Hattery's family read C.S. Lewis' "The Chronicles of Narnia" together. By the time she was eight, they moved on to "Mere Christianity." So, when Hattery had the chance to live and learn in the place where Lewis studied and taught, she relished the opportunity. A 2022 art and writing graduate from Kenton, Ohio, Hattery spent summer 2021 in Oxford, England, with Scholarship and Christianity in Oxford (SCIO).

**"Lewis is obviously a big deal in my life. He used logic, reasoning and argumentation to make very good points, but he also used fiction and fantasy," said Hattery. "I want to do the same thing, so this was the best excuse ever to learn about how he did that."**

In partnership with the University of Oxford's Wycliffe Hall, SCIO provides high-level academic teaching in a setting which seeks to deepen and strengthen faith and Christian understanding of the world. Hattery took two classes on Lewis' literature.

"I'm homeschooled, so I had a classical education growing up where we focused on writing papers and explaining what we learned over tests," she explained. "At class in Oxford, we used the Socratic method and thesis arguments with our professors."

In her free time, she traveled. In London, she took in a performance of Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap," the longest running show on London's West End and visited the British Museum where she saw the longest surviving manuscript (saved by monks from a fire) of "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight." She also toured Edinburgh Castle in Scotland solo and visited Hampton Court Palace with the other 11 participants to learn about Henry VIII.

**"I lived out my dreams—dreams I worked really hard for. I'm from a small town, and sometimes things seem impossible. Now I know dreams that seem impossible might actually come true."**

Encouraged by the experience, Hattery applied to graduate school at Oxford University. While she didn't get in, Hattery plans to apply again.

"I did get an interview, and less than 40 percent of applicants get an interview," said Hattery. "I'm going to wait a year, get a better resume and try again now that I know the process."





## EDUCATING THE MIND AND HEART IN URBAN CHICAGO

Three future educators: Abby Bullion '22 of Bellevue, Ohio; Tabatha Koetter '22 of Beavercreek, Ohio; and Brylee Oberdorf '22 of Green Springs, Ohio, spent the fall 2021 semester completing their elementary education student teaching requirements in Chicago.

**“Chicago opened my eyes to a whole new side of education that I had no idea was there,” said Bullion. “I will be doing more to advocate for diversity and inclusion in my future classroom because of the things I learned while working in Chicago Public Schools.”**

In addition to their student teaching experiences, the Bluffton University students lived and learned at the Chicago Center for Urban Life and Culture. CCULC provides professional practicum opportunities and seminars on urban life. Before starting their professional experiences, participants learn about Chicago and its history, navigate public transportation and visit non-profit organization's such as Kids Off The Block.

Bullion taught at Enrico Toni Elementary School while Oberdorf and Koetter taught in A.N. Pritzker Elementary School.

“I enjoyed my time at Pritzker Elementary and all the city had to offer,” said Koetter. “The city pushed me outside of my comfort zone and prepared me for a future in the classroom.”

All three double majored in primary P-5 education and intervention specialist and completed their intervention specialist student teaching assignments near Bluffton during spring 2022 semester.

Oberdorf built on the hands-on experience gained in Chicago while working with K-4th grade students at Pandora-Gilboa in the spring.

“While both experiences are giving me a good set of foundational skills to take into my teaching career, I received a set of skills that I never would have gotten if I stayed in Bluffton the whole time,” said Oberdorf. “I am thankful for having the opportunity to student teach in Chicago, and I feel that I am a better teacher because of it.”

All three are actively applying to positions in education. Oberdorf enjoyed her time in Chicago so much, she plans to move there to teach. Bullion is applying to positions in northwest Ohio and Koetter in the Dayton area.

# ALONG THE RILEY



## Athletics awards

Jameel Cosby and Brooke Kleman were named Bluffton's top senior athletes during the annual Athletics Awards Forum. During the event, champion WNBA coach and gold medalist Dan Hughes shared thoughts on "Empowerment."

Cosby received the A.C. Burcky Award. A 4-year starter on the men's basketball team, he earned the starting point guard position as a freshman. Cosby was named Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) Player of the Week multiple times and became Bluffton's 17th 1,000-point scorer. He ended his career with 1,218 points and was named First Team All-HCAC in his last two years on the court.

Kleman earned the Kathryn E. Little Award. A 4-year letter winner in volleyball, she was named to the HCAC Honorable Mention for four years and was on the 2018 All-Freshman Team. A staple on the court, Kleman led the HCAC in digs with 215 in 2021 and is on Bluffton's all-time leader board for accomplishments such as digs in a career and service aces in a career. As a senior, she also became an inaugural member of Bluffton's swim team and now holds 11 school swim records in a variety of events.

## Oldest Bible in the archives

Bluffton's 1531 Froschauer Bible was recently conserved with nearly \$5,000 in funding from an Ohio Library Service Technology Act preservation grant.

