

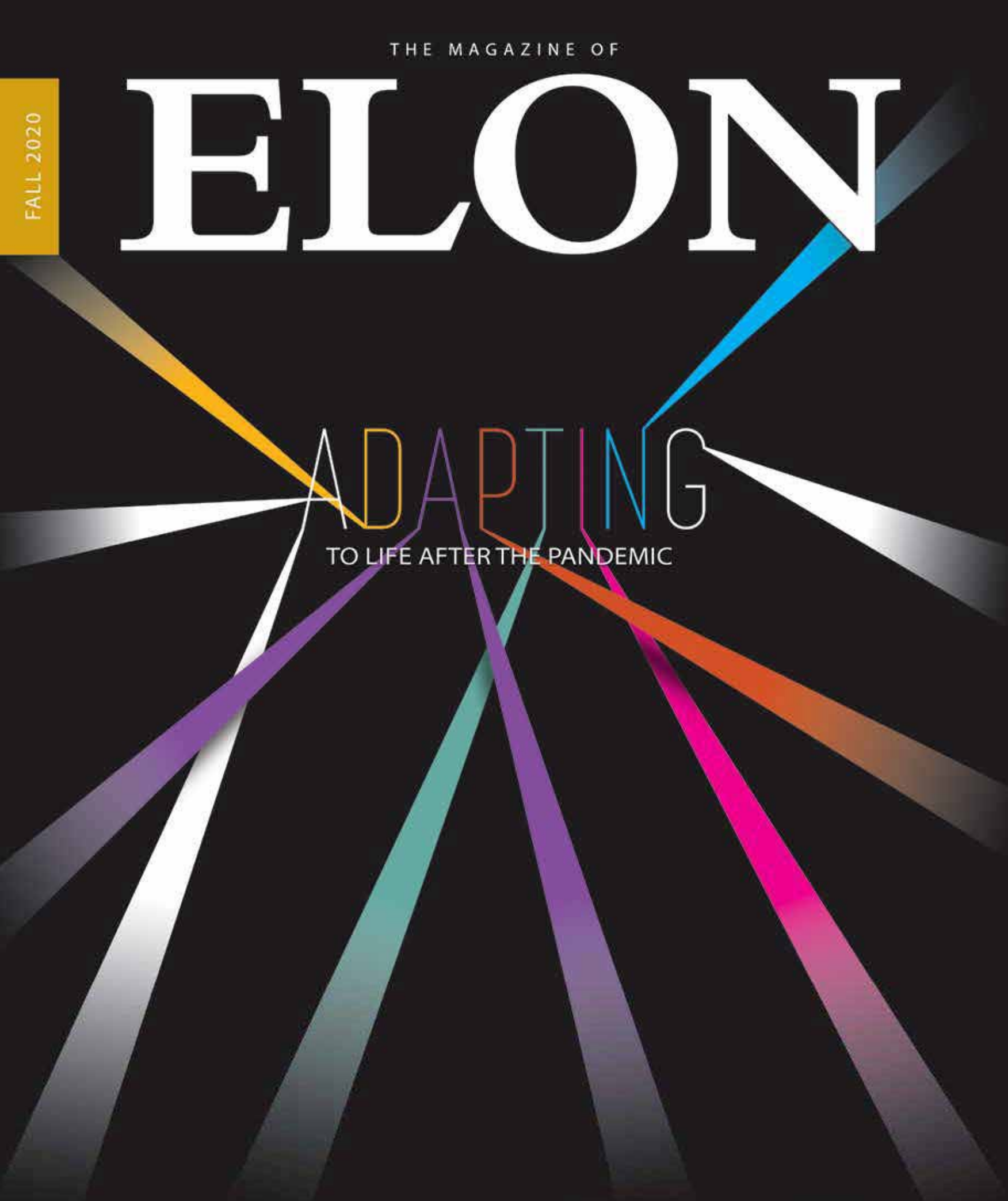
THE MAGAZINE OF

ELON

FALL 2020

ADAPTING

TO LIFE AFTER THE PANDEMIC



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BY OWEN COVINGTON

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I AM ELON

BY KIM WALKER

As **Saadia Munford '21** enters her last year playing with the Elon women's basketball team, she credits the three other seniors on the team for making her time at Elon so special. The women spend almost all their time together, even creating a faux sorority using their initials, "JASA Phi." She says she knows these are friends she'll have for life.

Saadia, a marketing and finance double major, also acknowledges the influence of her mentors, including Assistant Professor of Marketing George Talbert Jr., who taught her sales management course last fall. She says her time in Talbert's class helped lead to opportunities such as a summer internship at Aflac and a position on the Elon Sales Team. She recently formed an LLC to start her own e-commerce business.

"The teamwork, ethics and time-management skills that athletes have make working in sales a good fit," she says. "And Dr. Talbert really gave me the confidence to focus on sales and go for those types of positions."

In March, COVID-19 delivered an unexpected end to the 2019-20 basketball season, just as the CAA tournament was beginning. Saadia is hopeful that this year's season will not be canceled. A point guard and team co-captain, she knows the team relies on her to provide energy, leadership and impeccable judgment on the court. And although she loves those roles, she's also looking forward to life after graduation.

"I've given basketball all I've got, and after this year, I feel like I'm prepared to step away from it and start a career," she says. "Coach [Charlotte] Smith cares for her players as human beings and taught us to be good people first. It's important to be kind. You just never know what impact you might have."

Saadia is Elon.

Visit elon.edu/magazine to see more stories that are part of our "I Am Elon" series.



Together on a *Life Journey*



facebook.com/ElonConnieBook

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On a beautiful evening in September, under one of Elon’s newly installed instructional tents, I met with 12 of our Lumen Scholars and the program’s director, T.E. Powell Jr. Professor and Professor of Physics Ben Evans. We were socially distanced and wearing masks, as students shared the deep-dive topics they are undertaking with faculty mentors as part of this still relatively new scholarship program. Research ranged from global economics to cancer research, choreography and much more. While the environment for our event had changed to respond to the pandemic, the learning and challenges students described undertaking had a similar tone to it. It was the disposition of the students and Professor Evans that struck me — A realistic tone of acceptance in their voices, along with a resolve to continue to press forward.

One student described working in the lab and managing delayed supplies that caused adjustments to her schedule. Another described working virtually with a global partner in India to conduct interviews that she could no longer do in person as planned. Several described revisions to hypotheses and timelines. While one might at first think the learning goals established would be delayed or absent, what I heard from the students instead was amplified learning, critical thinking through adjustments, new insights gained and deeper relationships formed through collaborative problem-solving. Rich with learning, but simultaneously exhausting, these adjustments had become the unanticipated centerpieces of their Lumen Prize scholarship.

Evans closed the discussion with the observation, “I’m waiting for the beginning of the end.” He then asked me, “Do you think we are at the beginning of the end of the pandemic?”

If you consider this pandemic journey along a bell-shaped curve or liken it to climbing a mountain, unanimously we want to know, “*Is the most difficult part over or are we on the downward slope?*”

Like a child in the backseat during a long drive, “*Are we almost there yet?*”

As the university’s president, in that moment I wish I could have said “yes” and to “hang in there because we are just about done.” I wish I could have said that I was confident it was almost over and we would soon be free of the challenges the pandemic had and is creating. But that is not a possibility. Instead, what I can offer is the comforting reminder that journeys in life are perpetual and that we are here together, Elon. We are on a life journey together that has curves and hills and may even offer flattened landscapes for a little while before we begin to climb again. In this moment, with a steeper climb than we have encountered in our previous travels, we are experiencing new learning and new awareness. We can now see more clearly, and this new view is calling each of us to action in unique ways.

The hope forming in this new world as we continue the forward climb up the steepest part, with each step a new view and new understanding, is the power of the combination of your Elon education

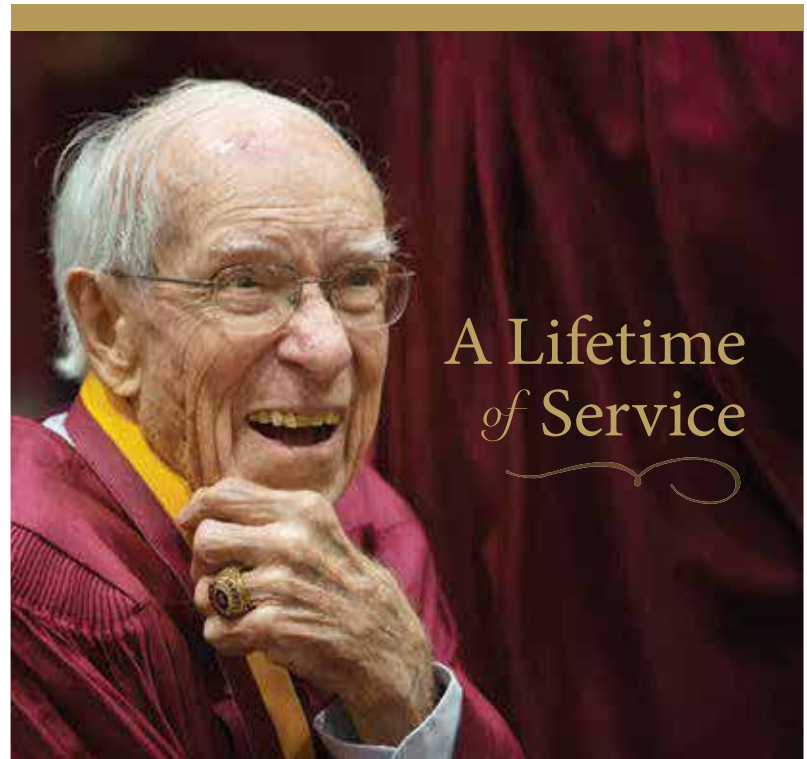
{ Associate Professor of French Olivia Choplin teaches her class outdoors in the fall to accommodate physical distancing during the pandemic. }



and the intersection of life. We are together as a community of learners. While our individual actions — the “liberty of conscience” articulated in our mission statement — define our journeys as our own, we are together in our learning and sense of purpose.

As you read the pages of this issue of The Magazine of Elon, you will find inspiration in the individual journeys of members of the Elon community, the vibrancy of their Elon education helping to establish our new world. In these stories, the action of our mission to provide an education the world needs is compelling and clear. We are here together, Elon, at a time when our journey is steep, and the beginning of the end is not yet in sight. ♣

Connie Ledoux Book
PRESIDENT



Dr. Charles E. Kernodle Jr. '38, who dedicated much of his 102 years to serving his community, was awarded the Elon Medallion in August during a virtual presentation with President Connie Ledoux Book and Vice President for University Advancement Jim Piatt.

