

A PUBLICATION OF UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT

SUMMER 2025

# UB Knightlines

## Shaping Student Success



Inside: Scholarships – New Coaches for New Sports – Annual Report





## President's Line

Greetings from Seaside Park! This year's *Knightlines* focuses on our mission to support students — and that mission is going strong. Inside, you'll read about new sports, new majors, and new facilities we are offering. You'll find new opportunities for research with UB RISE and ASEE conferences and new opportunities for students to connect with alums like you.

One of the main ways we support students is through a wide range of scholarships. We are using Scholarship Universe to make pursuing a degree more affordable and are dedicated to creating more through initiatives like the Bridgeport's Brightest program, which supports graduates of local public high schools as they pursue their higher education. You'll find stories of those initiatives throughout this issue.

I am also sharing my own scholarship story in *Knightlines* this year. My family created a scholarship in honor of my father before he passed away last year. It is a way for us to process the tragedy, and to create continuity. It was also a way for my father's legacy to have a long-lasting, positive impact on the future.

That is what University of Bridgeport is designed to do. We turn legacy into impact, past into future, hope into success. And we couldn't do it without you. This is your legacy, your impact, too. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Danielle Wilken, Ed.D.  
President

President Wilken  
helping out on  
Move In Day

President  
Danielle Wilken, Ed.D.

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UB Knightlines is published for University of Bridgeport alumni and friends by the Office of Innovation, Strategy, and Advancement.

## ON THE COVER

Nursing majors Jacklyn Mellia, Angelina LoFranco, Marianny Polanco, Brandon Garguilo, and Praise Ademokun celebrate a well-earned graduation.



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# The Human Element

How We Created a Scholarship in My Father's Honor

By Danielle Wilken, Ed.D.



Daniel Orebiyi with  
President Wilken and  
members of her family



My father was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer the same summer I started as president at University of Bridgeport. He was such a warrior about everything that he seemed unstoppable to me, so it was a shock. Originally, the prognosis was that he would live another six to eight months, but he tried every move to stay alive and was with us for almost another two years.

During this process he left Connecticut and stayed in New York City for experimental treatments through Mount Sinai Hospital. One day in September '23, at the beginning of the school year for both UB and my children, I traveled down to the hospital to be with him to give my mom a break. Dad had a really bad day. He slept through most of the day, fighting the pain. Dad never complained about anything and was strong about everyone and everything, but was in this frail state, and I realized that he might be winning the skirmishes, but he's going to lose the war. I had no power to affect that outcome.

That evening, I went to Greenwich for a Young Presidents Organization (YPO) event on how music impacts your brain. The night started with a handful of members playing Elton John's "Your Song." I sat there trying to hold it together, trying to imagine the world without my dad. I had such a sense of loss of what was about to come. I stayed as long as I could, but tapped out early, mentally and physically drained. I realized I had no control over this moment.

Driving home, I began to think about how I could honor dad. I couldn't control what happened to him, I thought, but I could do something in his name at UB. A scholarship was much easier financially — my family couldn't afford to name a building, for example. It also felt right as it was about people and the direct impact we could have on higher education.

I called my friend Elena Cahill, our Vice President of Innovation, Strategy, and Advancement, and asked her about the possibility. I confirmed my understanding of the minimum to create an endowed scholarship. I couldn't afford it in one payment, but if it was broken up over five years, it was manageable. I was in. I called my brother and told him what I planned to do for our dad. And he said, "I'll match you." My parents drilled the importance of an education into us our whole lives. They knew that for my brother and me education was the key to a better life. That meant we could go to college and have more than they did.

The next time I saw my father in this hospital, I told him what we planned to do. We talked about how the money would spin off every year to help pay for a student to go to college at University of Bridgeport. We started figuring out what kind of student he wanted the scholarship to go

to. He wanted an undergraduate student, because he knew that was a growth area for the University and he wanted a student who had already spent a year at the school and was committed to staying here.

This conversation was joyful. It was great to have something to talk about other than illness and dying. It was beyond the immediacy of what was happening. It was a way to create continuity for something that otherwise felt so finite. We created the scholarship on the UB donation page, where it says the Craig and Barbara Schortzmann Scholarship. In my dad's final days, I showed him the page so he could see that the scholarship was real, that this was going to happen. It was one of the very last things I did with my dad.

My dad passed away in January '24. On my way home from Mount Sinai, I called my son Eric and told him. Eric said, "As long as UB exists, Grandpa's scholarship exists, some student will be getting it, and that student will be impacted by him."

“As long as UB exists, Grandpa's scholarship exists, some student will be getting it, and that student will be impacted by him.”

As we shared the news of my father's death, we also explained that if anyone felt like doing something, they should donate to this scholarship as a constructive way of honoring him. The gifts came from faculty, staff, and friends of the family, in addition to our family. My children watched the contributions coming in and could see that people cared, whether they knew my dad or one of us. It was a soothing thing in a very painful moment. It felt like he was still impacting the world, even though he was gone.

The first scholarship was given out a few months later. Over 30 students applied, and my mother Barbara read each essay and picked a student. Some day, that duty and privilege will be handed down to my brother and me, and some day to my children Eric and Rachel, and my brother's children. In January of '25, UB hosted a Scholarship Donor Appreciation event, and we were able to meet the recipient of our family's scholarship. There were surprising connections between him and our family that made the experience even more meaningful. Our family felt he was exactly who my dad would have picked if he was still here to do it.

This was something we did together, with my family, my community, and my colleagues. It was a way to process the tragedy and trauma. And there was a profoundly human element to the whole process, from conceptualization to awarding the first scholarship.

It is a hard thing to talk about because nobody wants to talk about death. But creating a scholarship provided a joyful way to approach a difficult situation. In doing so, we created a legacy for my father and an ongoing impact for the students of the future.■



# Celebrating Success

## A Night of Gratitude and Aspiration at University of Bridgeport

By Abigail Levandoski

At University of Bridgeport, the impact of philanthropy is more than just financial — it's about fostering dreams, creating opportunities, and shaping futures. Recently, UB hosted a dinner that brought together scholarship recipients and their generous benefactors, celebrating the hard work, dedication, and ambition that define these students. It was a night filled with gratitude, inspiration, and a profound sense of connection between those who support UB's mission and those whose lives are transformed by it.

### A journey rooted in community and intention

For Bushra Rayyan Qadri, a Ph.D. student in Technology Management, the Purple Knight Scholarship represents far more than just financial assistance — it's a recognition of her resilience and unwavering commitment to her education. Bushra, who is balancing her demanding academic workload with being a mom and architect, says that receiving the Purple Knight Scholarship has allowed her to focus on her studies without the constant stress of financial worries.

Bushra is also the founder of the International Student Society at UB. In her time here, she's taken the initiative to create a supportive community for herself and others. "When I first came to UB, I was drawn not just to the academic rigor but to the sense of community," Bushra recalls. "It's a place where professors truly care about their students, and the environment is one of collaboration and support."

For Bushra, UB was a place that "just felt right." The University's proximity to New York City, its rich international campus, and its strong entrepreneurial spirit (embodied by alumni like the founders of Subway, JotForm, and Cahoot) all played a role in her decision. But it was the campus itself, with its emphasis on community, that solidified her choice.