Jeff Peachey, a Goshen College graduate and book conservator in New York City, completed the work. The primary goal was restoring the structural integrity of the Bible so the volume could be handled and examined—with proper handling techniques and a supportive cradle—without further damage. In addition, the entire book's surface was cleaned, tears and losses were repaired, and previous "repairs" were removed to reduce damage from the stiff adhesive. The book's hinges were also repaired, and both the sewing and spine were reinforced.



The Bible is significant for a number of reasons. It's an example of the first folio edition of a German-language Bible, and it's one of only 12 known surviving copies of this edition. Folio refers to all of the books of the Bible being published in one volume. The translation is German, and much of the phrasing would have been familiar to Swiss Mennonites.



## Nursing gift

A \$2 million estate gift from the trust of Hazel Robinson will allow for a new scholarship fund at Bluffton benefitting nursing majors. The Lehman-Huber-Zehrbach Scholarship is named in memory of the late Robinson's maternal grandmother, Jane Huber Lehman, and

her parents, Henry Zehrbach and Emma Lehman Zehrbach.

"Scholarships from this fund will be an integral element in recruiting and retaining students and providing opportunities for students who may need additional resources to pay for college," said Dr. Sherri Winegardner, director of nursing.

Bluffton offers a 4-year bachelor of science in nursing (BSN). The program is unique because students are able to sit for the NCLEX-RN (nursing exam for licensure) following successful completion of their third year of study. In the final year of the program, Bluffton students may work as registered nurses as they complete their bachelor's degree.

## New lights for Salzman Stadium

A gift from 1973 Bluffton alumnus Randy Gade and his wife Debbie will provide lights to be installed at Salzman Stadium.



The work will take place over the summer and will be complete for Bluffton football's Sept. 17, 2022, home opener against Adrian College.

A business major originally from Eaton, Ohio, Randy was a member of the football and wrestling teams at Bluffton. The Gades started their company, Accutech Instrumentation Inc. in 1988.

It is now a multimillion-dollar business unit of the parent company, Fluid Flow Products, Inc., with a client list that includes SpaceX, Blue Origin, Virgin Galactic and Siemens Power Generation. They worked together to build a successful business and sold it three years ago to retire. Alumni Field is also the competitive turf field for Bluffton's soccer teams and the practice space for several teams.





## STEM Scholarships

Bluffton has been awarded a Choose Ohio First grant by the Ohio Department of Higher Education to support students in critical STEM fields.

The five-year \$138,600 grant will support undergraduate students majoring in food and nutrition, dietetics, nursing, speech-language pathology and audiology, biology, chemistry and pre-medicine. Majors selected include long-established programs with experienced teaching faculty as well as majors that are in demand across the state. The grant also supports Bluffton's strategic planning vision to expand health sciences programming.

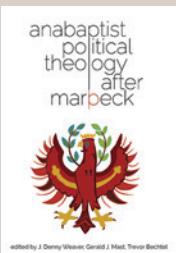
"Bluffton's health science programs are our highest sought-after programs for applicants," said Robin Bowlus, vice president of advancement and enrollment management. "Bluffton is excited for the possibilities the Choose Ohio First grant will offer and is ready to enroll and support additional underrepresented student populations."

Bluffton's goal is to enroll four new Choose Ohio First Scholars each year of the grant with COF scholarships matched dollar-for-dollar by Bluffton through institutional scholarships.

## Anabaptist book series

A book release celebration for "Anabaptist Political Theology After Marpeck" took place on April 27, in Musselman Library.

Co-edited by J. Denny Weaver, professor emeritus of religion;



## High-Five Fridays

Throughout the month of April, Beavers student-athletes provided early morning encouragement to elementary students as they headed to class. The High-Five Friday events were organized through Bluffton's Virtue-Driven Athletics program.

Gerald Mast, professor of English; and Trevor Bechtel, a former Bluffton faculty member, the book of essays is the 13th volume in Bluffton's C. Henry Smith series.

The book presents various perspectives on 16th century Anabaptist leader Pilgram Marpeck's approach to Christian political involvement. Each chapter offers insights from Marpeck on how Christians today can be active in the public sphere without being corrupted by political power.

Each editor also authored a chapter in the book, which includes chapters from 11 writers. The cover, designed by Trevor Bechtel, features an image of the Tyrolean eagle, a historic Austrian symbol that represents the region where Marpeck was born. Pilgrim Marpeck is also the namesake of Marbeck Center.

## We Remember

On the 15th anniversary of the baseball team's bus accident, more than 100 members of the campus community gathered to remember and reflect on the events of March 2, 2007, and the lives lost in Atlanta, Ga.



The ceremony was held at Bluffton's Circle of Remembrance with President Jane Wood welcoming guests.

"I have heard so much about the special bond held by the team of 2007," said President Wood. "The impact of that bond is still felt today. The spirits of David, Scott, Cody, Tyler and Zachary are still with us today."