Kernodle, who died on Sept. 26, was one of seven children of a farmer and country doctor and a school teacher, and one of four brothers who attended what was then Elon College. All four graduated from Elon and went on to attend Duke Medical School. Along with completing his medical training at Duke, Kernodle served as a U.S. Army chief surgeon, treating American soldiers and prisoners of war in Germany during World War II.

Kernodle then returned to Burlington, N.C., to establish the renowned Kernodle Clinic with brother Harold Kernodle and cousin John Robert Kernodle. The clinic grew into a multi-specialty group practice with more than 50 medical providers and 15 areas of specialty. Kernodle continued his connection with Elon, particularly with its athletics programs, providing free physicals for local athletes and outstanding family health care for generations. He also served as the football team doctor for nearby Williams High School for a remarkable 70 years.

Kernodle's benevolence extended into retirement, as he planted and nurtured more than 500 tomato plants each summer, only to distribute their generous bounty to family and friends. In recognition of his commitment to his community, Kernodle has received North Carolina's Order of the Long Leaf Pine award, the Alamance County Area Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Service in Sports Award, the Elon Athletics Distinguished Service Award and the Russell E. Blunt Legend Award from the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. The football field at Williams High School is also named in his honor. Earlier this year, he was selected for the N.C. Sports Hall of Fame.

The Elon Medallion is the most prestigious service award given by the university. ♣

THE MAGAZINE of ELON

FALL 2020
VOL. 82, NO. 3

The Magazine of Elon is published three times a year for alumni, parents and friends by the Office of University Communications.
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Elon University has been selected for the inaugural cohort of First Scholars Network institutions in recognition of its commitment to advancing the outcomes of first-generation students.

Established by the Center for First-Generation Student Success, First Scholars Network shares Elon's desire to expand programs that support first-generation students throughout their years on campus and well after graduation. "Elon believes in the transformative power of a college education and has a long history with students and alumni who were the first

in their family to attend college," said Elon Vice President for Student Life Jon Dooley. "As part of this national coalition, Elon will share about the good work happening here and build upon its efforts to help first-generation college students thrive at the university and beyond."

As part of the two-year experience, the center will help Elon use institutional data to identify gaps, track progress and create systems to help the institution implement initiatives that improve student outcomes and strengthen recruitment while fostering collaboration and thoughtful allocation of resources.

Elon joins 31 institutions that are already providing robust programming while creating systemic cultural shifts that focus on the success of first-generation students. Elon's offerings include the Odyssey Program, a highly selective merit-based program for talented individuals with demonstrated financial need; the Elon Academy, a nonprofit college access and success program for academically promising high school students in Alamance County with a financial need and/or no family history of college; and First-Generation Student Support Services, a new initiative that supports students who identify as first-generation college students. ✦

An enduring LEGACY

Elon University has renamed the Center for Leadership building for Janice Ratliff, a staff member and recipient of the Elon Medallion who served the university for 35 years.

The effort to rename the building for Ratliff began more than a year ago, and the Elon University Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve the renaming in April. The announcement was to accompany a formal dedication of the building in the summer, but the COVID-19 pandemic postponed the dedication until next spring.



The first Black Elon staff member to have a campus building named in her honor, Ratliff was a mentor to generations of Black students, scores of whom remain connected with her as alumni. "Janice Ratliff exemplifies service to the community and the deep impact that Elon staff members can have on the lives of our students," said President Connie Ledoux Book. "For more than three decades, Janice provided exemplary leadership in her support of Elon students while breaking new ground for others who followed her."

A native of Elon, Ratliff joined the university in 1981 as administrative assistant in the Office of Cooperative Education. During her career at Elon, Ratliff worked in the



{ Janice Ratliff has been honored by having a building named after her. }

Office of the Vice President and Dean of Students, the Office of Student Development, the Office of Auxiliary Services and, finally, the Office of Student Health and Wellness. She retired from Elon in 2016.

Ratliff was one of the first Black staff members to serve in the various roles she had on campus. She was immersed in the life of the university, serving as adviser to the Black Cultural Society, which is now the Black Student Union, the Gospel Choir and Elon's Finest. She served on the awards committee and faithfully attended the annual Phillips-Perry Black Excellence Awards celebration.

"The magnitude of this honor is unbelievable, to say the least," Ratliff said. "I feel honored, humbled, appreciative and excited, all at the same time."

The Janice Ratliff Building is located adjacent to the Global Neighborhood and Loy Center, north of Moseley Center. It houses the Office of Residence Life, which includes the Office of Student Care and Outreach and the Office of Student Conduct. ✦

TOP MARKS

A roundup of Elon University's latest rankings and accolades



• For the second year in a row, Elon is ranked among the top-100 National Universities in the 2021 U.S. News & World Report “Best Colleges” guide. The university ranks No. 88 among the nation’s most prestigious comprehensive universities, with a No. 2 ranking for excellence in undergraduate teaching and a No. 10 ranking for Most Innovative National University. For the sixth straight year, Elon is the leader in the “Focus on Student Success” feature — the only college or university ranked in the top 20 in all eight categories of high-impact academic programs: learning communities (No.1), study abroad (No.1), first-year experiences (No. 2), senior capstone (No.2), service learning (No. 2), internships/co-ops (No.7), undergraduate research/creative projects (No.10) and writing in the disciplines (No.19).



• Princeton Review named Elon the nation’s “best-run college” with a No. 1-ranked study abroad program in its 2021 edition of “The Best 386 Colleges” guide. The university was also recognized for excellence in academic (No. 6 best college theater program) and student life programs (No. 4 best career services and No. 12 best college dorms). The guide ranks the top 13 percent of the country’s 3,000 four-year colleges and universities.



• For a third consecutive year, Zippia has named Elon as North Carolina’s leading university for preparing students for employment. The career services website based its 2020 rankings on data from the federal government’s Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which estimates that 95 percent of Elon graduates were employed 10 years after they first enrolled.

CORNER

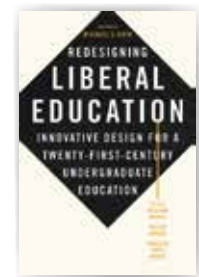
FACSTAFF



Five faculty members received endowed professorships in August. **Naeemah Clark, professor of cinema and television arts, was named the J. Earl Danieley Distinguished Professor**, which is awarded to an outstanding professor in any field; **Ben Evans, professor of physics, was named T.E.**

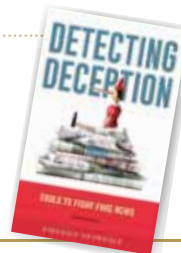


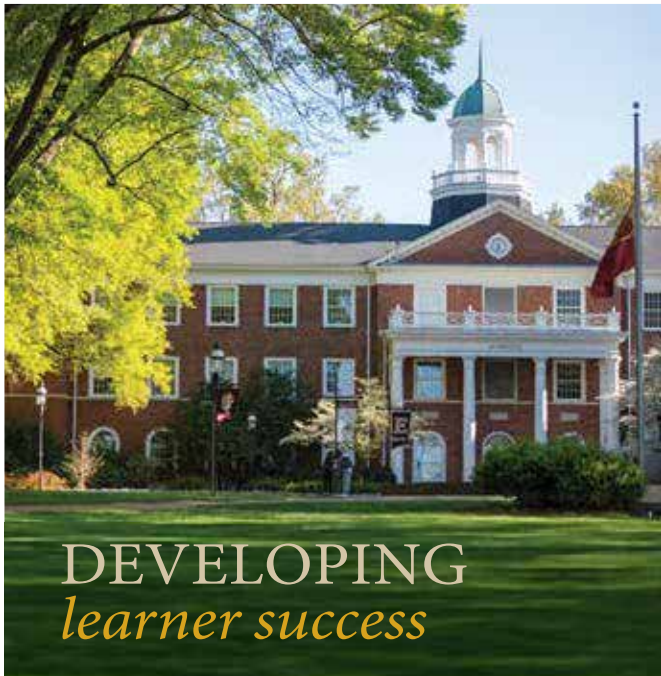
Powell Jr. Professor, which is awarded to an Elon professor in the sciences; **Lynn Huber, professor of religious studies, was honored with the Maude Sharpe Powell Professorship**, which is awarded to faculty in any academic discipline; **Charles Irons, professor of history, was named the William J. Story Sr. Professor**, a professorship in Southern history; and **Elena Kennedy, assistant professor of entrepreneurship, was named the Doherty Emerging Professor for Entrepreneurial Leadership**.



Two School of Communications faculty members have co-edited a new book, “Redesigning Liberal Education: Innovative Design for a Twenty-First-Century Undergraduate Education.” **William Moner**, assistant professor of communication design, and **Phillip Motley**, associate professor of communication design, collaborated with Rebecca Pope-Ruark of Georgia Institute of Technology on the book that highlights 14 different case studies by educators from across the United States — including numerous Elon faculty, staff and administrators — and six vision chapters examining the future of college education.

Amanda Sturgill, associate professor of journalism, has written a book. Published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, “Detecting Deception: Tools to Fight Fake News” seeks to equip readers with the insight needed to spot the broad range of ways newsmakers may mislead, distract or outright manipulate audiences.





Elon University has been selected to participate in the inaugural cohort of the American Council on Education's Learner Success Laboratory, a newly launched initiative that seeks to guide colleges and universities through a structured strategic planning process to advance critical institutional priorities. Elon and the nine other institutions selected for the pilot cohort began work in October supported by a grant from the Strada Education Network. These institutions, which include Iowa State University, Richard Bland College of William & Mary and Southeast Missouri State University, will spend the next 12 to 18 months working to review existing activities and capacities related to learner success, including site visits and peer review visits designed to allow for reflection and dialogue. The work will culminate in a comprehensive plan to integrate and focus activities while also building capacity for learner success.

Elon joins this unique effort at a time when it is implementing its strategic plan for 2030, Boldly Elon, which focuses on engaged learning and mentoring, including the development of essential skills and fluencies. Maureen Vandermaas-Peeler, interim associate provost for academic excellence, said the work through the Learner Success Lab will be foundational for launching key initiatives of the Boldly Elon strategic plan.

"I'm excited to have the opportunity to partner with colleagues at Elon, ACE and the other nine institutions to examine key facets of learner success on our campus and more broadly in higher education," Vandermaas-Peeler said. "With the COVID-19 challenges faced by our community and higher education at large, there is no better time to collaborate with ACE leaders, consultants and partner institutions to evaluate our current situation, revisit our strategic plans for learner success and mentoring in particular, identify and work to address structural inequalities and other barriers to thriving and succeeding, and establish a viable plan for moving forward."