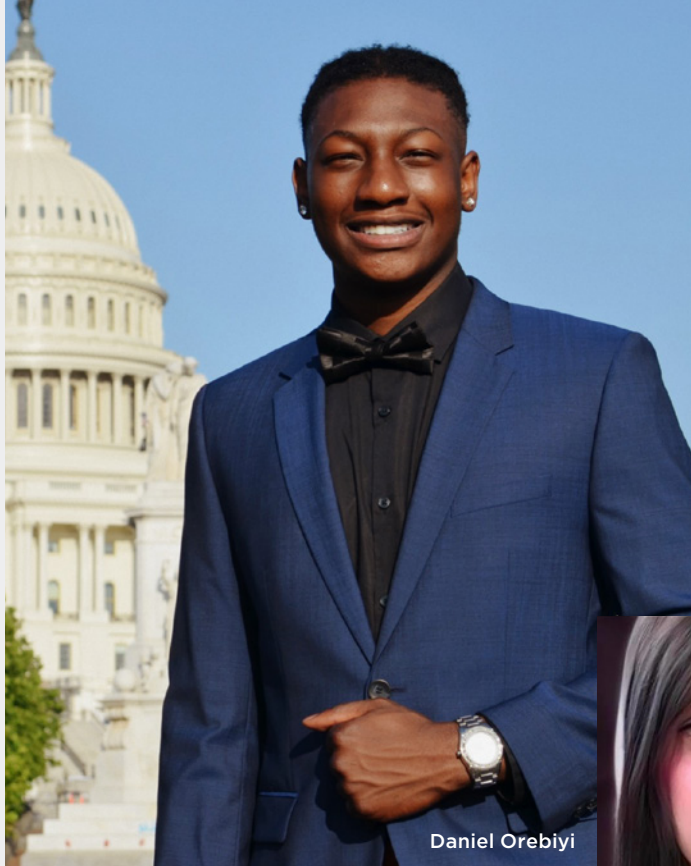


Bushra Rayyan Qadri

"I believe life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving," Bushra reflects. This quote, which she says encapsulates her approach to life and education, has guided her as she works towards a future in which she combines her expertise in technology management with her background as an architect.

Her advice to students considering scholarships? "Start early and don't give up. For international students, persistence is key," she encourages. And for those navigating challenges, Bushra adds: "Keep moving forward — just like riding a bicycle."





Daniel Orebiyi

## A pathway to law, sustainability, and advocacy

Sara Sajjad, a dedicated Criminal Justice and Human Security student who graduated in May 2025, has big aspirations. She is working toward a career in law, with a special focus on sustainability and conservation. The Martin F. Wolf Scholarship has been a key part of her journey, relieving financial stress and allowing her to dive deeper into her studies and extracurricular activities.

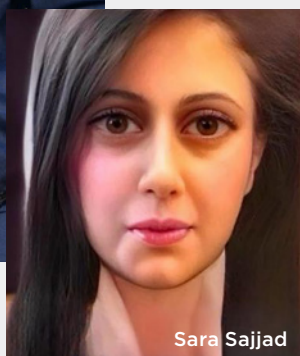
"I've always been passionate about law and its intersection with the environment," Sara shares. "UB's focus on experiential learning really drew me in, as did the diverse, multicultural campus."

Sara credits UB with helping her grow both personally and academically. "UB has given me the tools to think critically and the opportunities to engage with the community in meaningful ways," she says. The guidance she's received from her professors has been instrumental in shaping her career trajectory.

"The faculty has been a huge influence on my journey. Their teaching is inspiring, and they are always there to support

students," Sara notes.

Her advice to future students? "Start the scholarship search early, keep your grades up, and get involved on campus. Be persistent and proactive — you never know which opportunity might change your life."



Sara Sajjad

## A desire to make an impact

Daniel Orebiyi's story is one of both academic and personal growth, fueled by the Craig and Barbara Schortzmann Scholarship, founded by the University President Danielle S. Wilken and her family in loving memory of their father. Daniel is a driven MBA student, a member of the men's lacrosse team, and is passionate about giving back to the community. Daniel has found that UB offers a perfect blend of academics and extracurriculars, all while fostering a strong sense of belonging.

"UB has been an incredible experience," Daniel says. "It's not just the business program that's impressive — it's the people, the professors, and the network you build along the way."

Receiving the Schortzmann Scholarship has alleviated some of Daniel's financial burdens, allowing him to focus on what matters most: his studies and his future. "This scholarship has given me peace of mind, knowing that I can concentrate on school without the financial stress hanging over me," he explains.

After graduating, Daniel plans to continue his education, with a focus on lifelong learning. His journey at UB has reinforced his belief in the power of continuous growth and development.

For Daniel, scholarships are about more than just money — they're about recognizing hard work and providing the means to reach even greater heights. His advice to future students? "Apply for as many scholarships as you can. And when you write your essays, make them personal — show the committee who you really are."

## The power of philanthropy

The stories of Bushra, Daniel, and Sara demonstrate the powerful impact that scholarships have on the lives of University of Bridgeport students. They provide more than just financial relief — they serve as affirmations of hard work, determination, and the potential to succeed.

"UB makes it easy to find scholarships," says Daniel. "It's a great way to ease the financial burden and focus on what really matters — your education."

For donors, the dinner was a chance to witness the impact of their contributions and connect with the students whose futures they are helping shape. These personal connections between recipients and benefactors strengthen the bond that makes University of Bridgeport such a special place.

As the evening's celebration demonstrated, scholarships are more than just financial aid — they are a catalyst for change, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond the classroom. Through the generosity of its donors, UB is empowering its students to become leaders, innovators, and changemakers who will go on to make a lasting impact in their communities and the world. ■



# “Bridgeport’s Brightest” Program Helps Local Graduates

The University’s new “Bridgeport’s Brightest,” program supports high school graduates of Bridgeport public high schools as they pursue their higher education. With this initiative, yearly tuition will be reduced to \$7,000 for commuters, or \$12,500 for residential students that includes room and board. This program could significantly reduce or eliminate out-of-pocket expenses for students eligible for Federal Pell Grants or CT state grants.

UB’s President, Dr. Danielle Wilken, and the Bridgeport Schools Superintendent met this challenge and worked together to find a solution for 2024 Bridgeport public high school graduates who were negatively impacted by the lack of access to financial aid for the 2024-2025 school year and beyond.

“We are deeply committed to investing in our local community and fostering the

next generation of life-long learners,” shared President Wilken. “By partnering with Bridgeport Public Schools, we aim to provide more students with the resources and support they need to pursue higher education,” she said. “This is not just an investment in individual futures but also in the future of our community as a whole.”

“I’m thrilled to know that University of Bridgeport is offering a renewable four-year program to Bridgeport’s 2024 high school graduates,” said Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim (’83), sharing in the enthusiasm for this collaboration. “Providing quality education to Bridgeport students is always high on our list of priorities in this City, and because of this, we’re grateful for the support University of Bridgeport is now offering to our graduates for the upcoming academic year.” ■

**Teavanna Demontagnac  
and Chamique Brown  
both benefited from the  
Bridgeport’s Brightest  
Program**





# Associate Degree in Nursing Program Launches this Fall

To meet the rising demand for healthcare professionals, UB is excited to announce the launch of its new RN program. With core nursing coursework already begun in the spring 2025 semester, the university is currently enrolling students for the fall.