Chalsi (Eastman '12) Campbell, campus pastor, led prayers, a player remembrance and moment of silence.

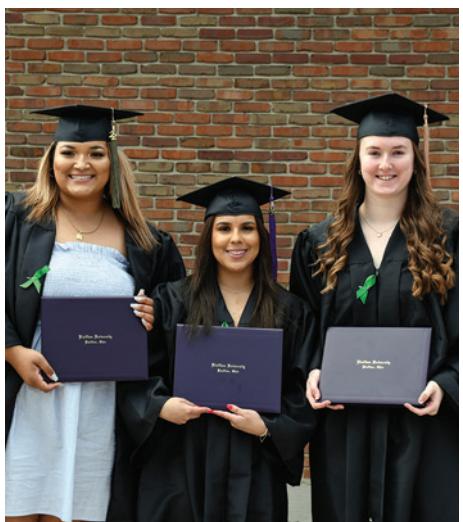




# 122ND ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

*Saturday, May 7, 2022*





The achievements of Bluffton University's Class of 2022 were celebrated Saturday, May 7, 2022, during Commencement in Sommer Center.

More than 150 students took part in Bluffton's 122nd Commencement including traditional undergraduate students and degree-completion graduates earning bachelor's degrees as well as MBA and MAEd students earning graduate degrees.

After the processional, President Jane Wood welcomed the graduates, as well as their family and friends.

Peter Strange, chairman emeritus of Messer, Inc., shared the Commencement address.

During his speech, "Greetings," Strange focused on why today's college graduates are so desperately needed.

**"We need your new eyes on our old problems. We've come to realize every problem that could have been solved by a good speech from an old white man has almost probably been solved by now," said Strange. "It's time to move from speeches to action. Your energy, your insight and your ideas will help us take action against the challenges of our businesses, our communities and our world."**

Graduates included a student whose great-great-grandfather graduated from Bluffton in 1908 as well as Bluffton's first class of Bachelor of Science in Nursing students who completed all four years as Beavers. There were also seven graduates from the Village of Bluffton, 10 graduates from states as far east as Maryland and west as Oregon, and graduates from eight countries including Albania, Botswana, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Japan, Peru and Syria.

# ALUMNOTES

## 1960-69

**Vern Long '67**, Westlake, Ohio, was recently inducted into the Westlake High School Hall of Fame. He was the head football coach for 27 years and also taught history and government classes. He and his wife, **Jeanne (Waidmann '69)**, have been married for 51 years. They have three grown children and three grandchildren.

## 1970-79

**Arlene Schneider '78**, Montclair, N.J., has retired after more than 23 years as an editor at "The New York Times." She will continue to freelance.

## 1980-89

**A. LaRue (Woomer '86) Basinger**, Dublin, Ohio, has stepped away after nearly 10 years of teaching

high school English at a small private school. She and her husband, **Gary Basinger '84**, welcomed a second son-in-law as well as a granddaughter this past year. LaRue also works part-time as a copy editor for a small independent press. Gary continues to work remotely for Verizon Wireless as a consultant in promotion assurance.

**Wendie (Mankin '88) Swary**, Pandora, Ohio, retired from Cory Rawson Elementary School after more than 34 years in education. She spent her career as the school counselor and teaching a variety of subjects in fourth, fifth and sixth grades. She plans to finish her book on surviving public education. Swary has three children, two grandchildren and another grandchild on the way. She has been married to her husband for almost 33 years.

## 1990-99

**Lisa (Taylor '90) McGinnis**, Bloomville, Ohio, will be retiring from Buckeye Central as the director of special education at the end of the 2021-22 school year and 32 years of service. She has been given the opportunity to be an adjunct professor at Heidelberg University teaching special education courses. She and her husband, Ron, have been together for 32 years, and they have a son, Adam, a daughter, Megan, and a son-in-law, Kurtis.

**Lara Gephart '94**, Corpus Christi, Texas, completed 20 years of service to the Corpus Christi International Airport/City of Corpus Christi. In October, she completed a second master's degree, a M.S. in criminal justice with a homeland security concentration from University of

## OUR LEGACY *Bluffton alumni in the world*

Partnerships between alumni and students continue at Bluffton. Dietetics students recently heard from alumnus, Corporate Partner and vice-chair of the Bluffton University Trustees **Greg Wannemacher '77** and toured Wannemacher Total Logistics' food facilities including the hot liquid fill plant in Van Wert. Several students/alumni have either interned or worked at Wannemacher Total Logistics over the years.



Arizona Global Campus. Lara was also named a 2022 Presidential Management Fellow finalist. She was one of 1,100 finalists selected from over 8,000 applicants.

**Richard (Rich) Rausch '98,** Marysville, Ohio, is finishing his sixth year as principal at Saint John's Lutheran School. The preschool through eighth grade program is currently working through a strategic ministry plan including a design feasibility study and building campaign. With his wife, Kristine, they have three children Leo, McClellan and Allison Ann Louise.