Institutions in the cohort serve approximately 67,000 undergraduate learners in total and comprise a diverse range of two- and four-year, public and private institutions, and several current or emerging Hispanic Serving Institutions. ✪

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



{ Mikayla Ford '22 }

Mikayla Ford '22, a communication design major, was named a recipient of a 2020 LAGRANT Foundation scholarship, which supports ethnic minority communications students. Ford is the seventh Elon student to receive the prestigious scholarship in the past four years.

Two Elon journalism students were part of the inaugural North Carolina Local News Workshop's Intern Corps this summer.

As part of their eight-week internship, **Anton Delgado '20** and **Khaalq Van-Otoo '22**, along with two other interns, assisted state news outlets by covering important state stories, with a reporting emphasis on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Housed in Elon's School of Communications, the local news initiative was launched June 1 with support from a \$180,000 grant from the North Carolina Local News Lab Fund.



{ Anton Delgado '20 }



{ Khaalq Van-Otoo '22 }

Honors Fellow Mikaela Benton '21, a political science and Spanish major, was named an inaugural recipient of the Phi Beta Kappa Key into Public Service Scholarship. The scholarship, which is awarded to promising liberal arts and sciences undergraduate students, will help Benton pursue a passion for public service.



{ Mikaela Benton '21 }

Six members of the Class of 2020 officially began their work as Elon Service-Year Graduate Fellows in May. The students partnering with local organizations in Alamance County to spend a year of service in health, wellness and education are (from top left) **Colin Deutsch** (Alamance County Health Department), **Sylvia Ellington** (Alamance Achieves), **Yasmeen Lee** (Healthy Alamance), **Sydney Simmons** (Impact Alamance), **Lily Sobalvarro** (Alamance Regional Medical Center) and **Lallo Yadeta** (Alamance Achieves).



{ Eliza Spear '22 }

Eliza Spear '22 won an American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers award for socially significant songwriting for "If I Don't Try," an original song she released this summer to promote work toward racial equity and justice. The music production and recording arts major and co-writers Lindsay Gitter and Rachael Williams received the 2020 ASCAP Foundation Jay Gorney Award for the composition.

LIFELONG CONNECTIONS

As university registrar, Rodney Parks is always looking for ways to innovate and improve existing processes. As an educator and mentor, his focus is on equipping students with the skills necessary to explore their individual paths with ample opportunity for both failure and success.

Rod Parks

BY LAUREN SILVERMAN '19

I met Rod during my first year at Elon when he was my Elon 101 professor and adviser. Like many Elon students, I got involved with a long list of extracurricular activities early on, which unsurprisingly contributed to my chronic feelings of overextension and stress. That first year I was stretched entirely too thin, but from the start, no matter the endeavor, Rod was a constant source of encouragement and support. I have a handful of stories that demonstrate the negative impacts of my over-involvement, but I've heard that one in particular has become quite popular in Rod's Elon 101 classes. It involves 18-year-old me, panicking about how overwhelmed I was feeling with everything spanning from classes and extracurriculars to the woes in my personal and social life. After spending nearly an hour on the verge of tears, fretting over this mainly self-imposed pressure, I asked Rod to write me a letter of recommendation for a spot in yet another organization.

Now, it's clear that I was in no position to add a new obligation to my plate of commitments, but Rod, an advocate for experiential learning, happily agreed to recommend me — despite the likely possibility that I would end up back in his office in a similar (or worse) state. This approach may seem irresponsible to some, but this is where Rod's knack for mentorship truly lies. In that conversation, as well as in the many that would follow throughout the years, he never told me what I should or shouldn't do. Rather, he consistently encouraged me to evaluate all of the facts in front of me. Instead of giving his opinions, Rod encouraged me to develop my own skills and awareness in critical self-reflection so that I could become a more confident, self-reliant scholar and individual.

His mentoring skills do not end with the lessons he adroitly imparts. Thanks to Rod, I never felt alone. He always made himself available to provide support. Even when saddled with the responsibility of leading our Wilderness and Adventure Therapy class to the top of the Rainbow Mountains in Peru, Rod happily discussed my interest in applying to graduate school for social work, a choice that would change my entire career trajectory. When I decided to apply, Rod was there to guide me through the process and remind me of the strength of my candidacy when I had doubts.

Rod is one of a kind, a true embodiment of the phrase, "if there's a will, there's a way." He has guided me through experiences that have helped to develop my strengths, leadership skills and overall perspective of my own positionality in the world. I will forever be extraordinarily thankful for all of the support, both as a mentor and friend, that Rod has shown me throughout the years. ♣



A public health studies and statistics double major, Lauren Irene Silverman '19 is pursuing a master's degree in clinical social work at Columbia University Graduate School of Social Work.



“Act now. Let’s act now to really try to chart a path forward and to really make progress on these issues. The time for freedom is now. The time for action is now.”

—Jennifer L. Eberhardt, author of *“Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We See, Think, and Do,”* during a virtual Common Reading conversation on Sept. 9.



“In order to be an anti-racist, you actually have to do something, you actually have to say something, you have to actually challenge racist power and policy and ideas.”

—Author, historian and scholar Ibram X. Kendi during a virtual conversation on Sept. 21.



SYLLABUZZ

ENG 171: Secrets, Spies & Surveillance in Young Adult Literature

BY PATRICK WRIGHT

What can Dr. Seuss teach us about surveillance? In the pages of *“The Cat in the Hat,”* we meet two young siblings left home alone without any parental supervision, leaving the door open — almost literally — to an unexpected babysitter. The level of surveillance, or lack thereof, found in Seuss’ classic is a far cry from the surveillance state used to oppress the people of Panem in Suzanne Collins’ *“The Hunger Games,”* a book released more than 50 years later.

“Where did our perceptions that it’s normal to track people and know where people are at all times come from?” asks Professor of English Megan Isaac. “Because it’s very clear to see from this literature that 50 years ago it wasn’t normal, but now it’s normal. How has that changed and why?”

It’s the question Isaac attempts to answer for students in her first-year seminar course ENG 171: *Secrets, Spies & Surveillance in Young Adult Literature*. The course, which is reserved for first-year students in their first semester on campus, teaches students to use literature and theory to analyze the ways in which surveillance and our attitudes toward it are instilled in younger generations from childhood. The course begins with the study of older children’s picture books, like *“The Cat in the Hat,”* and compares them to more current books, like Carol V. Aebersold and Bell Chanda’s *“Elf on the Shelf,”* to theorize how attitudes about parental responsibility and surveilling children have become more intensive over time.

Students later analyze more advanced young adult literature like *“The Hunger Games”* and Louise Fitzhugh’s *“Harriet the Spy”* to study the ways each story’s protagonist employs surveillance or is an object of it themselves. The coursework also includes deep-dives into government surveillance, as well as the works of theorists Foucault and Deleuze, to see how the structures of society — from the architectural design of schools to

the algorithms that shape apps like TikTok — funnel our movements and affect our experiences.

“I want my students to think about how surveillance is represented to them,” Isaac says. “How they develop the attitudes toward it that they have, and then to consider how comfortable they are with those attitudes and how intentional they want to be about surveillance, whether they carefully submit to it, whether they resist it and then also how they wield it themselves.”

While students learn about the development of surveillance, they also learn a lot about themselves, specifically what digital information they’re volunteering. They analyze their own social media accounts and even their campus Phoenix Cards to find out how much of their information is available to others and how it’s used. Isaac considers surveillance management to be a “threshold skill,” like literacy, that opens a student’s eyes to all sorts of new ideas once it is learned.

And along with learning about surveillance and how literature has enforced an expectation of submission to surveillance technologies, Isaac hopes first-year students leave her class with a fresh, exciting take on literature analysis on a college campus. “I think one thing the course does is it sort of changes their expectations about the discipline because this is not how English or literature were likely taught in their high schools,” she says. ✨

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR

Megan Isaac joined Elon’s Department of English in 2007. Her research currently focuses on surveillance culture in children’s and young adult literature.

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

- “Black Mirror,” series 4, episode 2 (“Arkangel”), written by Charlie Brooker and directed by Jodie Foster (available on Netflix)
- “The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau Banks” by E. Lockhart



E COMPANY

LEVERAGING STUDENTS' TIME AND TALENTS

This summer, Elon University launched E Company, an innovative new program designed for students experiencing canceled internships or economic hardship due to the pandemic. The program leveraged the time and talents of these Elon students to provide educational support to Alamance County children and to assist with the university's preparations for the fall semester.

"E Company created opportunities for these students, some of whom saw internship opportunities disappear due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said President Connie Ledoux Book, adding the program allowed them to "take advantage of experiential learning experiences while serving our community during this challenging time."

Through E Company, nearly 50 Elon students worked with the "It Takes a Village" Project, the university's summer enrichment project for a diverse population of local K-12 students, many of whom find school to be daunting, and who come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. The Village Project shifted its impactful Summer in the Village program online due to the pandemic, a move made possible by the addition of these E Company students. Operating out of the university's Center for Access and Success, the Village Project takes a collaborative approach to assisting students and their parents with academic support.

As part of the initiative's E Works division, nearly 20 Elon students also worked 35 hours a week from June 29 through July 31 with the university's Information Technology and Physical Plant departments. They served in positions tasked with assisting with social media, video production, technical operations, recycling and waste reduction, and landscaping. Interns assisted with producing training modules for students, faculty and staff as they prepared to return to campus and showcased preparations on social media. ✪



{ Sarah Myers '22, above, and Rohan Wilson '22, left, worked with the "It Takes a Village" Project through E Company. Top left: Marie-Irene Granger '22 assisted with video production as an E Works intern supporting Elon's Physical Plant. }



READY AND RESILIENT

Elon faculty and staff worked hard over the summer to get the campus ready for in-person classes in the fall amid the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the university's Ready & Resilient efforts. Below are some numbers associated with these preparations. You can read more about the fall on page 13 or at elon.edu/rr.

10,762

The number of Elon-branded masks distributed to students, faculty and staff at the start of the semester.



700

The number of hand sanitizer dispensers installed across campus. An additional 254 sanitizer stations were installed in classrooms.



464

Directional floor decals installed in offices and spaces across campus to ensure proper physical distancing.



254

The number of video cameras that were installed in classrooms to facilitate streaming during the semester.



1,707

Gallons of disinfectant used by members of Physical Plant through Sept. 30 to keep our campus clean.



Sources: Elon's Physical Plant & Information Technology



HALL OF FAME CLASS of 2020 ANNOUNCED

Elon University Athletics announced its 50th Sports Hall of Fame Class in July, with **Veronica Day '11**, **Aaron Mellette '13** and **Chris Thomas '12** chosen for induction.