“We are thrilled to introduce the associate degree in Nursing program at UB,” said President Wilken. “This new offering aligns with our mission to provide accessible, high-quality education that meets the evolving needs of our community and the healthcare industry.”

As part of UB’s ongoing commitment to addressing the critical need for skilled nursing professionals in the region, the school now offers prospective students a full suite of nursing programs ranging from career-entry to career-advancement programs aimed at helping nurses enter and expand their opportunities within the healthcare industry. The flexible, part-time ADN program aims to prepare graduates for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), enabling them to become competent, compassionate, and highly skilled registered nurses (RNs).

Dean of Admissions Dr. Allison Garriss echoed President Wilken’s excitement for the ADN program, sharing, “The ADN program will allow students to develop essential skills, gain invaluable clinical experience, and ultimately secure a rewarding career and stable future in the healthcare field.”

The students will be able to use the brand new, modern simulation labs and clinical facilities that provide hands-on training, along with the experienced faculty and supportive learning environment that UB is known for. Comprehensive clinical rotations will give these prospective nurses real-world experience and exposure to different nursing fields.

The program has been approved by the State of Connecticut Board of Examiners for Nursing. The first class of students will be joining the program in Fall 2025.

President Wilken sees a bright future for this new major and its graduates. “As the demand for registered nurses continues to grow,” she said. “our ADN program will play a crucial role in preparing the next generation of healthcare professionals.” ■

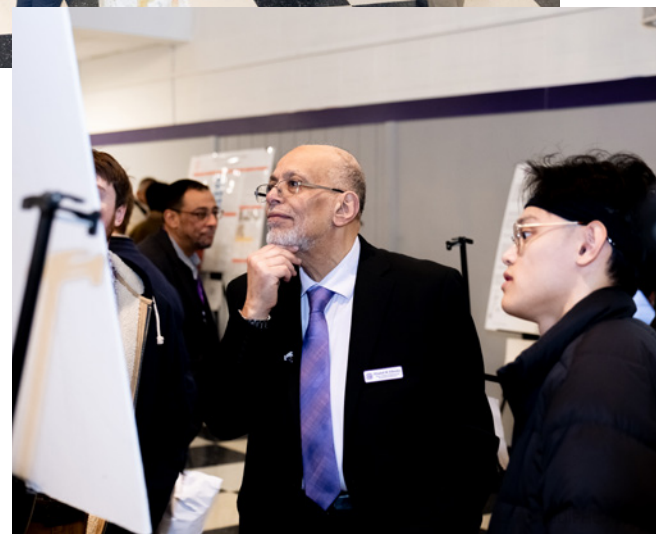




## UB Hosts 2025 **ASEE Conference**

The American Society for Engineering Education's Northeast Section annual conference, held at University of Bridgeport on March 22, 2025, drew an impressive turnout with 378 participants from 25 universities, with a total of 291 poster submissions. Attendees enjoyed two keynote talks by Dr. Magdy Bayoumi, IEEE Fellow Member, and Dr. Eric Miller, Director of the Division of Engineering Education at The National Science Foundation. The theme of this year's Conference was "Engineering Education in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: Role, Challenges, and Ethical Concerns."

Students from University of Bridgeport delivered remarkable presentations that demonstrated their skill, commitment, and deep knowledge. Among many UB student awards, graduate engineering student Abdulrahman Kariri, with advisor Khaled Elleithy, won 1st place for graduate posters, titled, "Astute Support System with Voice Feedback for Visually Impaired and Blind Assistance." ■



**Top to bottom: ASEE Conference posters fill the Student Center Social Room; Dean Khaled Elleithy inspects a student poster**

# NBALAB Is a Game-Changer for UB Students

By Grace Kuraska



University of Bridgeport business and marketing students are working alongside industry professionals at NBALAB. NBALAB is an innovation hub dedicated to fostering creative ideas, products, and partnerships within the sports industry. The company collaborates with emerging brands, artists, and designers to create unique and marketable products and content for fans worldwide. Through this partnership, it works to advance the impact of sports culture while providing valuable real-world experiences for students and entrepreneurs alike.

“Our relationship with University of Bridgeport is truly a microcosm for what [we’re] all about: working with smaller groups on a more individual basis to help grow,” said Eric Perugini, Chief Commercial Officer of NBALAB. “We view them as a valuable resource that can support us as our business evolves.”

NBALAB’s commitment to collaboration means UB students aren’t just interns — they’re vital contributors, delving into projects that require creative problem-solving and innovative thinking. Whether they’re refining marketing campaigns or exploring tech-driven solutions to engage NBA fans, students gain practical experience that’s difficult to find elsewhere. “This opportunity makes me feel proud and accomplished,” said Jai Sai Likith Kancharla, a business major. “As an international student, I’ve never been exposed this much before, and working with NBALAB is a great opportunity.”

Using data provided by NBALAB, UB students cleaned, analyzed, and visualized insights to optimize product sales and track performance. The students can apply their knowledge to focusing on strategies that will enhance NBALAB’s social media following, developing tactics for organic growth and higher engagement.

The impact of this partnership with NBALAB extends beyond typical internships, as students are encouraged to play a significant role in decision-making processes. Perugini highlighted this unique approach, explaining, “I want our interns to have a seat at the table and for their voices to be heard. That’s the greatest gift we can offer — empowering them to manage and run businesses within a business, not just giving them tasks but enabling them to contribute strategically.” By treating students as valued team members, NBALAB provides an environment where students not only build resumes but also develop the confidence to become leaders in the industry.

“There’s nothing more real than taking a student out of the academic setting and partnering them with a business that’s trying to grow. It’s critically important to focus on experiences that embed our students in the community,” said Director of the Ernest C. Trefz School of Business, Tim Raynor. “Through this partnership, UB students are empowered with the skills and connections that prepare them to transition smoothly from college to career.” ■

UB student Jai Sai Likith Kancharla and NBALAB’s Eric Perugini are working together to boost sales



## UB RISE Returns to the Arnold Bernhard Center

By Julie Demers

On April 4, UB RISE 2025 began with 465 guests sampling food and beverages from Bridgeport businesses that completed UB's Accelerator Program at the Bauer Hall Innovation Center. Students, faculty, and guests then headed to the Schelfhaudt Gallery to view a total of 127 faculty, staff, and student posters from University of Bridgeport, Goodwin University, and UB's Concurrent University Enrollment high schools.

In Littlefield Auditorium, students were treated to a talk by Dr. Vahid Behzadan, Assistant Professor, Computer Science and Data Science at University of New Haven, on "The Landscape of AI Research: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Imperative of Safety." He even featured an AI generated song about UB RISE.

Outside Waldemere Hall, the Connecticut Highway Safety Office, in conjunction with

KEA Technologies and the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety, allowed attendees to see and touch an INNOVATIVE car enhanced with a Driver Alcohol Detection System that has the potential to end impaired driving by drivers under the influence of alcohol or other substances.