**Mollie (Holbrook '99) LeFever-Ratcliffe,** Louisa, Ky., was selected as the associate warden at the Federal Correctional Institution in McDowell, W. Va. She married Keary Ratcliffe in November 2021 and is raising kids Maxwell, 17, and Samuel, 15.

## 2000-09

**Jackie Doner-Campbell '02,** Americus, Ga., is an ESOL teacher at Furlow Charter School. She was recently named an exemplary ESOL teacher by the Georgia Department of Education. She also received a Golden Apple Award which was given to her by a class of 2020 honor graduate. In her free time, she enjoys running, gardening and spending time with her family.

**Brienne (Wyndham '03) Sprunger,** Bluffton, Ohio, joined the Bluffton University business faculty this fall as an associate professor of marketing and director of graduate programs in business. Sprunger shared, "Returning to Bluffton has been a blessed adventure and I appreciate the dedication of the faculty and staff who have helped me feel like I never left; their kindness goes above and

beyond anything I could have asked for. During the spring, she also earned her EdS and superintendent's license.

**Sara (Weaver '04) Hofstetter,** Dalton, Ohio, married Lee Hofstetter on June 26, 2020, on his family farm in Kidron, Ohio.

**Jasen "Jay" Coleman MAOM '06,** Columbus, Ohio, was promoted to vice president, treasury management specialist at Heartland Bank headquartered in Whitehall, Ohio.

**Katie Barnett '09,** Dublin, Ohio, started a new position with the Ohio High School Athletic Association in Columbus.

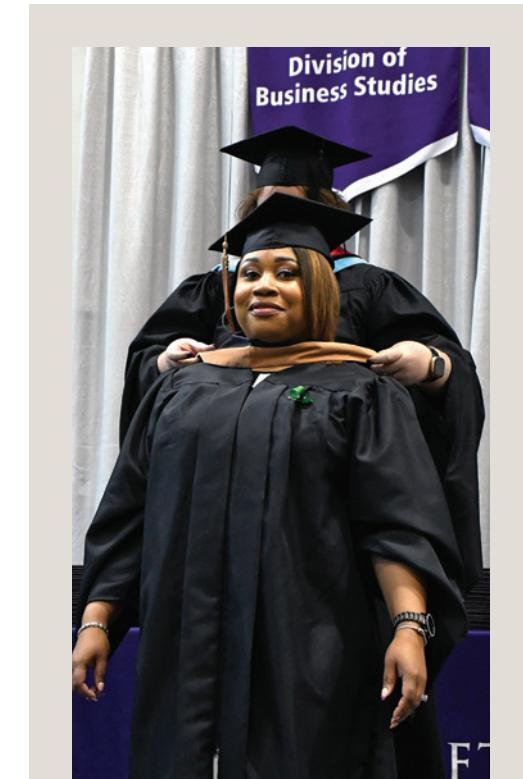
## 2010-19

**Abigail (Stern '10) and Shawn '12 Yoder,** Plain City, Ohio, along with Cassie, 4, and Kai, 2, are pleased to announce the birth of Cameron Caleb on Nov. 26, 2021.

**Thea (Rosengarten '10) and Scott Langenkamp,** New Bremen, Ohio, welcomed their fourth child, Hannah Marie, on Aug. 25, 2021. Hannah was welcomed home by siblings: Olivia, 7, Levi, 5 and Claire, 1. Langenkamp works as the executive support specialist at Mercer Health in Coldwater, Ohio.

**Maggie (Stover '11) Bowsher,** Orlando, Fla., started a new position as a senior relationship marketing strategist at DEG, a Merkle company. She is the lead marketing strategist supporting clients on their one-to-one email and mobile campaign strategy for Johnson & Johnson and The Salvation Army.

**Colin Kriegel '11,** Delphos, Ohio, started a new job in January 2022 as enrollment management communications coordinator at Rhodes State College.



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.

The **20 percent tuition discount on Bluffton University master's degree programs** began with new enrollees during the 2020-21 academic year. Eligible programs include the Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Arts in Organizational Management (MAOM) and Master of Arts in Education (MAEd).

For additional information on the Bluffton University Alumni Master's Degree Grant or to apply, visit [www.bluffton.edu/alumni-masters-grant](http://www.bluffton.edu/alumni-masters-grant)



**Sam (Paul '11) and Christopher LaBenne**, Mount Vernon, Ohio, welcomed their son, Grayson, in May 2021.

**Christopher Malkowski '11**, Sandusky, Ohio, left his positions in law enforcement as a detective for Cedar Point Police and pretrial services probation officer for Erie County Adult Probation. He is now a power plant operator for Walleye Power in Oregon, Ohio.

**Brittany Sinnema-“Jack”son '11**, Millersburg, Ohio, hosted her grand reopening after a fantastic remodel of Jack-Pot Pottery, her art and ceramic shop in Millersburg, Ohio.