Day spent four years as a member of the women's track and field program, where she was a three-time Southern Conference champion and was a nine-time All-SoCon selection in the triple jump and long jump.

Mellette concluded his highly decorated football career at Elon ranking in the top three of the SoCon in career yards (4,254), career receptions (304) and career receiving touchdowns (44) while holding the league's record in the most

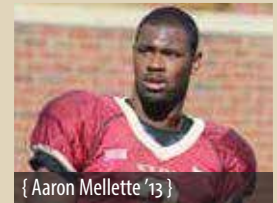
consecutive games with 100 or more receiving yards at seven.

Thomas, the first member of the Elon men's soccer team to be inducted in the Hall of Fame, ended his career as the Phoenix's all-time leading scorer in career goals (53) and career points (116). He also helped the maroon and gold to back-to-back SoCon tournament titles in 2011 and 2012, when the Phoenix clinched its first trip to the NCAA Tournament.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Class of 2020 honorees will be inducted into the Hall of Fame in a ceremony during the 2020-21 basketball season. Further details will be announced at a later date. ☞



{ Veronica Day '11 }



{ Aaron Mellette '13 }



{ Chris Thomas '12 }

Assisting VICTIMS of ABUSE

An Elon Law resource that has assisted thousands of women and children across Guilford and Alamance counties has been renewed for another two years through a \$1.2 million grant from the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission.

The law school's Emergency Legal Services Program, a resource embedded within both counties' respective Family Justice Centers, aids victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence and elder abuse by providing legal consultations and help with drafting complaints about restraining orders and child custody issues.

Legal assistance is only one part of the centers' "one-stop shop" comprehensive approach to addressing violence. Clients can access counseling, social services and law enforcement with trained professionals better able to coordinate victim services by virtue of being under the same roof. Victim advocacy and court accompaniment are also available.

"These Family Justice Centers are like an oasis in the desert," said Margaret Dudley, an attorney who directs Elon Law's Emergency Legal Services Program in both counties. "People can come in here and get all kinds of help. It's given with compassion and it's given as quickly as possible."

Elon Law established its legal services program in both centers in 2016 when the Governor's Crime Commission awarded the university an initial \$1.3 million startup grant. The commission's grants fund salaries and benefits for three intake attorneys, four contract attorneys and an administrative assistant, plus various expenses related to professional development and office operation. Since its founding, the program has served more than 3,000 people across both counties. ☞



{ Staff involved in Elon Law's Emergency Legal Services Program (from left): administrative assistant Barbara Henry, attorney Cheryl Hairston, attorney and program director Margaret Dudley, and attorney Mildred Hardy. }



One day at a time

With athletics competitions postponed for the fall, senior student-athletes look to the spring to close out their collegiate careers as healthy as possible.

BY PATRICK WRIGHT

On a pleasant spring afternoon, members of the Elon women's basketball team walked off the court at Schar Center celebrating a 20-point victory over Hofstra in round one of the Colonial Athletic Association Women's Basketball Championship. The win was even sweeter because it happened in front of Elon's home crowd, as it hosted its first-ever conference championship.

What no one in the arena realized that afternoon was that it would be the last time they, or any other Phoenix team, would compete that season.

"We walked off the floor and basically turned out the lights," says Elon's Director of Athletics Dave Blank. "That was an impactful day for those of us involved in sports, and since then, it's been a whirlwind."

The next day, the CAA Tournament was canceled.

Then, NCAA Championships.

And then, sports altogether.

It was March 12, 2020 — the day COVID-19 sent shockwaves across the landscape of college athletics.

At Elon, that meant the end of the men's and women's basketball seasons and the cancellation of the entire spring athletics calendar. The football team was five practices into offseason training and preparing for its first live scrimmage of the spring when everything changed.

"Things were going great," says Head Football Coach Tony Trisciani. "We felt like we were seeing some development as a

team, our morale was high, guys were starting to gel, and it all got shut down."

Heading into his second season as head coach, Trisciani quickly realized this offseason would look very different from the last. The team traded in-person practices and workouts for team meetings over Zoom and limited access to team facilities over the summer. But despite all the uncertainty, few coaches or student-athletes expected COVID-19 to still have a grip on the sports world as fall seasons were set to begin.

In August, Elon Athletics announced plans to postpone fall sports competitions until the spring. "As we monitored the situation through July and August, it became pretty obvious that the best thing to do to keep everybody safe and healthy and in class, which were our main priorities, was to not participate this fall," Blank says.



"I've loved my four years at Elon, and I'd love to finish [my senior year] out in my maroon and gold."

— Jalen Greene '21, football player



{ Head Football Coach Tony Trisciani }



“I feel like it’ll be the best version of me as a volleyball player. I was really looking forward to that. If there’s a way to do it that’s safe and healthy, I’d give up a lot to be able to do that.”

— Natalie Cummins '21, volleyball player

Schedules continued to change as conferences across the nation took precautions against the spread of the virus. “We had Duke on the schedule this year. I was so excited,” says Jalen Greene, senior defensive back and Durham, North Carolina, native. “That was going to be my hometown game in front of my family, in front of all my coaches. It was going to be an important game for me.”

The 2020 season is also the final year for volleyball middle blocker Natalie Cummins of Baltimore. The senior is looking to cap off a collegiate volleyball career after only beginning to play the sport in her first year of high school. “It would mean everything to me to play my last season,” Cummins says. “I feel like it’ll be the best version of me as a volleyball player. I was really looking forward to that. If there’s a way to do it that’s safe and healthy, I’d give up a lot to be able to do that.”

Fortunately for Cummins, Greene and hundreds of other Elon student-athletes, the athletics department is working around the clock to make a full athletics schedule possible in the spring, assuming conditions allow it. Elon Athletics continues to follow guidelines laid out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper and the NCAA. New protocols were in place for the fall when an increase in cases led to a complete halt of all in-person workouts, weight training and operations. Surveillance

testing of student-athletes was increased as well as contact tracing and quarantine measures to ensure the continued safety of all students.

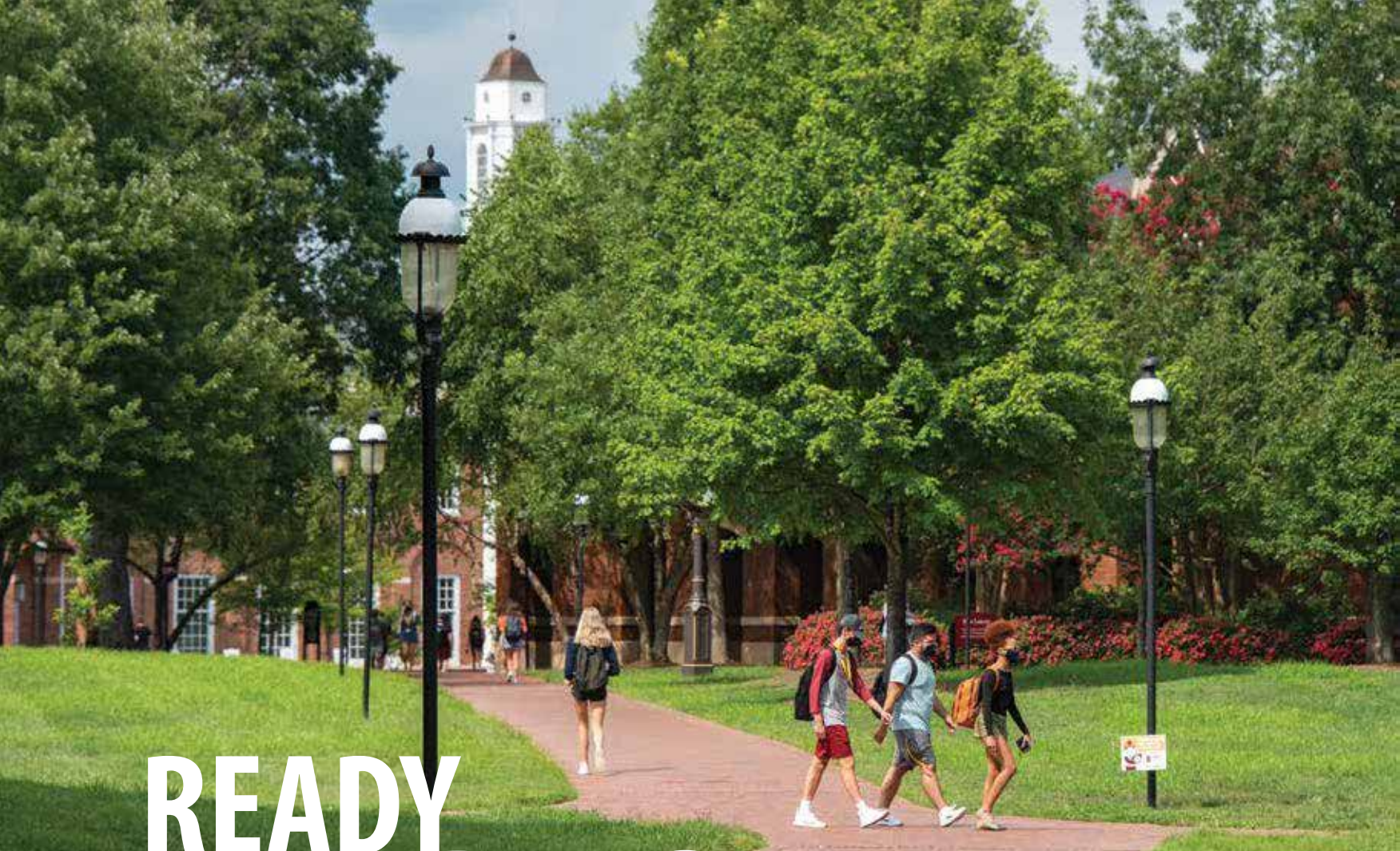
“We developed a proactive strategy to combat COVID-19 within our department, but it’s also important to be reactive to changing circumstances,” says Mike Ward, deputy director of athletics and member of Elon’s Ready & Resilient Committee. “Any time there is a positive case, we increase our surveillance and targeted testing. This is in addition to the distancing and masking strategies, enhanced facility cleaning, and phased approach to practice activities we’ve been employing all semester.”

Providing students with opportunities to engage in a safe environment is key. Soon, men’s and women’s basketball and other winter and spring sports will begin preparations for their seasons. Elon Athletics will continue to prioritize the safety of student-athletes as it looks to reach its goal of having all teams, including fall, winter and spring sports, competing at the same time. That gives Greene hope. He is looking to close out his senior year in memorable fashion.

