

SPRING 2023 VOL. 38, NO. 2

# HORIZONS

GRACELAND UNIVERSITY



## ***RADICAL BELONGING***

*Celebrating 60 Years of the House System*



*Horizons* (USPS 0884-8939) is published by Graceland University, Lamoni, Iowa. The magazine is distributed without charge to select alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the University. Free copies are available upon request.

#### CONTACT US

Your feedback is always welcome!  
Direct correspondence and address changes to:

Graceland University  
Alumni Programs Office  
1 University Place  
Lamoni, IA 50140  
866.GU4.EVER  
alumni@graceland.edu

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael R. Wiley, PhD, '83, *Chair*  
Sue Bevington '89, *Vice Chair*  
David J. Brown, MBA, '73, *Treasurer*  
Samuel G. "Sam" Smalldon, MBA, '78, *Secretary*  
Joseph Booz, JD, '86  
Holly Phillips '81 Caskey  
Stassi D. Cramm, PhD, '03  
Emily Hughes, JD  
Aleksandar "Aleks" Memca '00  
Randall E. Pratt, JD  
Dennis Shields, JD, '77  
Julia Snethen, PhD, '82  
Ryan Watson '77  
Toria K. Younger, PhD

#### ADMINISTRATION

Patricia H. Draves, PhD  
*President*  
Shane Adams '99  
*Chief Marketing Officer*  
Talia Brown, MEd, '05  
*Chief Information Officer*  
Kristi Hettrick '96  
*Vice President for Institutional Advancement*  
Beth Higdon, MA, '73  
*Executive Director for Planning and Effectiveness*  
Rob Lundeen, MBA, CPA, '74  
*Interim Vice President for Business and Finance*  
David Schaal, EdD, '80  
*Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students*  
Jodi Seymour  
*Executive Assistant to the President and Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees*  
Joel Shrock, PhD  
*Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty*  
Deb Skinner, MEd, '85  
*Vice President for Enrollment and Strategic Growth*

#### ALUMNI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Holly Phillips '81 Caskey, *President*  
Cathy Wolfe '88 Lysinger, *Secretary*  
Kevin Brunner, PhD, '86, *Faculty Rep*  
Wilai Rojjanasrirat, PhD, RN, IBCLC, *Faculty Rep*  
Jenny Bogda, MEd, '12  
Caleb Brian, PhD, '08  
Jeremy Deemer '18  
Dylan Fox '21  
John Godfrey, MA, '06  
Ric Hettrick '74  
Beth Higdon, MA, '73  
Jen Ingram '96 Imhoff  
Collin Isham '11  
Allie Kaminski '16  
Jeff Martin '85  
Chelsea McClain '05 Pierce, JD  
Doug Roberts, MA, '01  
Jonathan Schrale '11  
Melissa Sherer '18  
Natalie Sherer '16  
Blake Smith '16  
Lisa Sheehy '80 Stobbe, MEd  
Holly Inglehart '12 Weaver, BSN, RN  
Peter Wilkinson '93  
Cal Closson '82, *Alumni Board of Directors Emeritus*

#### EDITOR

Shane Adams '99

#### ART DIRECTION & DESIGN

Tiffany Rider '06 Smith, MEd

#### WRITING



Shane Adams '99,  
Colby Connelly '13  
Georgia Seagraves, MS, '21  
Angela Slosarski

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

Shane Adams '99  
Georgia Seagraves, MS, '21  
Tiffany Rider '06 Smith, MEd



Follow me:

  @GracelandUPres

## A House Built on Belonging

This year, Graceland celebrates 60 years of its iconic house system, often compared to traditional Greek life systems at other institutions, yet unique because of its focus on belonging and inclusion of all. For Gracelanders through the years, the house system is one of the single most important connections they have to the University. Their first friends come from their fellow house residents. They spend their days together – eating, laughing, studying, and playing. The house system is built on the principle of belonging, just like Graceland.

In the Fall of 2022, Graceland officially launched Blue, Gold & Bold: Our Strategic Framework for the Future. Alongside that strategic plan, we felt like we needed a clear reminder of what we do and why we do it. This statement of purpose has been our rallying cry:

## We are Graceland.

Together, we strive to create an environment of radical belonging where all are welcome, valued, and empowered to learn and grow. Radical belonging enables our students to gain the self-confidence, strength, and skills to be the bold leaders and changemakers the world needs.

Graceland's house system is one of our greatest examples of how we live out our commitment to radical belonging on our campuses. One of our unique university superpowers is that everyone belongs here regardless of cultural, political, or any other background, and we embrace our differing perspectives to learn together as a community. It is the backbone of our residential Lamoni campus experience, and it is central to so much of what we do and why it matters.

The belonging that our students find here is critical to fostering their personal growth because being surrounded by a caring community gives them the courage and acceptance to be their truest, most authentic self. And because of that, they carry their Graceland experience with them through their lives, as I know you all do as our treasured alumni. I am grateful for the leaders developed and lives changed through the house system over the past 60 years. With the ongoing support of our alumni and friends, we are excited for 600 more!

In Blue and Gold,

**Patricia H. Draves, PhD**  
*President*



☺ On a very windy evening at golden hour, the 2022-23 House Presidents met at the Victory Bell, where they teamed up the night before to paint the house symbols in honor of this special photoshoot. ☺ **Rows, left to right: Front** Naomi Long (President, Council of House Presidents), Mackenzie Klinginsmith (Paloma), Andrew Wolsey (Closson), Breanna Clark (Sariah), Joycelyn Dailey (Shalom); **Middle** Riley Newendorp (Solah), Samir Goffe (Stewart Manor), Delaney Fox (Hanthorne), Yasmin Yusman (Aponivi), Peyton Anderson (Cheville); **Back** Jack Main (Tiona), Caleb Weeks (Powell), Arissa Carpenter (Kiyah), Max Weesner (Faunce), Breneé Barrett (Amici), Alex Johnson (Agape); **Not pictured** Pene Salli (Orion)

CONNECT WITH US    

# The Buzz

BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES

*To no one's surprise,  
our amazing students  
are doing amazing  
things and we want  
to share it with you!*

## Student Edition

## CONTENTS



### SCHOLARS' SHOWCASE

A signature academic event for students from a variety of disciplines to present their work

6



### RADICAL BELONGING 60 YEARS OF THE HOUSE SYSTEM

8

1962 marked a pivotal change for the campus social setting and residence life when the spirit of community was introduced



16

### NEW PROGRAMS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Programs of study in highly sought-after career fields, accelerated graduate degrees, and a hybrid doctoral program in physical therapy



20

### CARRY IT FORWARD

Graceland's bold new brand campaign tells the story alumni and students know — the Graceland Experience stays with us forever

- 3 The Buzz
- 16 Academics
- 20 University News
- 22 Alumni Board & GU4U
- 24 126th Commencement
- 26 Class Notes & Alumni Profiles



© Martinez is all smiles as she proudly holds her diploma following the December 2022 commencement ceremony.

## Talia Martinez

**HOMETOWN:** San Jacinto, California

**CLASS YEAR:** 2022

**MAJOR:** Master of Science in Nutrition & Human Performance

Talia Martinez, who graduated from Graceland with her Master of Science in Nutrition and Human Performance (MSNHP) in 2022, collaborated with Assistant Professor of Health and Movement Science Melanie Mason, DAT, LAT, ATC, CES, PRES, and Assistant Professor of Allied Health James Geiselman, DC, to publish a review paper in the *Nutritional Foundations* journal. The paper, titled "Weight Loss Using a Ketogenic Diet for Adults with Type II Diabetes" was part of her thesis project in the MSNHP program. It reviews the differences in weight loss between very low-carbohydrate ketogenic diets and diets using normal, smaller reductions in fat intake in adults with Type II Diabetes. Martinez is the first graduate of the new MSNHP program and is setting a tone of excellence.

Q Check out the next page to read about some of our amazing Lamoni students!



## Student



*From NAIA and Heart of America Athletic Conference awards to excellent leadership in Graceland Student Government (GSG) and House President (HP) roles, Graceland students are taking "the Hill" – and even other parts of the world – by storm.*

☺ Above, left to right:

## Peyton Anderson

**HOMETOWN:** Lee's Summit, Missouri  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2024  
**MAJOR:** Economics  
**MINORS:** Data Science, Sport Management  
**HOUSE:** Cheville  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** HP (2022-23), Track & Field, GSG (2023-24)

Out of 11,000 NAIA scholar-athletes, Peyton Anderson received the distinguished A.O. Duer Scholarship Award for the 2021-22 season at the NAIA National Convention held in New Orleans in April 2023. Anderson displays leadership both in

sports and academics, and many who nominated him echo the strong character, work ethic, and leadership he has shown in his time at Graceland. This combination of characteristics and respect from his peers allowed Anderson to serve as Cheville House President this past year and be elected to represent the entire student body as Graceland Student Government President for the 2023-24 school year.

## Delaney Fox

**HOMETOWN:** Lee's Summit, Missouri  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2024  
**MAJOR:** Art Education  
**HOUSE:** Hanthorne  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** HP (2022-23), GSG (2023-24), Enactus, Drumline

Delaney Fox can be seen in all aspects of Graceland's social life, and after serving as an HP, she has been elected COSA President for the 2023-24 school year. She had not planned on doing anything her senior year, but said, "This year, I have grown so much and been able to create so many relationships with the other house presidents and girls on my house ... as I thought about my Graceland Experience and how much fun I had participating in COSA events, it inspired me to create those experiences for others."

## Gerald Monroe

**HOMETOWN:** Glenn Heights, Texas  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2026  
**MAJOR:** Communications  
**HOUSE:** Orion  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Football, Intramurals

Freshman Gerald Monroe was named the Heart North Football All-Conference; Co-Offensive Player of the Year. He recorded 93 receptions for 1,518 yards and 16 receiving touchdowns during his debut season with the Yellowjackets. This set a new record for the highest number of receiving yards in a single season by a player in the conference's history. At the spring Association of Student Athletes awards, Monroe received fall male athlete of the year, freshman athlete of the year, and co-overall male athlete of the year.

## Daniel Dennis

**HOMETOWN:** Lee's Summit, Missouri  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2025  
**MAJOR:** Biology  
**MINORS:** Music, Chemistry  
**HOUSE:** Cheville (2022-23), Faunce (2023-24)  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Soccer, Campus Ministries, HP 2023-24

Danny Dennis is a highly involved student and can be seen on the soccer field, playing instruments for Campus Ministries' Afterglow

worship service, and even as one of the hosts of the new Instagram series, "Questions with COSA." In a light-hearted interview style, Dennis travels across campus with a miniature microphone asking students, faculty, and staff goofy questions about food, Graceland, and life.

## Eden Clifton

**HOMETOWN:** Arlington, Texas  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2026  
**MAJOR:** Nursing  
**HOUSE:** Solah  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Outdoor Track & Field

The Heart of America Athletic Conference announced Eden as the Heart Outdoor Track Athlete of the Week on March 27. Clifton earned three first-place finishes at the Viking Invitational, winning the women's 100-meter dash in a time of 12.26, the women's 200-meter dash in a time of 25.89, and helped lead the Yellowjackets 4x100-meter relay team to a first-place finish time of 52.85. At the spring Association of Student Athletes award ceremony, Clifton received the Track Newcomer of the Year award, a testament to her achievements. She closed out the season with a second-place finish in the 100-meter dash at the 2023 Heart Outdoor Track & Field Conference Championship.



# Edition



## Cydney Stables

**HOMETOWN:** Gaston, Oregon  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2025  
**MAJORS:** Agricultural Business, Communications, Sustainability  
**HOUSE:** Solah  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Basketball, Golf, Agricultural Business Club

At just 17 years old, Cydney Stables started her own business “Flowers by Cydney,” and in October 2022, she was one of four people in the nation honored at the Future Farmers of America (FFA) national competition for the Agricultural Proficiency Award in Agricultural Sales – Entrepreneurship based on the portfolio she submitted outlining her business. Most recently, Stables created floral arrangements for the C.H. Sandage School of Business Dinner & Auction event in April.

Q Read more about the event ► P19

## Konnor Chase

**HOMETOWN:** Adel, Iowa  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2025  
**MAJOR:** Music  
**HOUSE:** Agape  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Choir, Harmonium, House Chaplain

Konnor Chase's summer will be a whirlwind of travel and music. In May, he joined the Graceland

Choirs for the 2023 Koonce Family Honorary Choir Tour all the way out to the West Coast and back – seven stops in 14 days. In June, he is traveling to the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy for La Musica Lirica, a prestigious five-week summer opera training program he was accepted into. Along with weekly solo performances, Chase will perform in three operas and receive professional voice lessons and master classes. He is also an active member of the Agape House Council and serves as their Chaplain.

## Spyridon Kalentzis

**HOMETOWN:** Corfu, Greece  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2026  
**MAJOR:** Allied Health  
**HOUSE:** Orion  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Football, Track & Field

Freshman Spyridon Kalentzis has been rowing competitively since 2012 and has been in too many competitions to count. In February, Kalentzis traveled to Toronto, Canada, to participate in the 2023 World Rowing Indoor Championship. Representing Greece, his team, “International Men of Mystery,” won first place in the the men's 2,000-meter race.

With an impressive time of five minutes and 10.7 seconds, the team of four took home the gold.

## Tumisang Leshoeli

**HOMETOWN:** Johannesburg, South Africa  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2025  
**MAJOR:** Graphic Design  
**HOUSE:** Khayah (2022-23), Amici (2023-24)  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Soccer, HP 2023-24

Since Tumisang Leshoeli first arrived, her joy, sincerity, and leadership reverberated throughout campus. This spring, she was elected as Amici House President for the 2023-24 school year. “Leaving my country and coming here, I knew I would experience culture shock. So, I wanted to have an open mind and be open to all the people I would meet. I think it was this mindset that allowed me to connect with others and will help me be a successful HP next year,” said Leshoeli. Some of Leshoeli's art projects, inspired by her South African culture, were recently highlighted on the Graceland Art Program's Instagram account.

## Michael Millslagle

**HOMETOWN:** Lamoni, Iowa  
**CLASS YEAR:** 2024  
**MAJOR:** Business Management  
**MINOR:** Economics  
**HOUSE:** Closson  
**INVOLVEMENTS:** Track & Field

At the 58th annual men's indoor track & field national meet in March, Michael Millslagle secured his name in Graceland history by becoming the first high jumper to hold the men's individual national title in program history. Millslagle finished second at nationals during his sophomore campaign and has been on a record-breaking tear ever since. In the past 12 months, he has broken the Graceland men's indoor record, set multiple facility records, and become an international champion at the International University Sports Federation America Games held in Merida, Mexico. Millslagle also received male co-athlete of the year from the Association of Student Athletes. He finished the season claiming the top spot in high jump at the 2023 Heart Conference Championship, followed by a seventh-place finish in high jump (both with a mark of 2.05 meters) at the 2023 NAIA Men's Outdoor Track & Field National Championship, which earned him All-American honors. ■





Each spring, Graceland hosts this **SIGNATURE ACADEMIC EVENT** for students from a variety of disciplines to present their work to fellow students, faculty, and visitors on the Lamoni campus, celebrating the University's emerging scholars.



# Scholars' SHOWCASE

BY SHANE ADAMS



**S**tarted in 2009 by Dan Pratt '81, Bill Norman, Sherri Kirkpatrick '65, and Jeana Wilcox, Scholars' Showcase aims to develop a culture of high-quality research, scholarship, and creative activities. The annual all-day event has grown dramatically each year and now includes over 100 scholarly works. The showcase is an opportunity for students and professors to share their passion for academics through posters, presentations, demonstrations, senior projects, art shows, musical instrument recitals, and more. Faculty, staff, students, and members of the community attend the event, have the opportunity to ask questions, and explore the full breadth of Graceland's academic pursuits.