**Ronelle Kinney OMP '12, MBA '22**, Huber Heights, Ohio, has been promoted to assume the responsibilities of the comptroller position for the Montgomery County Engineer's Office.

**Kourtney (Lewis '12) and Spenser '12 Smith**, Greenfield, Ohio, along with their son Jax, welcomed their second child, Jaya, on Nov. 11, 2021. Kourtney works for EMSAR as an account coordinator and Spenser teaches and coaches at Huntington High School in Chillicothe, Ohio.

**Samantha Wildow '13**, Dayton, Ohio, was recently named editor of the "Miami Valley Today" newspaper in Troy, Ohio. Wildow and her husband, Josh Brown, have two dogs, Ghost and Scuz.

**Cierra (Fraley '14) Moran**, Paulding, Ohio, started a new job in August 2021 as a police officer at Hicksville Police Department.

**Holly Walter '14**, Findlay, Ohio, accepted a promotion to technical services manager of the Findlay-Hancock County Public Library.

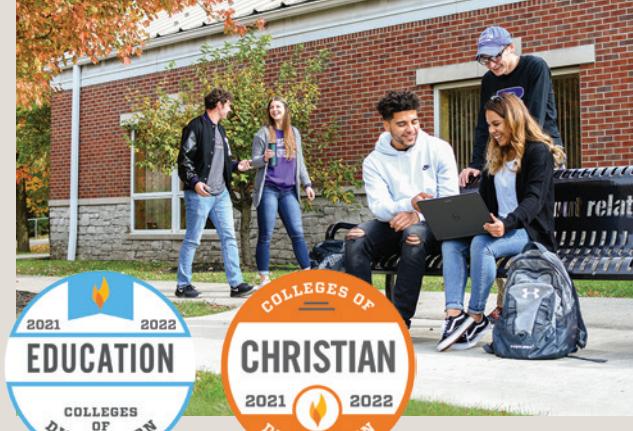
**Hannah Johnson-Gay '15**, Goshen, Ind., married Scott Gay in June 2020. Johnson-Gay works as an on-call care attendant for Greencroft Assisted Living, while also working as a private elderly care assistant. Together, they have a 3.5-year-old cat, named Paris, that they rescued from being stranded in a boat.

**Carrie (Blust '18, MAEd '20) Clay**, Delaware, Ohio, married Luke Clay on Jan. 15, 2022.

**Jena O'Brien '19**, Goshen, Ind., recently began as the communications and digital media specialist at the University of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies in Notre Dame, Ind.

**Tiffany Thomas OMP '19 MBA '22**, Greenville, Ohio, accepted a new position with Everheart Hospice as chief human resources officer.

## Markers of success **DISTINCTIVELY BLUFFTON**



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**Dr. Johanna (Dickey) Rian**

Class year: 1977

Major: English and Theatre

# Promoting the medical humanities

Never in her wildest dreams did Johanna (Dickey) Rian imagine she would end up working in the medical field.

But the sum of her experiences led Rian to a 14-year-long career, which she just retired from in March 2022, as program director of the Mayo Clinic Lavins Center for Humanities in Medicine.

The daughter of longtime speech faculty member, Dale Dickey, a 16-year-old Rian accompanied her father and Bluffton students on a January tour of London.

"I loved it," said Rian. "I wanted to do anything that allowed me to get back there."

As a Bluffton student, she spent the fall semester of her junior year studying theatre at the University of London Goldsmiths College, leading to her second major.

"I was able to persuade the faculty that by studying abroad and doing summer theatre at Bowling Green I would have enough coursework for a self-designed major in theatre."

Following graduation, Rian moved to Atlanta, and foreshadowing her future career, worked at the Georgia Hospital Association before becoming a flight attendant to continue her travels.

## A choice: literature or theatre?

When deciding between her loves of literature and theatre for graduate studies, Rian took the advice of the late Mary Ann Sullivan, professor of English, who asked if Rian wanted to be an active or passive participant as an educator.

"She helped me understand that, for me, theatre could be a more creative and expressive pursuit," said Rian.

A master's degree at the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. from Stanford University in Theatre and Humanities were followed by a move to Minnesota where Rian took a faculty position at Gustavus Adolphus College. Positions at an arts education non-profit and in hospital fundraising followed.

## An opportunity with the Mayo Clinic

Finally, a position in medical humanities, a field she had never heard of, caught her attention.

"At that time, it was still an evolving field," said Rian. "There weren't many programs in medical humanities in institutions across the country."



In 2008, Rian took over a small medical humanities program at Mayo and began to expand it, introducing curriculum for medical students and residents, private sessions with professional artists for patients, and professional development for staff on topics such as narrative medicine and medical improvisation.

"Many people begin an improv workshop feeling nervous and skeptical but end realizing that it has been both fun and practical in terms of takeaway communications skills," said Rian.