Fellow Purple Knights from UB's Alumni Association made generous donations and several businesses and faculty offered financial sponsorships, allowing for 36 awards to be presented at the afternoon awards ceremony in ABC's Tower Room. In addition to Alumni-sponsored student awards, prizes were awarded for student posters that addressed Climate Innovation, Optimizing Business Profitability Through the Use of Artificial Intelligence, and Quantum Computing Applications. ■

**Left to right: The UB robotic dogs wowed the RISE crowd; The ABC art gallery transformed into a haven of scientific inquiry**





**Los Angeles Chargers  
Safety Derwin James  
congratulates UB  
graduates**

# A Day of Triumph and Inspiration at 115th Commencement Ceremonies

**By Abigail Levandoski**

On Saturday, May 3, University of Bridgeport's community gathered at the Hartford HealthCare Amphitheater for the University's 115th commencement ceremonies. While grey clouds gradually overtook sunny skies, the threatening storms held off, and the central message echoing throughout the day's events became clear: each graduate holds the pen to their next chapter — now is the time to write their story and build their legacy.

More than 1,400 degrees were conferred, including approximately 500 undergraduate and 900 graduate-level degrees. The amphitheater hosted an estimated 9,000 guests between the two ceremonies.

UB President Dr. Danielle Wilken opened the undergraduate ceremony, reflecting on the journey she shared with many graduates. "Many of you in the class of 2025 began your adventure here the same year I had the honor of becoming president," she said. "It has been a privilege to watch your growth, your resilience, and your achievements over the last four years." She encouraged graduates to reflect on the legacies they will create, "Legacy is not created by a single act, but it is the sum of your actions, your words, and your choices. It is the values you

uphold, the choices you make not only when things are good or easy but, more importantly, the decisions you make when things are hard."

The undergraduate commencement address was delivered by Los Angeles Chargers safety Derwin James Jr., who also received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree. In his first-ever commencement address, James shared a message focused on confidence, motivation, and resilience. He used the story of his upbringing and journey from a small town with limited opportunities to the NFL to encourage students. Speaking directly to the graduates about their potential and the power they hold as they step into the world, James declared, "I want each of you to know that you are not just seen as one of more than 500 graduates but as a unique individual who now holds the power to shape how the world sees you and, most importantly, how you see yourself."

At the graduate ceremony, Robert Patricelli, a highly respected healthcare executive and public service leader, gave the keynote address and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. His wife, Margaret Patricelli, a celebrated philanthropist, attended as an honorary guest and also received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, recognizing their extensive joint philanthropic endeavors and dedication to making a positive impact through their foundation. Patricelli shared his advice for the graduates, encouraging them to "engage, take risks, and be civic participants."

The ceremonies concluded with the symbolic moving of the tassel, met with cheers from the graduates, followed by the triumphant toss of graduation caps into the sky, a moment of pure elation marking the end of one chapter and the exciting beginning of the next — as the class of 2025 steps forward to create their stories and build their legacies. ■



# New Partnership with Ponce Health Sciences University **Expands Healthcare Career Opportunities**

By Abigail Levandoski

Ponce Health Sciences University and University of Bridgeport are proud to announce an innovative partnership to deliver a Master of Science in Medical Sciences (MSMS) program. This collaboration aims to increase access to healthcare careers by delivering a dynamic, cutting-edge program model with a particular focus on supporting underrepresented groups in pursuing medical education.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with University of Bridgeport to expand their graduate health science offerings," said Dr. Gino Natalicchio, President of PHSU. "This collaboration will help PHSU continue our mission of increasing access to healthcare

careers and supporting students from diverse backgrounds in achieving their dreams."

The MSMS program offers a unique opportunity for aspiring medical students and healthcare professionals to improve their science GPAs and gain confidence in their abilities, providing them with the chance to complete coursework from the first year of PHSU's Doctor of Medicine curriculum. By working together, PHSU and UB are creating additional pathways for students who have not been accepted to medical school or other health professional programs, as well as those who have taken non-traditional paths in higher education. ■



# The Future of eSports is Purple

## UB Gamers Take on the World at the New Student Center Lounge

As you walk through the lower floor of the John J. Cox Student Center, past the bowling alley and Twisted Café, past Subway Sandwiches® and the Knight's Pantry, your eyes are greeted by a brilliant array of neon purple lights. The site of the former UB Bookstore is now the Purple Knights eSports lounge, and walking inside is a feast for the eyes. Purple track lighting illuminates huge, comfortable gaming chairs, sleek black desks, and big colorful screens that flash with the changing environments of various video games. Students in headsets locked into their gameplay grip their controllers, intent on one thing — winning a match for the glory of UB.

"The eSports lounge is an exciting place that brings people together," says Ashton Lankowski, a sophomore Business Administration major. "It's a place you can come to hang out and just relax to get school off your mind."

"We spent a lot of money on this stadium," says Director of Wheeler Recreation Center and Campus Recreation, David Graham. "I've seen eSports facilities across the state and this is top notch."

Graham has recently created "open hours" at the new eSports facility for any students who want to walk in and play on any one of the 24 computer stations or consoles. If you have access to a game, you can play it in this top-of-the-line facility rather than on your laptop or tablet. "This is yet another a place for UB students to unwind and relax," he says. "UB is a place to study but it is also a place to build healthy habits, to get involved, and to have fun!"

The future of UB's eSports facility will hopefully be more open hours, more teams, and more people taking classes in the eSports concentration. "We will have more tournaments with brackets where winners play winners, and move up," says David Graham. "The future is bright. Bright purple." ■



# Intentional Impact

Mario Morgan and Peter Del Gallo  
Build UB Wrestling

The culture of excellence that has defined University of Bridgeport for almost a century has arrived on the wrestling mat. In fall 2025, the Purple Knights will inaugurate new Division II men's and women's wrestling teams. The women's team will be led by two-time All American, Peter Del Gallo, and the men's team will be led by national champion wrestler Mario Morgan.

Men's coach Mario Morgan was born and raised in Chicago and started his athletics career in football and baseball. Then one day, a football coach said that he'd be a good wrestler. "I was probably too small for football, so I had to think about where the opportunities were at the next level," he says. "I was always very competitive."

After succeeding on his high school team, Morgan looked at many Division I schools, but when he visited University of Nebraska Omaha, he realized that it was where he wanted to be. At the time, Omaha had just won three national championships, and his visit convinced him that the coach and teammates were the right fit for him. "The program was set up to do the things I wanted," he said. "I've always chased high goals and having teammates that were national champions made the decision pretty easy."

Morgan tore his ACL during his first year, but returned to qualify for the national tournament, progressing to the 141-pound weight class, in three years building a 130-38 record. In 2009 and 2010 he earned All-American honors, and in 2011, he won the NCAA National Championship in the 141-pound weight class. Meanwhile, his team won the national championship every year he competed at Omaha.

Mario Morgan is on the mat  
for men's wrestling



“Building a wrestling program from the ground up is always a challenge,” Del Gallo agrees. “But there is so much potential here. I look forward to building a strong team here at UB.”