☺ Pictured, top to bottom:  
Katie Booth Heinrich,  
Darwin Marquez Rosario,  
Brenna Murphy,  
and Madi Sager.

## Keynote Speaker

This year's event featured a keynote from **KATIE BOOTH '99 HEINRICH, PhD**, a senior researcher for The Phoenix, a research fellow affiliate for NDRI-USA, and an adjunct professor for Kansas State University. She shared how her Graceland education has been influential throughout her career journey. She is recognized both nationally and internationally for her research on high intensity functional training (HIFT), exercise and chronic disease, and the built environment. Her research aims are to study the effects of HIFT on fitness, health and psychosocial outcomes delivered in a group-based context, focusing on populations including youth, active duty military, healthy adults, overweight/obese adults, and cancer survivors.

## Standout Research Projects

These three students displayed their posters in the Shaw Center Lobby space, with a crowd of interested faculty and fellow students stopping by to hear their presentations and learn more about their research. Below are excerpts from their submitted work:

**DARWIN MARQUEZ ROSARIO** Since its development in 1953, ibuprofen has become one of the most successful non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Work continues on the optimization of ibuprofen to enhance its ability to permeate the blood/brain barrier. In this study, structural analogues of ibuprofen were evaluated using density functional theory (DFT) and Quantitative Structural Activity Relationships (QSAR). Results show that the ethoxy analogues has the largest increase in polar surface area.

**BRENNA MURPHY** Many schools across the nation have made the choice to switch to renewable energy sources to power their schools and the choice has many benefits. This paper discusses the reality of what going solar for Graceland would look like, what land it would have to allocate, how much energy would be offset, how much it would cost, how much it would save, the time it would take to return on its investments, and the environmental implications. The students of Graceland have shown their opinion and it is important for Graceland to consider that socially conscious decisions are a factor in who decides to attend the school. Renowned in the residential and commercial solar project development community, Aurora software was used to make careful and accurate calculations that would allow for the school to make informed decisions for a project of this scale and importance. Institutions such as Graceland should look at how their decisions to buy energy from sources who produce it using non-renewable resources impact the environment and the image of their school.

**MADI SAGER** Acid rain causes billions of dollars of damage around the world annually. Carboxylic acids contribute largely to the effects, but little is known on how they form. This project highlighted an intermediate ( $\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$ ) that was found to be a pathway leading to acid rain. Having  $\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$  as a known pathway can help mitigate the number of carboxylic acids in the air and lead to other pathways. ■



Learn more at [graceland.edu/scholars-showcase](https://graceland.edu/scholars-showcase)





© This photo of the 1991-92 Council of House Presidents was our inspiration for recreating this year's group shot at the Bell.  
 © The HPs snuck in some fun poses with their house hand signs.



CELEBRATING

60 YEARS

RADICAL

## A History of the **House System**

*House Meetings. Air Band. Brother-Sister House Functions. Messy Games. Painting the Bell. Fun Runs. COSA Events. Candle passings. Final Fling.*

*Countless Memories. Lifelong Friendships.*



**I**n the spring of 1962, the Civil Rights Movement was sweeping across the United States and there was a sense on Graceland's campus that social clubs on campus were causing divisiveness amongst the student body. Graceland made the decision to completely reorganize the campus social setting and residence life with the goal of unifying the campus through more inclusive social activities for students. Harvey Grice, Graceland's President at the time, asked the Council of Student Life (CSL) to study the campus, conduct student polls, and hold all campus meetings. The CSL determined that the numerous campus social clubs were too exclusionary to promote the type of student life that Graceland wanted after becoming a 4-year institute in the mid 1950s. Social clubs came to an end at the conclusion of the 1961-62 academic year.

In a special session held Monday, May 7, 1962, the faculty approved the CSL's proposal for campus reorganization. The new system was primarily designed by Director of Housing Dave Haseltine, Dean of Students Harold Condit, and the Student Body President Jennings Jay Newcom, based on a model used by Grinnell College. Alongside others, Haseltine, Condit, and Newcom spearheaded the development of a new housing system which was approved to be implemented in the fall of 1962 for that academic year, and the house system Graceland holds dear was born.

“Everyone who is here belongs here just because they are here, and for no other reason. This is our top rule. It depends on nothing else. Nothing changes it.”

GRACELAND UNIVERSITY  
HOUSE PHILOSOPHY

**1962**

HOUSE SYSTEM ESTABLISHED

**15**

ORIGINAL HOUSES

# BELONGING

BY SHANE ADAMS & CLARA CLELAND-LEIGHTON

## The Originals

In the fall of 1962, 15 houses were established, seven men's houses, seven women's, and a last hall for married students. Each house had 45-67 students, a faculty member to act as a sponsor, and an elected student council to manage any house social activities and housing issues that came up among members. This council originally included a House President, Vice President/Treasurer, Vice President/Secretary, Chaplain, two Senators, and an Intramurals or Women's Recreation Association representative.

At the beginning of the 1962-63 school year, house members organized to elect positions and propose house names to be approved. House members also chose their own insignias, colors, mottos, and crests, all of which had to be submitted to Lance Hutton, the Council of House Presidents Vice President. Many of them still exist today.

Some houses have kept their histories and trivia veiled in secret, not to be easily recorded by the history books. The following listing of houses is what our investigative team could find over the years.



© The first ever Council of House Presidents portrait, a tradition that has continued year after year ever since.

© 1963 Acacia



# Original Men's Houses

## AARON 1962-2012

**HOUSE MASCOT** Knights

**COLORS** Black, White, and Red

**NAME ORIGIN** After the Aaronic priesthood of the Community of Christ (then RLDS) church

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** James Warnock

**TRIVIA** Aaron's knightly origins date back to a social club called the K.O.G. (Knights of Graceland) that began in 1946-47. The K.O.G. passed on their knightly paraphernalia to Aaron. K.O.G. also contributed the idea and the labor for the big concrete G that is visible from the football stands. Aaron House members were easy to identify on campus because of their iconic red jackets, introduced in 1977-78 and designed by Brian Carr.

## AGAPE 1962-Present

**HOUSE SYMBOL** A cross resembling the Ankh symbol, an ancient Egyptian hieroglyph signifying "life"

**COLORS** Navy Blue and White (originally Green and Black)

**NAME ORIGIN** After the Des Moines, Iowa area campgrounds and the Greek word for "love," represents brotherhood to house members

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** James Gargano

**TRIVIA** In early years, Agape had a house choir and participated in a "chicken stealing party" (which is exactly what it sounds like, though the chickens were taken legally).

## CLOSSON 1962-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Crusaders

**COLORS** Blue and Yellow (originally Scarlet and White)

**NAME ORIGIN** After Eugene Closson, professor of Psychology at Graceland from 1931-59

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Leighton Leighty

**TRIVIA** Closson House was initially comprised of 18 members and all male students who lived in Lamoni. During the 1991-92 academic year, house president Adam Long wanted to create lasting traditions, so they initiated the woman of the week tradition and the annual Caped Crusader Ball.

## EDWARDS 1962-85

**HOUSE MASCOT** A lion

**COLORS** Originally Orange and Black (then Yellow and Black)

**NAME ORIGIN** After F. Henry Edwards and Blanche Edwards, an RLDS First President and a member of the Graceland Board of Trustees respectively

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** James Elvin

**TRIVIA** Edwards House had a long-time tradition of "Big E Night" when house members would apply "E"s of various sizes around the campus prior to the homecoming football game. It was announced in 1985 that the first floor of Gunsolley would close, so Edwards merged with Tiona to form Orion.



© Left: Aaron's homecoming sidewalk rope "climb" tradition across campus, first staged in 1979.  
Right: © 1982 Acacia.

## FAUNCE 1962-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Originally, Gentlemen; currently, Dragons

**COLORS** Carolina Blue and Black (originally Green and White, then Orange and Royal Blue at some point)

**NAME ORIGIN** After Roscoe O. Faunce, a professor of Speech and Drama from 1934-60

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Daniel Shank

**TRIVIA** Faunce's symbol was originally a figure holding a torch and scroll, symbolizing mental and physical development, in front of a green circle, symbolizing eternal friendship, with a ribbon in front that said "Fraternitas Unitas" meaning "United in Brotherhood."

## STEWART MANOR 1962-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Several over the years: Executives, Sharks, Scotsmen; currently, Lions

**COLORS** Red and Yellow (originally Powder Blue and White, then Navy and Powder Blue)

**NAME ORIGIN** After Rolland M. Stewart, the Graceland President from 1904-08

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** James Zimmer

**TRIVIA** Stewart Manor is one of only two existing houses whose name goes back to the 1956 basic residence unit system.

## TIONA 1962-85; 2013-Present

**HOUSE SYMBOL** Stallions

**COLORS** Burgundy and Gold

**NAME ORIGIN** After the Polynesian word for "Zion"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Clive "Lance" Hutton

**TRIVIA** Tiona dates back to the age of Basic Residence Units, with its origins in 1957. In 1985, Tiona and Edwards merged to form Orion before Tiona returned in 2013 alongside Powell. Since their return in 2013, a new house tradition has emerged called the "Santa run" where house members take a picture with Santa in Des Moines.



© 1973 Acacia



## ..... Original Women's Houses

### AUDENTIA 1962-79

**HOUSE MASCOT** A caricature of a little girl nicknamed "Audie"

**COLORS** Dark Green and Light Blue

**NAME ORIGIN** After Mary Audentia Smith Anderson, the daughter of RLDS (now Community of Christ) President Joseph Smith III, the first treasurer of the Graceland College Alumni Association and writer of hymn "The Old, Old Path"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Carolyn Carter

**TRIVIA** One of Audentia's house functions was called "Pumpkin's Pilgrimage" involving a hayride and a party.

### BELAVERA 1962-85

**HOUSE SYMBOL** A cross with a rose

**COLORS** Maroon and Cream

**NAME ORIGIN** After the international language Esperanto's word for "truth and beauty" which was the house motto

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Rita Novell

**TRIVIA** The reason Belavera chose an Esperanto word as its name (and the translation as its motto) was because the members of the house wanted to reflect Graceland's status as an international school. In 1985, Belavera merged with Atara to form Leilani.

### KIMBALL MANOR 1962-79

**COLORS** White and Maroon

**NAME ORIGIN** After Violet Kimball, a woman who played a leadership role among the women supporting the building of the Kirtland Temple

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Sharon Pray

**TRIVIA** Kimball Manor and Dimora were chosen to combine in 1979 when their names were drawn out of a hat by GSG President Ken McClain. Those houses became Kimora.

### SARIAH 1962-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Sailors

**COLORS** Royal Blue (originally Maroon and Cream)

**NAME ORIGIN** After a character in the Book of Mormon

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Judith Manning

**TRIVIA** Each year, current Sariah members hold a door decorating contest during Halloween. The reigning champion is Lexi Zabel, Sariah's incoming house president for the 2023-24 school year.

### SHALOM 1962-Present

**HOUSE SYMBOL** Originally a four-pointed star, replaced by the six-pointed Star of David

**COLORS** Black (originally Green and Light Blue)

**NAME ORIGIN** After the Hebrew word meaning both "peace" and "welcome home"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Shirley Bigham

**TRIVIA** When it inevitably snows in Lamoni, Shalomies go out and do snow angels and have a snowball fight in their swimsuits.



© Left: © 1977 Acacia. Right: The brother-sister house tug-of-war. Solah and Tiona boasted in the 1963 Acacia that they were the first to start this tradition.

### SOLAH 1962-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** The house symbol is comprised of the Greek letters Sigma and Alpha, but Solah is known on campus as the Sweethearts

**COLORS** Red and White

**NAME ORIGIN** An acronym for the house motto "Sisterhood of Love and Honor"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Margo Montgomery

**TRIVIA** In 1972, Solah was the first winner of "Spring Sing," a COSA-sponsored singing competition featuring individual musical performances from each house. Solah went on to win the event for five years in a row. Spring Sing was eventually replaced by Air Band.

### TRAYER 1962-85

**HOUSE SYMBOL** A capital 'H' crossed by a capital 'T'

**COLORS** Royal Blue and White

**NAME ORIGIN** After Ted Trayer, a faculty member of English and Speech from 1960-64

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Suzanne Fisher

**TRIVIA** When Walker Hall closed in 1985, Trayer merged with Kimora House to form Amici.

## Married Housing .....

### ELECTA / SHADDAI 1962-91

**HOUSE ORIGIN** Little is known about why Electa was chosen as the original name for the house for married students. In 1985, the name was changed to Shaddai, meaning "the omnipotent and all-powerful"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Earl Detrick (Electa); Cindy Pitt (Shaddai)

**TRIVIA** Electa gained a location when Ullery Hall was converted into the Tower Apartments. Married students also maintained a newsletter, originally called *The Ball and Chain*, a shoutout to the original married social club, which was formed in 1945.





© Left: © 1978-79 CHP portrait. Right: Another homecoming tradition, Cheville members attend the football game with their torsos painted green and yellow, often carrying a sign that says "Roy Lives."

## Other Houses Throughout the Years

Over the years, many houses have been created, merged, or ended for many different reasons (new buildings, building conversions, changes in enrollment, etc.). Below is a listing of the houses that have existed at one time or another during Graceland's history.

### ..... Men's Houses

#### CHEVILLE 1965-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Gods

**COLORS** Green and Yellow (originally Green and Black)

**NAME ORIGIN** For religion professor Roy Cheville #ForRoy

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Roger Hershey

**TRIVIA** Cheville House was in the initial round of new houses added with the opening of Graybill Hall (then Gunsolley Annex) in 1965. Cheville was also home to one of Graceland's most infamous (and definitely not fictitious) residents, Rod Dixen, who has somehow roamed the halls of Cheville for over 50 years.

#### HIGDON MANOR 1967-68

**NAME ORIGIN** In honor of then-president William T. "Bill" Higdon and his father Earl T. Higdon, who had also been president.

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Mike Bessonette

**TRIVIA** Higdon Manor was the shortest-lived house in Graceland's history, only existing for a single year to accommodate the return of male students to Baker Hall. The following year, members of Higdon Manor joined Cheville.

#### ORION 1985-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Hunters

**COLORS** Purple and Green (originally Maroon and Silver)

**NAME ORIGIN** After the constellation

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Keith McMillan

**TRIVIA** Orion was formed when Edwards and Tiona merged in 1985. Their original name was intended to be "Hough House" after retiring business professor and interim president Frank Hough, but he declined the offer (a decision he later regretted).

#### POWELL 2013-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Phoenixes

**COLORS** Burgundy and Gray

**NAME ORIGIN** After beloved Dean of Students Tom Powell

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Kyle Macali

**TRIVIA** In 2019, Powell instituted "Tom's Diner," a late-night breakfast in the Gunsolley Lounge after special events.

### Women's Houses .....

#### AMICI 1985-Present

**HOUSE MASCOT** Originally Gumby, a penguin (1986-87), a cow (1989-96), ultimately known as the "House of Friends"

**COLORS** Purple and Gray (originally, Pink, Gray, and White)

**NAME ORIGIN** Means "friends" in Latin and Italian

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Lisa Smith

**TRIVIA** Formed by the merger of Kimora and Traver in 1985 due to the closure of Walker Hall, Amici's co-vice presidents during its first year were Cheville House members Todd Davison and John Snider, who even appeared in the Amici house picture. Davison also wrote the Amici House Song.

#### ANANTA 1965-79

**COLORS** Coral and White

**NAME ORIGIN** Hindu term signifying "infinite love"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Jane Donnelson

**TRIVIA** When Patroness Hall was converted into offices in 1979, Ananta was one of five women's houses that offered to combine to get first choice of location for the fall. Ananta and Audentia combined to create Atara.