Within Mayo's medical school, Rian taught courses such as The Human Element, an introduction to medical humanities, and Telling the Patient's Story, a theatre course that helps doctors better capture and share a patient's case history. Students are now able to earn a humanities distinction on their diploma, and Rian initiated the development of a professional certificate program in medical humanities. She also helped secure a multi-million dollar endowment for the Lavins Center, ensuring that its work supporting patients, staff and students will continue.

Benefits of medical humanities programs are wide-ranging, as demonstrated by the rapid growth of the field in the U.S. in the past decade. Programs geared toward health professionals "help care providers deepen the understanding of the human condition," while programs for patients "enhance science-based medical treatment." Ultimately, all Lavins Center programs follow Mayo's vision of medical care that "the needs of the patients come first."

While Rian certainly didn't expect to work in health care, her endless efforts at the Mayo Clinic follow a pattern developed during her college years.

"At Bluffton, I was encouraged to pursue my interests. That experience instilled an optimism that my choices would bring something rewarding to me but also beneficial to others."





## Graduation Outcomes *Class of 2021*

**98%**

OF GRADUATES ARE EMPLOYED OR IN GRADUATE SCHOOL OR LONG-TERM SERVICE WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF GRADUATION

**92%**

OF EMPLOYED GRADUATES SAID THEIR BLUFFTON DEGREE WAS IMPORTANT IN OBTAINING THEIR JOB

## TOP 5 INDUSTRIES for the Class of 2021

K-12 EDUCATION

BUSINESS AND ACCOUNTING

SOCIAL WORK/ COUNSELING

MANUFACTURING

RECREATION AND LEISURE

## IN MEMORIAM

**Joy Amstutz '49**, Souderton, Pa., passed away June 7, 2021, at age 93.

**Dorothy (Hurley '50) Janzen**, Baltimore, Md., passed away April 13, 2022, at age 93.

**Joseph R. Graham '51**, Cincinnati, Ohio, passed away March 29, 2022, at age 92.

**Carroll L. McNutt '54**, Columbia City, Ind., passed away Jan. 29, 2022, at age 92.

**John B. Augsburger x56**, Syracuse, Ind., passed away April 10, 2022, at age 87.

**Diane (Lora '56) Cremeann**, Xenia, Ohio, passed away Jan. 4, 2022, at age 88.

**Stanley Erney '56**, Endwell, N.Y., passed away Jan. 25, 2022, at age 87.

**Anne (Crabtree x57) De Maria**, Norwalk, Ohio, passed away Nov. 17, 2021, at age 86.

**Bill Orn x57**, Kokomo, Ind., passed away Feb. 22, 2022, at age 87.

**Gary Vandemark x57**, Delphos, Ohio, passed away Nov. 5, 2021, at age 86.

**John McDowell x58**, Plainfield, Ohio, passed away Sept. 29, 2021, at age 85.

**Don Kimmet x59**, Ottawa, Ohio, passed away Oct. 20, 2021, at age 84.

**Sharleen (Basinger x59) Olson**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Dec. 4, 2021, at age 84.

**Earl E. Shutt '59**, Fairfield, Pa., passed away March 10, 2022, at age 85.

**L. Evaleen (Bachman x60) Bertsche**, Goshen, Ind., passed away Feb. 3, 2022, at age 83.

**Ida (Hefner x60) Blunden**, Lima, Ohio, passed away Dec. 17, 2021, at age 84.

**Anita (Amstutz x60) Falk**, Mountain Lake, Minn., passed away Dec. 3, 2021, at age 83.

**Emil Kreider x60**, Harrisonburg, Va., passed away Oct. 28, 2021, at age 83.

**Kermit Nester x60**, Quakertown, Pa., passed away Dec. 19, 2021, at age 84.

**Jerry L. Risser x60**, Fishers, Ind., passed away Jan. 14, 2022, at age 83.

**Lloyd Geissinger '61**, Whitehall, Pa., passed away March 17, 2022, at age 83.

**Charles "Bud" Snyder '61**, Crestline, Ohio, passed away Dec. 2, 2021, at age 83.