“I’m excited to be able to have that opportunity as a senior to step out on that field for one last hoorah,” he says. “I’ve loved my four years at Elon, and I’d love to finish it out in my maroon and gold.”*



{ Natalie Cummins '21 was focused on training until an increase in COVID-19 cases led to a complete halt of all in-person workouts, weight training and operations in the fall. }



READY *and* RESILIENT

The fall offered new lessons for the Elon community as the university implemented a plan that balanced health and safety with meaningful educational experiences amid the pandemic.

BY OWEN COVINGTON

EVEN BEFORE THE FIRST CAR CARRYING A MEMBER OF THE CLASS OF 2024 pulled into the Schar Center parking lot to check in on the morning of Aug. 14, it was clear this fall semester at Elon would be one for the history books.

While people around the world were adapting to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, Elon was changing, too, to help ensure a safe and healthy return to campus for nearly 9,000 students, faculty and staff. Months of preparations in late spring and throughout the summer helped prepare the campus for a semester unlike any other. “As we launch the 2020-21 academic year, our newly staged campus is filled with the typical energy and excitement of a new beginning,” President Connie Ledoux Book said in a message to students to start the year. “This year it is also filled with resolve to meet the challenges that lie ahead. We are confident because of the extraordinary efforts this summer by faculty and staff to prepare the campus and the curriculum for the beginning of a new era in higher education.”

Elon adopted a condensed semester that saw classes resume in mid-August with in-person learning. Coursework will end before the Thanksgiving holiday, and final exams will be taken remotely. Students and faculty have participated in a variety of in-person, blended and remote learning models designed to incorporate the same engaging and experiential elements that make an Elon education unique while promoting physical distancing and healthy practices. Campus life shifted as well, with fewer in-person events and new opportunities to build community and connect in small groups and remotely.

In September, the Elon community responded quickly to several on-campus clusters of positive cases, adding new measures such as visitor restrictions in university housing, grab-and-go dining and recommendations against non-essential travel. The community’s determination and willingness to comply with

the updated procedures had an immediate impact, with the number of cases declining and the university lowering its COVID-19 alert level. It's been a semester of lessons learned, challenges overcome and new experiences that have bound members of the university together even as the pandemic forced many to be physically apart.

MOVING IN

On the first of two Move-In Days in the fall, the cheers and welcomes were slightly muffled by cloth masks and other face coverings as new students arrived on campus. Face coverings weren't the only difference, as Elon adapted its finely tuned move-in process to encourage physical distancing and reduce crowding in parking lots and residence halls. New checkpoints and protocols were in place to help promote a healthy and safe start to the semester, with all new students starting the process with a health check-in at Schar Center.

While Elon's Ready & Resilient Plan led to an unconventional move-in process, the day's significance remained, with more than 1,600 first-year and transfer students arriving to settle into their new homes and begin a transition into their college careers at Elon. The university's mission remained grounded in the emphasis on teaching and learning and supported by a culture of collaboration and innovation.

At Schar Center that Friday morning, a stream of cars, trucks and SUVs made stops at tents to begin the check-in process. Students and their family members had their temperatures checked, and Elon staff members verified that first-year students had completed the required steps to move in. Those included completing both a pre-semester COVID-19 test and online training modules, submitting vaccination records and signing the Healthy Elon Commitment, which asked students, faculty and staff to pledge to protect their health and that of others on campus. They also received a kit that included an Elon-branded mask, hand sanitizer,



{ The university is using unique indoor and outdoor spaces for instruction for the fall semester. }

tissues, a thermometer and other information about steps students could take to promote health and safety on campus.

"I'm just so excited to meet new people, despite all that is going on," said Michael Buccellato of Chicago as he moved into his room in Global Neighborhood. He and his mother, Cassie Buccellato, added a stop at Elon to a college-visit trip to North Carolina last school year. Both said things clicked as soon as they arrived on campus for a tour. "I am so excited for him to embark on this new chapter in his life," Cassie said. "I am way more excited than I am anxious."

CLASSES GET UNDERWAY

The semester officially commenced on Aug. 19, with students and faculty settling into reconfigured and creative learning environments. This followed a summer during which classroom spaces were reimagined and outfitted with cleaning supplies, and faculty adapted their courses to address the challenges presented by the pandemic. Tents were erected around campus to provide additional classroom space, and locations such as McKinnon Hall and Lakeside meeting rooms were put into service as "surge" classrooms.

For instance, Associate Professor of Journalism Rich Landesberg's COM100 course met for the first time in the 230-seat Turner Theatre in Schar Hall, with at most three students to a row.

The number of desks in classrooms was reduced to reinforce occupancy limits, with desks spaced out to adhere to physical distancing recommendations. Each classroom has a sanitizing station equipped with hand sanitizer, sanitizing spray and wipes. Students entering Assistant Professor Titch Madzima's Exercise Physiology course on the first day of class stopped by the hand sanitizing station before heading to their desks, which they wiped down with sanitizing wipes when class concluded. Madzima noted the use of masks made it more challenging to identify his students, as well as to tell when people were smiling, but underscored the importance of this new way to engage in the classroom. "Let's all take care, and look out for each other," Madzima told the students. "This semester as we need to make adjustments, we'll make adjustments."

Classrooms were also equipped with cameras to



{ New students moved in over a two-day period to ensure social distancing. }

BY THE NUMBERS

57,325

the number of virtual meetings held on Zoom, Webex and Teams by students, faculty & staff from Aug. 19 to Sept. 30

477

the number of faculty and staff who participated in development opportunities offered by Teaching & Learning Technologies

allow for remote participation and for the recording of class sessions. That has enabled faculty members to rethink how their students learn together, with many designing blended classes that have students alternating in-class and remote learning. “A lot of faculty members have been thinking through what technological tools make the learning experience rich and help meet the learning outcomes,” said Deandra Little, assistant provost and director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. “That can mean using those tools to bring in-class and out-of-class students together.”

Many faculty members adapted their courses to include both online and in-person elements in a hybrid or blended approach to instruction. Once a rarity at Elon, hybrid classes are now common, with more than 70 percent of courses incorporating an online component in some way. Often, faculty members are integrating new technological tools into their courses with help from Teaching and Learning Technologies and a range of resources offered throughout the summer.

At Elon, hybrid instruction takes place in many forms. Most commonly, it means splitting a larger course in two, with half of the class attending each session and half connecting remotely at the same time. This synchronous approach allows all students to meet at the same time and provides for adequate physical distancing within the classroom. Everyone participating in the in-person session wears masks, and the number of desks in each classroom has been reduced, with the desks spaced out around the room. Faculty members typically stream and record each session using a video-conferencing platform, and students rotate each session between being in class and connecting remotely. Often a student in class will serve as a connection between the two cohorts, relaying questions or comments from those connecting remotely.

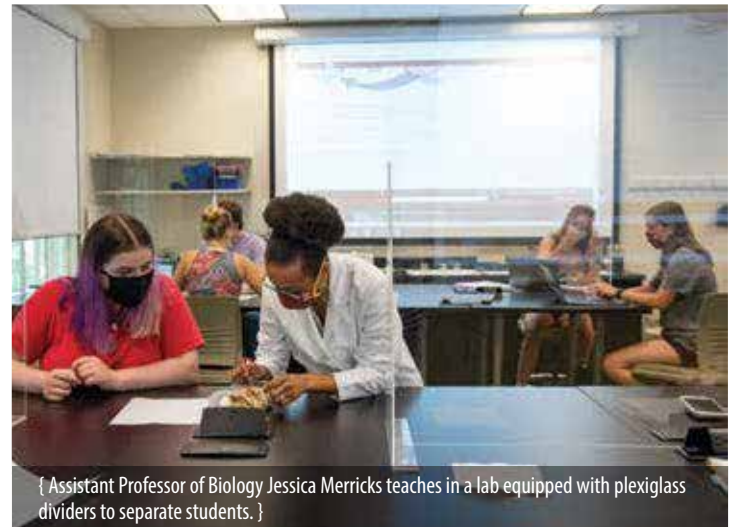
Another approach is a “flipped” classroom model that has students watching videos of their professor when they are not in the classroom, and then using the time in class to work collaboratively and put the material they learned in the videos to practical use. That’s an approach Assistant Professor of Finance Margarita Kaprielyan adopted in two of her courses that rely heavily on technology. “One of the challenges I found teaching technical courses is that the pace is really important,” she said. “They can follow along with me in the videos, and then rewind depending upon how well they are grasping the ideas. It makes it more accessible.”

VIRTUALLY CONNECTED

With the requirements of physical distancing and the restrictions on larger in-person gatherings, many traditional events shifted online or were dramatically reconfigured. While that’s meant fewer

personal interactions at events like Homecoming & Reunion Week, Family Fall (formerly Family Weekend) and the wide variety of offerings on the cultural calendar, it’s also provided the opportunity for greater participation by the broader Elon community as they can tune in and connect virtually.

Elon’s lineup of speakers for the fall included thought leaders such as author Jennifer Eberhardt, who wrote “Biased,” this year’s Common Reading selection; historian and author Ibram Kendi, a leading anti-racist voice; presidential historian Douglas Brinkley; and poet Nikki Giovanni. The calendar included musical performances by Naturally 7, John McCutcheon and the Williamsburg Salsa Orchestra as well as productions by the Second City Comedy Troupe and the Department of Performing Arts. The pandemic meant a shift online for these cultural offerings, but presented new opportunities for Elon students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends to engage and opened up an opportunity for participation by those who would not have been able to attend an in-person event on campus.



{ Assistant Professor of Biology Jessica Merricks teaches in a lab equipped with plexiglass dividers to separate students. }

Planning is still underway for Elon’s Winter Term and spring semester, as the university continues to adapt to the pandemic and promote a healthy and safe campus experience. Athletics competitions slated for the fall were canceled, with Elon Football and the CAA gearing up for a shorter season in the spring. The university is exploring the possibility of a May Term — also known as a warmer Winter Term — that could allow students to pursue study abroad opportunities they may have otherwise participated in during January had the pandemic not impacted those plans.

The campus community remains optimistic that by working together, innovating and remaining vigilant, the 2020-21 academic year will go down in history as a unique but ultimately successful year for Elon. “Like most new experiences, we’ve learned more than we could have imagined,” President Book said in a message to the community in the fall. “We’ve learned our community is strong, united and determined to protect one another. We’ve learned that lots of planning, attention to detail and thinking carefully about these challenges has paid off.” ♣

How Our Brains
Are Affected

Heightened
Social
Disparities


A LOOK AT THE WAYS
THE PANDEMIC IS
SHAPING OUR FUTURE.

WHAT'S


Small
Businesses
Adaptation

Media Consumption



 Virtual Learning

 Economic Impact

 Spiritual Lives

 Politics and Social Media

BY ALEXA BOSCHINI '10, KEREN RIVAS '04 & ROSELEE PAPANDEA TAYLOR



andemics and infectious diseases have always been a part of our lives.

