Changing Directions—alumni find new paths to success.

Page 14
The University of Hartford welcomes your assistance in identifying prospective students with academic potential who could benefit from the small class size, caring faculty, and wide range of majors that we offer. Whether it's a family member, a neighbor’s child, or the son or daughter of a co-worker, tell them about your experiences at the University and encourage them to apply.

The University is committed to meeting the financial needs of all our students, even in the current economy. Right now, more than 90 percent of our full-time undergraduates receive some form of financial assistance.

Prospective students and their families can learn more about the University of Hartford by going to our admission website: admission.hartford.edu.

—David L. Kurtz III '99

I received my BS in engineering from the University of Hartford by attending night classes while working full time. My professors were great, and they were well versed in their subjects. Because of the education I received, my career has advanced, and for that I’m very grateful.

So grateful, in fact, that my wife, Claudia, and I encouraged our son, Dave, to attend the University. He’s an engineering major too and is off to a great start. We’d also like to see our daughter, Rachel, go to the University in a couple of years.

I think we made the right choice.

—David L. Kurtz III '99
Dear Readers,

It’s spring and that means it’s time to say a temporary good-bye to the approximately 1,300 members of the Class of 2010. We hope they will return to campus often and send us news of all their achievements out there in the world.

A big Thank You! to all of you who answered our call for Plan B career stories. Starting on page 14, about a dozen alumni tell us when, why, and how they changed their career paths.

Read about the recently announced new men’s head basketball coach, John Gallagher. Many of you will remember his name. He was the Hawks’ men’s associate head coach in 2006–08.

I’d like to hear from alumni whose spouses are also graduates of the University of Hartford. I know there are a lot of you out there, so if you are willing to tell the story of how you met and became a couple in a future Observer article, please contact me.

Enjoy your summer!

Trish Charles
Editor-in-Chief
pcharles@hartford.edu

Read the Observer online at www.hartford.edu/observer.
Imagine walking across the University of Hartford campus on a warm, sunny day in April. Outside the Integrated Science, Engineering, and Technology complex, two young women are tossing a football back and forth. Inside the complex, in the acoustical engineering suite, three groups of students are huddled around computers working on projects with various industries in the area while Professor Bob Celmer occasionally looks over their shoulders.

In the Koopman Commons of the Hartford Art School, Mary Frey, professor of photography, sits on a bench talking to seven students sitting on chairs and the floor around her. In a seminar room in the Harry Jack Gray Center, a group of communication students works together on a public relations campaign for a national competition. And from the windows of the Alfred C. Fuller Music Center, the mellow sounds of a jazz saxophone fill the air.

I witnessed these events on a short walk I took this spring; I didn’t pick them to illustrate anything. But I think they do illustrate something that I believe is worth noting.

Each of these learning situations, with the exception of the football toss, was a preprofessional activity. Each, with the possible exception of the jazz saxophone solo, was a group activity; each—to some extent—was informal.

While academics, including myself, love to argue about how important the liberal arts are, I think we sometimes miss an essential point: learning is learning. The aims of education—liberal, professional, or artistic—are to encourage critical thinking, good communication skills, and the power of analysis. Every major has at its base the mastery of a discipline, not only because the subject matter is important but also because it fosters habits of thinking that will last a lifetime.

Secondly, each activity I saw was a small group-learning environment. I believe that is the most significant change in learning I have witnessed since I was an undergraduate 45 years ago. We learned in two essential ways then: in a class or by ourselves, reading books. We still have great classes and great teachers—many Barney graduates will remember Professor Charles Canedy—and reading, whether in a book or through an electronic device of some sort, is still vital. But more and more often, our students help teach each other in small group environments. I think that form of learning is more active and, hence, more lasting.

So what does tossing a football have to do with any of this besides the sheer joy of relaxing and having fun? Simply this—much of the learning on this campus, as on any other, goes on outside of a strictly academic environment; it goes on through learning about ourselves, often not in organized group activities. We should celebrate that form of learning as well.

This summer, our provost, Lynn Pasquerella, will be leaving the University to become president of Mount Holyoke College. In her too short two years here, one of the most important things she has taught me is that the life of the mind is the most important thing that a college or university can inspire. In her own work in philosophy, or in the work she inspired or supported here in others, she helped me realize every day the importance of encouraging and celebrating learning.

One of Lynn’s most memorable contributions here was to start a group she called “difficult dialogues.” In this group Lynn encouraged faculty and staff to talk with each other about the topics we usually avoid discussing, such as disability, gender, and race bias. Like all the activities I described above, this was an informal learning environment. I know from the participants that their time together challenged and stimulated everyone who took part. For me, it exemplified learning of the highest sort.

This column is for Lynn. I am sure she will stimulate such learning among faculty, staff, and students at Mount Holyoke. She has left her mark here. We will all miss her.
A DAMP BUT Delightful Community Day

Despite some drizzly and raw weather, the inside of Gengras Student Union was packed, as some 1,400 attendees enjoyed music, food, lots of activities for kids, interactive health-and-wellness displays, a bicycle safety clinic, a circus workshop, and much more at the University’s annual Community Day.

Outside Gengras, visitors found a mobile petting zoo, a performance of The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by Dramatis Personae, and the always popular opportunity to “Be an Anchor” at the University’s television studio, among other activities.

Some of the day’s options featured a Mark Twain theme in recognition of the 175th anniversary of the birth of the Hartford icon and the 100th anniversary of his death. An actor portraying Mark Twain gave several performances during the course of the day and participated in the President’s College-sponsored marathon reading of Mark Twain’s Tom Sawyer.

Old-time trolley rides took attendees to University High School of Science and Engineering, where students and teachers demonstrated student-built robots and other projects.

“Fortunately, Community Day’s reputation has grown to the point where families are coming back year after year, regardless of weather,” said Jonathan Easterbrook ’87, M’90, director of marketing communication for the University and the founder and organizer of Community Day.

Now in its eighth year, Community Day brings the University’s neighbors from throughout Greater Hartford to campus and helps increase awareness of the rich array of programs, activities, and resources that the University offers.
If the Shoe Fits…
FOUNDER OF TOMS SHOES DISCUSSES HIS UNIQUE BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

Blake Mycoskie founded TOMS Shoes, Inc., with the promise that for every pair of shoes sold, he would give a pair to a child in need. In just three years, this business model resulted in more than 140,000 pairs of new shoes being donated to children around the world.

Mycoskie, the founder and “chief shoe giver” of TOMS Shoes, discussed his unique business philosophy at the Barney School’s annual Ellsworth Lecture on April 6.

“Using the purchasing power of individuals to benefit the greater good is what we’re all about,” says Mycoskie. “The TOMS One-for-One business model transforms our customers into benefactors, which allows us to grow a truly sustainable business rather than depending on fundraising for support.”

Many people became familiar with TOMS Shoes when Mycoskie starred in a commercial for AT&T. The commercial has received thousands of hits on YouTube.

Embodying the entrepreneurial spirit of a new generation, the 32-year-old Mycoskie has created five businesses since college. An avid reader and traveler, he lives on a sailboat in Los Angeles, Calif.

The Ellsworth Lecture program promotes an awareness of and appreciation for the American business system. It was created in 1979 by Ensign-Bickford Industries, Inc., to honor its former chairman, the late John E. Ellsworth.

Bestselling Author Kelly Corrigan Comes to Lincoln Theater

Just two days after her newest book, Lift, became available in stores, bestselling author and YouTube sensation Kelly Corrigan discussed it with an appreciative audience in Lincoln Theater.

Corrigan, whose earlier book, The Middle Place (Voice, 2008), spent 24 weeks on The New York Times bestseller list, came to campus on March 4 as part of the Rogow Distinguished Visiting Lecturers Program, in partnership with the Women’s Education and Leadership Fund. Corrigan’s lecture also was the opening event in Hartford College for Women’s reunion weekend, “A Home Coming for Women 2010.”

Corrigan discussed and read passages from Lift and The Middle Place, answered questions from the audience, and signed copies of the books for enthusiastic fans.

Written as a letter to her children, Corrigan’s Lift (Hyperion, 2010) weaves together three true and unforgettable stories of adults willing to experience emotional hazards in exchange for the gratifications of raising children. The book is described as “a tender, intimate, and robust portrait of risk and love; a touchstone for anyone who wants to live more fully.”

Corrigan’s bestseller, The Middle Place, describes “that sliver of time when parenthood and childhood overlap.” At 36, she had a marriage that worked; a couple of funny, active kids; and a weekly newspaper column—and all the while felt as though she remained comfortably wedged between her adult duties and her parents’ care.

In addition to being a bestselling author, Corrigan also is a YouTube sensation. A video of Corrigan reading her essay, “Transcending: Words on Women and Strength,” has received more than 4.6 million hits.
The University of Hartford celebrated its 53rd birthday on Feb. 21, with a variety of Founders Day festivities, culminating in a colorful birthday party at the Sports Center.

The University began observing Founders Day on Feb. 21, 2007, its 50th anniversary. Five decades earlier, on Feb. 21, 1957, a bill incorporating the new University of Hartford was unanimously approved by the Connecticut General Assembly and signed by Gov. Abraham Ribicoff, clearing the way for the merger of Hillyer College, Hartt School of Music, and the Hartford Art School.

For each of the past four years, the University has observed Feb. 21 with a variety of festivities designed to bring together the University community and celebrate its spirit.

This year’s events included a Founders Day women’s basketball game against Boston University (the Hawks won, 61–38). During halftime, three finalists competed in the Jeopardy-style championship round of the University of Hartford Trivia Challenge on the floor of Chase Arena. Alumnus Mark Vining ’82 won the first prize of two round-trip airline tickets to Florida, courtesy of A&S Travel Center.

The Feb. 21 women’s basketball game also was a Pink Zone game, in which 50 percent of all ticket sales were donated to the Comprehensive Breast Health Center at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford. Hartford Athletics presented a check for $7,204 to Paul Pendergast, president of Saint Francis Foundation, at halftime. Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell, a breast cancer survivor, attended the game, took part in a ceremonial “first tip,” and helped award prizes to the Trivia Challenge finalists.

For those whose interests lay more in the arts than on the basketball court, Founders Day 2010 offered several options. Campus visitors had an opportunity to take in a performance of Brian Friel’s play, Translations, at the Handel Performing Arts Center, or a Hartt School faculty recital in the Fuller Music Center.

The day’s events culminated with a Founders Day birthday party in the auxiliary gym at the Sports Center, complete with cupcakes, ice cream, party hats, balloons, and a performance by the student a cappella group L’Shir.