When Omaha dropped their wrestling program, the coach brought Morgan and other athletes with him to Maryville University of St. Louis. That's where he started his coaching career, and the style he developed during those years at Maryville will be key to building UB's program. "I want to make sure the athletes leave here with great character, that they took care of their academics and go into a career that makes sense for them," he says. "Those pieces are just as important as how many matches you win. I want to make an impact on their lives."

The opportunity to intentionally build a team that fits his vision was an even bigger draw. "You can take over another program, but you're inheriting a different culture," he continues. "It might take a few years to manage and mold the idea you have for the program. Here, I get to hit the mat right away."

Women's coach Peter Del Gallo was raised in Gardiner, Maine, and started wrestling in first grade, following his older brothers in the sport. He wrestled throughout high school, then followed his older brother to the University of Southern Maine, a Division III school. While there, Del Gallo notched an incredible 133-10 record, becoming a two-time All-American. At the NCAA Northeast Regional tournament, he earned 4th place, 2nd place, 3rd place, and 2nd place again during his senior year.

"It taught me resilience," says Del Gallo. "You have four or five matches a day, and if you do take a tough loss, you have to be a goldfish and immediately forget. You think about it for a second, and then it's out and you're ready for the next match."

He was also ranked No. 1 nationally in the 125-pound weight class for most of his junior season and was 4th seed going into the national tournament, as well as 1st team All-

#### Peter Del Gallo poses with recruit Hoshena Gemme

American. He was working out in the gymnasium in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, preparing for his weighing in. An announcement came on the intercom at 7 p.m. saying that the tournament was canceled due to Covid-19 and everyone had 30 minutes to leave the facility. "It was a tough way to end the year," he says wryly.

In 2023, Del Gallo moved to Black Rock, Connecticut, to coach men's and women's freestyle wrestling at South Side Wrestling Club, one of the biggest clubs in New England. Since then, he has also coached at Greens Farms Academy, worked with the Connecticut National Team, and worked as an assistant wrestling coach at Staples High School in Westport, Connecticut. "I feel like I can teach a lot about the technical aspects of wrestling," "I like what I call the puzzle of wrestling. If someone does a move, there's a counter. And there's a counter to the counter, almost infinite counters during a match."

The home for student wrestlers in Wheeler Recreation Center will be another key to creating winning teams. Morgan says that he is looking forward to partnering with alums and other organizations to sponsor athletes, build the spaces in Wheeler Recreation Center, and promote wrestling in Connecticut. "But I think showing up is even more important than that. Bring your family and bring anyone who is interested in wrestling. We're going to do our best to provide value for you," he says confidently. "I'm excited to build a program that embodies the spirit and dedication of this great community."

"Building a wrestling program from the ground up is always a challenge," Del Gallo agrees. "But there is so much potential here. I look forward to building a strong team here at UB." ■



# A Family Program

## Evan Sholudko Builds a Swim Team

From his office in the Baum Foundation Aquatic Center at Wheeler Rec, Evan Sholudko can see and hear the splashing of swimmers in the 25-meter swimming pool, the home of the incoming UB men's and women's swimming team. "Somebody might not believe in themselves or not think they're capable of swimming to the level that they are actually capable of," he said. "It's my job to raise them up and prepare them."

Sholudko has six years of head coaching experience and many of the athletes he coached over the past three years were national swimmers and even one Olympian. "I have certainly had some great opportunities," he said. "But I like being able to build my own brand here at UB."

When University of Bridgeport's Vice President of Athletics, Recreation, and Student Life Jay Moran hired Sholudko last spring to build a competitive swimming and diving program, he picked him for his wealth of experience and a proven track record of success. "Evan Sholudko will reinvigorate our swim teams as head coach and I believe he will have success right away," said Moran. "He cares about the development of his student-athletes and understands the importance of collegiate athletics in the lives of young people. I am thrilled to welcome him to our Purple Knight family."

**Evan Sholudko is building a family swim program here at UB**



“I’ve had a lot of experience and made my own mistakes, and seen other people make mistakes and make good decisions and bad decisions. I can share a lot of insight with young people.”

Building a program and a community is a tall order for anyone, but Sholudko is confident that he is up to the task. “I always wanted to be involved in sports, and here I am nine years after starting in this business, and I am still doing it,” he says. “It doesn’t always feel like a job.”

After four successful years swimming on the varsity team at the University of Massachusetts, Sholudko began his NCAA coaching career in 2016 as an assistant coach at Stevens Institute of Technology, where he helped lead the program to an Empire 8 Conference Championship in 2017. He then moved on to Assumption University, where he served as assistant head women’s coach and then head men’s swim coach, before serving two years as the head coach of the men’s and women’s swimming programs at Eastern Illinois University (EIU). At age 25, he was then the youngest head coach in Division I collegiate swimming.

“I’ve had a lot of experience and made my own mistakes, and seen other people make mistakes and make good decisions and bad decisions,” he says. “I can share a lot of insight with young people.”

In three seasons coaching the Lewis University Flyers, Sholudko coached 42 men and 39 women to All-GLVC honors. Under his guidance, both programs finished fourth at the 2024 GLVC Championships and matched their highest finishes in team history. The men and women have also achieved CSCAA Scholar All-America team honors each of the six semesters under his leadership. Along with 19 CSCAA

Scholar All-American recipients and many more honors, Sholudko was named the GLVC Coach of the Year at the 2023-2024 championships.

“I was building a great program, and I think a lot of my peers were shocked that I would leave it, but I’m a family-oriented guy,” he says. Both he and his wife’s families live in the area and they wanted to be closer to them as they built their own lives. “I was always telling people that I wished Bridgeport would overhaul their program and fund it, because if I could do anything there like I was doing at Lewis, it would be perfect,” he laughed. “And then it happened. I am ecstatic to return to the New England region and I can’t wait to get to work establishing a new level of success and tradition for our student-athletes.”

The Purple Knights swim teams officially begin competing in the fall of 2025 and have been approved for associate membership in the Northeast-10 Conference. “There’s a certain level of athlete that we’re trying to recruit,” said Sholudko. “The goal is to really build a conference championship team. The University’s reputation of being very inclusive, family-oriented, and competitive will be a draw for these students. And then as we build, I want people to know that UB swimming means business.”

Sholudko was married in June 2025 and this fall will begin his inaugural season as head coach. “I’m not going to rest” he says. “I know all the ins and outs of what we need to do for success here and I’m chomping at the bit to get it done.” ■



# CHAMPS!

## Men's Basketball Earns First-Ever CACC Title

By Jim Sheehan

On March 9, 2025, University of Bridgeport's men's basketball team defeated second-seeded Post University, 67-57, to win the program's first-ever CACC title. The Purple Knights, who are conference champions for the first time since 2015 (when they competed in the ECC), earned a place in the 2025 NCAA East Regional.

Bridgeport's journey to the CACC championship will be remembered for a long time at UB. The Purple Knights defeated a trio of higher-seeded teams, including wins over top-seeded Dominican (91-78) and second-seeded Post on back-to-back days in Philadelphia. Coach Kranthi Senadhi's squad was picked to finish last in the CACC in the preseason, but remained relentless in their pursuit of UB's first NCAA tournament bid since 2020.