Cassie Brailer '13, public health analyst at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, remembers the emergence of the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus while she was an Elon student. It was the first influenza pandemic in more than 40 years. The swine flu, as we more commonly call it, is now a regular seasonal virus. Though COVID-19 is here to stay, there could come a day when it, too, could become a seasonal virus similar to influenza, Brailer says. Just don't ask her to predict when that will happen. "The future of the outbreak depends on our individual choices and everyday preventive actions," she says. "Everyone can do their part to help prepare for, prevent and respond to this emerging public health threat."

As a global community, she says, we are learning more every day about the virus and the disease it causes. We continue to increase our collective public health knowledge and experience, but there is still a lot that we do not yet know. She cautions that while it is expected a vaccine should be an important protective step in combating the virus, it won't be a cure-all. "Even with a vaccine, we will need to continue the preventive behaviors such as handwashing, wearing a mask and physically distancing ourselves," Brailer adds.



{ Cassie Brailer '13 }

If nothing else, the world's response to COVID-19 has exposed the gaps in our pandemic preparedness. For Brailer, this means we need better global public health surveillance systems and laboratory capacity to prevent, detect and respond to outbreaks before they become pandemics. "It has shown us how valuable a well-funded and connected global public health infrastructure can be," she says. "We can also learn the importance of listening to science and evidence. In the future, we need to find better ways to combat misinformation and continually learn how to develop clear, concise and actionable information for all audiences that is based on facts."

To learn more about other lingering effects on our everyday lives and interactions with others, we asked several Elon experts to share their insights about what we can expect as we adapt to living in a COVID world.



Scrambled brains



{ Amy Overman }

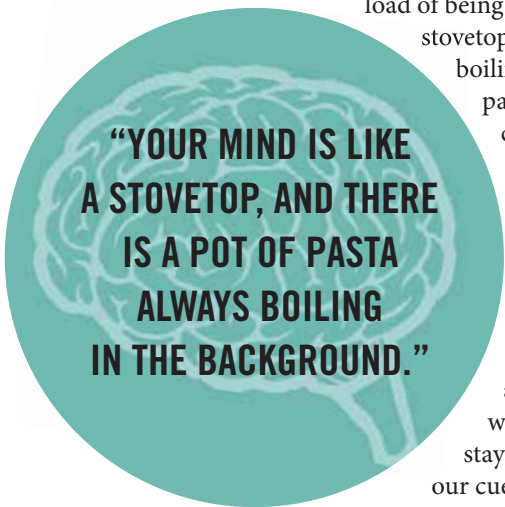
No matter how much we try, most of us are finding it harder to concentrate while dealing with the anxiety and stress that is part of life during a pandemic — whether it’s work, study, family demands or even relaxing activities like reading. That’s because according to Amy Overman, professor of psychology and principal investigator of Elon’s Cognitive Neuroscience of Memory and Aging Lab, our attention is divided. We are thinking about all the things we have to do for safety, which makes us pay less attention to our daily interactions.

How has the pandemic affected the way we think?

Overman: We know that anytime there is a chronic stressor, it impacts our ability to focus and impairs our memory to some degree. Our brains are adapted to buckling down and focusing on the essentials. It’s harder to focus on long-term goals, so the immediacy of this stressor is so overpowering. It takes more effort to think long term because we are so busy putting out little fires and dealing with the immediate challenges that we are all facing. The flipside is that it is actually pretty important to set long-term goals. It gives us something to work toward that isn’t about the pandemic. It’s something hopeful and it’s more important than ever to have something to look forward to in the future that is not related to the pandemic.

Why is everyone struggling with time right now?

Overman: A part of that has to do with the cognitive load of being in a pandemic. Your mind is like a stovetop, and there is a pot of pasta always boiling in the background. That’s the pandemic. While you are baking a cake, you have to make sure you are still watching the pasta, so it doesn’t boil over. We are always thinking about the pandemic in the back of our minds, and it causes us to lose track of time. People are also used to cues about time. In pre-pandemic time, you might have gotten up and had a cup of coffee or driven to work. Those are all cues. When we all stayed home because of the pandemic, our cues got jumbled up. Now we are back at work, but our day doesn’t look the same. It’s almost like we have to develop new cues to tell us what day it is. Our routines got distorted, and we have to find new routines.



How can we reset our brains?

Overman: Humans really are resilient, but we need to have that down time in order for our brains to work properly. We need to get enough sleep, and it has to be quality sleep. We need time away from screens. It’s more important now than ever. It’s not the time to skimp on sleep or spending time in nature or exercising. I think when we go into survival mode — and we are still in the lens of survival mode — our brains won’t function as well if we don’t keep up our wellness that way.

Small business conundrum



{ Bernie Coston II '08 }

On Main Streets across towns of all sizes, many small business owners were forced to close their doors in 2020. Despite losses, the biggest thing small businesses have learned is the ability to be flexible, says Bernie Coston II '08, a business initiatives consultant at Wells Fargo based in Atlanta. Having a plan is paramount, but even more important is the ability to be able to

change at the drop of a hat.

How have small businesses managed to survive?

Coston: By quickly adapting, despite not receiving a lot of guidance with regards to how to operate in what has quickly become our new normal. In particular, small businesses have tried to create an environment in which not only their customers feel comfortable, but more importantly, their workers feel safe and comfortable coming to work every day. Customer service used to be a huge driver in terms of how businesses would differentiate themselves from one another. Businesses are still looking to enrich the customer experience, but that experience is now driven by seamless online interactions and speed when it comes to delivering a product to their customer.

Will businesses that are closed be able to reopen?

Coston: I do think so, though it’s not an easy task by any stretch. For starters, the business owner needs to have the capital saved up and also a true understanding of their business model in order to recognize when to shut things down for a period of time because they are just taking too large of a loss. Living in Atlanta, I’ve seen a lot of places be able to stay open since May because of the weather, but



I've also seen a lot of places have to remain closed because of the new standards they have to adhere to, and that takes time to prepare for. I've already talked to a couple business owners who will have to make some tough decisions once winter comes to see if it's worth it for them to still operate while taking a huge loss. Only time will tell what decision they will have to make, but I can say it is possible for a business to be able to shut down for a period of time and then reopen.

What lasting trends will we see in how people interact with businesses?

Coston: Online shopping is here to stay. A lot of small businesses have now had to make a big investment in their online platforms to make sure that they can meet demand. However, for people of my father's generation, there is absolutely still a huge desire to go into a store, feel a product, talk to a representative, go to a different store and compare and contrast. Each buyer is going to operate in a completely different manner and will continue to operate in a manner that works for them. Restaurants using QR codes rather than printed menus might be a trend that will stay. But it depends on the restaurant. For example, patrons in an upscale restaurant really want to get a feel for what it has to offer because that meal and that experience are truly an investment. Comparatively, if I go to my local taco shop, I just need to look quickly at the menu before I make my decision on what to order.

An economic shift

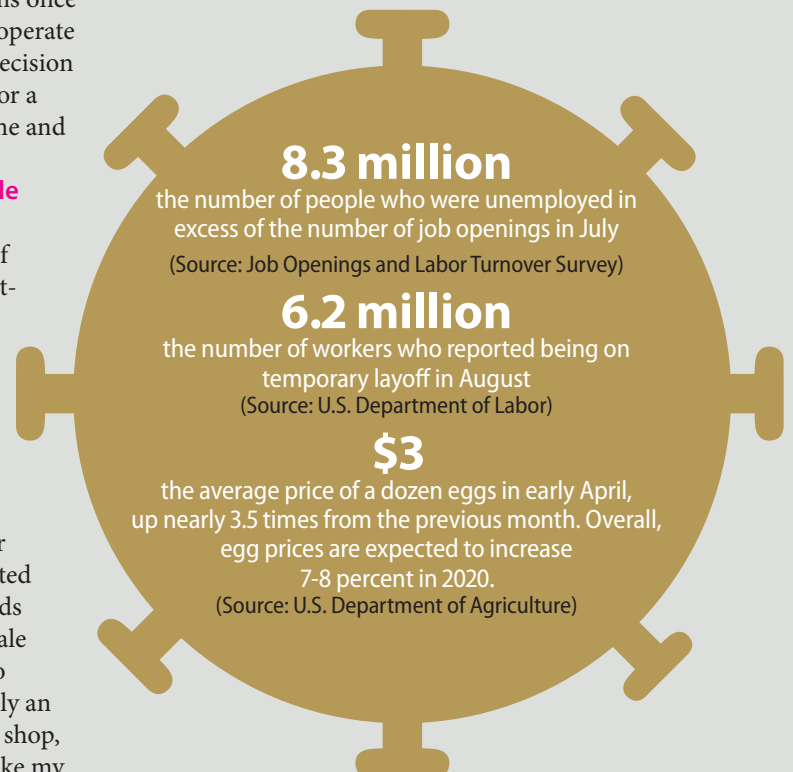


{ Brandon Sheridan }

The impact of the pandemic has been widely felt across all sectors of the economy, but the biggest economic impact has been on the labor market. The service sector in particular has borne the brunt of the impact, says Assistant Professor of Economics Brandon Sheridan, something that has led to millions of furloughs now turning into permanent job losses. Other visible signs of the impact on the economy include rising food prices and supply chain interruptions that have led to shortages of certain items — even coins.

What have we learned from COVID-19's impact on the economy?

Sheridan: Economists have been very clear from the outset: If you want to help protect the economy, then you



“WHATEVER OUR NEW REALITY IS, EQUITY HAS TO TAKE CENTER STAGE, BECAUSE IF IT DOES NOT, THEN WE FURTHER EXPAND THE EQUITY GAP.”

— CHERREL MILLER DYCE, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION



have to control the virus. This means testing and tracing are extremely important, and this is an area where the U.S. has performed very poorly from the outset. We've also seen how important the role of government is during a time like this. Sending out pandemic relief, increasing unemployment benefits and providing assistance to businesses probably helped stave off total economic collapse. But we don't know whether it was enough and how much is still needed. We've also seen that it is important to have mechanisms in place to quickly distribute financial relief to those in need. Some states have performed better than others on this aspect.

Will remote work persist?

Sheridan: I would be shocked if the percentage of people working from home, or working some larger number of hours from home, is not permanently higher going forward. Part of the reason is workers have already been forced to figure it out and are now more comfortable with the idea and the technology. Another contributing factor is companies have been given an opportunity to try this out on a mass scale and they have seen which aspects have worked well and which have not. This presents opportunities for people and companies who are flexible and adaptable. If people are spending a larger percentage of time working from home, then we may see some changes in the population density of cities. This has implications for the finances of large and small cities alike.