Happy birthday, University of Hartford—and best wishes for a great 54th year!
Approximately 300 high school students from all over the Northeast were on campus March 26–28 to attend the 2010 PeaceJam Northeast Youth Conference. Throughout the weekend, the students took part in workshops, community service projects, performances, and other programs. Some 50 college students, at least half of whom were University of Hartford students, served as mentors to the students.

PeaceJam is an international movement that brings young people together with Nobel Peace Laureates to inspire and educate them about becoming leaders who work for social justice and peace in the world.

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel was this year’s Nobel Laureate in attendance. He received a Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 for his leadership in promoting fundamental human rights and true democracy for the people of Latin America. Prior to Esquivel’s lecture, the University conferred on him an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

A native of Argentina, Esquivel was one of thousands of “Desaparecidos.” Imprisoned and tortured for 14 months by the Argentine military junta, he was finally released when Amnesty International declared him the 1978 International Political Prisoner of the Year. Esquivel continues to campaign for debt relief for lesser developed countries and to focus on breaking the cycle of violence endured by those who live in extreme poverty.

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PeaceJam and Nobel Laureate Welcomed to Campus

More Than $9,000 for Haiti Quake Relief

Faculty, staff, and students at the University have responded generously in the wake of the Jan. 12, 2010, earthquake that devastated Haiti by raising $8,600 through the Center for Community Service on campus.

The funds, which were collected during a variety of on-campus events throughout the spring semester, will be donated to Oxfam International and the Connecticut Haitian American Organization.

In February the Center for Community Service sponsored the “Hartford for Haiti Benefit Concert,” which was held in Lincoln Theater. The Student Government Association held a second benefit concert, “Light the Pathway of Hope,” in February in Gengras Café. Both concerts featured student performers. The Center also collected funds at the University’s annual Community Day event in April.

Other fundraisers included a “practice-a-thon” organized by The Hartt School Community Division and an event sponsored by the Campus Activities Team—“Some Blues, Some Jazz & Some Soul Food”—in honor of Black History month. In addition, student-athletes sold “Hawks 4 Haiti” headbands at home basketball and lacrosse games.

Barney School students in Assistant Professor Linda Cohen’s Leadership in the 21st Century class raised an additional $550 for Haiti relief as a class project. Their funds are being donated to Save the Children’s Haiti Quake Disaster efforts.

“One thing about the Haiti campaign is that faculty, staff, and students alike came together to work on it and support its formation. It’s been a great process,” says Matt Blocker, director of the Center for Community Service.

L-r: Student and volunteer coordinator Adrian Alexis Ruiz ’10, in back; Emma Heinz-Goldberg and Matt Blocker of the Center for Community Service; and student volunteer Alana Blake.
Two Hartford Art School students won top honors in February at the 21st annual Alexander A. Goldfarb Student Exhibition in the Joseloff Gallery.

Kevin Kelly, a senior majoring in media arts, and Sara Allen, a senior ceramics major, won this year’s Alexander A. Goldfarb Purchase Awards. Kelly received the Purchase Award for his high-definition video titled Directions, and Allen won the award for her ceramic and mixed-media piece, Memories of Sisters: Similar and Divergent.

Each year, two student artists are selected to receive Purchase Awards in the amount of $1,000 each, made possible through the Alexander A. Goldfarb Endowment Trust. The winning students’ artwork becomes part of the University’s permanent collection.

The annual exhibition and awards are open to all undergraduate and graduate students of the University of Hartford. Each year, students are invited to enter their finest work, which is juried by a professional in the visual arts. The juror for this year’s show was Clinton Jukkala, Yale University assistant professor of painting/printmaking and director of undergraduate studies in art.

Goldfarb Purchase Award Winners

New MFA in Photography Is a Hit!

The first cohort of the Hartford Art School’s new Master of Fine Arts in Photography program will be on campus for two weeks this summer. World-famous photographer Robert Lyons, whose work has been exhibited throughout the United States and Europe, has developed and will direct the limited-residency program with an international scope.

Lyons has designed the independent, tutorial-based program for the engaged professional interested in investigating art, documentary practice, and the photo-based book. It will also appeal to recent graduates who wish to facilitate their professional credentials as artists and educators.

Already the new degree program has drawn faculty and students from around the world. Its emphasis is for students to produce a strong body of work with an accompanying publication, and learn the pedagogical forms and methods that can be used in teaching photography.

Students attend the program over three summers and four academic-year semesters. Each summer session takes place at the University of Hartford for an intensive, two-week period, during which students and faculty interact inside and outside the classroom. In addition, during the fall and spring sessions, the class meets at off-site locations—such as New York City, Berlin/Leipzig, and other photography hubs—for an intensive, seven-day period.

Between official sessions, students are in regular contact with their thesis advisors. The program has a full 60-credit curriculum but allows students to participate without leaving their studios for the majority of the time.

“I am pleased that the Hartford Art School has embraced my vision for this program and that President Harrison and the board of regents are behind its innovative approach to higher education,” says Lyons. “I feel we are at the forefront with the international limited-residency MFA program, which has . . . attracted a very high caliber of MFA candidates. I look forward to our beginning this summer.”

The roster of faculty includes Hartford Art School Professor Mary Frey, Joerg Colberg of the blog "Conscientious," Doug Dubois, Adam Bartos, Alice Rose George, Hellen Van Meene, Alec Soth, Marc Joseph Berg, and others. For more information, visit the MFA Photography homepage and www.hartford.edu/graduate/programs.
Observer

Scholarship recipients were introduced to their benefactors at the Ninth Annual Scholarship Appreciation Luncheon. Student speakers were Wilfreda Tilley ’10 and Miguel Angel Vaszquez ’12.

Tilley received The Hartford Nursing Career Track: Pre-Nursing to BSN Scholarship established by Claire and the late Millard Pryor. Originally from Kenya, where her birth family still lives, she will be the first member of her family to earn a college degree at Commencement this year.

Tilley lives in Bloomfield, Conn., with her husband, who is pursuing a master’s degree at the University, and her son, a high school freshman. She works at Hartford Hospital in the cardiovascular unit and volunteers at My Sister’s Place in Hartford, Conn., where she works with victims of domestic violence.

Vaszquez, whose parents live in Waterbury, Conn., has been singing in church since the age of four but received no private instruction in voice until his last year of high school, where he was president of the choir and was involved in other activities and clubs.

A student of Hartt faculty member Michele McBride, Vasquez has since performed with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra under the baton of conductor Willie Waters. He says he also enjoys acting in community theater and has participated in a number of music festivals, including the New England Music Festival, where he was both the number-one baritone and the featured soloist.

The luncheon was attended by more than 200 scholarship donors and student recipients, and gave both groups an opportunity to meet and learn about each other. The 1877 Club on the University’s Bloomfield Avenue campus was the site of the event, held on April 4, 2010.

Face to Face

SCHOLARSHIP DONORS AND STUDENT RECIPIENTS MEET

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$2.4 Million Grant to Develop Unmanned Surveillance Vehicle

The University of Hartford has received a $2.4 million federal grant to develop miniaturized autonomous (unmanned) aerial vehicles (UAVs). The largest research grant in University history, it will be used to help the U.S. Army develop the technologies needed to create a new generation of small surveillance systems.

Dean Lou Manzione of the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture has been working to secure the project for close to a year and a half. The device, which will be about the size of a soda can, will be multifunctional—able, for example, to transmit video over long distances in real time, provide a forward listening post, and sense dangerous conditions such as gases, radiation, or explosives nearby.

“It’s a very aggressive target size,” says Manzione, pointing out that the Predator—the military’s workhorse unmanned aerial vehicle currently being used in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere—is too large to fit in a two-car garage.

The University is the lead institution in a partnership with the University of Connecticut, the University of Bridgeport, and the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc., as well as select area companies that will provide vital expertise to the effort.

“Autonomous technologies such as these are an excellent interdisciplinary learning device for the engineering profession,” adds Manzione, “and they enjoy tremendous student interest as one of the most important 21st-century technologies.”

According to John J. Carson ’65, vice president of University relations, the awarding of the grant to the University received strong support from U.S. Congressman John B. Larson, who provided the direct sponsorship; U.S. Senators Christopher Dodd and Joseph Lieberman; and the highest levels of the Army Research Command.

Manzione says he expects that an early prototype will be developed by the group within the next 18 months.
The Observer went to press in late April. Lacking a time machine, we could not include coverage of the University’s 53rd Commencement on May 16 in this issue. Instead, we’re providing preview information about the speaker, two graduating seniors, one alumnus, five faculty members, and four honorary degree recipients who are to be given special recognition that day.

The Commencement speaker is our own Jennifer Rizzotti, coach of the University of Hartford’s women’s basketball team. In her 11 years at the University, Rizzotti has built the program into a nationally recognized America East power, winning four regular-season championships and four tournament championships, and making five trips to the NCAA Tournament. She has been honored three times as the America East Coach of the Year.

The University will present honorary doctoral degrees to Hartford Archbishop Henry J. Mansell, Senior U.S. District Judge Ellen Bree Burns, psychologist and educator Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and Grammy Award–winning composer William Bolcom. The student speaker is Taryn Brandt, a Class of 2010 psychology major with a 3.92 grade point average.

Graduating senior Adrian Alexis Ruiz will receive the Belle K. Ribicoff Prize, which recognizes academic excellence. He has a 3.95 grade point average and will attend medical school in the fall. Neftali Torres is a student leader, researcher, and community volunteer who has maintained a 3.93 grade point average as a civil engineering major. He will receive the John G. Lee Medal, awarded each year to a graduating senior from Greater Hartford who has excelled academically and demonstrated a deep commitment to the community.

John Feierabend is professor and director of the Music Education Division as well as chair of undergraduate music education at The Hartt School. One of the country’s leading authorities on music–and–movement development in early childhood, he will receive the James E. and Frances W. Bent Award for Scholarly and/or Artistic Creativity. The Roy E. Larson Award for Excellence in Teaching will go to Robert L. Duran, a professor of communication in the College of Arts and Sciences. Mentoring students has been the hallmark of Duran’s 28-year teaching career at the University, whether the setting is in the classroom or in a residential community across campus.

Susan Coleman, professor of finance in the Barney School of Business, will receive the Oscar and Shoshana Trachtenberg Award for Sustained Service to the University. From serving on a wide range of committees to promoting financial literacy among students to developing partnerships with educational institutions in China, Coleman’s efforts on behalf of the University have been remarkable. The recipient of the Donald W. Davis All-University Curriculum Award will be Donn Weinholz, professor and chair of the Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education, Nursing and Health Services. Among his many accomplishments is his participation in the All-University Curriculum for 18 years, teaching four courses and helping to develop two, including the long-running Gender, Identity, and Society.