#### APONIVI 1979-Present

**HOUSE SYMBOL** Angels (originally a question mark symbolizing the things yet to be revealed in the future)

**COLORS** Blue and White (originally Cranberry and White)

**NAME ORIGIN** Hopi for "where the wind blows," chosen for the Lamanite heritage

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Carina Lord

**TRIVIA** Formed through the merger of Chemin and Mahana houses, Aponivi debuted on campus occupying the top two floors of Walker Hall before it was closed in 1985. When Walker Hall reopened in 1994 after extensive renovations, Aponivi returned to the second floor, where it has remained since.

#### ATARA 1979-85

**HOUSE SYMBOL** A crown

**COLORS** Maroon and White

**NAME ORIGIN** Means "crown" or "royal diadem"

**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Marjie Lake

**TRIVIA** Created through a merger of Ananta and Audentia in 1979 when the number of women's houses had to be reduced by three to accommodate the conversion of Patroness to offices. When Walker Hall closed in 1985, Atara merged with Belevra to form Lelani.



**CHEMIN** 1967-79**COLORS** Lavender and Burgundy**NAME ORIGIN** French for “way,” “road,” or “path”**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Sharon Engle**TRIVIA** Pronounced “sheh-min,” Chemin was created in 1967 to help balance Mahana House, which was originally set to take over all of Patroness, but the college felt this made it too big. The bonds between Chemin and Mahana continued through the years when they ultimately merged in 1979 to create Aponivi.**DIMORA** 1965-79; 2010-18**HOUSE SYMBOL** Originally a letter D with a rose, then a flowering tree with roots spelling “Dimora”**COLORS** Originally Cranberry and Mauve, then Black, Cyan, and Magenta**NAME ORIGIN** Italian for home**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Marge McCauley**TRIVIA** Before it was named, Dimora was known as “the new house” and some members jokingly called it the “Gnu House.” In the spring of 1979, Dimora combined with Kimball Manor to become Kimora. Dimora was revived again in 2011, replacing Leilani.**HANTHORNE** 1994-Present**HOUSE SYMBOL** The sun**COLORS** Orange, Gold, and Purple (originally Gold and Purple)**NAME ORIGIN** In honor of Cleo Hanthorne Moon, Graceland’s poet laureate and college librarian from 1935-45 and again from 1956-69**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Amy Hough**TRIVIA** Hanthorne was created due to the expansion in the number of women’s houses when Walker Hall reopened in 1994.**KHIYAH** 1994-Present**HOUSE MASCOT** Ninjas**COLORS** Burgundy and Silver**NAME ORIGIN** “Khiyah” means “Mother Earth” in Hebrew and is similar to a Swahili term that means “season of new beginnings”**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Kristi Hettrick**TRIVIA** One of Khiyah’s first house functions was called “Hooked On You” where house members and their dates were handcuffed to each other for the evening.**KIMORA** 1979-85**HOUSE MASCOT** The kittens**COLORS** Originally Green and White (later Pink and Black, Navy Blue and White, and Blue and Silver)**NAME ORIGIN** The spelling honored the two houses that merged to form Kimora: Kimball Manor and Dimora, but it was also a clever play on words that sounded like Cumorah, an important location in Community of Christ history**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Lori White**TRIVIA** Kimora’s house song (adapted from the Kimball Manor house song) was sung to the tune of *Far Above Cayuga’s Waters*.**LEILANI** 1985-2010**HOUSE SYMBOL** A flower**COLORS** Pink, Turquoise, and Yellow (later Pink and Turquoise)**NAME ORIGIN** Hawaiian name for “flower”**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Judith Postnikoff**TRIVIA** Formed when Walker Hall closed in 1985 by combining Atara and Belavera. Leilani was replaced by the return of Dimora in 2010.**MAHANA** 1967-79**COLORS** Yellow and Orange**NAME ORIGIN** Tahitian for “sun,” which signified spiritual enlightenment**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** LaDora Cripps**TRIVIA** Of the 40 original members of Mahana House, only three of them were returning students. When Patroness Hall closed in 1979, Mahana and Chemin merged to form Aponivi.**PALOMA** 1966-Present**HOUSE MASCOT** Doves**COLORS** Green and Aqua**NAME ORIGIN** Spanish for “dove”**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Sharon Heinlen**TRIVIA** A time-honored tradition for Paloma is to ‘P’ the campus, where house members spend an evening placing the letter ‘P’ and the dove symbol on sidewalks and other areas.

## Specialty House .....

**McKEVIT MANOR** 1970-present**HOUSE SYMBOL** The pin nursing students receive during their pinning ceremony**NAME ORIGIN** Named for Margaret McKevit, who was known as the mother of Graceland’s nursing program in the late 1960s**FIRST HOUSE PRESIDENT** Pam Duffield**TRIVIA** While Duffield was McKevit Manor’s first house president, the first leader of the house was Cathy King, who served as student head resident. It was not until 1975 that McKevit Manor adopted a house council system that resembled Lamoni’s.

© A crowd gathered to support their houses' entry in the watermelon eating contest on the Commons lawn. Cindy Jenkins walked away with first place for Paloma.

© 1974 Acacia





## Painting the Bell

One of the time-honored traditions of the house system is the painting of the Victory Bell. The bell originally hung in the chapel of the Higdon Administration Building before moving to the area just southeast of the building in the fall of 1959.

The painting of the bell originally required students to shimmy up a large concrete and stone tower. In 2015, the bell was moved to its current location just east of the Fitzgerald Fitness Center, thanks in part to the efforts of the facility services team of Bob Kelly, Rob Washburn, and Nathan Craig, whose creativity made the bell visible and easily accessible.

Painting the bell is very much a source of pride for many of the houses. Alumni house members have been known to "claim the bell" upon visits to campus for Homecoming or other activities.

## Air Band

The Air Band contest was introduced by COSA in 1984 as an annual competition between the houses. Houses are paired up and perform a lip synched, choreographed stage routine to popular songs. Originally, the event was held in the spring, replacing Spring Sing, which involved live singing.

Over the years, Air Band moved to be held on Homecoming weekend and became a part of the annual Homecoming house competition. Costumes, routines, and themes became more and more elaborate. Now, houses select a movie that they must portray through their performance, using contemporary songs.

At Homecoming 2022, defending Air Band champions Sariah teamed with Stewart Manor to perform the winning routine, their energetic and well-choreographed interpretation of *Finding Nemo*.



# 17

CURRENT HOUSES

### Share your memories!

We love hearing your memories of the house system! If you have others you'd like to share, don't hesitate to email them to [househistory@graceland.edu](mailto:househistory@graceland.edu)

## Cheers to 60 More Years

This academic school year marks the 60th year of the house system being in place at Graceland and despite years of changes, disbandings, and merges many of the original names are still in use.

Ultimately, the house system is built upon the belief that students can find belonging and inclusion at Graceland. The residence life system embraces the idea that our students will become their best selves if they can find a strong support system. Over the years, Graceland's houses have seen a lot of change, but their commitment to ensuring students feel a sense of welcome the moment they arrive on campus has remained steadfast. ■

**ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR** Clara Cleland-Leighton '24 is an honors senior majoring in History with a minor in Studio Art, English and Theatre. She is a member of Solah and is active in the theatre program, SAGE, and is captain of the cheer program. Her mother, Shawn Leighton '86, was on Sariah, her sisters Anna '14 and Laura '17 were on Shalom, and her sister Emma '21 was also on Solah. Her grandfathers, Donald Parkes '44 and Rigby Eric Leighton '60, also attended Graceland but before the house system was created.



# The Girls of Lamoni

## *Friends by Chance, Sisters by Choice*

The Graceland Experience is unique for everyone, but in the early 2000s, **A GROUP OF 10 WOMEN** found themselves in a friendship that would last a lifetime.

**F**rom house connections on Hanthorne and Leilani to participating in the Gadets to working together in classes, a true friendship was born between Brittany Hettrick '07 Jensen, Chelsea Johnson '06 McCormick, Christina Manuel '05 Anderson, Janna Cash '06 Gilner, Jennifer Hernandez '05 White, Lindsay Garrett '07 Tarwater, Lisa Ash '09 Drackert, Meredith Hoffman '06 Sturgis, Sara Churchman '06, and Sara Kendrick '07 Glenn.

By chance, the group of Graceland women ended up in the surrounding Kansas City area after graduation. There, they nurtured this Graceland connection through dinners, a book club, and trips to the Ozarks. It was in this book club that the name The Girls of Lamoni was born after the group read "The Girls of Ames: A Story of Women and a Forty-Year Friendship" by Jeffrey Zaslow.

In the years to come, as they began to move away, they have stayed in touch through annual girls' trips, video calls, and emails. "Through the book club and regular time together, our bond grew, and we became connected through supporting each other in marriage, divorce, babies, and loss. Once major life events happen, I think it is clear what and who is important, and we continued to choose to make time for each other," said Jensen.

They even carried on Graceland traditions and held their own New Year in November celebration as a way to get together for the holidays. Even though many of the women have moved away from the Kansas City area, they have gotten creative with ways to stay in touch. "We are now spread across



seven states and clearly have managed to keep in touch and remember the most important stuff. Between email, text, Marco Polo, Elfster, and Zoom, we really have to be grateful for the ways technology has helped us feel like we are much closer geographically than we truly are," said Gilner.

As "The Girls of Lamoni" have grown up and had families of their own, there is a new generation of connections with their children which they fondly call "The Kids of Lamoni." While subsets of this remarkable group get together more often, it is a magical moment when they can all be together. "I am so thankful to Graceland for bringing us together and creating a culture and environment that fosters such meaningful relationships. I know my life is so much richer because of this group. I think all of us would agree that we inspire and support each other to be the strongest, healthiest, most intelligent, and most thoughtful versions of ourselves," said Tarwater. - **BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES**

**"I am so grateful to Graceland for bringing us together and creating a culture and environment that fosters such meaningful relationships. I know my life is so much richer because of this group."**

LINDSAY GARRETT '07 TARWATER





# New Programs, New Opportunities

BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES

Graceland's academic divisions add new majors and programs to give students the **OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE** their passions and pursue their dreams in highly sought-after career fields, accelerated graduate degrees, and a new hybrid doctoral program in physical therapy.

## New Undergraduate Programs

Beginning in the fall of 2023, three exciting new majors will be offered. **Digital Content Creation** is a unique interdisciplinary program combining communication, creative arts, and writing to provide students with a well-rounded education in the content creation field. The Bureau of Labor Statistics expects employment in media and communications jobs to grow 6 percent over the next decade, and the salaries are increasing rapidly as companies prioritize social media, video production, and content creation. This unique program will feature hands-on learning opportunities, internships, and a capstone course to give students the skills and experience they need to succeed in their careers.


Graceland's **Marketing** major is the newest offering from the C.H. Sandage School of Business (SSOB) and caters to students interested in careers in strategic marketing, sales, and other similar occupations. Marketing is an in-demand degree, and this program builds on the popular programs that already exist in

the SSOB, leveraging the talents of the new faculty members like Assistant Professor of Business Ioseb Gabelala, DBA, who brings knowledge of international business marketing to the department. Graduates will be well-prepared to enter the workforce and make an impact.

The SSOB also added a new **Finance** major for those interested in careers that require financial analysis, risk assessment, and strategic planning to contribute to the economic success of businesses and other organizations. The program is built on coursework in finance, economics, mathematics, and accounting that will provide students with strong quantitative, critical, and analytical thinking skills. Students will graduate the program equipped with career-focused, field-specific finance content that features experiential and simulation-based learning grounded in a professional code of ethics.

These new majors were developed by faculty with an eye toward relevance and growth, and they are made even more valuable with the **Transformational Leadership** major. A second major that all students receive as part of their undergraduate education, Transformational Leadership combines general education, leadership, and strategic skills courses. This bonus major provides Graceland students with a well-rounded education that is rooted in the liberal arts and readies them for the next step in their lives, regardless of their chosen career path. The National Association of Colleges and Employers published eight Career Readiness Competencies, and Graceland's Transformational Leadership major explicitly develops all eight, setting up its students for success in the workplace and lifelong career management.





**“We have worked hard to build a program that is innovative, accessible, and will attempt to contribute to improving the diversity of the profession. We feel this focus aligns tremendously well with Graceland’s initiatives.”**

LEIGH MURRAY, PT, PhD  
*Director, Doctor of Physical Therapy Program*

## Doctor of Physical Therapy

Graceland is launching a new **Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)** program, the latest graduate program for the 128-year-old institution.

In January 2022, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) formally approved the University’s second doctoral program, which will be delivered as a hybrid, accelerated program, providing students with a modern and collaborative learning environment. (Graceland’s School of Nursing provides a Doctor of Nursing Practice program online.)

“Approval from HLC is an exciting step,” said Graceland President Patricia H. Draves. “The team has been working hard to get our program to this point, and we are thrilled to launch this program.”

Students will experience an innovative, two-year curriculum and will graduate as movement system experts that can provide transformational care in a wide range of settings, including hospitals, outpatient clinics, homes, schools, sports and fitness facilities, workplaces, and nursing homes. The hybrid instruction format is provided through distance education and face-to-face onsite lab immersion sessions that allow students to live anywhere in the country. The program’s mission focuses on providing a learning community that reinforces justice, compassion, excellence, and a sense of belonging while adding to the diversity of the institution and profession of Physical Therapy.

Program Director Leigh Murray, PT, PhD, said, “We have worked hard to build a program that is innovative, accessible, and will attempt to contribute to improving the diversity of the profession. We feel this focus aligns tremendously well with Graceland’s initiatives. I am so proud of the team we have put together so far, and I am looking forward to the future and how this program can positively contribute to the University!” ■

## 3+2 Program Makes a Perfect Pairing

Graceland is excited to offer a new Allied Health to Master of Science Nutrition and Human Performance (MSNHP) 3+2 program that allows students to earn their Bachelor of Science in Allied Health and Master of Science in Nutrition and Human Performance in five years.

**T**hrough this program, students will have an in-depth understanding of biomechanics, functional anatomy, and movement science, with a specialized focus on the evidence-based foundations of nutrition and human performance.

Since its inception, students with the Allied Health undergraduate degree expressed interest in the MSNHP program. In response, Assistant Professor of Health and Movement Science Melanie Mason DAT, LAT, ATC, CES, PES, in partnership with Robert Davidson, PhD, director of the MSNHP program, worked tirelessly to develop this combination program for students with a passion for health who want to graduate as a leader in their field.

From coaching to physical therapy, the master’s in nutrition and human performance gives students an edge in employment by providing additional knowledge to offer their clients. Students interested in professional school will have the opportunity to have published work, hands-on experience, and a proven track record that they can thrive in a terminal degree program. – **BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES**







# Transform[ed] Leaders BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES

Two years ago, a group of alumni, administrators, trustees, and faculty embarked on **A MISSION TO ESTABLISH A NEW MAJOR** for all undergraduate students, aimed at equipping them with practical skills to excel as capable professionals and leaders in their chosen fields and communities.

**T**his fall, Graceland University introduced the brand new transformational leadership major to the first freshmen class. Dr. Nancy King, associate professor of psychology and director of the Life and Leadership program, sat down with freshman Grace Testerman '26, a student-athlete who has just completed her first course in the new major, to review the progress of the Life and Leadership program.

**DR. NANCY KING:** Transformational leadership is the act of leading people towards change, and the purpose of this leadership style is to help people transform into better people, students, leaders, business professionals, nurses, and teachers. Transformational leaders have a great sense of vision and can see the best or the potential in people or an organization. The transformational leadership program is designed to help our students do just that.

When our students come in as freshmen, we start with the development of transformational leaders, which helps them learn to be leaders of their own lives and take care of themselves and be responsible and dependable.

**GRACE TESTERMAN:** I would say that this first-year class has definitely helped me really realize what it means to be a leader in the classroom. It can just be being the first person to answer a question or to talk in class and communicate with other students. Those are all great signs of being a leader, and I think this beginning leadership course will help people come out of their comfort zone.