**Janet Badertscher '64**, New Washington, Ohio, passed away Dec. 18, 2021, at age 79.

**Lyle K. Troyer '64**, Wellington, Ohio, passed away Aug. 11, 2021, at age 79.

**Gary Brenneman '65**, Kalispell, Mont., passed away Oct. 22, 2021, at age 77.

**Rodney Hewitt x65**, Apple Creek, Ohio, passed away March 29, 2022, at age 86.

**Bertha (Roehrle '66) Bibler**, Continental, Ohio, passed away April 14, 2022, at age 79.

**Molly (Johnson '66) Herbert**, Orrville, Ohio, passed away March 23, 2022, at age 77.

**Rosemary (Fitting '67) Arn**, Parkersburg, W.Va., passed away Dec. 15, 2021, at age 75.



**Judy (Price '68) Lawrence**, Lima, Ohio, passed away March 26, 2022, at age 80.

**Earl Bixel '69**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away March 11, 2022, at age 75.

**Carolyn (Gerber '71) Fitzwater**, Dalton, Ohio, passed away Dec. 29, 2021, at age 77.

**Garth L. Gerber '71**, Dexter, Mich., passed away Oct. 18, 2021, at age 72.

**Larry Kropp '71**, Mena, Ark., passed away March 4, 2022, at age 72.

**Linda (LeVan '71) Lehman**, Pandora, Ohio, passed away Oct. 8, 2021, at age 72.

**Gary Rinehart '71**, McComb, Ohio, passed away Jan. 30, 2022, at age 72.

**Roger Reiter '72**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Dec. 22, 2021, at age 76.

**James Saneda '74**, Canal Winchester, Ohio, passed away Jan. 12, 2022, at age 70.

**Robert O. Tate '77**, Toledo, Ohio, passed away Dec. 4, 2021, at age 65.

**Linda (Obenour '78) Rumer**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Nov. 23, 2021, at age 73.

**Keith Brooks x79**, Kissimmee, Fla., passed away Jan. 10, 2022, at age 66.

**Winnie J. Pickering '80**, Russells Point, Ohio, passed away Nov. 2, 2021, at age 74.

**Jim Leiber x81**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Oct. 11, 2021, at age 64.

**Randall Bohland '82**, Perrysburg, Ohio, passed away Feb. 26, 2022, at age 73.

**Sue Heath x82**, Sullivan, Ohio, passed away April 12, 2022, at age 62.

**Rich Gansheimer '86**, Georgetown, Texas, passed away Dec. 29, 2021, at age 57.

**Carl Sonneberger '86**, Edon, Ohio, passed away Jan. 6, 2022, at age 57.

**Beverly (Corsaro '91) Glass**, Lima, Ohio, passed away Feb. 6, 2022, at age 76.

**Nita (Contner '93) Worstine**, Forest, Ohio, passed away April 3, 2022, at age 73.

**Carolyn L. Harshbarger '95**, Wapakoneta, Ohio, passed away Jan. 12, 2022, at age 74.

**Howard W. Sherer '95**, Maineville, Ohio, passed away Sept. 30, 2021, at age 51.

**Carla (Weaver '97) Kohler**, Wapakoneta, Ohio, passed away Feb. 12, 2022, at age 67.

**Greg Hover MAEd '99**, Spencerville, Ohio, passed away Feb. 22, 2022, at age 73.

**Mason Staley x10**, Harrod, Ohio, passed away Nov. 26, 2021, at age 34.

**Hunter Hardee '21**, Ladson, S.C., passed away Feb. 11, 2022, at age 25.

### Employees

**Karen (Anderson) Garmatter**, Rawson, Ohio, passed away Dec. 29, 2021, at age 79.

**Sally (Hogan King) Reeder**, Lima, Ohio, passed away April 7, 2022, at age 90.

## Austin E. Knowlton Science Center update



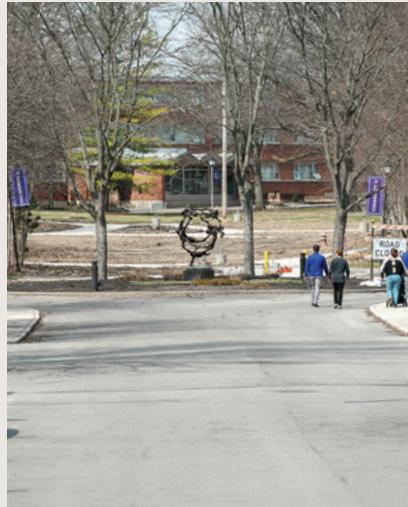
Foundation work  
Dec. 15, 2021



May 16, 2022



March 15, 2022



View down College Avenue  
March 17, 2022





# BLUFFTON NETWORK OF ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

This spring we welcomed Bluffton's 122nd graduating class into the Bluffton Network of Alumni of

**Friends.** They join you in a flourishing community of more than 16,000 alumni in 62 countries and 50 states. Since this network is continuously growing, there are more ways than ever to connect with the university and fellow alumni across industries, countries and beyond!