Catharine (Cat) Balco, assistant professor of painting and drawing in the Hartford Art School, will receive the Belle K. Ribicoff Junior Faculty Prize, which carries with it a $10,000 award. Balco is the second recipient of the prize. Established with a generous gift from Ribicoff, it recognizes an outstanding junior faculty member in a tenure-track position who has not yet been tenured.

Also on the platform on May 15 will be Kathy Behrens ’85, who is receiving the Distinguished Alumni Award. Behrens is executive vice president of social responsibility and player programs for the National Basketball Association. She oversees a group that manages league and player social responsibility efforts, supports player growth and development, and enhances marketing opportunities for current and former players.
Just days after men’s basketball coach Dan Lebovitz announced his resignation, Director of Athletics Patricia H. Meiser named John Gallagher as the 10th coach in the history of the University of Hartford men’s basketball program. Gallagher will make his return to the Hartford sidelines after spending two seasons as the Hawks’ associate head coach from 2006 to 2008. He spent the past two seasons on head coach Glen Miller’s staff at the University of Pennsylvania.

“In John Gallagher we have someone whose passion for the game is unparalleled and someone who has devoted his life to the sport of basketball,” says Meiser. “He brings a high energy level, tireless work ethic, and a set of values we believe our players will emulate.”

“I am ecstatic to be back in Hartford,” Gallagher says. “I can’t wait to get started. The Hartford community means a lot to me, and I cannot wait to embrace this challenge.”

In Gallagher’s two seasons at Hartford, the Hawks compiled a 31-34 mark, including a Division I record 18 wins in 2007–08. That season, the Hawks went on to finish second in the America East regular season and made the program’s first trip to the America East Championship game.

Gallagher spent his two seasons in Hartford implementing a new motion offense for the Hawks. The result was a scoring average of 62.1 points per game in his first year and 70.8 points per game in his second year, both of which led to double-figure wins in each season. Hartford’s perimeter offense also accounted for a school-record 206 three-pointers in his first season and 312 in his second season, which set an America East Conference record.

“I am delighted we have been able to attract John back to the University,” says University President Walter Harrison. “I never would have predicted this turn of events, but all’s well that ends well. I am looking forward to great success for Hartford men’s basketball under John’s leadership.”

Prior to his first stint at Hartford, Gallagher was the top assistant for Fran O’Hanlon’s staff at Lafayette College, where he was the program’s top recruiter and developed the team’s guards. Gallagher arrived at Lafayette by way of La Salle University, where he coached five seasons, two of which came under Big 5 legend Speedy Morris and the final three under Billy Hahn. He jumped right into coaching upon graduating from Saint Joseph’s University in 1999.

Gallagher and his wife, Geneva, welcomed their first daughter, Kenna, in November 2008.
It Was a Basketball Bonanza!

MEN’S AND WOMEN’S AE TOURNAMENTS CAME TO CAMPUS

The University of Hartford hosted the first-ever combined men’s and women’s America East basketball championship March 4–7, presented by Newman’s Own. Thousands of fans from Baltimore, Md., to Bangor, Maine, traveled to the University campus to support their respective universities and watch basketball, basketball, and more basketball.

The excitement of the four days was evident throughout the University and captured beautifully by Zach Wallens ’10, sports editor of the UofH student newspaper, The Informer.

For four days I wrote, blogged, interviewed, ate, and by the final buzzer each night, practically slept at the University of Hartford Sports Center during the America East tournament. Four days, 17 teams, 13 games—I saw it all. As fast as the thousands of fans, hundreds of student-athletes, and momentary Fan Fest tents came in, like magic, they disappeared.

The America East tournament occupied Hartford for just over 72 hours, but its enduring effect on the University and the conference could take years to comprehend. However, one thing is for sure: this weekend marked possibly the most important and most successful sporting event in the University’s history.

Being at Chase Family Arena for 12 hours per day was simply amazing to witness the amount of work the America East and the University put into transforming the Sports Center into a fan-and-media-friendly environment. The Fan Fest behind the arena was constantly packed. The media room, which occupied the usual cardio room and multipurpose courts, was perfect. But it wasn’t the rare accommodations that made this weekend special. It was the athletes and packed fan buses.

The America East men’s and women’s tournament was part of a basketball bonanza in Hartford that first week in March. Just minutes away, the Big East Conference hosted its 16-team women’s tournament downtown at the XL Center. The Hartford Courant opined that the tournaments were an economic boon to the city, taking a total of 4,500 hotel room nights and adding nearly $4 million in economic impact.

A Year of Many Firsts for Women’s Basketball

A program that has been making a tradition of reaching new heights savored a plethora of firsts this past season.

Finishing with a 27-5 record, the women’s basketball program received its first at-large bid to women’s basketball’s biggest showcase, the NCAA Tournament. The Hawks also made their inaugural appearance in the national rankings this past season, reaching as high as number 19 in the ESPN/USA Today Poll on March 8.

Hartford soared through the America East Conference regular season unblemished, finishing with a perfect 16-0 mark, another program first. Its 20-game winning streak during the season shattered the previous high of 15 consecutive victories.

Individually, fifth-year senior Erica Beverly became the first player in school history to record 1,000 or more career points and rebounds. Classmate Diana Delva finished the season second in the country in field-goal percentage, making 64.7 percent of her shots. This represents the first time that a Hartford player has finished that high nationally in a major statistical category. To add icing to the cake, the Hawks as a team allowed opponents only 50.4 points a game, which was third-best in America, again previously unchartered territory.

Unfortunately, in a season of firsts, it was a second occurrence that halted the Hawks’ record-setting momentum. When Beverly went down with a knee injury one game shy of the America East Championship game, it was the second time such a misfortune cut short one of her seasons. It also jolted the Hawks, who, after playing 30 games with her, lost the final two without her, the America East Championship game and an NCAA Tournament first-round matchup with Louisiana State University.

With six-straight postseason appearances and the same number of consecutive 20-win seasons, Hartford women’s basketball has clearly become recognized on the national landscape. So, too, has its head coach. Jennifer Rizzotti has been selected by the USA Basketball Women’s Junior National Team Committee to lead the 2010 USA Women’s U18 National Team this summer at the FIBA Americas U18 Championship, June 23–27, at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.
A YEAR AFTER IVESON GRADUATED IN 1998 FROM THE HARTT SCHOOL, HE BECAME THE YOUNGEST AND THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN RINGMASTER AT THE CIRCUS.

Slightly more than 10 years ago, the Observer featured opera performance major Johnathan Lee Iverson in an article written not long after he became a circus ringmaster. In this issue we catch up with him and ask how he likes the job.

At six feet five, Johnathan Lee Iverson ’98 would be a presence anywhere. Add a sparkling top hat and a voice that booms out “New York, are you ready for the Greatest Show on Earth?” to a sold-out crowd at Madison Square Garden opening night of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, and you have energy personified.

A year after Iverson graduated in 1998 from The Hartt School, an opportunity opened up for him to become the youngest and the first African American ringmaster at the circus. He took it and says, “It was one of the best decisions of my life. I was beside myself when I got to Madison Square Garden at 23. A year earlier I was a broke college student.”

During three tours with Ringling Bros., Iverson met and married his wife, Priscilla, a fellow performer who is originally from Brazil. He then left the circus and took roles in several Off-Broadway productions, including Carnival, Showboat, The Magic Flute, and
Dreamgirls. He did television commercials, some singing with the USO Liberty Bells of New York, voiceovers for the new animated feature Eloise, and a bit of freelance journalism.

Now the Iversons are back with the circus, traveling by rail with their two children, Matthew Felipe, 4, and Lila Simone, 1. Iverson loves his life on the road and the easy balance between career and family that it provides. He also loves the global, multicultural world in which his children are immersed—where 10 languages are spoken on a daily basis—and the nonstop energy and enthusiasm in an environment where everyone is committed to excellence and craft.

Born and reared in New York City, Iverson is the son of a single mother whom he gives much of the credit for his success. “She was love-in-action, a hands-on mother, president of the PTA, and I learned from her that parenting is the most sacred of all ventures. Considering the fact that you can’t choose your parents, I hit the jackpot with this lady.”

Iverson’s growth as a performer has meant watching the tinge of arrogance that accompanied him through his 20s be transformed into something else: his own version of love-in-action.

“When I took on the responsibilities of a wife and children, I started to understand that love is really about the other.” Now, it’s not just a love of performing but a love for the audience and a desire to touch each child’s imagination, especially young children of color.

“It’s a kind of blessed burden, but when I’m performing, I want them to know that everything is possible if you’re willing to commit to it. That’s what drives me.

“When opportunity meets preparation, through quality education, great things happen. When you’re educated, [your diploma] does a lot. The fact that you have that degree shows that you can commit yourself to something.”

Iverson sips tea and feeds his daughter cereal backstage between shows while talking about where his life has gone.

“I never thought about running away with the circus; it never entered my mind. I was going to be an opera star, maybe a Broadway star or a film-and-television star, but this is better than anything I could’ve ever imagined.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: To read more about Iverson and see additional photos, go to www.hartford.edu/observer.

A DAY IN THE LIFE of Jonathan Iverson ’98 includes family time backstage listening to his son, Matthew Felipe, read a book with wife, Priscilla, and feeding his daughter, Lila Simone, cereal. Then it’s time for Mom and Dad to don costumes and get ready for the day’s performance, scenes from which are shown here.
A number of alumni who made somewhat dramatic career changes mentioned wanting to help others. For example, Russell Graves M’83 had his position as an investment officer at a bank eliminated in a 1997 merger. He became the executive director of a nonprofit credit counseling agency called Consumer Credit and Budget Counseling. In his new capacity Graves oversees programs that help families save their homes from foreclosure and teach money management to low-income and unemployed individuals.

“I wanted to take off the suit and tie and essentially give back to those that needed help,” says Graves. “I was very fortunate that the separation package, including stock options and the employee stock ownership plan, [allowed me] to join with members of my family to start a nonprofit agency.”

Others, like Julie Averill ’01 and Gene Heady ’81, found a way to use the knowledge and skills they acquired at the University in new ways. Averill, a professional freelance flutist in New York City for three years, performed with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic, among others. A double major in performance and instrumental music education, she recently went full time at her early-childhood business, Kids at Work. Located in Greenwich Village in Manhattan, Kids at Work provides classes for mothers and their very young children in art, music, and creative play. Averill transitioned from performing to teaching flute at a small music school, where she also taught toddlers through age 4. She then moved to a preschool, where she became a lead teacher, before founding her business in 2007.
Gene Heady worked in his father’s electrical contracting business before, during, and after earning his bachelor’s degree in engineering in 1981 from what is now the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture. He worked in the industry for nearly 13 years as a project engineer, project manager, and business owner before applying to law school. The idea of becoming an attorney was actually first planted at UofH.