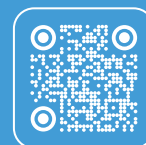
**DR. NANCY KING:** Then we move into the sophomore year, and that's all about group leadership because many students are now serving on house council, engaging with student government, and stepping up as leaders on athletic teams, so they are going to understand group involvement is essential. When we move into their junior year, the focus is organizational leadership. In that course, they learn the more formal role of being a leader and transitioning into that leadership position to help lead people or to change an organization.

## Preparing World Changers

Graceland reimaged its liberal arts general education program and added new modules that are specifically aimed at preparing our graduates to be transformational leaders. These courses set Graceland students on a path to success with a foundational education and experience that will propel them into future careers that have not yet been imagined.



Check out our video and learn more:  
[graceland.edu/bonusmajor](https://graceland.edu/bonusmajor)





**“Transformational leadership is the act of leading people towards change, and the purpose of this leadership style is to help people transform into better people, students, leaders, business professionals, nurses, and teachers.”**

NANCY KING, PhD

*Associate Professor of Psychology  
Director, Life and Leadership Program*

The final year is about servant leadership – doing internships and having the opportunity to apply everything they’ve learned. We even have some of our leadership committee working on those internships now to get them in place.

**GRACE TESTERMAN:** I use the skills we learned in class in my everyday life – to self-lead for my job, as a student, my assignments, communicate with others, and to be a good person. It’s teaching us morals in life, how to respect one another and know that it’s okay that we have different opinions, and how we can talk about certain things. What I get out of it is that it helps us grow as people, and I honestly love having transformational leadership as a major because it not only looks great on resumés, but it helps a lot for someone individually whenever it comes to work or just trying to be a good person overall.

**DR. NANCY KING:** What is truly remarkable is that no other university in this country is doing this. Before I agreed to accept this position, I did lots of research, and many universities are teaching leadership courses, but nobody’s offering it as a major. I think our unique program can be attributed to the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff who had the vision to see that this was needed for our students and that it would set them apart from other graduates.

You can’t fool these students into believing that the class is good for them – you have to prove it to them. After this first year, I think they’re starting to realize that this can help them in their lives. Which, in turn, will give them the life skills to help others and enact positive change. This is my first year here at Graceland, and I am truly impressed with this all-campus effort to launch this exciting program. ■



Agricultural business students Cydney Stables and Noah Hughes celebrate the event’s success with Max Pitt.

## A Night of Generosity

### C.H. Sandage School of Business Dinner & Auction Raises Funds for a Brighter Future

**T**he Great Room in Newcom Student Union hummed with laughter and conversation as members of the Lamoni and Graceland community gathered for the C.H. Sandage School of Business Dinner & Auction. The event, organized by the faculty and students of the School of Business, was a night of joy, celebration, and camaraderie.

The evening started with a welcome from Associate Professor of Business Max Pitt ’86 and a brief message from President Patricia H. Draves discussing the event’s theme: Blue, Gold & Bold. Student Isaac Hall ’23 gave the invocation, and all the attendees sat down for a delicious dinner and admired the auction items.

As the world-renowned auctioneer took the stage, the live auction began with a bang. One of the highlights of the evening was a Jeff Criswell ’86 signed Kansas City Chiefs jersey commemorating the Graceland football legend’s time in the NFL. Homemade pies from agricultural business students were another delicious crowd favorite.

Cydney Stables ’25, an agricultural business student and key organizer of the auction, said, “This event took a lot of preparation from members of the Graceland Agricultural Business Club – they were asked to gather donations for the auction, help set up tables and chairs, and volunteer their time to make the night possible. This event was truly by students for students!”

The night ended with a roar of cheerful commotion as attendees congratulated each other on their successful bids and favorite parts of the evening. The School of Business Dinner & Auction was a resounding success, not only in raising crucial funds but also in fostering a sense of community, philanthropy, and support for the next generation of business leaders.

When asked about the evening, Pitt said, “The School of Business Dinner & Auction built upon the years of successful Ag Dinners and Auctions. Our students, donors, and employees share a vision of Graceland making a difference for people. The shared experience of gathering and being generous reconnects people to each other and to Graceland. What a great evening!” ■

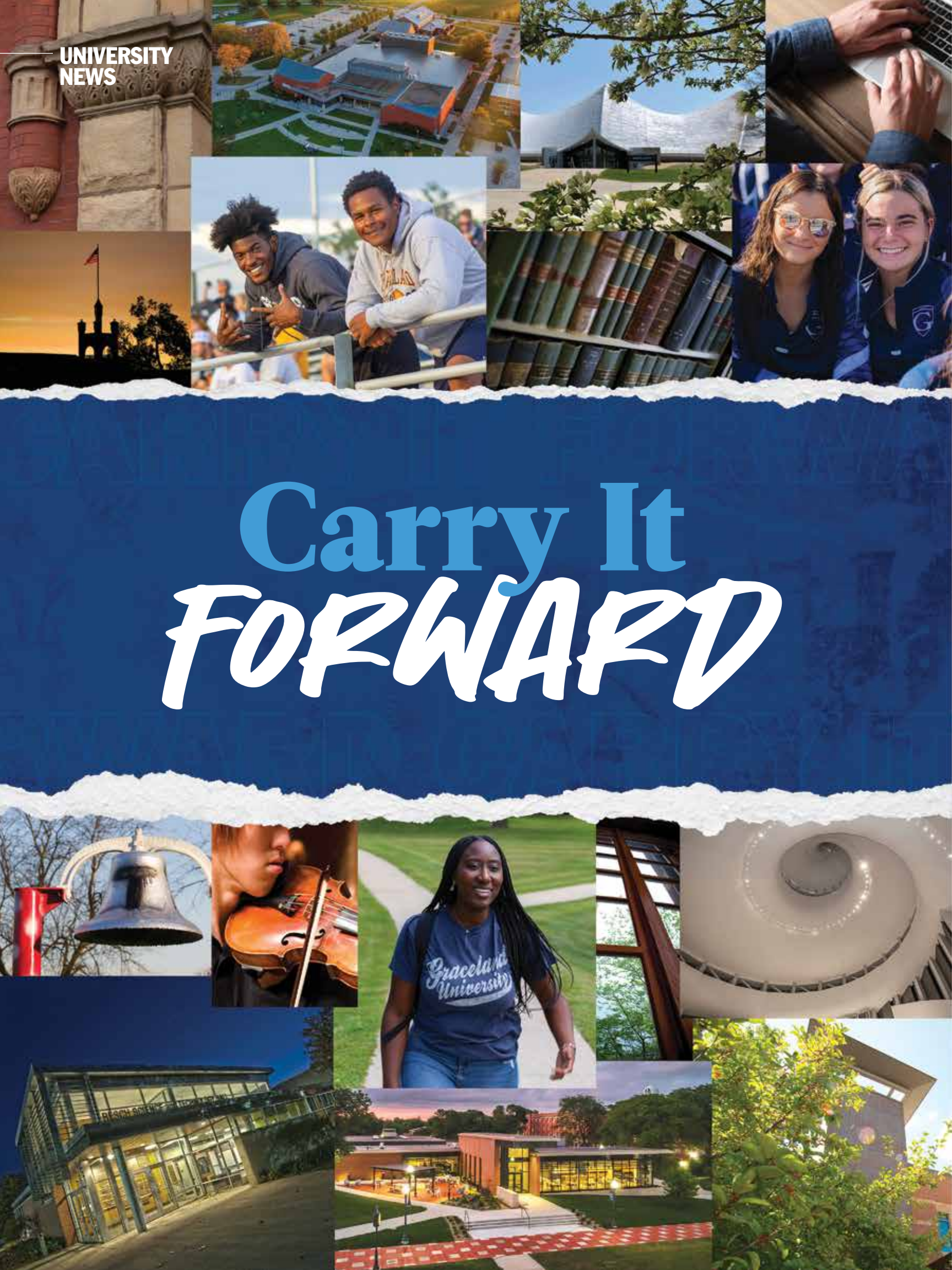
**“Our students, donors, and employees share a vision of Graceland making a difference for people. The shared experience of gathering and being generous reconnects people to each other and to Graceland.”**

MAX PITT, MBA, CMA, ’86  
*Associate Professor of Business*



UNIVERSITY  
NEWS

# Carry It FORWARD





# An Education That Endures

BY SHANE ADAMS

**BRANDS ACROSS THE WORLD ARE COMPETING FOR ATTENTION**, and we are inundated with marketing messages. In the 1970s, consumers only saw about 500 to 1,600 per day. In 2022, that number skyrocketed to 4,000 to 10,000 ads *daily*.

**F**or Graceland to stand out in an already crowded marketplace that is saturated with universities with incredibly deep pockets, the University focused on ensuring that the message we tell to the world stands out in a sea of sameness.

One of the central efforts of Graceland's *Blue, Gold & Bold* Strategic Framework is a focus on increasing the visibility and awareness of the University that we all love. Central to that effort is a brand initiative led by the internal marketing team alongside their agency partner, VisionPoint Marketing.

The first task was to develop Graceland's brand pillars – who are we and what do we stand for? ☺

These pillars form the backbone of our brand marketing strategy, which then led to the development of a 3- to 5-year campaign that begins rolling out in the summer of 2023.

Marketing is storytelling, and Graceland has a great story. From its humble roots as a small, rural junior college to a university with undergraduate and graduate degrees alike, Graceland continues to endure the challenges it has encountered over the years through its commitment to learning, wholeness, and community. The Graceland Experience isn't any one specific thing – it connects us in its multi-layered diversity. And that experience is what we carry forward into the world.

**CARRY IT FORWARD** The national brand campaign highlights the many dimensions of the Graceland experience by telling the story that we all know well: Graceland is four years that lasts forever. We carry it forward through our lives – our education, the relationships that we make, the bonds we build, and the experience as a whole. This gives our students the assurance of their value, guidance for their life's purpose, and security in knowing their worth exactly as they are. Graceland is more than an education – our alumni and students all know that – it is an experience that remains with us for a lifetime.

As Graceland embarks on one of its most substantive brand campaigns in recent history, we hope alumni and friends of our beloved institution will join us in helping amplify and tell our story as widely and loudly as we can. ■

## Graceland's Brand Pillars

### A SAFE SPACE FOR SELF-DISCOVERY

We create a caring, inclusive community that supports students' personal growth through a culture of acceptance and belonging.

### SKILLS FOR THE MODERN WORLD

We prepare students to be purpose-driven changemakers through a modern approach to liberal arts education, transformational leadership development, and a culture that cherishes diversity and fosters inclusivity.

### CONNECTIONS TO LAST A LIFETIME

We foster strong interpersonal connections and a powerful network of faculty and alumni, preparing students for meaningful and productive lives.

### STRONGLY ROOTED AND STILL GROWING

Since its founding in 1895, Graceland University has been dedicated to helping students develop their potential for meaningful and productive lives through the open and free pursuit of truth. This drives our commitment to remaining innovative, ensuring that we are offering our students what they need most for their individual futures. We have never shied away from branching into new territory – both literally and figuratively.

The Graceland Experience isn't any one specific thing – it connects us in its multi-layered diversity. And that experience is what we carry forward into the world.

© **A BOLD BRAND CAMPAIGN** Graceland's Marketing team has been working closely with VisionPoint to hone in on a fresh design style that will appeal to prospective students for our undergraduate and graduate programs. The layered imagery adds texture and depth with architectural details and tells the story of the student experience.





# Gracelanders Giving Back

BY COLBY CONNELLY

The Alumni Board of Directors is a **PASSIONATE GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS** who strive to promote the welfare of the University and foster a close, mutually beneficial relationship between the University, its alumni, and friends.

**T**he board supports the president, trustees, faculty, staff, and students in advancing Graceland's mission. On March 24-25, 2023, the Alumni Board gathered in Lamoni to meet with stakeholders at the institution and to welcome eight new board members to the team. Each board member is eligible to serve two four-year terms. There are various committees within the Alumni Board of Directors and several officer positions, including a President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.

Meet our newest Alumni Board members and read their reasons for volunteering.



**JENNY BOGDA '13**

"I understand the importance of a strong alumni base, and I would love to represent Graceland in this setting."

My experience as a transfer student and my time working in higher education will provide a unique perspective for the board. I have always wanted to give back to Graceland, and I am excited about this new opportunity."



**JEREMY DEEMER '18**

"Coming from Lamoni, I understand how necessary it is for Graceland to succeed for the overall wellness of Southern Iowa."

I am passionate about making sure local teens understand Graceland is an exceptional option, and it provides many unique opportunities. I want Graceland student-athletes to understand how they can translate their collegiate career to professional success."



**DYLAN FOX '21** When "I was Academic Student Council President as a student, I enjoyed partnering with the Alumni Board to set up discussions and events

between students and alumni. Many students expressed their gratitude for participating in these and developing new connections. Now that I have graduated, I am happy to transition to the other side of this relationship. Graceland taught me that I enjoy helping others and how I can find my own success in the success of others."



**JOHN GODFREY '06**

"Graceland was one of the most transformative experiences of my life. At Graceland, I was able to grow as a young adult, form

lifelong friendships, and pursue leadership experiences that have been a foundation for my current success. Being connected to my alma mater and pulling in more participation from my age demographic is important to me."



**COLLIN ISHAM '11**

"I wanted to join the alumni board for the university that set my life in motion. While Graceland may not be for everyone, anyone

that chooses to go to GU (Graceland University) can find success afterward. Graceland needs to continue pushing itself to keep up with other schools, and I would like to help share the university that helped shape me."



**ALLIE KAMINSKI '16**

"I owe so much to Graceland for where I am today because of the start the institution gave me. Joining the alumni board is a way I can give

back to the place that gave me so much. I would love to help make a lasting impact on Graceland and its current/future students like those did before me."





© Alumni Board members hosted GU4U networking events for current students and faculty last fall and again this March on the Lamoni campus.



**MELISSA SHERER '18**

"I am extremely interested in building a strong talent pipeline of Graceland graduates, both in connecting students to future

roles and preparing them to succeed in interviews. A Graceland grad helped me get connected to my first role out of Graceland, and I have helped connect two more grads to full-time roles. I love Graceland and care deeply about its continued success. I want to support Graceland by helping recent graduates land excellent jobs through connections and interview prep."



**PETER WILKINSON '93**

"I want to give back to the school and community that has given so much to me over the years. I thoroughly enjoyed all four years of my time

at Graceland and married my college sweetheart. I have had a fairly successful career, and I think Graceland prepared me for that success. I am excited to participate in the alumni board and bring my expertise in the marketing and healthcare fields."

**Do you desire an opportunity to get back on "the Hill" and reconnect with your alma mater? Consider joining the Alumni Board of Directors or participate in one of GU4U's networking events!**

Find out more: [graceland.edu/AlumniBoard](https://graceland.edu/AlumniBoard)



## A Network of Connections

The **GU4U COMMITTEE** within the alumni board plays an important role in connecting current students with alumni. The committee provides a framework for support that encourages student success and career direction while fostering a greater connection for our growing alumni base.

**M**any GU4U members are passionate about connecting with students and helping them on their career and life journeys. These committee members have facilitated interviews, organized networking events, and offered career advice to Graceland students.

Networking and outreach events are important aspects of the GU4U committee's role. In March 2023, they held a networking event in the Newcom Student Union Great Room – reviewing resumes, offering interview tips, and sharing about their career experiences. This event allowed students to meet alumni in their fields and gain knowledge about success in their industries.

In September 2022 during homecoming week, they also held an event which enabled students to connect with alumni and friends regarding their unique Graceland experiences, careers, and life after Graceland. The GU4U committee also met with new faculty and staff to foster relationships of understanding and connection, and encourage them to build their own networks for the benefit of Graceland students.