**Top to bottom: Junior Aliou Cisse drives to the basket; CACC Men's Basketball champs punch their ticket**



The Purple Knights led the CACC in scoring this season by a wide margin. In fact, UB's scoring average of 85.6 points per game ranked 27th in the country at the time of the championship. The team also led the CACC in almost every rebounding category this season, including total rebounds per game (44.5), offensive rebounds per game (16.1) and rebounding margin (+5.3). They registered at least 90 points in 12 games this season while seeing the century mark on five occasions, as well as attempting the most shots per game of any team in the east region this season.

Mechanical Engineering major Lambert Shell, Jr. was named to the CACC's All-Academic Team for the 2024-25 school year. Aliou Cisse was tabbed as the MVP of the CACC tournament while Malikai Delgado and Caleb Jacobs were also recognized. Cisse was also named CACC Player of the Year and voted to the D2CCA's All-East Region First Team and the 2024-25 All-Met First Team by the Met Basketball Writers Association. ■



# Softball's Strong Season

UB's softball team had a banner year, ending as regular season CACC Champions and earning a trip to the NCAA East Regional, with an overall record of 33-16. Dawn Stearns notched her 331st win and was named CACC Coach of the Year. Infielder Madison D'Amato had an impressive 32 Game hitting streak this season, the 6th longest in NCAA DII History. Fellow senior Kaite Burawski was named CACC Pitcher of the Year, earning over 1,000 career strikeouts and a career ERA of just 1.93 across 737 innings. During Burawski's time at Bridgeport, the Purple Knights have gone to four NCAA Tournaments and amassed 157 total wins. She was also selected, along with Emily Chase, Madison D'Amato, Samantha Ledger, and McKenzie Morgan, to the CSC's Academic All-District Team.

The Softball team rounded out 2025 as regular season CACC champs







Bill Moran, Elena Cahill, Rob Gerowe, and Yvrose Romulus

Dear Fellow UB Alumni,

I can't believe another year has flown by, and once again I have the pleasure of greeting you in *Knightlines*. The 2025 academic year has been full of exciting events, achievements, and most importantly, growing alumni engagement.

It's inspiring to see more alumni reconnecting with UB and enthusiastically sharing their time, resources, and stories. A highlight this year was the Class of 1975's 50th reunion, held during Commencement 2025, which saw our largest turnout yet. It was a powerful reminder of the lifelong bonds formed at UB and a shining example for current and future alumni.

Alumni are also playing an increasingly vital role in UB RISE (Research, Innovation, Scholarship, and Entrepreneurship). We are serving as judges, panelists, sponsors, and mentors. In fact, alumni are the principal providers of category awards. Your involvement helps make this signature event a success.

In the spirit of this year's *Knightlines* theme, "**Serving the Students**", I encourage you to participate in our alumni events throughout the year, and I hope to see even more of you getting involved. Visit campus, share your knowledge and experience, mentor a student, or simply connect with fellow alumni. No matter what your class year is, your location or situation, you are always UB Alumni and part of the UB family. Go to the Alumni page at [www.bridgeport.edu](http://www.bridgeport.edu) to learn about upcoming happenings on the Alumni event calendar. We are always looking for folks who would like to sponsor an event in your area. Your involvement makes a difference.

Warm regards,

Bill Moran '74  
President, University of Bridgeport Alumni Association

Learn more about  
upcoming UB centennial  
events here!









# Jeffrey Ostrove

## Gives Back to UB

Jeffrey M. Ostrove, PhD ('75), has donated \$50,000 to fund a Biology Scholarship for students at UB. "I have a warm place in my heart for the University of Bridgeport," says Ostrove. "I went there not knowing what I was going to do with my life and came away prepared for the future."

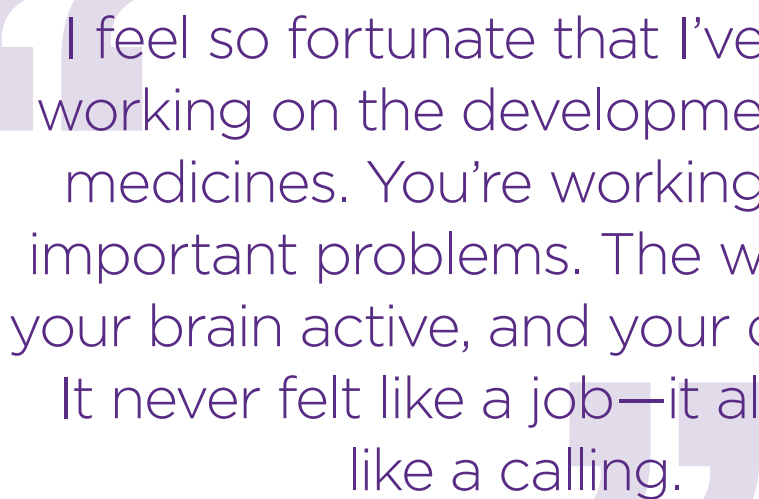
That spirit of giving was instilled in him from an early age, even though he grew up in a modest household. "My mother used to donate \$5 to the City of Hope Cancer Center because she believed it mattered," he recalls. "As a 25-year-old graduate student making just \$3,600 a year, I donated \$25 to PBS because I

believed in its mission." That small act sparked a lifelong commitment to philanthropy in both his personal and professional life.

Initially unsure about even attending college, Ostrove enrolled at UB and immersed himself in a wide array of classes...biology, chemistry, immunology, microbiology, and liberal arts courses like music appreciation and art history. He also worked as a math tutor for the math department to earn spending money and joined a biology research lab investigating the immune system of the North American eel, a species uniquely adapted to live in both saltwater and freshwater environments.



Jeffrey Ostrove and  
classmate David  
Rodgers at the Golden  
Knights reunion



I feel so fortunate that I've had a life working on the development of new medicines. You're working hard on important problems. The work keeps your brain active, and your days fly by. It never felt like a job—it always felt like a calling.

"My research project was pretty hokey in retrospect," he laughs. "But I was working in the lab, getting exposed to science, and loving it!"

His passion for science led him to pursue a PhD in virology and molecular biology at the University of Florida College of Medicine. From there, Ostrove embarked on a distinguished career in medical research, contributing to the development of innovative therapeutics, publishing approximately 60 papers in journals like the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He played a pivotal role in some of the earliest clinical trials in gene therapy developing ways to test the safety of the new technologies.

"I feel so fortunate that I've had a life working on the development of new medicines," he says. "You're working hard on important problems. The work keeps your brain active, and your days fly by. It never felt like a job—it always felt like a calling."

After completing a postdoctoral fellowship at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Ostrove joined the National Institutes of Health working in the clinical virology department. Though he was offered tenure, his entrepreneurial spirit led him to the private sector, where he joined a Maryland based biotechnology company and founded his first biotech company in 1992.

Venturing into the emerging field of gene therapy, he contributed to the first cystic fibrosis gene therapy clinical trials and many others. Over the course of his career, Ostrove founded eight biotech companies and led six of them, including Ceregene, AbViro, Genstem, Locana, and Stelios Therapeutics. In the past decade, he partnered with professors at the University of California San Diego School of

Medicine to launch multiple companies.