“I took a business law class there. The professor told me that I had missed my calling and suggested that I transfer from engineering to pre-law. I never forgot my professor’s advice.”

Heady graduated from Texas Tech University School of Law in 1996 with honors. Since 2003, he has been a partner in the Atlanta, Ga., office of the national construction litigation firm, Smith, Currie & Hancock, LLP. Heady has parlayed his experience in the construction industry and his engineering degree into a successful construction law practice. He is a member of the state bars of Georgia, Texas, Florida, and Colorado.

Some alumni ended up in careers that surprised even them. David Markowitz ’98 majored in communication with an emphasis on broadcasting. His first job was at ESPN in the television production department, where he worked on *Sportscenter* and *NBA2Nite*. After two years at what he thought would be a dream job, Markowitz moved to *World Wrestling Entertainment* for a year before realizing he was burned out on television. Today, Markowitz is a regional director of client relations for New England and New York State at Great-West Retirement Services.

“I never thought back in college, working for STN Channel 2 News, that I would be working on 401(k) plans, let alone enjoying it,” says Markowitz. “But I love my job and feel that I was made for this role. I also enjoy the nights and weekends off that I didn’t have before to spend with my wife [Jessica Nowasacki ’98] and daughter, Rory.”

And then there are those who never really settle on a particular career path. Bob DePietro ’66, M’73, falls into that category by his own admission. A former editor of *The Informer* (then called *The Callboard*) while on campus, DePietro describes his work experience as follows: “farmer; insurance claims adjustor and supervisor; HR manager; middle-school teacher as well as ESL and GED instructor; consultant in priority and time management; adjunct university professor teaching insurance, organizational behavior, and employment law; management training instructor; federal government administrative officer—you name it, chances are I did it.” Now retired, DePietro most recently worked for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in a variety of supervisory functions.

Looking back on his checkerboard career, DePietro says, “I attribute my broad range of abilities and successes to the respect, support, and friendship of the very capable teachers I had during my University of Hartford years.” It’s a sentiment echoed by many others.
For the past seven years, Lee Bieber, who received a BFA in illustration in 1992, has been known as Officer Bieber to his colleagues in the Plantation Police Department in South Florida. Assigned to road patrol, Bieber spends his days helping stranded motorists, issuing traffic citations, arresting criminals, and testifying in court, among other duties. He also answers a wide variety of calls for assistance and citizen complaints from members of the community, which is about 30 miles north of Miami.

Between his 1992 graduation and the end of 2001, Bieber worked in the graphic design field, developing corporate identity packages, creating website designs, and doing prepress design and production for print materials at several agencies. Then, two months after 9/11, Bieber left his job and sat down with his wife to talk about the future. “My wife, Jill, and I discussed whether I should start my own business, work for another design agency, or pursue other options. My father-in-law suggested law enforcement as a possibility. He was a police officer in New York City for more than 30 years and said it was the best decision he had ever made. After much more discussion with my wife, I could see that police work would be a great career opportunity for me.”

In addition to his father-in-law’s suggestion, Bieber recalls that his own father had often wished that he had pursued a career as a state trooper. Community service was an important issue in his family—both of his parents were volunteer paramedics in Spring Valley, N.Y.

Although he made his decision shortly after 9/11, Bieber says the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were contributing factors but not deciding ones for him.

“I think the driving motivation for me was the fact that I wanted to be a better person, feel pride in the work I was doing, and have opportunities to help people.”

“I think the driving motivation for me was the fact that I wanted to be a better person, feel pride in the work I was doing, and have opportunities to help people. I also like that I’m not stuck behind a desk and that, every day, my environment and the people I meet change. The job offers great stability, benefits, and opportunities for growth. I enjoy making a difference in the community that I serve and having a positive effect on other people’s lives. My goal is to move up the chain of command.”

Bieber says that although police work can sometimes be a thankless job, there are those rare occasions when he gets to see, hear, or read about the results of his actions. He adds that being recognized by his department as a person who can contribute to its development, efficiency, and overall productivity is another big plus.

Some of that recognition comes from skills he acquired at the Hartford Art School and used in his previous profession. Bieber’s department has made use of his design and project management skills on several in-house projects that included electronic ticketing systems, a computer-aided dispatch system, and the department’s records management system. “I handled these and other projects from concept to completion,” says Bieber. “Since their successful implementation, I am now considered the liaison between the police department and the city’s IT [information technology] staff.”

Almost nine years since he decided to join law enforcement, Bieber is still enthusiastic about the change he made. “To this day, I am so happy that I made this career change. It has had a positive effect on so many aspects of my life. I only wish I had done it sooner.”
Julie Karass Clawson graduated cum laude from the then Hartt School of Music in 1987 with a Bachelor of Music in Opera Performance. At 20, she says, “I was driven and worked very hard to be a great singer.” After graduation, she toured with Opera New England and gave numerous recitals.

While her husband, Michael Clawson ’91, was in graduate school at the University of Connecticut, Clawson sang with CONCORA and the Woodland Scholars, both professional choral groups in Connecticut, and was a soloist/section leader at Immanuel Church in Hartford, Conn. She also worked full time as a medical secretary.

After the birth of their two daughters and the completion of his PhD, Clawson’s husband received a job offer in south-central Nebraska at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The two East-Coasters were about to become Midwesterners.

“In true pioneering spirit, we packed up our two babies, two cockatiels, and a dog, and headed west in 2002,” says Clawson. Their destination: Hastings, Neb.; population, 24,000.

Despite her admitted culture shock, Clawson soon discovered the town was home to Hastings College, a small liberal arts school. She sought out the chair of the music department at the college. Within a year of her arrival, Clawson had performed with the college and had brought the Woodland Scholars to Hastings for a concert. For the next five years, she continued to sing at the college and with the Hastings Symphony and several churches in the area.

While enjoying her status as the self-titled “Queen Diva of the Prairie,” Clawson found herself looking for something new once her children started school.

“I tried teaching but discovered that was not for me. So, in December 2006, I decided to return to school and become a nurse.

There was a nursing shortage, and I discovered that Creighton University School of Nursing in Omaha, Neb., had a satellite campus just six blocks from my home.”

Because her opera curriculum at Hartt had not included courses in chemistry, anatomy, physiology, and a few other areas of science, Clawson spent a year and a half fulfilling the prerequisites for Creighton’s accelerated 12-month nursing degree. With the support of her family, she graduated from the program with honors in August 2009 and passed the Registered Nurse Licensure Exam shortly thereafter.

Today, the former Queen Diva can be found working the night shift as a trauma nurse in the emergency room at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital in Hastings.

“In some ways these two careers are similar in that they both provide opportunities to connect with people,” says Clawson. “Richard Mercier, my vocal coach at Hartt, taught me that I could do anything and be anyone I wanted. He also reminded me that music is nothing if it doesn’t touch someone in some way. This remains with me to this day as a nurse. How a person is treated plays a major role in their recovery.”

As for singing, Clawson admits that she hasn’t completely closed the door on her previous profession. “I have been heard singing the score of The Lion King to a sick or hurt child in the emergency room!”

EDITOR’S NOTE: We added a photo to Julie’s monitor of her, far right holding Cassius, the poodle; Heather Tessmer, far left; and Susan Mello, center, from a 1986 Hartt production of the opera Manon.
Many Americans are living longer, and many of their adult children are struggling with how to make sure their parents are in safe and comfortable environments.

Freelance financial writer Marcie Lain LaBelle M’83 has been there. In the midst of looking for resources to make life easier and more secure for her mother, now 94, and her husband’s parents, she made some discoveries.

“I saw a very broad range of adaptations, products, and technologies that could be helpful and also discovered that remodelers, technology companies, interior designers, and others were getting very serious about serving the physically challenged older adult.”

With LaBelle’s discoveries came the realization that her family could have taken advantage of these resources much sooner if only they had known what was available and whom to turn to for advice. Thus was born the concept for her new business, Accommodating Homes.

Through a network of occupational therapists experienced in home adaptations, LaBelle gives older homeowners guidance on environmental modifications, products, design solutions, and technologies that support safe, comfortable, and independent living in their own homes. She also offers an idea of the costs involved in modifying their home environments.

“We make it easier for clients to age in place,” says LaBelle. “We also help homeowners who are struggling with the ‘stay-or-go’ decision.”

LaBelle received a BFA in theatre education from Boston University and taught briefly before her marriage and move to Connecticut. She then worked in television production and public relations for WFSB, Channel 3, for a few years before going into corporate communications at CIGNA for almost 10 years. She received her MBA from the University during this period. After the birth of her two sons, she decided to go freelance and for the past 20 years has been self-employed as a financial writer.

“I really value my UofH graduate education,” says LaBelle. “I did a concentration in marketing, and I couldn’t have picked a better specialty area. With my new business, the importance of marketing can’t be overstated.”
The birth of a first child has a way of rearranging priorities, and that was certainly true for Melanie Hache Downey ’95. The director of public relations and B2B marketing at Monster.com, she was instrumental in the growth and success of the company, which is one of the largest online employment websites in the world.

Downey’s life changed when she learned that her daughter, Ava, and later her son, William, have severe allergies that began right after their births.

“Both of my children have severe allergies to foods, environmental contaminants, and various household and cosmetic chemicals. Symptoms range from hives to severe eczema, and we have endured anaphylaxis [a severe allergic reaction that can be fatal] too often,” says Downey.

She began heavily researching allergies, skin disorders, and related illnesses. Downey discovered that a lot of the chemicals and additives in our food, cosmetics, and even baby lotions are banned in other countries as known or suspected carcinogens, hormone disruptors, or skin irritants.

Unlike most of us, Downey decided to solve the problem herself by creating homemade soaps, lotions, sunscreens, and other products for the family’s use. Word spread through relatives and neighbors, and soon she was getting orders from more and more people.

“Over the course of several years, I began my business specializing in handmade, natural soaps and lotions. The company, Wilava, is named after my children. I still make all my products myself in a dedicated room in my house, and production overflows into my kitchen,” explains Downey. “Ninety-five percent of my business is currently via my website at wilava.com.”

In addition to brushing up on her chemistry and spending many hours doing research, Downey says her degree in communication with an emphasis on journalism has helped her business be successful.

“Those skills translate very well to any type of business venture because you always need to know how to write well, look at things objectively, and promote yourself or your business.”
Crossing the Digital Divide
FROM SALES AND MARKETING TO IMPROVING COMPUTER LITERACY

The Barney School of Business’s Paris MBA program began in 1985 and lasted for 10 years. Philippe Alexandre graduated in 1988 and for 20-some years has worked in sales and marketing, most recently for a company originally belonging to Johnson Worldwide Associates, makers of the Johnson fishing reel and many other outdoor recreation products.