The GU4U committee also helps monitor and connect with students and alumni via their LinkedIn page. GU4U and alumni board members post jobs, internships, and other career updates on this site. They also encourage alumni and current students to post similar opportunities on the GU4U LinkedIn webpage.

Scan the code to visit GU4U's LinkedIn page:



GU4U is more than just an attempt to foster conversations among future, current, and past students; it is a focused initiative to build supportive, lifelong connections between members of the Graceland community. – **BY COLBY CONNELLY**





# 126th Commencement

BY GEORGIA SEAGRAVES

**I**t was a brisk Saturday morning on Dec. 17, 2022, as seminary and nursing students gathered at the Community of Christ Auditorium in Independence, Missouri. Community of Christ Presiding Bishop Ron Harmon Jr. '86 addressed the crowded auditorium, and after the ceremony, the room was buzzing with excitement as graduates and their families celebrated their incredible accomplishments.

Over at the Lamoni campus, the commencement weekend began on Saturday, April 29, 2023, with the baccalaureate celebration in the Shaw Family Auditorium. Vice President for Student Life Dave Schaal '80, announced Colby Wilken '23 as the recipient of the Student Life Award – a testament to Wilken's superior leadership and service to the Graceland community.

The next morning, the spring commencement ceremony was held for just the second time in the newly reconstructed Morden Center, and students donning caps and gowns eagerly awaited receiving their hard-earned degrees.

In addition to the honoring of faculty awards and recognizing esteemed faculty emeriti (see page 26), commencement was marked by the conferring of honorary doctoral degrees to Ken '79 and Cindy McClain, as recognition for their incredible service to the University and their community. Ken is an accomplished trial lawyer, and Cindy is a dynamic entrepreneur. Together, they have revitalized the historic Independence Square through their own personal investment and sweat equity. Further, they have offered internships to over



*We sat down with three new Graceland grads to ask them about their time on “the Hill” and what comes next.*

## Justin Binnicker

**HOMETOWN:** Independence, Missouri

**MAJORS:** Sport Management, Business Administration, Social Change

**HOUSE:** Closson

**INVOLVEMENTS:** Enactus, GSG 2022-23 (COSA Board)

Justin will be starting a full-time position at Presbyterian College in South Carolina as a Marketing and Promotions Coordinator Intern in their Athletic Department. In this new role, Justin will be coordinating and assisting the operation and success of the athletic department's comprehensive marketing and fan engagement initiatives. "I am grateful that my time at Graceland helped shape me into the individual that I am today and provided me with the ability to become my authentic self and pursue an education centered around who I was as a whole. At Graceland, not only did I learn how to be successful in my career, but I learned how to become a better person."

## Kyla Apolonio

**HOMETOWN:** Pasadena, California

**MAJORS:** Communication

**HOUSE:** Solah

**INVOLVEMENTS:** Volleyball, HP 2022-23

After graduation, Kyla will return to Pasadena to begin her job search. Kyla dreams of working for a marketing firm. She is still exploring what her future will look like, but she is grateful for her time at Graceland and the experiences she had along the way. One of her favorite memories is house president training because it prepared her to be a leader and provided her with many fun experiences.

## David Toese

**HOMETOWN:** Independence, Missouri

**MAJORS:** Health & Movement Science

(Concentrations: Physical Education, Coaching)

**HOUSE:** Agape

**INVOLVEMENTS:** Wrestling, GSG 2022-23 (IDEA President), Harmonium

After serving in student government, becoming a two-time All-American, and two-time national qualifier in wrestling, David is excited to begin his new job as a physical education and health teacher at William Chrisman High School and head wrestling coach for George Caleb Bingham Middle School in Independence, Missouri. But his journey with Graceland is not over yet. In March, David was accepted into Graceland's Master of Science in Nutrition and Human Performance program. He is excited for the next step of his educational journey as a student and a teacher. Advice David would give to a new Graceland student is, "Try everything! Get involved with everything on campus so you can not only create relationships with others, but also find the stepping stones to your path in your life journey."

100 Graceland students throughout the years, investing over \$100,000 to provide not only paid internship experience but also fully furnished housing for students. Together, Ken and Cindy have six children, all of whom attended Graceland.

The event was made even more special with the presence of Graceland Board of Trustees member and Southern University President-Chancellor Dennis Shields, JD, '77, as the distinguished commencement speaker. He challenged students around three main themes: *brevity, humility, and kindness*. Shields went on to share the story of his childhood spent in orphanages and foster homes, and how hundreds of good people showed him kindness and gave him a life of direction. He acknowledged the contributions of Graceland alumni Jack '49 and Lois '51 Braby on his formative years and ultimately, his

**“Humility makes us grateful for the many kinds of support we have received that helped make possible your achievement being acknowledged and recognized by this ceremony today, and the opportunity to have a rich and rewarding life and career.”**

DENNIS SHIELDS, JD, '77

© **Opposite page, main image:** (left to right) Justin Binnicker, Kyla Apolonio, and David Toese don their caps, gowns, and grins for the camera. **Left circle:** Ron Harmon congratulated the Fall 2022 graduates and shared about his hope for a brighter future through the power of together. **Right circle:** Speaker Dennis Shields encouraged the Spring 2023 graduates to be transformational leaders as they move on to the rest of their life's journey. © Honorary Doctorate recipients Ken '79 and Cindy McClain were joined by several family members for the special occasion.



decision to attend Graceland. "I lead [Southern University] with the values that Graceland, whether intentionally or unintentionally, helped to shape in me," said Shields.

After Shields' address, the moment that the graduates had been eagerly waiting for arrived – the conferral of their bachelor's degrees. They walked across the stage one by one, beaming with pride as their names were called and they received their diplomas. The ceremony concluded with the tassel-turning tradition, symbolizing the graduates' transition from students to alumni. ■

**flickr** • View all Commencement photos here:  
[flickr.com/gracelanduniversity](https://www.flickr.com/photos/gracelanduniversity/)



# Faculty Recognitions

## Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching



### FALL 2022

**Barbara Voshall, DNP, RN, '73**, Professor of Nursing

As both an in-person and online professor, Dr. Voshall makes the learning relevant to the student's clinical experiences and future nursing roles by using in-depth scenarios and examples to make the learning as memorable as possible.



### SPRING 2023

**Nancy King, PhD**, Associate Professor of Psychology, Director, Life & Leadership Program

Dr. King consistently encourages her students to reflect on their aspirations and think of how they will make a difference in people's lives after college.

## Excellence in Scholarly Achievement



**Wilaiporn Rojjanasrirat, PhD**, Professor of Nursing

Dr. Rojjanasrirat has published over 25 peer-reviewed articles and focused her scholarly pursuits on promoting breastfeeding among vulnerable populations such as human milk donors, mothers of premature infants, and low-income mothers.

## Exceptional Service Award



**Elise Hector, PhD, RN**, Dean, School of Nursing, Assistant Professor of Nursing

Dr. Hector plays a vital role in the academic and administrative leadership of Graceland's Independence campus. Along with her course load, Dr. Hector advises 10-18 students per year, coordinates the annual career fair, and serves on a number of committees.

## Faculty Emeriti

The following faculty were conferred Professor Emeritus status — each retiring from full-time work, but continuing in part-time roles at Graceland.



**Max Pitt, MBA, CMA, '86**, Associate Professor of Business

Pitt teaches courses in agricultural business and business administration. His professional objective is to apply experience in education, leadership, banking, business, and service to create whole persons, develop ethical organizations, and build healthy communities.



**Michele Dickey-Kotz, EdD**, Professor of Education

Dr. Dickey-Kotz is driven by the belief that it is her responsibility to promote, provoke, or inspire those around her to become the very best version of themselves. She asserts, "I believe (with my whole being) that education is the threshold of social change."



**Steven L. Anders, PhD**, Distinguished Professor of Economics

A goal Dr. Anders has in every course is for students to develop as analytical and critical thinkers. His passion is learning and teaching economic theory, and he recognizes the importance of communication in the professional life of an economist.

🔍 Read all commencement recognitions online: [graceland.edu/Horizons](https://graceland.edu/Horizons)

# CLASS NOTES

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

Completed a degree program? Published a written work? Received that awesome promotion? Earned a prestigious honor? If so, we want to hear about it.

Submissions are included as space permits and may be edited for length or clarity. Send high quality digital photos — 300 dpi and/or minimum of 1,200 pixels on the image's shortest side.

Share your memories and milestones with us here: [graceland.edu/classnotes](https://graceland.edu/classnotes)

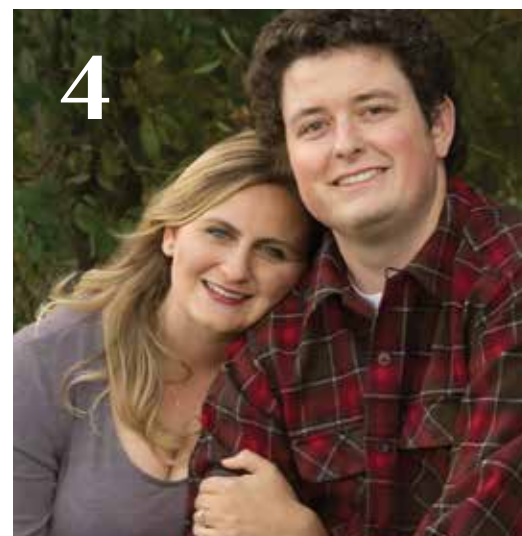
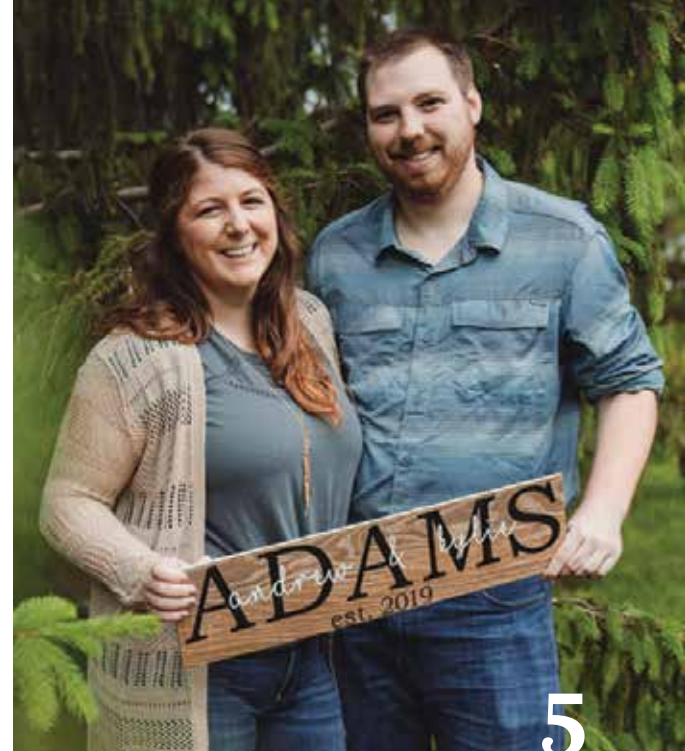
Class notes submitted between Sept. 9, 2022, and April 19, 2023, are included in this issue.

**75 Mary Ellen Kimball**, Osceola, Iowa, sponsored a Girls in Aviation contest in celebration of Girls Aviation Day. Girls between the ages of eight and 17 from Clarke County were encouraged to write a "Why I Want to Fly" essay of at least 50 words. The eight contest winners had the opportunity to be flown by Kimball in her Cessna 150 airplane. Kimball is a licensed private pilot, and member of Women in Aviation International (WAI), the 99s Women Pilots, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), and Iowa Aviation Promotion Group (IAPG).

**84 Jeff Douglas**, Truro, Iowa, was inducted into the Iowa High School Baseball Coaches Association (IHSBCA) Hall of Fame class of 2023. He was one of seven total 2023 inductees on Jan. 21, 2023, in Des Moines, Iowa, and was one of only three coaches selected. Jeff has spent 23 years at Interstate 35 Schools and a combined 24 years of service to Graceland in various roles that included coaching football and softball. 📧 **1**

**94 Troy Scheuermann, D.C.**, Keosauqua, Iowa, and his wife, Ralinda "Ro," were commissioned Honorary Colonels of the Iowa State Militia by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds in





January 2023, for service to their community and the State of Iowa. The Scheuermann family built a gymnasium on their personal property in Van Buren County, out of the need for practice space for the area youth basketball teams, and have made it available for public use free of charge. Van Buren community youth use the gym for everything from holding basketball practice to a 4-H gathering, making it a multipurpose space.

**98 Dr. Lawrence “Bo” Frank**, Honolulu, Hawaii, led the Radford High Cheer Team to their 15th national championship at the National Cheerleading Association (NCA) competition in Dallas, Texas, in January 2023. Frank has been the head coach since 2000, and his team (which includes his son, Saxoni) won the Advanced Small Varsity Co-Ed Division, beating out some of the best prep cheer teams in the country. The team also took home awards in co-ed excellence and superior showmanship. Frank teaches at Radford, and the team has won numerous Hawaii state titles as well as a couple of international titles, and he has been the state coach of the year nine times. 📷 2

**06 Flora Ferati-Sachsenmaier**, an expert researcher on minority rights, visited Washington, D.C. with the Preshevo Valley political delegation Feb. 28 - March 2, 2023, to brief members of the U.S. Congress on the situation of minority rights in Serbia and promote democracy in the Balkans. 📷 3

**22 Kayla Mounenay** was hired as a Project Manager and Digital Strategist with WYSIWG Marketing, an industrial digital marketing company in Kansas City, Missouri, that focuses on website development and search engine optimization. Mounenay’s duties will have her working closely with fellow Graceland **Ryan Jennings ’99**, the owner and founder of WYSIWG Marketing.

## BIRTHS

**09 Jeffrey and Morgan Phillips Catalano**, Lee’s Summit, Missouri; son, Pierce, and daughter, Scarlett, born July 14, 2019, son Maddox, born Oct. 14, 2020, and son, Roman, born May 14, 2022.

**10 Greg and Emily Phillips Irr**, Blue Springs, Missouri, son, Everett, born Aug. 7, 2021.

**14 Andrew and Kylie Perkins Adams**, Kansas City, Missouri, son, Wyatt, born May 2020.

**16 Justin and Allie Krabbenhoft Kaminski**, Bentonville, Arkansas, daughter, Ember, born Dec. 14, 2022.

## WEDDINGS

**61 Gary McLean** and Merrilee Fryer, Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 2021.

**07 Rachel Luna and Cassie Luna-Eskridge**, Hayward, California, Jan. 16, 2022.

**13 Curtis and Callie Clow Mehrhoff**, Corydon, Iowa, married June 4, 2022. Sean and **Brickell Dotson O’Keefe**, West Des Moines, Iowa, July 2022. 📷 4

**14 Andrew and Kylie Perkins Adams**, Kansas City, Missouri, Sept. 21, 2019. 📷 5





#### ALUMNI PROFILE

**CHERYL BUNTZ '98** graduated from Graceland with a bachelor's degree in nursing. Shortly after that, she became a critical care nurse in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at the Kansas City VA Medical Center.

This was quite an accomplishment as the VA did not readily hire new nursing graduates into their intensive care units. Buntz's response to that opportunity has been 24 years of dedicated service to the VA. Throughout these years, Buntz has demonstrated leadership abilities and provided exceptional bedside nursing and frontline care. She has coordinated and implemented process improvement procedures, mentored and trained fellow nurses, earned various certifications, and contributed in ways that have allowed her to utilize her experiences, training, and talents as she moved into nurse leadership roles. Today, Buntz continues to serve the veterans of Kansas City and surrounding areas as the Chief Nurse of Inpatient Services and the Emergency Department.