His work spanned the development of treatments for a wide range of diseases, including cancer, neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and ALS, as well as various genetic and cardiac conditions.

To raise support and awareness for these groundbreaking treatments, Ostrove gave public and private talks across the globe. "As CEO, you have to be a spokesperson and a salesperson," he says. "You need to explain why you're doing what you're doing and how it's going to help patients and society."

He recalls the terrible nerves before his first major talk at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in front of hundreds of leading scientists—but over time, he grew comfortable speaking to medical professionals, investors, and regulatory bodies like the FDA.

After a lifetime of work dedicated to advancing medicine, Ostrove feels humbled by the impact he's had. "It's humbling. We tackled difficult problems and raised significant funding to develop new treatments," he reflects. "When you think about it, it's all part of giving back." Ostrove also gives back to Johns Hopkins as part of a formal mentoring program run by Johns Hopkins Technology Ventures supporting start-up companies founded by alumni from the medical school. He really "loves working with start-up companies and first time CEOs."

His most recent gift—supporting UB biology students—will help open doors for those who need financial assistance. "I'm happy to give back to the university and support future students," he says. "UB will teach them the importance of hard work and perseverance in achieving success." ■





# Elevating the Dental Hygiene Profession

By Abigail Levandoski

From modest beginnings in a vocational high school to addressing audiences on global stages, one UB alum is revolutionizing how we think about dental hygiene by reshaping its role in public health and helping prevent diseases that reach far beyond oral care.

Shavonne Healy earned all three of her degrees — associate, bachelor's, and master's — from the Fones School of Dental Hygiene. In 2010, while earning her bachelor's and master's degrees online, Shavonne moved to Washington, D.C. In 2012, she was recognized for her role as an implant care specialist and was invited to speak professionally. She has since served as the president of the Washington D.C. Dental Hygienists' Association and as a national delegate for the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA).

She was later selected to attend a leadership development workshop hosted by the ADHA and set out to change the public perception of dental hygienists by addressing knowledge gaps with practitioners and advocating for more autonomy for professionals in the field. Through her leadership, Shavonne has influenced policy at the local, state, and national levels. "My mission and main objective is to

advance the professional role of the dental hygienist," she said. Since 2012, she has developed a reputation as an expert speaker on evidence-based

**Shavonne Healy serves the public as an ambassador for Dental Hygiene**

protocols to diagnose, prevent, and manage dental implant diseases and periodontal diseases.

As Shavonne's career evolved, so too did her understanding of the broader impact of dental hygiene — both in individual practices and in public health as a whole. For her, every patient interaction became an opportunity to do more than prevent tooth loss; it was a chance to contribute to a larger public health mission. From a public health perspective, dental hygiene is on par with other forms of critical care, such as mental health, women's health, and community health. "We're here to serve the public," she explained.

As she solidified her reputation as a thought leader, Shavonne began to recognize a gap in the education available to professionals. This realization fueled her next endeavor: to provide more advanced learning opportunities to hygienists eager to expand their skill sets. In January 2020, she founded A Higher Learning, a continuing education organization designed to do just that. In this work, Shavonne hopes to advance the dental hygiene profession through continuing education opportunities.

In considering her organization's purpose, she said, "Whether someone wants to become a public health advocate or wants to advance in their practice as a dental hygienist and perform at the top level of their license, A Higher Learning can deliver that."

Shavonne notes that the average dental hygienist isn't taking part in the broader conversations on social media, and they haven't been part of national conventions centered around the dental hygiene profession. "There's a whole other side to the work that I do that is grounded in advocating and advancing the role of dental hygienists as independent practitioners," she explained. "I want to help gain professional autonomy for those of us in the field."

As an industry expert, Shavonne returns to UB yearly to host an international symposium that provides continuing education hours and experience to practicing dental hygienists.

"I really appreciate the opportunity to give back to Fones and the University the way they gave to me, she said. "We are doing that by bringing innovative technologies and changing the standard of care. We're bringing Fones to the forefront of what modern-day dental hygiene should look like — not just from a private practice perspective, but from a public health perspective." ■

# Alumni Notes

Mass Communications major **Angelica Castillo** ('10) won a 2024 New York Emmy Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for her work in Short Form Content at New York City Tourism and Conventions.

Psychotherapist **Elena Cella** ('13, '15) married **Leonardo Nazario Rosa** in 2024. They first met at the 2015 Gathering of the Vibes and after a long-distance relationship that lasted years, Leo moved to America in 2024, and they finally said "I do."



**Juliana Garofalo**, PA-C ('24) has enrolled in the Norwalk Hospital/Yale PA Surgical Residency Program. While at UB she participated on the winning team for the 2023 PA Challenge Bowl and joined a transformative medical service trip to Peru in 2024. Juliana was also one of 18 PA students nationwide selected for the prestigious Advanced Surgical PA training program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in December 2023 and credits UB's faculty, clinical preceptors, and classmates for shaping her into the healthcare professional she is today.

Left to right:  
**Juliana Garofalo;**  
**Megan Hughes and**  
**James Durrell**

PAI graduate **Astrid Garza** ('18) practices Emergency Medicine at Norwalk Hospital and St. Vincent's Hospital. Her advice to current students about to enter the workforce is that "most of the learning happens on the job. You won't know it all, and no one expects that of you. There are resources and people who will guide you and are willing to help."



**Megan Hughes** ('16, '19) and **James Durrell** ('16) were married in October 2023. At the wedding, they used UB napkins and trays provided by the Advancement team. "They were very sentimental to add to our day," says Megan. They currently live in Florida where Megan works as a Physician Assistant and James works for the Florida Department of Agriculture.

PAI program graduate **Karolina Lewko** ('25) participated in the Street Medicine rotation with the Valley Health Partners Community Health Center (VHPCHC) in the Lehigh Valley area of Pennsylvania, in Summer 2024. Street Medicine serves unhoused or unsheltered patients, providing vital medical care.



# Alumni Lines



Computer Science and Finance major **Ruben Gimenez Linares** ('16) and Technology Management major Alja Tavcar ('16) were married in August 2024 in Slovenia with a group of their former UB swim teammates as guests, helping them celebrate the special day and reminisce about their time together in Bridgeport.

On May 3rd, the Bob Margolis Blues Band, including **Bob Margolis** ('75) and **Dave Bacon** ('76) jammed at this year's Golden Knights reunion to great acclaim. They played music together at the ABC Building when they were roommates in the 1970s, and on the beautiful Saturday afternoon of graduation they played live music for thirty fellow UB Graduates outside the same building.

Married alums and business partners **Mayank Nath** ('17) and **Natasha Macleay** ('16) of Tulsi Regenerative Medicine have partnered with their alma mater to bring their company's Regenerative Dermatology, Orthopedic Care, Integrative Joint Care, and Advanced Infusion Therapies to Connecticut. Students will be able to enroll in a licensed certificate program and intern at local Tulsi wellness centers.

**Yekaterina** ('17) and **Vladislav** ('15, '16) **Paskas** are living their best life in South Miami, Florida, where they watch the sunrise and sunset together every day.