After the second managed buyout—backed up with pension funds—in four years, Alexandre began to feel uncomfortable in his job. In 2002, at the age of 40, he divorced and left the company.

“I then started to really question myself on what I should do with my life. I began a personal development program that has led me to the more spiritual side of life,” says Alexandre.

After working for a time as an independent sales representative, Alexandre decided he wanted to do something to help people, not just make money. Luckily for him, the day he quit his job, another opportunity came along asking him to manage a nonprofit organization that tries to improve computer literacy. According to Alexandre only 50 percent of households in France have Internet access.

“The project means refurbishing old computers, then redistributing them, and providing free computer training for people on a multiregional basis. The government has acknowledged that getting familiar with computers and the Internet is a major way for people with low incomes to improve their lives, especially in terms of employment,” says Alexandre.

The new project follows several years of building infrastructure to enable Internet access throughout France—from providing access in rural areas to making fiber-optic connections available to businesses and universities. Alexandre’s organization is called Defris, or Challenges in English, and is located in Lorient, Brittany, in the western part of France near the coastline.

“Why the change? At 47, I am looking to give purpose to my life. I feel more and more the need to be helpful to others and to put human beings at the center of my actions,” says Alexandre.
Melisa Bezanson had planned since high school to work in the insurance industry. She received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1998, with a double major in actuarial science and mathematics. Bezanson later earned an MBA from Southern New Hampshire University in 2006.

After more than a decade in the insurance industry, Bezanson found herself working in California in the largest healthcare company in the United States. She felt frustrated by the amount of red tape and what she perceived as the difficulty of making an impact.

Looking for something new, Bezanson considered working at the community college level, hoping to motivate students to continue on from a two-year program to a full bachelor’s degree. She applied to a few places and then had a life-changing experience.

On a 14-day trip to Ireland with her mother, Bezanson fell in love with the people, the culture, and the history. She spent a lot of time talking with the local people, especially Stephen McPhilemy, co-owner of a youth hostel named Paddy’s Palace in Derry, a historic city in Northern Ireland.

“I returned to Ireland only a few months later to see what Derry really had to offer. I spent time in the hostel and saw so much potential,” says Bezanson. She made up her mind to move to Derry this past March and become the general manager of Paddy’s Palace.

Asked about her plans for the hostel, Bezanson is full of ideas to improve efficiencies, staff training, and delegation of duties, as well as make some cosmetic updates. “Steve is looking to improve our level of service to the customers and turn the hostel into the number-one hostel in Derry, with the hopes of winning us an award at the 2011 Hoscars from HostelWorld.com,” explains Bezanson. The website compiles comments from travelers and posts ratings of the hostels, thereby driving business to the highest rated.

If you find yourself in Derry, stop in and say hello.
Hartford-born Peter C. Bjarkman received bachelor’s (1963) and master’s (1970) degrees in education from the University of Hartford. A high school English teacher in Connecticut and Florida at first, he then worked as an international, U.S.-dependent school administrator in Colombia and Ecuador.

After receiving a second master’s from Trinity College (1972) and a PhD from the University of Florida (1976), Bjarkman became a university professor of linguistics at Purdue University, the University of Colorado, and several other schools. All in all, he devoted almost 25 years to teaching.

Then things changed.

"After a second marriage in 1985, I decided to leave academe and pursue a freelance writing career in sports history, especially baseball," explains Bjarkman. It turns out that baseball is an old love: Bjarkman was a member of the Hawks baseball team in 1960–61.

Since 1987, Bjarkman has published more than 40 books on sports, eight of which have won sports-writing awards.

It has been a fruitful second career. Since 1987, Bjarkman has published more than 40 books on sports, eight of which have won sports-writing awards. In 1994 he published his first book on Cuban baseball, *Baseball with a Latin Beat: A History of the Latin American Game* (McFarland). In 1996 he and photo researcher Mark Rucker followed the Cuban national team to the Atlanta Olympics; their project was later published as *Smoke: The Romance and Lore of Cuban Baseball* (1999).

Bjarkman was hooked. Since his first trip to Havana in 1997, he has returned more than 50 times. He travels legally as a researcher, with Treasury Department license, making most of his trips on charter flights from Miami.

“My status as a Cuban baseball authority has provided the rare opportunity [for an American] to spend extensive time on the Communist island. I have also traveled extensively with the Cuban national team to international tournaments in Latin America, Canada, and Europe,” he adds.

In addition to his books, Bjarkman maintains a popular website on Cuban League baseball (www.BaseballdeCuba.com) and is a baseball commentator on other websites in the United States, Europe, and Cuba. He has appeared in numerous television baseball documentaries and international tournament game broadcasts. He also was the first American interviewed extensively about baseball on postrevolution Cuban national television.

“The differences [between Cuban and American baseball] are major,” Bjarkman says, “and boil down to both organizational structure and physical appearance. Cuban League games are mostly played in small stadiums of 15,000–20,000 capacity, on natural grass, and with no video screens or other intrusive electronics. The experience is very much akin to attending a minor league game in the States back in the 1940s.

“The Cuban League is owned by the government sports ministry. Players play for their native provinces’ teams and are never traded or sold. The focus in Cuba is on preparing the best possible teams for world competitions such as the Olympics or the World Cup.”

Asked what he would miss most about Cuba if he never returned, Bjarkman had this to say: “I would most miss the Cuban people and the island’s vibrant rhythms. Cubans are among the most hospitable people I have ever known, . . . and I am enchanted by the music that seems to fill every corner of the island.”
Donald Osborne, who graduated from what was then the Hartt School of Music in 1977 with a bachelor’s degree in opera performance, obviously has a well-trained ear. But today he may be listening to the hum of an exotic Italian sports car like an Alfa Romeo or a Ferrari instead of an Italian opera.

Osborne is the founder of Automotive Valuation Services, an appraisal service for car collectors. His love affair with well-designed cars goes back to his high school years in New York City. As an art major, he intended to study industrial design and become a car stylist.

But music stepped into the picture. After winning a New York Daily News/All-City High School Chorus scholarship contest, Osborne decided instead to go to college and study voice. He auditioned at The Juilliard School, The Hartt School, and the Manhattan School of Music, but because he was only 16 years old when he graduated from high school, only Hartt would admit him to its opera program.

Like many Hartt graduates, Osborne found a close and supportive community there and has stayed in touch with fellow alumni.

“My voice teacher for the past 15 years has been Noel Hart [’77], who was a piano major at Hartt when I was studying there. I also put together a concert with another fellow Hartt grad, tenor Robert Brubaker [’77], which we hope to do as a benefit for Hartt next year.

“All the teachers I had at Hartt are now gone, many passed away. One who stands out was Brenda Lewis. A very well known operatic soprano of the late fifties and sixties, she taught acting and interpretation classes. She sent me the most wonderful note when I made my Met Opera debut, saying that she knew when we worked together at Hartt that I would make it.”

Osborne made his debut as a baritone at the Metropolitan Opera in 1985, singing the role of Robbins in Porgy and Bess, a role he held for two seasons. At the same time, he was singing roles with other opera companies. He then decided to leave his opera career behind, saying it was the business of music that didn’t click for him.

“I am a very goal-oriented person who likes to think that my return will be commensurate with my efforts. The music business is terribly subjective. Having a good engagement doesn’t necessarily translate into more work with a company. I found that ultimately frustrating.”

Osborne, who has also owned a successful antiques business since 1974, became an executive at Macy’s department store, where he created a department of marketing communications for Macy’s private brands. Tapping into his performance background, Osborne developed informational and promotional videos that he wrote, directed, and edited.

From that experience he started his own agency and worked with various marketing and advertising firms in video and Web design before starting his current car appraisal business in 2004. In 1993 he also began writing for Sports Car Market magazine. His writing on collector cars has also appeared in The New York Times, Business Week Online, and Road & Track.

Coming full musical circle, Osborne is now chair of Hartt’s board of trustees. He says he really didn’t have any choice. “I met the remarkable Grace Ellsworth [Hon. ’77], a Hartt honorary trustee and [University] life regent. Grace found out I was a Hartt opera alumnus and there and then declared that I must join the board. And as she is a force of nature, I complied.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Osborne was photographed with two of his own treasured cars—a 1967 Lancia Fulvia sport, left, and a 1952 Lancia Ardea.
ANTHONY D ISALVO (M, ENHP) of Hamden, Conn., was elected chairman of the Regional Water Authority in New Haven, Conn. A trustee/member of the water authority for 11 years, DiSalvo retired as president of Cello, Ltd., and Viola Audio Labs, manufacturers of high-end audio equipment. An active community member, he has served as president of the New Haven Manufacturer's Association and ALSO–Cornerstone, as treasurer of the International Association of New Haven, and as a director of the Greater New Haven Community Loan Fund.

Robert H. Forrester (A&S) of Avon, Conn., has assumed the stewardship of Newman’s Own Foundation’s philanthropic legacy, following the death of Paul Newman. Coexecutor of Newman’s estate, cotrustee of a living trust, and the chairman and CEO of Newman’s Own, Inc., and Newman’s Own Foundation, Forrester also oversees Hole in the Wall camps all over the world and is involved with various other charities founded by Newman.

Richard A. Malinsky (HAS) of Madison, Conn., had his acrylic painting Flora selected for a jurors’ award at the Slater Memorial Museum’s 67th Annual Connecticut Artists Juried Exhibition in

Shades of Ireland
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For additional information, contact Kandyce Aust, director of alumni relations, at aust@hartford.edu.

A University of Hartford Alumni Association trip in conjunction with Smithsonian Journeys and Collette Vacations.

Tour Highlights
Dublin, Irish Evening, Kilkenny, Waterford Crystal, Blarney Castle, Ring of Kerry, Killarney, Farm Visit, Limerick, Cliffs of Moher, Galway, Castle Stay

DEGREE KEY
Alumni Connections entries are distinguished by types of degrees and certification:
A associate’s degree
AD artist diploma
C sixth-year certificate
D doctorate
GPD graduate professional diploma
M master’s degree
No letter designation before a degree year indicates a bachelor’s degree.

1966
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RICHARD A. MALINSKY (HAS) of Madison, Conn., had his acrylic painting Flora selected for a jurors’ award at the Slater Memorial Museum’s 67th Annual Connecticut Artists Juried Exhibition in
Norwich, Conn. This is the second consecutive year that Malinsky has been included in the Slater Museum’s juried exhibit. He was also selected for the New Britain Museum of American Art’s 40th Annual Juried Exhibit.