With an impressive career and numerous accomplishments to speak of, there's one recurring theme Buntz comes back to: building connections. The value of this skill is not new for her – it is part of the story of how she became a nurse. Buntz earned her first degree in biology from Graceland in 1993. It wasn't until she learned about the nursing program and met the faculty that she discovered her path. "Even though I was in my twenties and still trying to figure myself out, they saw leadership potential," Buntz said about the Graceland nursing faculty. The academics and clinical opportunities were top-notch, but it was the relationship with the faculty that made Graceland's nursing program unlike any other. From the ever-present support throughout school and clinicals to the thoughtful consideration when diversifying teams within the cohort to allow for varying perspectives, the faculty were focused on enhancing both clinical and soft skills. They wanted to ensure that the students were ready to enter the world prepared to contribute to society.

The leadership potential the faculty saw in Buntz was quickly realized, and although responsibilities have shifted throughout the years, her desire to put people first has remained the same. "As a nurse, hands-on with patients is the cup-filling piece, but as you move to a leadership role, you ask yourself, what is filling my cup? My cup filler is my investment in the people I work with," Buntz commented. It is focusing on her team, understanding where they're at and what they need to do the job to the best of their abilities and the highest standard of care.

When asked what advice she'd share with current nursing students, it was no surprise that it had little to do with the clinical aspect of nursing and more with the connections with others. "The big thing is to remain true to who you are and hold your peers to the standard of best possible care. Lift them up, and in turn, they'll help lift you." – BY ANGELA SLOSARSKI

## ANNIVERSARIES

**52** David and '53 Henrietta Cachola Kaleikau, Independence, Missouri, 69 years, Dec. 19, 2022.

**55** Lowell and Fay Kohlman Davis, Chandler, Arizona, 65 years, Sept. 1, 2022.

## DEATHS

**37** Lillian Gruver Frus, Boise, Idaho, May 22, 2004.

**41** Muriel Hughes Beebe, Columbia, Missouri, Dec. 11, 2022. Ellen Taylor Johnson, Austin, Texas, Dec. 17, 2013.

**42** Max Anderson, Glendale, Arizona, March 24, 2006. Madolyn Work Chandler, Packwood, Iowa, Nov. 21, 2022. Robert Young, Lenexa, Kansas, Aug. 16, 2022.

**43** Almeda Farris Sullivan, Sequim, Washington, Oct. 14, 2022.

**44** Lillian Flack Hardy, Madison, Ohio, Aug. 7, 2022. Lois Bailey Howe, Houghton Lake, Michigan, May 17, 2009.

**47** Edna Day Curtis, Cameron, Missouri, Oct. 25, 2022. Yvonne Walden Hynden, Lamoni, Iowa, Aug. 24, 2022. Robert Kuhnert, Centerville, Oct. 4, 2022.

**48** Peggy Hopkins Andriano, Lillian, Alabama, Feb. 25, 2017. Helen West Crews, Milton, Florida, June 17, 2016. Ruth Staley Crowther, Osborn, Missouri, Sept. 3, 2011. Lena Johnsen Dennis, Garden City, Idaho, February 2023. Margaret Maltas Eggart, Moses Lake, Washington, Dec. 1, 2018. Donna Larson Gaulter, Independence, Missouri, Aug. 30, 2020. Kenneth Graybill, Manly, Australia, Feb. 25, 2007. Mary Van Fleet Hall, Freeport, New York, July 12, 2022. Billie Harper, Lee's Summit, March 25, 2023. Patricia Spargo Hield, Holland, Michigan, Sept. 10, 2017. Lois Hogue Mahi, Kaneohe, Hawaii, Aug. 21, 2013. Florice Watt McDonald, Pearland, Texas, Nov. 2, 2018. Gordon Mesley, Blue Springs, Missouri, Dec. 3, 2020. Winifred Nelson Negaard, Guilford, Missouri, April 2, 2023. Edna "Dolores" Glenn Packer, Gainesville, Florida, Sept. 7, 2021. Mary Cline Renfro, Elk Grove, California, Sept. 1, 2022. Daniel Waite, Lee's Summit, Missouri, Sept. 19, 2022. Dallas Hunt Webb, Federal Way, Washington, Jan. 3, 2020. Emma Mitchell Weis, Lewiston, Idaho, Nov. 10, 2022. Lauryce Hintzsche Weydert, DeKalb, Illinois, Aug. 6, 2022.

**49** Bernita Heath Bishop, Allen, Texas, Jan. 11, 2019. Alma Blair,



Johnston, Iowa, April 7, 2023. **Robert Brown**, Oakdale, California, March 2, 2007. **Donald Comer**, Lacey, Washington, Aug. 29, 2012. **Henry France**, Westport, Massachusetts, March 5, 2019. **Tressa Visser Griffin**, Rockford, Michigan, Nov. 29, 2022. **Marion White Heaviland**, Independence, Missouri, April 24, 2015. **Rose Oakes Hilker**, Stover, Missouri, Sept. 23, 2020. **James Hynden**, Covington, Kentucky, Nov. 24, 2020. **Jerry Jones**, Huntsville, Utah, Aug. 10, 2015. **Barbara Hartschen Killion**, Lenexa, Kansas, Sept. 27, 2020. **Virginia "Ginny" Plumb Kuchel**, Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, April 2, 2012. **Larry Luig**, Boca Raton, Florida, Nov. 17, 2016. **Doris Winegar Neff**, Jerome, Idaho, May 25, 2021. **Charles Nixon**, Dayton, Ohio, June 1, 2012. **James Ross**, Independence, Missouri, Dec. 31, 2020. **Betty Wylie Swartz**, Ocean Springs, Mississippi, June 18, 2010. **Elma Samuelson Todd**, Fredericksburg, Texas, Dec. 21, 2013. **Jacque Vincent**, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Aug. 28, 2006. **Beverly Robinson Zimmerman**, Port Charlotte, Florida, May 14, 2020.

**50 Doris Cropp Booker**, Mobile, Alabama, March 3, 2020. **Charles Church Jr.**, Orange Park, Florida, March 28, 2020. **Richard DeLong**, Irvine, California, Jan. 14, 2021. **Richard "Vern" Elefson**, River Falls, Wisconsin, Aug. 26, 2020. **Thomas Emde**, Bald Knob, Arkansas, Jan. 3, 2020. **Gayle Brunson Foster**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, May 17, 2019. **Mavis Kelley Gertz**, Springfield, Missouri, July 21, 2010. **Alene Briggs Gilchrist**, University Place, Washington, Feb. 25, 2011. **Roy "Gene" Hampton**, Holts Summit, Missouri, Feb. 14, 2004. **Arthur Hands**, La Mesa, California, Dec. 7, 2016. **Francis Harper**, Woodbine, Iowa, Sept. 9, 2020. **Madora Cain Kramer**, Independence, Missouri, Dec. 6, 2022. **Margaret Birrell Kuhn**, San Clemente, California, May 13, 2018. **Elsie Gurwell Nelms**, Loveland, Colorado, April 1, 2022. **Jack Stone**, Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, May 11, 2020.

**51 Anita Long Bailey**, Hot Springs, Arkansas, Jan. 28, 2008. **Viola "Lorean" Breeze Baker**, Burlington, Iowa, July 16, 2020. **Dorothy "Jane" Hynden**

**Besco**, Alpine, Texas, July 26, 2018. **James Chapman**, Bow, Washington, Sept. 4, 2022. **Elbert Cole**, Moundridge, Kansas, July 29, 2014. **Myrtle Eggert Dillon**, Odessa, Missouri, Dec. 9, 2018. **Robert "Bob" Dixon**, Vancouver, Washington, Feb. 21, 2016. **Conrad Faulk**, Grain Valley, Missouri, June 2, 2018. **Reta Peck Fitch**, El Prado, New Mexico, April 1, 2020. **Jane Hansen Fucek**, Saline, Michigan, May 12, 2019. **Doris Bedwell Giltner**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, Nov. 24, 2019. **Kenneth Goodman**, Canfield, Ohio, Oct. 5, 2018. **Alberta Thomas Hitch**, Independence, Missouri, May 21, 2013. **Carol Dowdy Kinnaman**, Blue Springs, Missouri, Sept. 19, 2013. **Elsa Wildermuth Kominitsky**, Bakersfield, California, April 23, 2022. **Lavona Gardner Lorange**, Maryville, Missouri, Feb. 4, 2018. **Grace Jackson Moor**, Port Lambton, Ontario, Canada, April 17, 2022. **Kenneth Noland**, May 16, 2021. **LuWanna Langton Russell**, Broomfield, Colorado, Aug. 29, 2018. **Gordon Sears**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, Nov. 22, 2017. **Marion Kuenzi Simpkins**, Shoreline, Washington, March 11, 2021. **Thomas Speer**, Casa Grande, Arizona, Dec. 31, 2007. **Paul Swain**, Glendale, Arizona, Aug. 27, 2022. **Donna Stearns Swall**, Torrance, California, April 3, 2016. **Donald Swick**, Charleston, West Virginia, Feb. 25, 2020. **James "Jim" Tabor**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 9, 2023. **Thelma Turpen Templin**, Napa, California, Dec. 4, 2022. **Shirley Closson Trowbridge**, Independence, Missouri, Feb. 18, 2017. **Kenneth "Ken" Walden**, Watsonville, California, Jan. 5, 2021. **Richard Weiss**, Independence, Missouri, July 3, 2019. **Shirley Slocum Wick**, Seattle, Washington, May 15, 2003. **Winfred Willis**, Pensacola, Florida, Nov. 23, 2003. **Howard Ziegenhorn**, Fairway, Kansas, June 30, 2016.

**52 Freeman "Duane" Anderson**, Yakima, Washington, June 30, 2012. **Donald Ayers**, July 21, 2008. **Eva Smith Benson**, Independence, Missouri, March 16, 2023. **Donna Comfort**, Independence, Missouri, April 4, 2017. **Kenneth "Kyle" Conway**, Independence, Missouri, Aug. 28, 2021. **Paul Edwards**, Independence, Missouri, Oct. 13, 2022. **Neil**

## IN REMEMBRANCE

Long-time faculty member Alma Blair '49 passed away on April 7, 2023.

For 39 years, Blair educated Graceland students on LDS History, World Civilizations, and history topics. His passion for historical detail and accuracy inspired many of his students to become historians and curators.

He was passionate about Community of Christ history and was the preeminent expert on the history of Lamoni and its ties to the formation of the church. He spent much of his free time researching the founding families of Lamoni, photographing historic homes, and documenting historical events.

Blair joined Graceland as a faculty member in the fall of 1955 and helped establish the college's four-year religion major. His impact was not limited to the classroom: he contributed to the establishment of the house system, helped organize the Phi Alpha Theta honor society in the late 1960s, and appeared in 28 plays and musicals, including the iconic role of Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof."

He was a scholar through and through, authoring many articles and historical documents, filming and producing a documentary about Nauvoo, and was the president and secretary for the John Witmer Historical Association. He retired from Graceland as professor emeritus in 1994.



**Eliason**, Bigfork, Montana, Aug. 25, 2022. **Randall Ellis**, Topeka, Kansas, Nov. 23, 2017. **Kenneth Fernandes**, Puyallup, Washington, Nov. 17, 2019. **Edna White Flinn**, Shawnee, Kansas, July 23, 2022. **Alfred Frey**, Fairbanks, Alaska, Nov. 20, 2009. **Willa Langfield Frey**, Fairbanks, Alaska, Nov. 29, 2012. **Donald Graham**, Warren, Michigan, Dec. 12, 2015. **Frederick Howes**, Raleigh, North Carolina, Jan. 23, 2023. **Darrell Huntley**, Sarasota, Florida, Oct. 21, 2022. **Melvin Johnson**, Chipley, Florida, Feb. 24, 2020. **Charles Kern**, Maryville, Tennessee, May 9, 2021. **Hazel Smith Landon**, Lompoc, California, Nov. 17, 2021. **Marjorie Godfrey LaRose**, Anchorage, Alaska, March 28, 2019. **Virgil Leibold**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 9, 2021. **Margaret McKeivit**, Lee's Summit, Missouri, Sept. 30, 2022. **Robert Mogan**, Elizabethtown, Kentucky, Feb. 23, 2012. **Bonita Sands Morehead**, Omaha, Nebraska, Dec. 31, 2016. **Barbara**

**Hunter Nixon**, Dayton, Ohio, Aug. 31, 2013. **Richard Petre**, Santa Fe, New Mexico, May 29, 2016. **Donald Poore**, Kellerton, Iowa, Oct. 13, 2018. **William Propst**, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Nov. 6, 2010. **Nancy Sears Raveill**, Independence, Missouri, Oct. 30, 2006. **Geneva Hunker Richards**, Cass City, Michigan, Sept. 19, 2015. **Rebekah "Jeanne" Slasor**, Collierville, Tennessee, Aug. 3, 2017. **Carolyn "Sue" Younger Smart**, Blue Eye, Missouri, June 19, 2008. **Jacqueline Downing Snethen**, Kenosha, Wisconsin, Nov. 14, 2022. **Jack Stephens**, Independence, Missouri, Oct. 15, 2018. **Thomas Stribling**, Palm Desert, California, Jan. 15, 2021. **Paul Studtmann**, Aurora, Illinois, Sept. 14, 2019. **Barbara Johnson Tucker**, Fair Oaks, California, May 9, 2021. **Joseph Wellington**, Edmond, Oklahoma, Jan. 2023. **Erleta Covalt Woo-Sam**, Buena Park, California, July 5, 2013.

**53 Barbara "Fay" Davis Andrews**, Tallahassee, Florida, July 4, 2022. **Edna**





## IN REMEMBRANCE

Professor emeritus  
Nicholas Hartwig '58  
passed away on  
October 16, 2022.

He first joined Graceland's faculty in the fall of 1965 on a one-year temporary assignment, filling in for a professor on sabbatical. He returned on a permanent basis in the fall of 1967 and served for many years in the biology department, teaching courses such as botany, zoology, paleontology, and horticulture.

Hartwig also taught Genetics to the Pre-Med and Pre-Nursing students, and was proud that he was teaching future healthcare workers; two of his former students became his physicians. He drove weekly from Lamoni to the Independence, Missouri, campus for 20 years to teach genetics to nursing students. For many years, he taught popular winter term courses in marine biology in Grand Cayman.

Hartwig was also passionate about plants, introduced courses in ecology, and drew up the plans for the science building's animal quarters and greenhouse, which he received a grant to build. In that greenhouse, he grew plants for classes and crossbred many orchids. Over the years, he created many beautiful orchid hybrids, which his wife, Merilou, would make into corsages for special occasions. He also maintained plants in all buildings on campus.

Hartwig's influence remains to this day. He and Merilou were "town parents" to dozens of students over the years. At Homecoming in 2023, Graceland will dedicate the greenhouse to Hartwig in a ceremony on Saturday.

**Amundson Angove**, Onawa, Iowa, June 2, 2012. **Edward Boehm Jr.**, Johnstown, Colorado, April 3, 2020. **Glen Bruch**, South Ogden, Utah, Feb. 10, 2019. **Harlen Chong**, San Jose, California, Oct. 2, 2019. **Alice Eastwood Davis**, Irvine, California, Oct. 29, 2022. **John "Ron" Davis**, Skiatook, Oklahoma, Nov. 2, 2022. **Polly Poe Easterhouse**, Columbia, Missouri, March 18, 2022. **Patricia Peters Fink**, Bellevue, Nebraska, Dec. 25, 2017. **Maxine Bowden Graham**, Warren, Michigan, Feb. 17, 2021. **Argel Gross**, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 27, 2020. **Janice Green Howard**, Dixon, California, July 20, 2014. **John Hufford**, Pensacola, Florida, June 4, 2015. **Patricia Jacobs**, Bayview, Idaho, Oct. 29, 2005. **Eugene Kozuki**, West Des Moines, Iowa, May 9, 2021. **Guy Kramer**, Onaway, Michigan, Dec. 14, 2020. **Ray Leamon**, Independence,

Missouri, June 14, 2020. **Guy Maxfield**, New York, New York, Aug. 19, 2020. **Dahryl McClain**, Clawson, Michigan, Aug. 21, 2017. **Ray Persall**, Vestaburg, Michigan, Aug. 30, 2021. **Carole Smith Phillpott**, Houston, Texas, Sept. 18, 2022. **Viola Velt Presler**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 2, 2017. **Floyd Riebold**, Springfield, Missouri, March 26, 2020. **Karen Chesnutt Rohm**, Bettendorf, Iowa, April 27, 2009. **Robert Russell**, Berkeley, California, May 8, 2017. **Jacob "Jake" Scherer**, Independence, Missouri, April 17, 2023. **Ward Serig**, Pensacola, Florida, Aug. 4, 2022. **Ronald Yager**, Independence, Missouri, Sept. 6, 2022.