What are the lasting effects on the national and global economy?

Sheridan: While this is still somewhat of an unknown, we do know that people tend to be more cautious after traumatic events like this one. We will likely see more precautionary saving, which could lead to slower economic growth worldwide. People may also be less inclined to take risks, which could hamper entrepreneurship. We also need to be keenly aware of the impact on children. While they may be less susceptible to fatal complications of the disease, many students are stuck in less-than-ideal learning environments. This could have long-term effects for all children and could be especially harmful for those children who are already disadvantaged (e.g. food-insecure, low access to internet, etc.), further exacerbating existing inequalities.

Unplanned lessons

The move to online learning in the spring caused many disruptions. Public and private schools alike scrambled to create virtual classrooms with little time for careful planning while parents suddenly became at-home instructors for their K-12 children. A new academic year saw stronger systems in place. Remote learning is certainly here to stay, says Cherrel Miller Dyce, associate professor of education and director of diversity, equity and inclusion in Elon's School of Education, but it doesn't mean one option fits all as some students won't have the technology necessary to access the information to engage them in success.

What lessons have we learned from virtual classrooms?

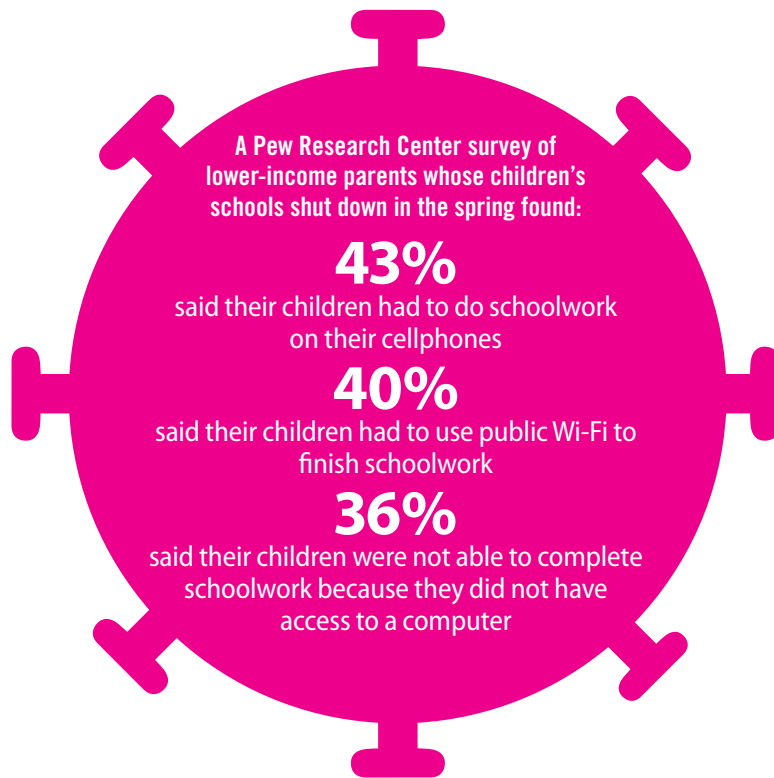


{ Cherrel Miller Dyce }

Miller Dyce: In this virtual space, you have to be extremely flexible. For me, flexibility is central to equity-based teaching. We have to practice, in a sense, equity in how we accommodate the needs of students and by extension the needs of their families. I really think this is a time where equity-based teaching takes center stage as we are trying to navigate a pandemic that we know is affecting certain communities at higher levels, particularly the Black and Brown communities. Students are not divorced from their communities. The other lesson I've learned is the value of empathetic teaching. It takes precedence in the virtual space, especially when you can't always have your finger on what is happening in your students' lives because they are not directly in front of you.

How has it changed the way you teach?

Miller Dyce: Because I educate young people to be teachers, what this virtual classroom allows me to do is model for them what they need to do for the students they will teach. I model for them the equity issues they need to keep front and center. Do the students actually have the technology to learn? Do they have a place to even sit without being disturbed? Are they in a chaotic or nurturing environment? Are they taking care of a younger sibling at home? Do they have enough to eat? Are they dealing with sick family members? Are they dealing with trauma and mental health issues?



How will this shift impact higher education?

Miller Dyce: It will push institutions of higher education to be more creative in our offerings because of how K-12 students are being impacted by remote learning. I think we will see a significant shift in the way students engage in the brick-and-mortar college experience. There will be some students who enjoy the rituals and rites of passage of the college experience while others will prefer remote learning only. Some students will still yearn for the move-in experience, the crossing-the-stage experience while others remain in their home communities. I think the shift will heighten awareness about providing a hybrid model for some students, but the experience of attending college in person will still be desirable. Whatever our new reality is, equity has to take center stage, because if it does not, then we further expand the equity gap.

Life through a screen



{ David Bockino }

Prior to the pandemic, most people had never heard of Zoom. Now, even kindergartners know how to get on a call using the platform. People are having digital happy hours, trivia nights, birthday parties and weddings. Will this last? David Bockino, an associate professor of sport management, is skeptical. "While there are many instances where digital gatherings make a lot of sense (I'm

looking at you, university committee meetings), there are other instances where these get-togethers tear at the very

fabric of community," he says. "Does anybody really want happy hour to become a bunch of boxes on a computer screen? No thanks. I'll stick to the bar down the street."

How has the pandemic affected media outlets?

Bockino: The No. 1 issue facing news outlets remains the same as it was a year ago: the need to figure out sustainable ways to monetize the "business of news" and pay the salaries of good, reputable journalists while competing within a media landscape where anyone can publish anything they want anytime they want. That was difficult before COVID and will remain difficult after COVID. One fascinating thing to watch is the way news organizations have had to grapple with COVID data (number of cases, hospitalizations, percentage of positive results, etc.) There are so many questions to ask here: What is the most important data set that the average person needs to see? How do we obtain consistent, reliable data? How do we express that data in the most appropriate way? In a world of endless information, the organization of that data has become as important as ever.

How have sports and other live events been affected by the pandemic?

Bockino: COVID has really revealed the competence, or lack thereof, of lots of leagues around the country and world. The NBA and WNBA had a plan, executed it nearly flawlessly and have been able to put out an exciting and competitive (if less than ideal because of the lack of fans) product. College football, meanwhile, has been a logistical and PR nightmare for the most part. Everyone wants to save the season, but nobody knows how to do it. And it's brought to light a lot of fundamental questions that linger over the entire state of the college football landscape such as: Can we put college athletes in a "bubble"? Some people think this could be the beginning of the end of big money collegiate athletics as we know it. Oh, and I haven't even mentioned minor league baseball yet — that whole industry will never look the same again.

What role will the media play in people's lives in a post-COVID-19 world?

Bockino: I really don't think the primary trends we've been seeing over the past 10-15 years (more streaming services, destruction of local news, cord cutting) will fundamentally change now that we've gone through a pandemic. One thing that might be interesting to monitor is the health of smaller media companies/personalities over the next few years. Think about a group like "travel influencers." So many of these have emerged in the past decade, making money by traveling to different places/hotels/cities and then getting paid to talk about how great these entities are. With so many travel restrictions, will this type of job go away?

“IF WE CAN CULTIVATE A GREATER APPRECIATION FOR THE VALUE OF OTHER PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND IN OUR LIVES, EVERYONE, WHETHER RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR, WILL BE BETTER OFF FOR IT.” —THE REV. CALEB TABOR '09

Will it come back even stronger? I have no idea. But the companies that are the most diversified are the ones able to weather this storm and possibly the ones to benefit even more in the coming years. In other words, as it is with so many other earth-shaking events, COVID will allow the rich to become even richer.

Less common touch



{ Kyriakos Pagonis '99 }

COVID has impacted all facets of our lives, including how Congress does its work, says political consultant Kyriakos Pagonis '99. From how lawmakers interact with their constituents on a daily basis to when they go back home to their districts, opportunities for personal connections have diminished substantially. As a result, more members are engaging over social media now than they might have otherwise.

How has the pandemic affected our political process?

Pagonis: Most lawmakers are doing Zoom types of events, which is at least one way they can continue to be accessible, but it's certainly very different from what they did before COVID-19. For one, the House has set up proxy voting, so members don't actually have to be in Washington to cast votes, which wasn't the process before. This creates fewer public opportunities to interact with lawmakers and staff and changes how business is done. I think politics in general is a very personal experience. They want to be in front of their constituents to make themselves accessible, to learn about the issues and to be able to react to that.

What about campaigning and elections?

Pagonis: I think the election process is somewhat similar to what we're seeing on the legislative side. Candidates had to get creative in terms of how they got their message out to their constituents. Technology is playing a much larger role today than it did back in February.

That's probably not likely to change. Once members have figured out they can do certain things, maybe even do them better, using technology, I think they'll stick to

that. I still believe that once they're able to do more in-person events, then they'll go back to that. But I think the communication of campaigns was changing before and it's accelerated because of COVID.

What lasting effects do you foresee for Congress?

Pagonis: I think the long-term implications, aside from how members communicate with the public and how the public communicates with lawmakers, are really going to focus on social and economic issues that have become more evident as a result of COVID-19. Things like unemployment and other labor issues might get corrected, maybe not going back to where we were pre-COVID but certainly better than where we are now or were a couple of months ago. I still think there are issues around homelessness, housing, wage issues and health care that are going to be front and center as a result of COVID-19. I think Congress will have to deal with those issues long after the pandemic has passed.