1970
CYNTHIA B. GIESING (A&S) of Columbia, Mo., has been working for Applied Ecological Services, Inc., in Brodhead, Wis., since 2004 as a project estimator/coordinator.

1971
PHILLIP C. BOWLER (HARTT) of Newtown, Conn., gave a jazz performance at the Flagpole Radio Café in Edmond Town Hall Theatre in Newtown. He is known for his award-winning radio program, Jazz Adventures, on WPKN radio.

1973
PETER B. WAITE (HAS) of Glastonbury, Conn., was featured in Paintings/Paris, a one-person exhibit at the Winston Wächter Fine Art Gallery in New York City.

1975
AARON D. MAHI (HARTT) of Honolulu, Hawaii, was honored by the Oahu Choral Society for his contributions to the arts in Hawaii at its annual fundraiser, held at Waialae Country Club in Honolulu. Mahi was the former conductor of the Royal Hawaiian Band for more than 24 years and the Honolulu Symphony Pops Orchestra for seven years.

WILLIAM MARROCCO (HAS) of Cranston, R.I., has retired after 34 years as a high school visual arts teacher in Blackstone, Mass. Marrocco was a featured potter in 1996 at the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institution, where he demonstrated the fabrication of Nubian style pottery. The project was a result of a research grant he received in 1995 from the Nubian Institute for the production of Die Frau Ohne Schatten in the role of Der Kaiser at Deutsche Oper Berlin in Berlin, Germany.

ROBERT BRUBAKER (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., debuted with Teatro Comunale in Bologna, Italy, in the role of Herodes in Salome. He has also performed the role in Barcelona and at La Scala. Brubaker appeared in the production of Die Frau Ohne Schatten in the role of Der Kaiser at Deutsche Oper Berlin in Berlin, Germany.

ROBERT J. GECKLER (A, WARD; ’80 A&S) of Terryville, Conn., serves as an associated minister at the First Baptist Church in Plymouth, Conn. He is the owner of Ecumenical Communications and Christian Podcasts—New England, a production company serving churches and religious organizations in the region.

1978
JOSEPH J. GRECO (M, BARNEY) of Litchfield, Conn., was elected chairman of the Connecticut Banker’s Association. He is the president and CEO of the First National Bank of Litchfield.

1979
JEANNE A. KENT (HAS, M’82 HAS) of Winsted, Conn., has five pieces of gourd art in permanent collections at the Chimney Point Museum in Addison, Vt.; the Institute for Native American Studies in Washington, Conn.; and Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. Kent’s work is based on the designs, stories, and history of the Wabanaki people of northern New England and Lower Canada. Kent’s studio, Morningstar, produces fine gourd art based on the designs and stories of the Northeast Woodland people.

MARK J. SWIRSKY (HAS) of Pittsfield, Mass., had his photography featured at Art at Bagels Too in Pittsfield. Swirsky specializes in pictures of families, family celebrations and events, performers and performances, and young children.

1980
SUNIL RASTOGI (BARNEY) of Mount Pleasant, S.C., is vice president of business development at Cypress Bath, Bed & Spa in Mount Pleasant.

SHELLEY SOMERS (M, ENHP) of Beaufort, S.C., is the new principal at Central Middle School in Greenwich, Conn.

MARK L. WINZLER (M, ENHP; C’83 ENHP) of Manchester, Conn., was named interim superintendent of schools in Berlin, Conn.

1981
MEGAN P. COLLINS (A&S) of Norwalk, Conn., had an exhibit of her paintings, titled Reflections on Asia, at New Canaan Library in New Canaan, Conn.

JULIE JANSEN (A&S) of Stamford, Conn., has just released a revised edition of her bestselling first book, I Don’t Know What I Want, But I Know It’s Not This. Jansen (www.juliejansen.net) is a speaker, coach, consultant, and trainer who helps individuals and businesses reach their fullest potential in today’s chaotic workplace.

1982
BRIAN P. DAVIS (ENGINEERING) of Scottsdale, Ariz., is the author of The Hunt for Sunan. This new mystery novel follows two engineers drawn into a treacherous manhunt for a missing colleague in rural Louisiana. For more information, visit www.brianaudavis.com or www.thehuntforsunan.com.

1983
DAVID M. CYBULSKI (BARNEY) of Franklin, Mass., is vice president of finance at Lenze AC Tech Corporation in Uxbridge, Mass.

KATHRYN D. CARLIC (M, BARNEY) of Buffalo, N.Y., was named to the Daemen College Board of Trustees. She is an investment management executive at M&T Bank.

DALE W. MAINE (A’81, WARD; WARD) of Simsbury, Conn., received his second software patent for a system that translates Web application code from one development format to another. He was inducted as the first IT Fellow at Hamilton Sundstrand in 2008.

1984
DIANE O. STABLES (M, HARTT) of Glen Mills, Pa., designs and creates beaded jewelry in various colors, shapes, sizes, and textures, each with its very own personality.

Elizabeth “Betty” Burnham Bennett

Betty Burnham grew up on a tobacco farm in Windsor, Conn., during the Depression and attended Hillyer College during World War II. She married her sweetheart, Howard Bennett, after he returned from service in the Navy. They raised three sons together while Howard enjoyed a successful career with IBM.

After losing her beloved husband to cancer, Betty took advantage of a plan that gave her income for life and, with careful planning and some old savings bond certificates stored in her attic, found a way to help others have the educational opportunities she had enjoyed.

Today, there is a named scholarship fund in memory of Betty and Howard Bennett that offers tuition assistance to veterans attending the University of Hartford.

Visit hartford.edu/plannedgiving to read more of Betty’s story and other stories of how thoughtful planning today can leave a lasting legacy for the future.

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Introducing Your Alumni Board . . .

The University of Hartford Alumni Association comprises 30 board members, with representation from all schools and colleges as well as each decade of the University. Beginning in this issue of the Observer, alumni leadership is profiled so that you may come to know the members who serve on your behalf in the areas of finance, governance, institutional advancement, alumni chapters, and the executive committee.

Barbara Quirk Beaudin C’82
ENHP

Barbara Quirk Beaudin holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mathematics, a Sixth-Year Certificate in Public School Administration from the University of Hartford (1982), and an EdD in administration, planning, and social policy from Harvard University. She worked for 16 years in the Farmington public schools as a mathematics teacher and administrator and for 12 years at the University of Hartford as a mathematics professor and administrator.

Beaudin began working at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in 1986 on a consulting basis for a variety of research projects focusing on teacher and administrator supply and demand. In 2000 she moved to CSDE to take a program evaluation position in its Division of Research and Evaluation. Since then, Beaudin has served as the chief of the Bureau of Research, Evaluation, and Student Assessment and is currently the associate commissioner for the Division of Assessment, Research, and Technology.

Eileen Callahan Bredice ’89, M’91
ENHP

Since graduating with a bachelor’s degree in 1989 and a master’s degree in education in 1991, Eileen Callahan Bredice has called Simsbury, Conn., her home. She recently returned to her career as a teacher after spending nine years at home with her children, Nicholas, 14, and Callahan, 11. For the past two years she has been teaching 2nd grade in Newington, Conn.

Bredice says she often reflects back on her experience as an undergraduate at the University and feels fortunate to have had an outstanding teacher-training foundation. She is thankful for the support of professors like S. Edward Weinswig, who brought teaching to life for her through his commitment and sincere love of learning.

Bredice and her husband, Mark ’89, often bring their children back to the University for various sporting events as well as Homecoming Weekend. She says it is amazing to see the changes around the campus, but somehow they still feel that connection to the place they called home almost 21 years ago.

Bobbi McNeil ’94
ENHP

Bobbi McNeil began her professional career 46 years ago as a student in the radiography program at Hartford Hospital. Through those years, she advanced from a diagnostic technologist to an interventional technologist to a supervisor. In 1994 she graduated with a BS in health sciences from the University.

After 27 years at Mt. Sinai Hospital and having passed her advanced certification boards in cardiovascular radiography, McNeil decided to use her education at a different level. She says her degree allowed her to advance to a manager of interventional radiology at Hartford Hospital.

McNeil’s years in this role led to a position as operations manager. Last year brought yet another challenge, when she became the director of radiology. Now, with a $22 million budget and 188 full-time employees, McNeil feels that Hartford Hospital has arguably the most cutting-edge technology department in the state.

A University regent from 2001 to 2010, McNeil has served on a number of committees at the University. She also served as president of the Alumni Association from 2001 to 2004.

Mission of the Alumni Association

The mission of the University of Hartford Alumni Association is to promote lifelong relationships between current and future alumni and the University of Hartford, to support and sustain the objectives of the University, and to serve as an advocate for the University and its alumni.

GET INVOLVED

The Alumni Association of the University of Hartford is an outstanding organization made up of dynamic undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral alumni. Alumni participate in a variety of association activities: Homecoming, reunions, regional events, community outreach, career-development and enhancement workshops, cultural events, and recreational activities. The Alumni Association has been very successful in its efforts, and we want you to be a part of its continued success.

If you would like more information about alumni programs, please contact Kandyce Aust, director of alumni relations, at 860.768.2409, 888.UH.ALUMS (toll free), or aust@hartford.edu.
From Mathematician to Conceptual Artist

By Beverly Kennedy

Kevin Van Aelst M’05 is a self-confessed “bit of a nerd.” As a guest speaker last February in Associate Professor Ellen Carey’s class in Professional Practices in Photography, Van Aelst explained how he went from undergraduate math major to conceptual photographer for high-caliber publications like *Time* magazine.

As an undergraduate at Cornell University, Van Aelst began to lose interest in math when the concepts became too abstract and switched his major to psychology and creative writing. At the same time, he was drawn to photography. The realization that “art didn’t need to look pretty” was the confirmation he needed to begin photographing seriously.

Pursuing a master’s degree in fine arts at the Hartford Art School was his next career step. “I like making sense of what we don’t have control over,” Van Aelst says, like the patterns that show up in nature. He tries to corral the abstract into images that are concrete, fun, and meaningful to him. Food shows up in a Van Aelst work as an apple with enough chunks gouged out to leave a recognizable, red-skinned replica of the Earth. The New England night sky is proportionally laid out in constellations of tiny lint wads on a cobalt-blue sweater background.

In February, Van Aelst announced that he had just submitted his 100th conceptual image for “The Medium,” Virginia Heffernan’s weekly column on visual culture in the Sunday *New York Times Magazine*. He shot the Jan. 18, 2010, cover of *Time* and has also done work for *Men’s Health*, *GQ*, *Business Week*, and *Fast Company*.