**54 Robert Anderson**, Santa Barbara, California, April 18, 2022. **Leslie Belrose**, Bellingham, Washington, June 11, 2018. **LaVerna Jeschke Cawley**,

St. Joseph, Missouri, April 21, 2017. **Helen Busch Chamberlain**, Virginia Beach, Virginia, March 19, 2013. **Helen Propst Crow**, Houston, Texas, May 13, 2021. **Carolyn Essig Curtis**, Kingsport, Tennessee, July 6, 2006. **Raymond Daggett**, Lakeport, Michigan, Feb. 7, 2023. **Gretchen Edwards Eagan**, Cameron, Missouri, June 3, 2009. **Margaret Wagner Garfield**, Sacramento, California, April 6, 2021. **Dorothy Henderson Gundling**, Port Royal, South Carolina, March 31, 2023. **Ralph Gunn**, Grasonville, Maryland, Sept. 9, 2021. **Phillip Hada**, Rosamond, California, Jan. 24, 2021. **Gary Harsin**, Loveland, Colorado, June 4, 2016. **Joyce Smith Heath**, Oak Grove, Missouri, July 26, 2019. **Leonard Johnsen**, Leawood, Kansas, Nov. 10, 2022. **Marjorie Barr Johnson**, Goodlettsville, Tennessee, April 11, 2016. **James Jones Jr.**, Nevada, Missouri, Jan. 27, 2020. **Fred Knapp**, Buckner, Missouri, March 6, 2009. **Jack Larson**, Haslett, Michigan, Feb. 8, 2016. **Lois Anderson Leary**, Chula Vista, California, July 11, 2019. **Richard Lorance**, Phoenix, Arizona, Feb. 24, 2014. **Sallye Hill Marsh**, Troy, Kansas, Nov. 27, 2014. **Harold Martens**, Lynnwood, Washington, Dec. 11, 2018. **Max Noe**, Waco, Texas, July 29, 2015. **John Northrup**, Webster Groves, Missouri, Sept. 18, 2006. **Richard Oehring**, Beatrice, Nebraska, June 22, 2020. **Sylvia Lenfestey Peabody**, Madbury, New Hampshire, June 25, 2022. **John Pennington**, Bainbridge Island, Washington, July 9, 2022. **Norma Gault Pomeroy**, Howell, Michigan, Feb. 6, 2022. **Kathryn Jones Precure**, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, March 8, 2015. **Irene Hackulich Riegle**, Ankeny, Iowa, Aug. 1, 2022. **Beverly Knight Sandison**, Lutz, Florida, Dec. 28, 2015. **Alta Purvis Sarnella**, Warrenton, Virginia, Mar 22, 2020. **Lucy Lesh Scherer**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 14, 2020. **Robert Selberg**, Bend, Oregon, Dec. 24, 2014. **Rosemary Swenson Stark**, Seattle, Washington, Nov. 26, 2014. **Jacquelyn Peterman Stringer**, Shelley, Idaho, March 10, 2022. **Bettie Stephens Turner**, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Sept. 25, 2006. **Carol White**, London, Ontario, Canada, Nov. 10, 2022. **Dorothy Niles Woodson**, Camarillo, California, Sept. 16, 2022.

**55 Marigold Tousley Bernhardt**, Rogersville, Missouri, Aug. 22, 2021. **Charles Caywood**, Eagon, Minnesota, Aug. 15, 2021. **Ronald Freeze**, Bates City, Missouri, Aug. 30, 2021. **William Johnson**, Henderson, Nevada, April 13, 2019. **Darrel Kreglo**, Sun Lakes, Arizona, Oct. 3, 2022. **James McCartney**, Papillion, Nebraska, Jan. 15, 2023. **Gene Miller**, Perry, Iowa, Oct. 4, 2022. **Marilyn Sibilla O'Brien**, San Juan Caistrano, California, Oct. 12, 2021. **Edgar Patterson**, Kingsville, Missouri, March 14, 2014. **Marshall Rall**, Independence, Missouri, July 24, 2020. **Mary Higdon Seeley**, Kansas City, Missouri, Aug. 10, 2021. **Beverly Wilson Serig**, Independence, Missouri, March 29, 2023. **Lee Shippy**, Crystal Lake, Illinois, Aug. 24, 2020. **Barbara Blair Tankersley**, Wauke, Iowa, June 3, 2022. **Marlene Powell Tisnado**, Camas, Washington, Jan. 7, 2009. **Roger Wilmot**, Raymore, Missouri, Nov. 28, 2022.

**56 Lynda Nulph Arno**, Boyne City, Michigan, Dec. 25, 2021. **Joan Paul Bland**, Independence, Missouri, March 30, 2023. **Margaret "Peggy" Guthrie Clohessy**, North Hollywood, California, Oct. 15, 2019. **Gerald Greer**, Kaneohe, Hawaii, Aug. 22, 2021. **Horace "John" Kench Jr.**, Jacksonville, Florida, May 29, 2020. **Karolyn Kyser**, Orange Park, Florida, Jan. 20, 2023. **Dennis Norman**, Springfield, Missouri, March 4, 2021. **Ellen "Jane" Velut Parton**, Limon, Colorado, Oct. 18, 2022. **Margo Irvine Peterson**, Joplin, Missouri, Nov. 1, 2018. **Gerald Riegle**, Ankeny, Iowa, March 5, 2022. **Mark Thoman**, Tucson, Arizona, Sept. 15, 2022. **James Wilder**, Portland, Texas, July 25, 2014. **Hazel Nelson Williams**, Salinas, California, April 26, 2014.

**57 Robert Carroll**, Apache Junction, Arizona, Nov. 2, 2007. **Robert Chown**, Lamoni, Iowa, Oct. 5, 2022. **Eleanor Shippy Closson**, Blue Springs, Missouri, Dec. 25, 2022. **Dorothy Clow Davies**, Vancouver, Washington, Oct. 11, 2022. **Carolyn Johnson Donnelly**, Rockport, Texas, Sept. 18, 2022. **Annie "Kathy" Stricker Ellis**, Topeka, Kansas, Oct. 10, 2012. **Jack French**, Auburn, Washington, April 26, 2022.





#### ALUMNI PROFILE

## Under the Sea

The journey of **MARISSA MYER '18** from Graceland student to a passionate advocate for ocean conservation has led her to launch The Coral Nursery, a nonprofit organization based in Puerto Rico. Since graduating in 2018, her dedication to her work and her commitment to environmental preservation have made her a rising star in the field.

Marissa decided to attend Graceland because of her family's deep ties to the university and her affiliation with Community of Christ. Her grandmother, Vicki Ross '50, served on Graceland's board of trustees, and she had a long list of family members who had attended Graceland. "The list of my family members that attended Graceland is a long one! For me, it was a no-brainer committing to GU, from a lifetime of hearing of the memories and experience it provided for my family," Myer said.

During her time at Graceland, Marissa's experiences in the C.H. Sandage School of Business laid the foundation for her current work. While the curriculum provided important

knowledge, it was the supportive faculty, personal development opportunities, and multicultural friendships she cultivated that truly prepared her for her professional growth. Engaging with professors who genuinely cared about her success, participating in clubs like Enactus, and forming relationships with peers from around the world broadened her perspectives and nurtured her personal and professional development.

Marissa's journey in coral restoration began with a fortuitous encounter with Dr. David Vaughn '75, another Graceland graduate. Her brother, Nathan Myer '10, informed her of Dr. Vaughn's groundbreaking work at his organization, the Plant a Million Corals Foundation. Intrigued, Marissa visited

Dr. Vaughn's facility in the Florida Keys while she was traveling the United States. Their meeting sparked a connection and a shared vision for coral restoration. Inspired by Dr. Vaughn's work and his mentorship, Marissa decided to join forces with him, resulting in the birth of The Coral Nursery of Puerto Rico.

"My passion and love for the ocean has always been a leading force in my life," Myer said. That passion, combined with her knowledge of the nonprofit sector, were the driving forces behind Marissa's decision to pursue coral restoration.

Using the innovative micro-fragmentation method developed by Dr. Vaughn, The Coral Nursery aims to produce 100,000 corals annually, restoring coral reefs at an accelerated rate.

© Corals provide essential habitat structure and energy in coral reef systems, facilitating the existence of numerous reef associated species. Healthy oceans need healthy corals!



Follow [@thecoralnursery](https://www.instagram.com/thecoralnursery) on Instagram to stay connected!

Through their facilities, which include retractable tanks, a miniature laboratory, and temperature-controlled awnings powered by solar energy, The Coral Nursery is poised to become a leader in coral restoration. Additionally, the organization is committed to education, providing internships for local marine biology students, and offering educational programs for K-12 schools and the general public.

For Marissa, the most meaningful aspect of her time at Graceland was the invaluable network she built. The close-knit community fostered strong connections and a collective commitment to each other's success. These connections not only led to the establishment of The Coral Nursery but also helped her secure her first job in the nonprofit sector as an Americorps Vista in Anchorage, Alaska. Grateful for the support she received, Marissa acknowledges that her experiences at Graceland, such as the house system as a member of Shalom, participation in sports teams, Enactus, and Winter Term travel, all contributed to her personal and professional growth.

Myer's advice to students centers on her adventurous spirit: "Since Graceland, I've lived in many places including Alaska, Wilmington NC, the Outer Banks, Pittsburgh, aboard a houseboat, and traveling around in a van. My advice is to dream big, travel far, and meet as many people as you can!" - **BY SHANE ADAMS**





#### ALUMNI PROFILE

### As the Director of European Programs for Duquesne University, Community of Christ Seminary alumnus **MICHAEL WRIGHT '22** calls Rome, Italy home.

In that role, he has helped establish two international campuses for Duquesne – one in Dublin, Ireland, and the other in Rome. All undergraduate and program-specific graduate students can spend a semester or summer abroad at these locations. Along with developing programs across Europe and Africa, Wright also co-teaches a course called Intercultural Awareness. This course connects American and Italian students on a project called “Be the Difference – Never Again.” Through this project, students collaborate to piece together the life and history of a soldier who is buried or memorialized at the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery where 11,000 American World War II soldiers are buried. Wright commented, “I tell the students during our visit that the dead no longer speak, no longer complain. They lay at peace. But the true peace developing is in the relationships developed by our students who come from two different nations, cultures, and languages. These young people are learning how to make the world a more peaceful place.”

It was Wright’s own mission of creating a more peaceful and just world that led him on a journey of finding a faith that aligned with that mission. This ultimately led him to the 2019 Community of Christ (CoC) World Conference. After conversations with Apostle Richard James and the Seminary’s Dean, Zac Harmon-McLaughlin, Wright enrolled in the Seminary, Fall of 2019. Wright was grateful for the flexibility of the Master of Arts in Religion program offering online study, as he had a full-time career and lived abroad. One in-person experience at the Temple, however, was where everything connected. Wright told the story of a man who came to talk with his cohort. Having served time in prison, the man no longer felt welcome among the Community of Christ members. “Our class put into practice the ideas of dignity, justice, and love we had learned in class. The man left knowing he was welcome among us. All that I was learning felt possible and a glimpse of a more peaceful and just world – Zion, or the Peaceable Kingdom – felt like it could be within reach.”

Wright uses his Seminary education by continuing to find creative ways to educate American students in the mission of creating a more peaceful and just world. He has also published several papers and articles written during his years in the Seminary. He has been a presenter for Community of Christ’s Historic Sites lecture series, is a member of the Leadership Team for Community of Christ’s online congregation, is the Ministry Coordinator for Italy, a member of the Western Europe Mission Center Council, and currently awaiting priesthood ordination in the Community of Christ.

– BY ANGELA SLOSARSKI

**Elbert Heath**, Oak Grove, Missouri, Dec. 2, 2020. **Anna Hale Hewitt**, Chesterfield, Virginia, Oct. 30, 2020. **William Nesbit**, Crown Point, Indiana, Jan. 1, 2016. **Alice Chapman Ruble**, Independence, Missouri, Feb. 21, 2023. **Dorothy Kniffin Vickers**, San Jose, California, Nov. 15, 2012.

**58 Fred Cachola**, Hawi, Hawaii, Feb. 20, 2023. **Nicholas Hartwig**, Kansas City, Missouri, Oct. 16, 2022. **Nancy Lounsbery Holmes**, Elsie, Michigan, June 12, 2022. **Ramona Sharpe Johnson**, Chipley, Florida, Jan. 7, 2015. **Cornelis Laban**, Bastian, Virginia, May 28, 2017. **Lars Olsen**, Missoula, Montana, Dec. 20, 2017. **Betty MacNeil Owens**, Wichita, Kansas, May 21, 2016. **Donald Palmer**, Midland, Texas, May 13, 2021. **Gordon “Rex” Smith**, Fort Collins, Colorado, June 2, 2022. **Charlotte Wood Stellmach**, Argyle, Texas, Sept. 29, 2022. **James Swick**, Surprise, Arizona, July 30, 2020. **Carolyn Hansen Waldemer**, Woodbine, Iowa, Jan. 4, 2023. **Nancy Byrd White**, Salem, Oregon, Sept. 17, 2022.

**59 Wilbert Cobb**, Neosho, Missouri, April 13, 2021. **John DeLong**, Independence, Missouri, April 14, 2023. **Helen Londrie Propst**, Creston, Iowa, Feb. 20, 2016.

**60 Phyllis Preusch Bowen**, Davidson, North Carolina, March 21, 2018. **Vivienne Cummins Brown**, Independence, Missouri, July 21, 2012. **Sigrid Larson Festersen**, Omaha, Nebraska, Sept. 1, 2022. **Bruce Wade**, Colville, Washington, Jan. 13, 2023.

**61 Jeannette Davis Day**, Independence, Missouri, Oct. 8, 2022. **Robert Sinclair**, Danville, California, Dec. 22, 2022.

**62 Vicki VanTuyt Geeding**, Blue Grass, Iowa, Feb. 27, 2023. **Franklin Methner**, Coleman, Michigan, June 6, 2011.

**63 Elbert Derick**, South Dennis, Maine, Jan. 9, 2011. **Marilynn Jones Grutter**, Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 10, 2019. **James Rishel**, Zanesville, Ohio, Aug. 22, 2012. **Bonita Korsell Spies**, Saint Paul, Minnesota, July 22, 2022. **Gayle Thislethwaite**, DeKalb, Illinois, March 1, 2023. **Nancy Vanderpool Thompson**, Burns, Oregon, Dec. 31, 2007.

**64 Suzanne DeTray Barclay**, Blue Springs, Missouri, Feb. 15, 2023. **Kenneth Campbell**, Gainesville, Florida, Feb. 22, 2023. **Patricia Gabrielson Trachsel**, Olathe, Kansas, Nov. 1, 2022.