**Mike** and **Lynn Schneider** ('84) celebrated their 40th anniversary at a hotel owned by **Joe Bokan** ('82), with a room decorated with UB paraphernalia, including napkins, tray, pillows, and a framed Knightlines article about how they met, proving once and for all that they are "UB's proudest alums."

In June 2025 **Ajay Shrestha** ('02, '06, '19) and his wife Bishakha welcomed a new 7 lb, 5 ounce baby, little Jay Shrestha. Ajay is a UBAA board member and an adjunct instructor for the School of Engineering.

Men's basketball legend **Lambert Shell** ('92 '96 '08) was selected to be a member of the Small College Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2025. He will officially be inducted on Friday, October 31 inside the Branscomb Auditorium on the campus of Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Fla. Shell's illustrious career included the Purple Knights' all-time scoring record at 3,001 points, the 12th most in NCAA Division II history. He currently serves on UB's Board of Trustees.

## Remembrances

**Andrea Baquero** ('22), a recent B.S. in Dental Hygiene graduate who worked at a dentist's office in Wallingford, CT, passed away in May 2025.

**Walter Budney** ('52) passed away on July 12, 2024.

**Leigh Danenberg Jr.** ('55) passed away on February 5th, 2025 at the home he shared with his wife of 70 years. Originally from Easton, Connecticut, he earned a Bachelor's degree and met his future wife Charlotte Ann Southard at UB. In 1972, he co-founded Herald Graphics in Stratford, and then established Graphic Image in 1979.

**Steven Freilich** ('69) very unexpectedly and sadly passed away on April 10, 2024.

**Doreen M. McGonnell** ('76) passed on December 16, 2023. While at UB she worked as an RA and in the dining hall. Her sister tells us that "she loved her time there and had many fond memories."

**Jeffrey Petroski** ('76) was scheduled to attend the Golden Knights Celebration this year, but passed away on March 23, 2025.

**Joan Marie Frisk Trefz** passed away peacefully in her sleep on April 24th, 2025, at the age of 88. She and her husband, Ernest C. Trefz, were huge supporters of UB's School of Business, and their generous philanthropy made better education possible for thousands of UB students. ■

# A Life of Service

Trustee Fred Moses '74  
June 6, 1949 - January 24, 2025

Born in Coward, South Carolina on June 6, 1949, Fred Moses was the seventh of ten children in a family of humble origins. He moved to Connecticut and enrolled, first at Housatonic Community College, then at University of Bridgeport. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Marketing in 1974 and became a Justice of the Peace in Bridgeport. He worked for eleven years at the General Electric Supply Company before moving to Texas, where he established Telecom Electric Supply Company, which continues to thrive over three decades later. He and his wife Mazzie created numerous charitable and educational endeavors to promote education, creating opportunities that include an endowment scholarship fund at UB.

Despite all his business success, one of his greatest joys was serving at Shiloh Baptist Church, where he was a Minister for over four decades. He also served as chair of the Plano Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the Plano Community Home, Commissioner of State of Texas General Services Commission, Commissioner of Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations Commission, Collin



College President's Circle and Foundation Board, the Dallas/Fort Worth Minority Supplier Development Council, the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce, Plano Partners Mentor Program, the United Way of Plano, and the Plano Metro Rotary Club.

**Classmates, Friends,  
and UB Trustees Art  
Landi and Fred Moses**

Moses's service on UB's Board of Trustees helped set the course for the next decade, and he will be sorely missed by his colleagues and friends in Connecticut, Texas, and beyond. One of his favorite quotes from the Bible was Matthew 5:41, "If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles." He exemplified the idea that a lifetime of service to others is the true reward. ■





# MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER



# UB ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends,

As we navigate through these challenging times, with complications in the international market and significant changes within the federal government, I am proud to share that University of Bridgeport has not only managed these complexities but has excelled in the face of adversity.

Our resilience and adaptability have been key to our success but so has the commitment to planning we have made in recent years. We have launched our second strategic plan since 2021, a testament to this forward-thinking approach. The new strategic plan will propel us further and faster, ensuring not only economic stability, but also that we remain at the forefront of academic excellence.

Our strategic initiatives will focus on enhancing our majors and programs and fostering a more supportive community for our students, faculty, and staff. We will continue expanding our athletic teams, developing our music and arts resources, and encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship. We are committed to creating an environment that both meets the current needs of our community and prepares for a bright future.

The future includes our upcoming Centennial during the 2027-2028 school year. Contact us to be part of the planning and honor generations of students — from your graduating class and to those a hundred years from now. We have included a giving opportunity in this year's Knightlines, with both QR code and envelope for your convenience. Contribute what you can to support this wonderful transformation and visit the campus at Homecoming 2025 to experience the changes firsthand.

With thanks,

Elena Cahill, JD '88, '91

Vice President of Innovation, Strategy, and Advancement

## WAYS TO GIVE

### GIFTS OF CASH

Gifts of cash may be made with a personal or cashier's check, or by credit card.

### ONLINE

To give online visit  
[www.bridgeport.edu/support-ub](http://www.bridgeport.edu/support-ub)

### MAIL OR PHONE

To give by mail, our address is Office of Advancement, 126 Park Avenue, Bates Hall, Bridgeport, CT 06604. To give by phone, call 203.576.2433. Gifts can be made by check or credit card (MasterCard, Visa, American Express). Please make checks payable to University of Bridgeport.

### STOCKS AND BONDS

A donation of stock by an electronic stock transfer or by gifting the stock certificate form to UB. Contact the Office of Annual Giving for instructions at 203.576.2433.

### REAL ESTATE

If you own property that is not subject to a mortgage and has appreciated in value, a gift of real estate to the University may be an attractive option.

### YOUR WILL

You may also make a deferred gift by naming the University in your Will. If you plan to do this, please notify us of your intentions.

### GIFTS OF LIFE INSURANCE

Make a substantial gift with modest premium payments. This is also a good use of paid policies no longer needed for family members.







In fiscal year 2025, our alumni giving has **increased dramatically, by over 54%**. This is a testament to your generosity and dedication to the future of our great university.

Our Annual Giving has also **increased, by an astonishing 42%**. This growth amongst our dedicated donors supports our ongoing operations and programs and plays a crucial role in the ability to fulfill our mission.



## By the Numbers:



**\$333,433.00**

Alumni Giving

(Increase of 54.53% from 2024)



**\$1,869,729**

Financial Giving



**\$144,505**

Annual Giving

(42.25% increase from 2024)



**410**

Total Donors

**235**

Alumni donors have increased  
4.91% from 2024

**Class of  
1974** was the top  
donating class of the  
fiscal year

## 2024–25 Snapshot:

**1,529** Degrees  
Conferred

**3,838** Total  
Enrollment



**43%**  
Students  
of Color



**22%**  
First-Generation  
Students

**1,051** New  
Students

**152** Full-Time  
Faculty Members

**16** NCAA Division II  
Varsity Athletics Teams

**30+** Clubs and  
Organizations

# THANK YOU to our Generous Donors

## President's Society \$100,000 or more

Mr. Arthur E. Landi and Mrs. Mairead O'Sullivan\*  
Mr. Fred N. Moses  
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Ernest Trefz and Joan Trefz Foundation  
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The Pepsi Bottling Group, Inc.  
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