Van Aelst is a part-time faculty member at Quinnipiac University and a 2008 recipient of a Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism fellowship grant. A national exhibitor, his work may also be viewed at http://kevinvanaelst.com.

1985

**Andrew C. Acquarulo (Engineering)** of North Haven, Conn., is president and chief operating officer of Communication Networks, Danbury, Conn.

**Jill F. Levin (A&S)** of Margate City, N.J., along with her friend Annemarie McCartney, invented Skunkies, a shoe deodorizer that eliminates odor and absorbs moisture, which helps prevent bacteria. Skunkies can be used with cleats, sneakers, skates, bags, trunks, cubbies, closets, cars, and locker rooms.

**Michael B. Smith (A&S)** of Edinburgh, Scotland, is a director at Societe Generale Bank in London, England. He heads the Paris-based institution’s Scottish operation and is responsible for the UK Sports and Entertainment Group.

1987

**Nora C. Carey (M, Barney)** of New York, N.Y., is executive director of the Bocuse d’Or USA Foundation. The foundation is devoted to inspiring culinary excellence in young professionals and preserving the traditions and quality of classic cuisine in America.

1988

**John M. Titus** (A&S) of Pittsburgh, Pa., continues to work for Decision Resources, Inc., in Pittsburgh. He also serves as the interim minister at First United Church of Christ in Harrison City, Pa.

1989

**Jerome P. Kelly** (Barney) of Verona, Wis., won the PGA Tour Shark Shootout with partner Steve Stricker in Naples, Fla.

**John Reeves** (M, Barney) of Alexandria, Va., is president of KB Home’s Washington, D.C., metro division. He is responsible for homebuilding operations, from land acquisition and construction to sales and customer service.

**Kim M. Weinberg** (A’87, Hillyer; A&S) of Sarasota, Fla., is executive director of the Prader-Willi Syndrome Association in Sarasota.

1990

**John K. Hampton** (A&S) of Simsbury, Conn., was elected to his fourth term on the Simsbury Board of Selectmen. A Democrat, he was appointed deputy first selectman. Hampton is executive director of the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.

**Craig D. Hart** (Hartt, M’06 Hartt) of Avon, Conn., and his wife, Susan, performed for the Watermark at East Hill’s Sunday Music Series in Southbury, Conn.

1991

**Stergios Lazos** (M, ENHP) of Cleveland, Ohio, was awarded the 2009 American Philological Association Award for Excellence in Teaching at the Pre-Collegiate Level. He is chair of classical and modern languages at St. Edward High School in Cleveland.

**A White House Christmas**

Daniel G. Pikarski A’92, ’94, poses with his nephews, Nicholas, 8 (left), and Mike Pikarski, 7, before entering the wreath-bedecked iron gate to the East Wing of the White House for a special holiday party and private tour of the East Wing’s Christmas decorations, hosted by President Barack Obama. When not visiting the White House, Pikarski is a real-estate taxation attorney in Chicago, Ill.
Births

Top row: 
Kate Pels & Andrew M. Hacker ’84 (Marley)

Middle row (l–r): 
Angela M. Puccino ’94 & Patrick C. Puccino ’94 (Kiera Mary, 12.7.09)
Sarah Bernstein & Andrew P. Bernstein M’08 (Ethan Ari, 11.4.09)

Bottom row (l–r): 
Karen Deutsch & Gabriel M. Deutsch A’01, ’02 (Meira Rebecca, 12.29.09)
Shari M. Marks ’92 & Peter Marks (Jonathan Samuel, 8.19.09)

Not pictured: 
Rachel D. Markowitz-Mallis ’94 & Brandon Mallis (Jayden Samuel, 7.19.09)
Meghann C. Bodeau ’00 & Todd Bodeau (Allison Catlin, 8.11.09)

The Real Thing

Ryan Labbe’s ’02, M’05 (right), walk down the aisle to marry Trine Engelbrechtsen reads like a dream sequence. While the groom, of Pembroke Pines, Fla., was receiving a liver transplant in May 2008, he met his bride, the first successful liver transplant in Florida.

After discovering that Wedding Day, a new television reality show, was looking for a couple tied to the theme of organ donation, “We sent in a few videos, answered lots of questions about us and our ‘dream wedding,’ and four days before being married [Dec. 19, 2008], we were told we had won,” Labbe explains.

The winning couple was given the wedding of a lifetime at the Trump International Beach Resort in North Miami Beach, Fla., with many surprises for the bride and groom. “The producers of the show knew that I was a musician and guitar player,” Labbe says, “so they had lots of music-themed surprises for me.” Pictured with the newlyweds are legendary Swedish guitarist, composer, and bandleader Yngwie Malmsteen. The Labbes’ episode aired on Aug. 1, 2009.

SCOTT MACGREGOR (A&S) of Madison, Conn., was named president and chief operating officer of Medidata Solutions, Inc., a managed print services company, presented with Flo-Tech’s prestigious Document Solutions Manager of the Year Award, which recognizes the top sales achievement companywide. Leslie is based in Flo-Tech’s New York City office.

HERMAN R. SORCHER (A&S) of Lafayette, N.J., is CEO and managing general partner of the Danbury Whalers minor-league franchise in Danbury, Conn. The Whalers are members of the Federal Hockey League.

1992

HULUS ALPAY (BARNEY) of Morganville, N.J., was elected to the board of directors of the National Investor Relations Institute. He is the director of investor relations for Medidata Solutions, Inc., a leading global provider of hosted clinical development solutions, in New York City.

1993

PETER BOYER (M, HARTT; D’95 HARTT) of Altadena, Calif., had his work, “The Dream Lives On: A Portrait of the Kennedy Brothers,” featured in the 125th anniversary season of the Boston Pops.

ABRAHAM A. BURTON (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., led a jazz-and-blues trio on the saxophone at Cathedral of the Woods Church in Medford Lakes, N.J.

1994

JOSEPH M. D’EUGENIO (HARTT) of Hamden, Conn., was selected as the recipient of the 2009 Choir Director of the Year award by the Connecticut chapter of the American Choral Directors Association.

LAYNE F. FRANK (A&S) of Island Park, N.Y., is the director of sales for BBH Solutions, Inc., in New York City.

ADAM J. RAIDER (A&S) of West Hartford, Conn., is coauthor of a book about the NHL’s New York Rangers. Released through John Wiley & Sons, 100 Ranger Greats profiles and ranks the 100 most influential players from the hockey team’s 83-year history. The book is available in stores, as well as at online retailers, amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, and borders.com.

1995

MICHAEL A. ADDO (M, BARNEY) of Liberty Township, Ohio, is a member of the board of directors of Starwin Products Limited, a pharmaceutical manufacturing company in Ghana.

DAVID M. CORDANI (M, BARNEY) of Simsbury, Conn., was named president and chief operating officer of CGIWA Corporation.

DANIEL D. ROY (A&S) of Wilbraham, Mass., is principal of Wilbraham Middle School in Wilbraham.

Weddings

Not pictured:
Kate Pels & Andrew M. Hacker ’84 (9.9.09)
Liliana Alvarez & David R. Festa ’93 (9.19.09)
Pavlina Richterovala & James M. Perry ’96 (8.22.09)
Carrie H. Fischer ’01 & Steven Keppler (11.7.09)
Meghan Leclerc & Brian G. Quinn A’05, ’05 (11.14.09)
Kristina Catanaro & Dane C. Schroeder ’05 (11.27.09)
Cynthia L. Rock M’08, C’08, & Justin McCobb (7.31.09)
Melanie D. Crosby M’09 & Kevin T. Carubia ’04 (8.8.09)
1996
Robert T. Jachym (Barney) of Middletown, Conn., was inducted into the Connecticut Soccer Hall of Fame. He is the head boys’ soccer coach at Wethersfield High School in Wethersfield, Conn.

1997
David A. Allen (A’95 Hillyer, Barney) of Edgewater, N.J., is the president and founder of DBA Commercial Real Estate NYC in New York City.


Kyle W. Wolfe (HAS) of Framingham, Mass., is design director at Sunshine Sign Company in North Grafton, Mass., overseeing all company design and engineering efforts, providing custom-designed and engineered solutions for individual client signage needs. Wolfe also leads Sunshine Sign’s green/sustainable design-management and material-selection efforts.

1998
Michael C. Ryan (Barney) of Broad Brook, Conn., announces his engagement to Tracy Gaudreau. A July 2010 wedding is planned.

1999
David P. Nutt (Barney) of Marblehead, Mass., was inducted into the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce. He is an auto-, home-, and life-insurance sales representative at Liberty Mutual.

SHEL P. Tscherné (ENHP) of Marborough, Mass., is youth group leader at Memorial Congregational Church in Sudbury, Mass.

2001
Bryant J. McConkie (M, Barney) of Salt Lake City, Utah, has accepted the position of shareholder with the Strong & Hanni Law Firm in Salt Lake City. McConkie represents clients involved with legal issues that arise during family disputes and with other family-law issues.

2002
Bryan J. Bendig (ENHP) of Boston, Mass., is the grassroots marketing manager at Gait Lacrosse in St. Louis, Mo. He is responsible for the Gait Grassroots Program nationwide.

Lauren M. Cavanaugh (Hartt) of Union City, N.J., was featured in Farmington LIFE in an article about growing up in Farmington, Conn., and her work now as a playwright in New York City.

Thomas P. Crean (Hartt) of Windsor, Conn., performed with fellow Hartt School alumnus Daniel A. Voss ’02 in the Tom Crean-Dan Voss Duo at Martocchio Music in Simsbury, Conn.

Scott A. Hill (M, Hartt; C’04 Hartt) of West Hartford, Conn., and Carlos Boltes ’04 received the 2010 Chamber Music America/American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers Award for Adventurous Programming, Hill, on guitar, and Boltes, on viola, make up the Alturas Duo.

2003
Erica L. Geller (Hartt) of Cherry Hill, N.J., is pleased to announce her engagement to John Guilama. The couple plans a June 2011 wedding.

Christopher Nelson (HAS) of Westwood, N.J., portrayed Prince Barry in Rapunzelarella White, with the Bergen County Players at the Little Firehouse Theatre in Oradell, N.J. Nelson is an art director for MgMGold Communications in New York City.

Matthew M. Shea (Hartt) of New York, N.Y., a former Broadway publicist for Barlow and Hartman, launched his own styling company, called Matt Shea Style, in New York City.

Benjamin P. Whelan-Morin (Hartt) of Washington, D.C., was nominated for the Mayor’s Arts Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Performing Arts by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. The award is the most prestigious of its kind given by the government of the District of Columbia. Whelan-Morin is production supervisor/music and theater instructor at the William E. Doar Jr. Public Charter School for the Performing Arts in Washington.