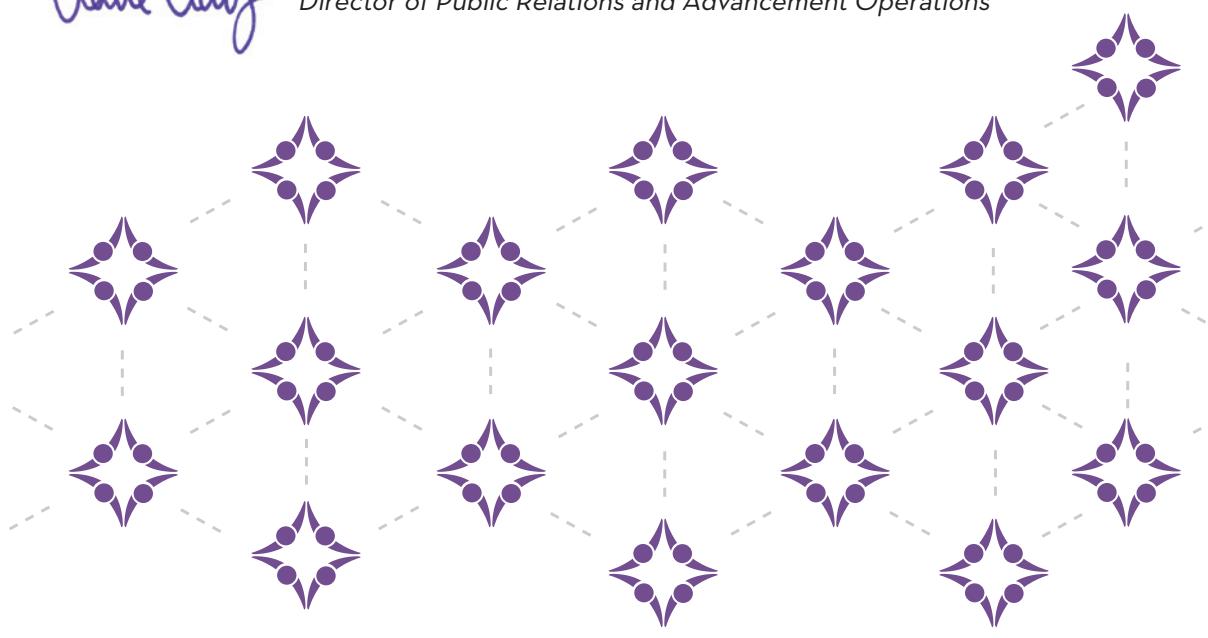
I'm sure you've noticed a few changes in our alumni programming. The first is FareWelcome Week! Held during finals week, FareWelcome events are designed to help seniors say "Farewell" to their undergrad time and "Welcome" to the Bluffton Alumni Network. New events included the Senior Toast and Senior Send Off. Alumni were also invited to join in the fun through the Adopt-A-Senior project and writing a letter to a graduating student, hearing about what's happening on campus during a Zoom call with President Wood and providing ideas for a "Graduation Bucket List" for seniors.

We are also excited to focus on alumni during Homecoming and Alumni Weekend. All alumni reunions which used to take place at May Day, will now be celebrated Homecoming weekend. **Save the date for Homecoming on Oct. 15, 2022!**

However, there are many ways to stay connected to Bluffton no matter the time of year through affinity groups, events and engagement. **Visit [www.bluffton.edu/alumni](http://www.bluffton.edu/alumni) to make a gift, submit an alumnote or refer a student!**

*Claire Clay*

Claire Clay, '18, MBA '20  
Director of Public Relations and Advancement Operations



# LIFELONG LEARNING RESOURCES

Your involvement with Bluffton does not stop at graduation. We offer resources to alumni to help you grow in every stage of life.



## ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Alumni who completed their undergraduate degree at Bluffton are eligible for a 20 percent tuition discount on Bluffton University MBA, MAOM and MAEd programs.

## CAREER RESOURCES

Bluffton's Center for Career & Vocation offers services to Bluffton alumni. Make an appointment for any of your professional development needs.

## LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS

A \$1,000 renewable Alumni Grant is awarded to first-year or transfer students whose parents, grandparents or siblings are Bluffton alumni or current students.

## GIVE BACK

Gifts of every size and type make Bluffton a unique institution. Investments in our students and our mission create valued learning experiences.

### BLUFFTON FUND

Gifts to this unrestricted fund provide flexible financial security which allows Bluffton to respond to institutional and student needs as they arise.

### REFERRALS

Know a high school student who would flourish at Bluffton? Refer them to us!

### PRESIDENT'S SOCIETY

Donors who exceed an annual threshold of giving are eligible to join Bluffton's President's Society. All members receive personal contact from President Wood and an invitation to the President's Banquet during Homecoming.



## STAY IN TOUCH

Information goes both ways! Keep us informed of your personal and professional achievement, and keep your contact information up to date so we can share our big news as well.

### EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

Subscribe to our monthly newsletters and stay updated on upcoming alumni events and opportunities.



### LINKEDIN GROUP

Join the Bluffton University Alumni LinkedIn group. This worldwide network of alumni and friends provides opportunities for connection, ideas and career resources. We want to provide this space for you to network, ask questions, catch up with old classmates or just stay in touch.

### 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.



### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

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- @BlufftonU
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TEAM Bluffton Alumni and Friends  
**25<sup>th</sup>**  
**ANNUAL**

# GOLF SCRAMBLE

## Saturday, July 23, 2022

Entry deadline: July 17, 2022

To register and pay online, visit:  
[www.bluffton.edu/golf](http://www.bluffton.edu/golf)