**65 Charles Reed**, Des Moines, Iowa, Feb. 6, 2023.



## GRACELAND CONNECTIONS IN OUTER SPACE

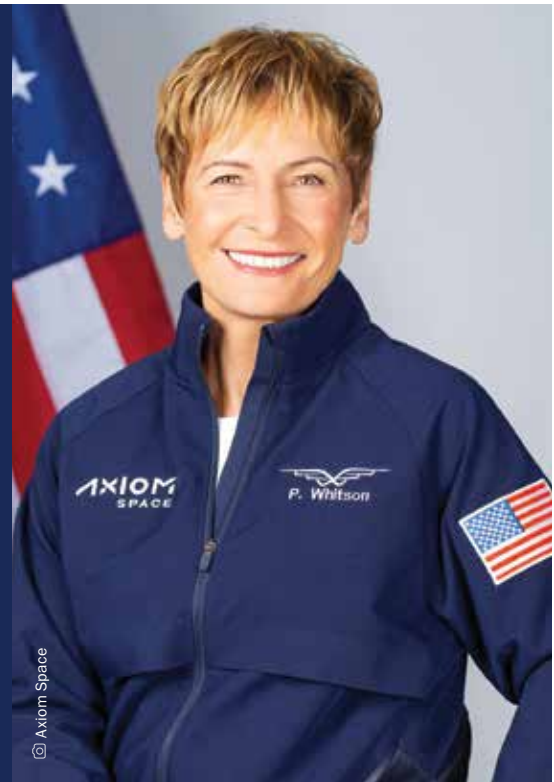
Honorary Gracelanders Peggy Whitson, PhD, is the first female commander on the Axiom Mission 2 (Ax-2), the second all-private astronaut mission to the International Space Station (ISS).

During her 37-year career with NASA, Whitson flew on three long-duration space flights and holds the record among American astronauts and women for spending the most time in space, over 665 days (and counting), as well as the record for most spacewalks (10) by a woman.

She now serves as the Director of Human Space Flight of Axiom Space, adding to her accomplishment as the first female commander of the ISS, the only woman to serve as ISS commander twice, and the first female, nonmilitary chief of NASA's Astronaut Office.

Peggy Whitson's connection to Graceland goes back decades. The Beaconsfield, Iowa, native once took summer classes at Graceland and has returned to campus to speak to students about her experiences. Several items she donated can be found in a display case in Resch Science & Technology Hall on the Lamoni campus. Her career in space and science is an inspiring reminder to dream big, work hard, and keep reaching for the stars!

Do you know of any other cool stories or facts? Share them with us: [graceland.edu/classnotes](https://graceland.edu/classnotes)



© Axiom Space

**66 Vada Brayton**, Independence, Missouri, Oct. 4, 2021. **Bary Hartman**, Shawnee Mission, Kansas, April 20, 2019. **Judith Mohler**, Jefferson, Iowa, Jan. 4, 2023. **Derek Young**, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Jan. 26, 2022.

**68 Elbert Brown**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 13, 2022. **Betty Moore Johnson**, Lamoni, Iowa, Jan. 20, 2023.

**69 Richard Greene**, Lancaster, New York, June 17, 2014. **Kathleen Maharry Harover**, Saint Charles, Missouri, Aug. 5, 2022. **Raymond Reid**, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Oct. 25, 2022. **Bonnie Milner Sudduth**, Plano, Texas, Feb. 26, 2022.

**70 James Danielson**, Lapeer, Michigan, Nov. 1, 2022. **Tepurotu "Rina" Fauura DeBarthe**, Overland Park, Kansas, Feb. 28, 2023. **Richard Hawks**, Okemos, Michigan, Jan. 8, 2023. **Alvin Shanks**, Robinson, Texas, March 15, 2017. **Donna Turk Terry**, Numa, Iowa, Jan. 27, 2019. **Barbara Keller Walter**, Mount Ayr, Iowa, May 8, 2019.

**71 Valena Kirkpatrick-Spragg**, Osceola, Iowa, Oct. 8, 2015. **Belinda "DeAun" Stearman Young**, Buckner, Missouri, March 22, 2023.

**72 Marilyn Robinson Moberg**, Des Moines, Iowa, Oct. 7, 2019. **Leon Probasco**, Kansas City, Missouri, Oct. 26, 2022.

**73 Shawnee Dippel Douglas**, Chattanooga, Tennessee, Feb. 6, 2023. **W. Scott Marshall**, Greenfield, Iowa, July 20, 2022. **Billie Politovich**, Seymour, Tennessee, Oct. 14, 2014. **Mary Ragland**, Sun City, Arizona, Jan. 30, 2023. **Robert Timmerman**, Stockton, Iowa, May 11, 2005.

**74 Donella Drake**, Mount Ayr, Iowa, Feb. 2, 2018. **Marcia Sack Emslie**, Albia, Iowa, Dec. 10, 2022. **Terry Schlotman**, Wellington, Missouri, Nov. 30, 2020. **Donald Shriver**, Shenandoah, Iowa, March 16, 2023. **Dennis Young**, Buckner, Missouri, March 22, 2023.

**75 Cynthia Knapp Franz**, Bartlett, Illinois, Aug. 23, 2022. **James "Jim" Gillaspay Jr.**, West Des Moines, Nov. 10, 2022.

**76 Martha Ruble Grosz**, Pleasant Hill, Iowa, Oct. 8, 2022. **Ruth Shotwell**, Detroit, Michigan, Jan. 11, 2023.

**77 Kathy Fallon**, Cecil Township, Pennsylvania, Nov. 23, 2022. **Jean Jackson Massey**, Rock Hill, South Carolina, Aug. 3, 2015.

**78 Klansee Clark**, San Diego, California, Jan. 19, 2023. **Yvonne Gray**, Norwalk, Iowa, March 16, 2020. **Jeffrey Moores**, Naperville, Illinois, Nov. 2, 2022.

**79 Glenda Brown Ganson**, Independence, Missouri, Jan. 27, 2023. **Ernest Williams**, Saint Joseph, Missouri, Aug. 28, 2022.

**80 David Gillaspay**, Bandon, Oregon, April 30, 2021.

**82 Marten Garn**, Charlotte, Missouri, Nov. 16, 2021.

**83 Lisa Freberg**, Independence, Missouri, Nov. 3, 2022. **Tammy Wells Lynch**, Oskaloosa, Iowa, Dec. 31, 2011. **Tammy McFate Pesina**, Tama, Iowa, April 3, 2023. **James "Jim" Silsby**, Lamoni, Iowa, Nov. 27, 2019. **Renee Voltmann**, Lantana, Florida, May 25, 2019.

**84 Janie Ourth**, Fort Madison, Iowa, Feb. 13, 2023.

**85 Evelyn "Lorraine" Lungwitz Austin**, Independence, Missouri, Sept. 20, 2014.

**86 Donna Skinner Hurd**, Fall Creek, Wisconsin, Oct. 4, 2022. **Richard Lindgren**, Bradenton, Florida, Dec. 11, 2022. **Helen Scott**, Kansas City, Missouri, Nov. 25, 2014.

**87 Donnie Jones**, Quincy, Illinois, Oct. 21, 2022.

**92 Josephine McAuliffe Fowler Cleveland**, Fairport, New York, Nov. 28, 2022. **Warrine McDoffie Harden**, Wenatchee, Washington, Sept. 14, 2022. **Stacie Nyberg Sparks**, Silverthorne, Colorado, Nov. 25, 2016.

**93 Mattie Kincaid Christian**, Clayton, Oklahoma, Dec. 23, 2007. **Patricia Dowell Nichols**, Chillicothe, Missouri, Sept. 29, 2013. **Virginia Williams Scott**, Tacoma, Washington, Nov. 29, 2015.

**95 Sherri Hoffman**, Salisbury, Missouri, Oct. 22, 2022.

**96 Eleanor Offer Greene**, Glen Burnie, Maryland, Jan. 9, 2023.

**97 Joshua Davis**, Saint Louis, Missouri, Nov. 6, 2022.

**98 Andria Meadors Allen**, Chickasha, Oklahoma, Feb. 1, 2009. **Lillian Hollinger**, Akron, Ohio, April 27, 2008. **Michael Lay**, Rock Hill, Missouri, Oct. 31, 2017. **Rhonda Young Martin**, Vacaville, California, Jan. 9, 2023. **Mary Knapp Michael**, Liberty, Missouri, July 28, 2021. **Odella Martin Sandoval**, Las Vegas, Nevada, March 28, 2015. **Colby Vredenburg**, Coral Springs, Florida, July 25, 2021.





From left: Lacey, Travis, Logan, Laura, and Julie in the building where the family legacy began.

#### ALUMNI PROFILE

## Harders on “the Hill”

Lamoni’s Spring 2023 Commencement ceremony marked the end of the latest chapter in the long **HARDER FAMILY LEGACY** at Graceland, which dates back to the 1930s.

**H**arder triplets Lacey, Logan, and Laura walked across the commencement stage to the cheers of their parents, Travis ’93 and Julie ’92. Lacey, Logan, and Laura grew up on a steady diet of SPECTACULAR each summer, so when they went to choose a university, each of them said they felt at home at Graceland, even having explored other opportunities. Each of them has had their own unique experience at Graceland, participating in different activities and carving their own path.

“I really learned to love Graceland on my own rather than through the eyes of my parents,” Laura said. “I learned I could run track and cross country, and I had a great audition with the music program. [With] these opportunities, I knew I had to attend Graceland.” All three Harders were active in Graceland’s house system. Lacey was on Aponivi, Laura on Paloma, and Logan on Closson. Lacey’s house experience was

particularly familial – her aunt Debbie Daikowa ’87 Harder, her cousin Hannah ’24, and two of her extended cousins were also Aponivi Angels.

The Harder family goes all the way back to the origins of Graceland. “One of our ancestors was here when Graceland was first founded,” said Laura. “He helped build the Administration Building to help pay his tuition. After he attended, we’ve had a long line of relatives who have attended because we understand the positive impact Graceland has on our lives.”

“Hearing stories from my grandpa and other family members about their time on campus adds such sentimental value,” said Logan. “It’s a special place for my family and I’m incredibly grateful to continue the family legacy at such a meaningful place.”

The Harder triplets’ mother and father followed in their parents’ footsteps to

“One of our ancestors was here when Graceland was first founded. He helped build the Administration Building to help pay his tuition. After he attended, we’ve had a long line of relatives who have attended because we understand the positive impact Graceland has on our lives.”

LAURA HARDER ’23

Graceland. Julie’s parents James ’61 and Sharon Lewis ’62 Craven attended shortly after Travis’ father David, who graduated in 1957. Travis’ mother, Nita, who passed away earlier this year, did not attend Graceland, but was actually named as an Honorary Alumna at Homecoming in 2019.

Now that the triplets have walked across the stage, they’re ready for the next part of their lives.

Lacey graduated in December 2022 with a major in social change and an emphasis in Gender and LGBTQ+ Justice. She immediately completed a 12-week internship in Dublin, Ireland with a nonprofit called Work Equal, which helps women from a variety of backgrounds get back in the workforce.

Logan, who graduated with a degree in Math and a secondary education endorsement, is pursuing high school math positions in St. Louis and will begin Graceland’s Master of Science in Data Science and Analytics program this summer.

Laura will graduate officially in December 2023 with her degree in music and endorsements in K-8, 5-12 music education. She will complete her student teaching in St. Louis in the fall and hopes to become a high school band director as soon as possible.

As for any future Harder Graceland graduates, only time will tell. The memories will remain though. Lacey shared one of her favorite memories from her time at Graceland, “During Homecoming 2021, I painted the bell with Hannah, Katelyn (Metcalf) ’18, Cameron ’17, Laura, and Logan, who are all current students or alumni. We thought it would be fun to celebrate the family legacy in the same way that houses have done for years. It was chilly and dark, but completely worth it because our paint job remained visible for a few days.” – **BY SHANE ADAMS**



- 99 Shari Peterson Marr**, New Hampton, Iowa, Feb. 4, 2023. **Carolyn Meadows**, Gulf Breeze, Florida, July 21, 2021. **Lydia Scott Wideman**, Enid, Oklahoma, Sept. 1, 2021.
- 00 Carol Grant-Holmes**, Mount Laurel, New Jersey, Nov. 2, 2022. **Frieda Guilford**, Florence, South Carolina, Oct. 9, 2015. **Andrew “Lee” Jones**, Kansas City, Missouri, Dec. 6, 2022.
- 01 Judy Wallischeck Byrd**, Tomball, Texas, Jan. 9, 2023. **Robert Vericker**, Bartonville, Illinois, July 15, 2022.
- 03 Karon Dorr**, Greenville, Pennsylvania, Aug. 30, 2017. **Linda Hughes McWilliams**, Modesto, California, March 21, 2006.
- 04 Lori Chedester**, Dallas Center, Iowa, March 18, 2023. **Maryellen Linkey Colston**, Colonial Beach, Virginia, April 6, 2018.
- 05 Theresa Rogers**, Flowery Branch, Georgia, Aug. 30, 2022.
- 06 Marilyn Johnson Dunham**, Oskaloosa, Iowa, March 1, 2023.
- 07 Janet Schaat Anderson**, East Moline, Illinois, Jan. 7, 2023. **Sherri Oelker Burich**, North Port, Florida, Sept. 4, 2022. **Amanda Kula Meeker**, Marion, Iowa, Sept. 8, 2022.
- 15 Halamehi Vailea**, Oakland, California, Jan. 3, 2023.
- HONORARY ALUMNA Nita Harder**, Saint Charles, Missouri, Oct. 16, 2022.



**NOW ONLINE!**  
[spiritshop.graceland.edu](http://spiritshop.graceland.edu)

We launched our online shop to provide a convenient shopping experience for Gracelanders near and far. Explore our collection of custom gear so you can represent your Yellowjacket pride!





## Interactive Learning Shines in New SkillPath Learning Experience Platform

In summer 2023, SkillPath’s new **Learning Experience Platform (LXP)** will be available for not only its enterprise users but also individual public users at all stages in their careers. After an 18-month implementation, SkillPath’s LXP features hundreds of live virtual training programs and a robust collection of interactive learning content to help learners gain new skills and achieve their personal and professional goals.

Learning platforms centralize and automate the complicated job of training people of varying skill levels. The streamlined functionality of the SkillPath LXP is a common feature of most learning management systems. But unlike other platforms, SkillPath’s offering comes with an extensive learning library.

Users of SkillPath’s LXP will find a tightly curated library of OnDemand courses, microlearning content, and interactive training programs – the piece CEO Michele Markey feels elevates the learning. “With this new content, users will watch a video or read an article, then encounter an interactive scenario where they’re asked to make choices based on the new concept,” she says. “They are able to apply what they’ve learned and drive through the experience at their own pace.”

“Not only is our high-quality learning content a key differentiator of the SkillPath LXP, but the new platform also makes it possible for us to securely export and license content,” explains Teri Beckman, Director of eLearning Solutions at SkillPath. “This is a frequent request from customers who have an existing LMS and are searching for programs to add to their platform.”

For enterprise clients who are managing a large group of learners, the platform offers tracking, reporting, and several levels of customization and flexibility. Platform subscribers can also enroll in unlimited live virtual instructor-led courses, programs for which SkillPath is most well-known.



SkillPath is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, delivering strategic and innovative training solutions to professionals worldwide since 1989. Revenue funds scholarships for students at Graceland University.



**SCAN THE CODE**  
 for more details about this  
 Learning Experience Platform



ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

**Q View the online version of *Horizons* at: [graceland.edu/Horizons](http://graceland.edu/Horizons)**

### **Honor Classes**

1963-1973-1983-1988-1993-1998-2003-2013

## **HOMECOMING 2023**

# **CARRY IT FORWARD**

## **September 29-October 1**

Join fellow alumni and friends in  
Lamoni for a weekend of food,  
fellowship, fireworks, and fun!

**[graceland.edu/homecoming](http://graceland.edu/homecoming)**