Kristy Wing (ENHP) of Wallington, Conn., is pleased to announce her engagement to Paul Naskie ’01. A Sept. 5, 2010, wedding is planned.

2004

Elisah C. Livingstone (A, Hillyer; ’06 Barney) of Hartford, Conn., received the Program Achievement Award from the Urban League of Greater Hartford for her accomplishments following her Urban League in...
ALUMNI, PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND FRIENDS—
WE’LL BE LOOKING FOR YOU!

Hawktober Weekend is

Mark your calendars now and save the date.

Come visit the University and enjoy a fun weekend on campus!

Casino Night will become “Hawktoberfest” this year, with a German festival theme. Lederhosen optional!

Don’t miss the barbecue, the Artisan Marketplace, sporting events, music, and more!

Umbrellas for Peace

Lamb Umbrellas for Peace Project is a global art project involving painting and decorating umbrellas by children and adults. Individuals atavistically design umbrellas that represent their personal values of world peace. A subsequent parade happens throughout their neighborhoods and or campus. This is a manifestation of people bringing peace throughout the world they live in.

This program was sponsored by the Office of Alumni Relations (Alumnae Council for Women), Women for Change, and the Women and Gender Resource Center. Funding was provided through a grant from WELFund, a legacy program of Hartford College for Women.

1. Students Shauniqua Blake, Anita Spence, Debra Simpson A’03, Ashley Mussington, and Desiann Malcolm show their support for Umbrellas for Peace.
2. Marelin Vergara ’09
3. Students from Weaver High School and their class advisor joined in the fun.
4. Donna Haghhighat, grants and programs manager, WELFund

ANNE M. MCGINNIS (HARTT, ’04 A&S) of New York, N.Y., has earned her doctorate in school psychology from Pennsylvania State University. She is a school psychologist in a public school district.

KERRYANNE SAUNDERS (M, BARNEY) of Litchfield, Conn., danced the roles of the Snow Queen and Dew Drop Fairy in the Albano Ballet Company’s performance of The Nutcracker.

2005

JESSICA A. MEYER (M, HARTT) of Hartford, Conn., is a member of the West End String Quartet, with fellow Hartt alumnae SARAH J. WASHBURN M’05 and CARLYLYN H. SAVOT M’05. The quartet performed at Trinity College’s Hamlin Hall in Hartford, Conn., with Meyer and Washburn on violin and Savot on cello.

2006

MARK ANDREWS (M, BARNEY) of Manchester, Conn., was elected chair of the Connecticut Society of Certified Public Accountants. He is a tax manager with ESPN in Bristol, Conn.

CRAIG A. BIONDI (HARTT, M’08 HARTT) of Birmingham, Ala., ALPHONSE T. IZZO D’06, AD’08; and ALEKSANDER STERNFELD-DUNN D’09 performed in “Listen Out Loud,” a concert of newly composed works for renowned cellist and new-music advocate Craig Hultgren at the University of
Each composer presented a work for solo cello and a work for cello with ensemble.

YUNMI CHO (HARTT) of Kyunggido, South Korea, sang in "Valentines for the Young New Jersey Artists" cabaret at Farleigh Dickinson University’s College of Florham.

KENNETH T. PARKER (US, M’09 BARNEY) of Granby, Conn., accepted a position at CIGNA in Bloomfield, Conn., as test environment planning and governance director within the Enterprise Testing Competency Center.

2007

JESSICA M. HARTKE (A&S) of Higganum, Conn., is pleased to announce her engagement to Mark A. Port of Southington, Conn. The couple plans a Sept. 17, 2011, wedding.

DANIEL PIous (BARNEY) of Bloomfield, Conn., was a contestant with his brother, Jordan Pious, on CBS’s The Amazing Race in February. Although the pair didn’t win the million-dollar prize, they did survive the first leg of the race, which took contestants to Valparaiso, Chile.

2008

NICOLE M. LAWHEAD (M, BARNEY) of Newington, Conn., is pleased to announce her engagement to Sean Lee. A July 23, 2010, wedding is planned.

LISA J. MARINO (M, HARTT) of West Hartford, Conn., is pleased to announce her engagement to Christopher Abel. The couple plans an Aug. 1, 2010, wedding.

VANEY C. MURILLO (CETA) of Lima, Peru, has completed 12 weeks of basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot in Parris Island, S.C.

KYLA SCHOER (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., won a Best Supporting Actress in a Musical award from the New Hampshire Theatre Awards, Professional Division, for her performance as Hildy in On the Town at the Papermill Theatre in Lincoln, N.H.

DAREN WEISSFISCH (HARTT) of Ridgewood, N.J., helped to organize a benefit concert for Haiti Earthquake Relief. The performance was a musical collage from the University of Colorado College of Music students and faculty.

2009

CHRISTOPHER J. BRUNO (BARNEY) of Maywood, N.J., is business development specialist in the entertainment line of business at NCR Corporation in New York City.

ELIZABETH A. FOSTER (A&S) of Ellington, Conn., placed third out of a field of 9,676 female competitors in the Disney Half Marathon in Orlando, Fla. Overall, she ranked 33rd out of 17,090 runners, completing her first mile in less than seven minutes, while averaging a speedy pace of 6:13 over the grueling 13.1 mile course.

AMANDA LEVY (AA&S) of Boxford, Mass., won second place in the Essex National Heritage Area photo contest in the National Historical Landmarks category.

JACQUELINE A. ROCHE (HAS) of New York, N.Y., is the illustrator for the newly released children’s book, The Derby Ram. John Feierabend, professor of music education and division director at The Hartt School, is the author. Included in this state-of-the-art retelling of the folk music classic, is a Web link to a free MP3 download featuring two versions of the song, one with a singer, the other with an accompaniment for singing along.

ALFONSO A. SANTANIello (A’06, HILL YER; BARNEY) of Agawam, Mass., was named to the board of directors of the Agawam Small Business Association. He owns Creative Strategy Agency, a marketing agency that assists small businesses with their marketing, branding, web and advertisement efforts.

ALEKSANDER STERNFELD-DUNN (D, HARTT). See CRAIG A. BIONDI ’06, M’08.

HOLLY A. VANNUCCI (M, ENHP) of Enfield, Conn., is a director at the Lee Regional Visiting Nurses Association in Lee, Mass.

ASHLEIGH K. VOSE (HAS) of Ashford, Conn., was featured in The Hartford Courant’s “Artist Corner.” Her work has been included in the Connecticut Women Artists Juried Exhibition and in every Un-Art event hosted at Hartford ArtSpace and Mansfield Community Center.

Alumni Group Sails Away

Oasis of the Seas cruise ship
1. Oasis of the Seas cruise ship
2. (l–r) Horst and Gail ’70 Fei
3. (l–r) Kenneth Muskat ’94, President Harrison, and Richard Cardin ’62
4. Ryan Labbe ’02, M’05, and Richard Gomez A’88, ’90
5. (l–r) Richard ’62 and Lucy Cardin aboard the Oasis of the Seas
Alumni Events

1. Dr. Steven Minkler ’86, M’00, D’08; his wife, Karen; daughter, Rosemary (far left), and two of Rosemary’s friends at the 2nd Annual Donor Appreciation Celebration on Feb. 27, 2010

2. Bill Duquette M’74; his wife, Linda; and his two granddaughters, Olivia and Sophie Schwager, at the 2nd Annual Donor Appreciation Celebration on Feb. 27, 2010

3. Pictured (l–r) are Richard L. Cote C’98 and his wife, Brenda Cote; Joyce M. Wilson M’75 and her husband, Allan S. Wilson M’82; and Gerry Wickman and her husband, Roger Wickman M’65. Dick, Allan and Roger were long-time administrators and coaches in the Department of Athletics. Dick was also an athletic trainer and a men’s tennis coach; Allan, a men’s soccer coach; and Roger, a baseball coach. The couples gathered this past August to celebrate the Cotes’ 40th wedding anniversary.

4. Samantha Cahill M’10, special events coordinator in the Office of Alumni Relations, donates sneakers to be distributed to the earthquake victims in Haiti on behalf of the Alumni Association.


A Home Coming for Women

Hartford College for Women alumnae, faculty, and staff came together March 4–6 at “A Home Coming for Women 2010,” to share memories and celebrate the legacy of HCW.

The activities began Thursday evening with a lecture and book-signing by Kelly Corrigan, bestselling author of The Middle Place and her latest publication, Lift.

On Friday, reunion participants gathered at The 1877 Club for “A Women’s Health Portrait: Awareness and Empowerment,” featuring informative discussions on women’s health issues, presented by Hartford Hospital physicians.

In the tradition of beloved HCW President Laura Johnson, alumnae and friends then attended a Reunion Tea at Butterworth Hall on the HCW campus.

Friday wrapped up with a viewing of the Hartford Stage production of Motherhood Out Loud, a play of warm and revealing vignettes exploring the special relationships among women.

A Home Coming for Women 2010 concluded with a Saturday brunch at the Town & County Club of Hartford. Speaker Sue Blanshan—who served as assistant provost, dean, and professor at HCW from 1992 to 1998—explored the impact of the HCW experience.
1. Home Coming for Women committee, from bottom: Rebecca Danchak A70; Janice Klein A70; Kandyce Aust, director of alumni relations; Cheryl Chase A’95, ’99; Grace Mitchell A’95; Bonny Stoecklin A’02, ’04; Deborah Nebel ’00; Patricia McKinley A’72; Sharon Scorso ’02; Jennifer Sanborn, director of WELFund.

2. Former HCW deans Sue Blanshan, left, and Mims Butterworth.


4. HCW Reunion Brunch with committee chair Cheryl Chase A’95, ’99.

5. Alumni and friends gather for brunch at the Town and County Club.

6. Alumnae view photos and share memories at the tea hosted in Butterworth Hall.

7. President Walter Harrison addresses the alumnae.

8. L–r: former HCW deans Kathleen McGrory, Sue Blanshan, Mims Butterworth, and Joan Davis.


12. Tracey Dery A’77 and Doris Mirucki A’64.

13. Alumnae at Hartford Stage for dinner and the opening night of Motherhood Out Loud.
“Thank you for the scholarship that gave me the means to continue an education that I might not otherwise have had,” says Wilfreda (Freda) Tilley ’10, recipient of The Hartford Nursing Career Track: Pre-Nursing to BSN Scholarship, established by Claire ’84 and the late Millard Pryor. The scholarship enabled Freda, who already had an associate’s degree, to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing while she continued to work full time as a registered nurse. A native of Kenya, Freda is one of eight children. She is the first in her family to earn a college degree and plans to enter the University’s graduate nursing program to focus on public health.

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