Social disparities



{ Marissa Rurka '14 }

We often think that differences in health and educational achievement are the result of differences in individual behavior. As a sociologist and researcher, Marissa Rurka '14 looks further upstream and considers how human behavior is shaped by other, more fundamental causes — such as economic inequality and structural racism. And the pandemic, she says, has helped to make these

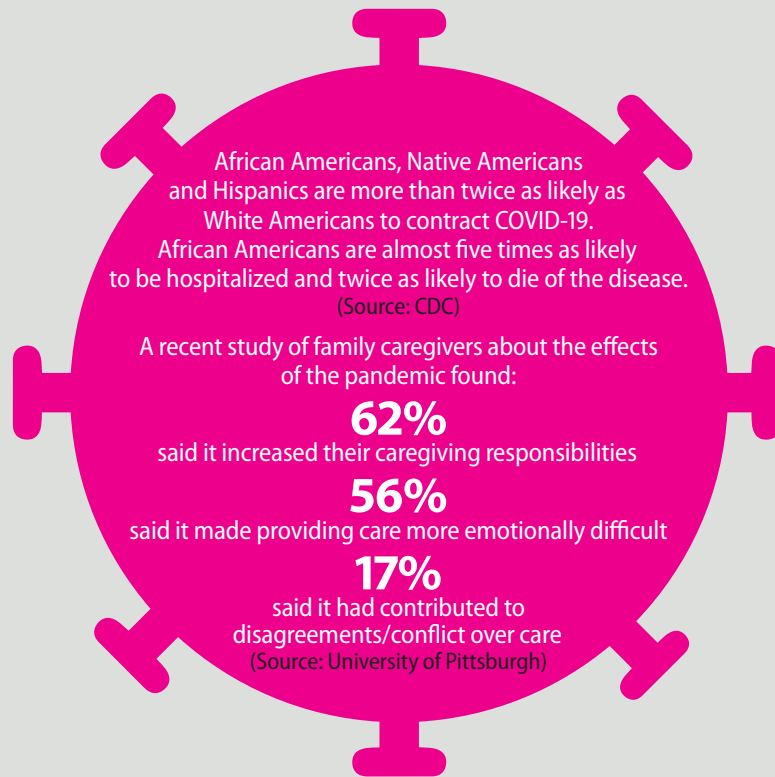
fundamental causes more apparent.

How is the pandemic impacting existing social inequalities?

Rurka: I think the pandemic has the potential to exacerbate existing inequalities, particularly when it comes to income. It is likely, for instance, that we will see an increase in educational achievement gaps. Although the transition to remote learning presents challenges for most children, those from low-income families face additional obstacles. Besides being a source of childcare for working parents, schools offer children a place where they can access resources such as tutoring, internet connection, educational technologies, disability services and nutritional food. In addition, in the midst of a pandemic-induced economic recession, children from low-income families

In the first five months of 2020, members of Congress collectively produced an average of 73,924 tweets and 33,493 Facebook posts each month, generating a total of more than 476 million reactions and favorites and more than 112 million shares and retweets by July.

(Source: Pew Research Center)



may have to deal with the additional stresses of food and housing insecurity. These challenges may have detrimental consequences for children's educational achievement not only in the coming year, but for years to come.

How has our home life been impacted by the pandemic?

Rurka: We have all been encouraged to limit in-person interactions with those who are not part of our household. For some families, this has led to increased contact, which could be protective of well-being for some. But it could also fuel family conflict and, in turn, psychological distress. People may be especially hesitant to interact with older generations, and vice versa, given that older adults tend to be at greater risk of serious complications from COVID-19. This can be socially isolating for older adults.

For those who care for older relatives, the pandemic has resulted in greater stress as family members have to navigate a number of tough decisions.

What kind of impact will social isolation have on us?

Rurka: Social isolation and loneliness have been associated with increased depression and anxiety, accelerated cognitive decline, worse health behaviors, increased risk of chronic health conditions and increased risk of premature mortality. Physical distancing has made it more difficult for us to interact and connect with others. Although communication technologies may help people to stay connected, these may not fully compensate

for in-person interaction. Increased social isolation and loneliness likely contribute to the spike in anxiety and depressive symptoms, substance use and suicidal ideation that we have seen in the United States during the pandemic. We will continue dealing with these ramifications well into the future.

Beyond the church's walls



{ The Rev. Caleb Tabor '09 }

One of the initial struggles both ministers and congregation members have dealt with from day one of the pandemic has been maintaining connection, according to the Rev. Caleb Tabor '09, the young adult missionary at Episcopal Campus Ministry in Raleigh, North Carolina. Religious spaces, he says, are often carefully designed to inspire folks in a variety of ways. Lacking the ability

to meet as usual has been challenging.

Has the pandemic strengthened or strained relationships with God?

Tabor: Difficult moments always inspire challenging questions and concerns. Some people have a hard time finding divine meaning in a crisis, while others find a great deal of meaning and purpose and are inspired into states of great resilience, brilliance and strength. Most folks seem to find themselves moving back and forth within that spectrum. Part of what religious and spiritual communities do is address these issues together and work through them as a group. Many faiths teach that God is everywhere (omnipresent), so this is a time to really cultivate that kind of spiritual awareness.

What will the church of the future look like?

Tabor: The church will have to continue to be adaptive and dynamic while maintaining a stable spiritual core. More online content, more services and activities outside, and more small gatherings where it is safe to do so will continue as the norm. Looking ahead a bit, some smaller communities may close or drastically reduce operations. But if we are able to see those challenges as opportunities, I think we'll come out the other side of this much stronger. I also think that religious groups have learned an important lesson in the value of community and being with others. If we can cultivate a greater appreciation for the value of other people in our communities and in our lives, everyone, whether religious or secular, will be better off for it. ☛

1 in 3

adults watched a religious service online/on TV during July

1 in 5

religious attendees have donated less money to their congregations since the start of the pandemic

(Source: Pew Research Center)



THOSE WHO
ARE SUPPOSED 2
PROTECT ARE
KILLING US!

NO Justice
NO PEACE

Racism
is
a
PANDEMIC

{ Students hold signs as part of a Sept. 1 demonstration sponsored by the Black Student Union. }

TAKING A STAND

RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT ELON AND BEYOND

BY KEREN RIVAS '04

The year is 2020. The world is being ravaged by a pandemic with no end in sight. For the first time in most of our lives, we are united under the threat of an unknown disease. Then, in May, the eyes of the world fall on Minneapolis. That's when a 46-year-old Black man is arrested for allegedly buying cigarettes using a counterfeit \$20 bill. That's when a White police officer decides to put his knee on the suspect's neck, for eight minutes and 46 seconds, while two other officers watch and bystanders helplessly record the incident with their cellphones. That's when George Floyd dies, and the world is never the same. Protests across the country and the world ensue. So does media coverage of other alleged police brutality cases against members of the Black community, some of which took place before Floyd's death.

Atatiana Jefferson.

Ahmaud Arbery.

Breonna Taylor.

Rayshard Brooks.

Calls for justice and police reform are heard across the country. Images of protesters of all races and ages holding "Black Lives Matter" signs fill our news feeds. Voters demand their elected officials do something about it. Corporations of all sizes make public statements in support of the movement and pledge millions of dollars to social justice organizations. At Elon, Black community members and allies also ask for action to end systemic racism on campus and beyond. They send messages to President Connie Ledoux Book and other members of senior staff. The university announces a series of virtual conversations featuring administrators and Black students, faculty, staff and alumni, which begin June 11. Almost a week later, on June 19, dozens of alumni and students take to social media to participate in #BlackatElon, a virtual protest organized by Nichelle Harrison '04 L'09. They share stories of racism, macro and microaggressions or just indifference they encountered while at Elon. They also ask their alma mater to do more.

Many more conversations follow, some in private, others on comments sections of social media platforms. The results of these listening sessions, conversations and comments, in conjunction with feedback from the Elon Black Alumni Network and other campus stakeholders who had been working on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion for years, lead to a university announcement on July 8. "Action. That's what most of you have called for to make Elon a more equitable and welcoming community," President Book says in a video message to the community that day. "A university where Black students, faculty, staff and alumni thrive and succeed. A university where our commitment



{ Above & opposite page: Members of the Elon community participate in a student-led demonstration on Oct. 2. The event was in response to a convoy of vehicles that drove through campus as drivers and passengers yelled racist and hateful taunts at members of the campus community. }

to respect for human differences found in the university's mission statement is fully realized. I agree.”

As part of that message, Book announces five initial action steps with the promise of more to come, all centered on human dignity and diversity. A second announcement comes three and a half weeks later, this time by Randy Williams, who was promoted to vice president and associate provost for inclusive excellence as part of the initial July 8 announcement. In all, the university releases a plan for 15 additional action steps to further advance diversity, equity and inclusion work on campus, ranging from curricular changes, program development and enhancing recruitment of Black students, faculty and staff, to redesigning Elon's bias response system and expanding aid to Black students. Each action builds on existing work and challenges the university and all its members to commit deeper, work harder and

invest more to better support the success of students of color and promote a richer and more just intellectual community for everyone.

ONGOING TRAJECTORY

It's not that there hadn't been any diversity efforts at Elon before the summer of 2020. The university's strategic plans have achieved greater diversity and inclusion across the board. Theme One of the Elon Commitment, which guided the institution for 10 years and concluded in 2019, centered on achieving an unprecedented commitment to diversity and global engagement. It resulted in an increase in the number of students, faculty and staff of color, going from 11 percent to 19 percent, 11 percent to 20 percent and 18 percent to 24 percent, respectively. The

15 ACTION STEPS

Over the summer, the university launched 15 diversity, equity and inclusion action steps to better support the success of Black students and promote a richer and more just intellectual community for everyone. For more details about these and other initiatives, visit elon.edu/diversity.

1

Leadership appointment of Randy Williams to the new position of vice president and associate provost for inclusive excellence to drive progress

2

Revision of the curriculum so students in all majors are required to take courses that drive deeper understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion

3

Removal of the name of former Elon President William A. Harper (1911-31) from the residence hall in the Colonades Neighborhood for his role in advancing racist ideas (see page 30)



{ Connie Ledoux Book }



{ Randy Williams }

four-year graduation rate for students of color went from 75 percent to 78 percent, placing Elon in the top 6 percent of institutions nationwide, according to The Education Trust.

On the programmatic front, the Multicultural Center became the Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education so it could offer expanded support and programming for African American/Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Alaskan Native and other multiracial groups. Other initiatives launched during that time support LGBTQIA, first-generation and faith-based communities. Among those initiatives was the creation of the Center for Access and Success in 2014, which brought together the Odyssey Program for talented students with financial needs; Elon Academy, a college access and success program for Alamance County high school students with no family history of college attendance; and “It Takes a Village” Project, a literacy and tutoring program serving hundreds of children in the Alamance-Burlington School System.

The newly launched Boldly Elon strategic plan continues this trajectory with plans to further increase the percentage of students, faculty and staff of color. It aims to bring the total number of Odyssey Scholars to 400 and create a greater sense of belonging, access and support during the next 10 years. These are aspirational goals, says Williams, that call for investments into human resources and programs, and take time to be fully realized. But the events of the summer prompted the institution to accelerate that work. “We wanted to engage, listen, have constructive conversations,” he says. “From those conversations and what we wanted to do resulted these steps largely related to anti-racism.”

Using a racial lens in developing Elon’s next steps was critical for Williams. From reading levels in elementary schools and high school graduation rates to home ownership, mortality rates among pregnant women and incarceration, when one looks at data across systems in society, he says, Whites have better outcomes than people of color, with Blacks and indigenous groups generally at the bottom. “If that is so true across the board, if there is so consistent of a stratification across society,” he says, “we need to acknowledge this occurrence and live up to our mission in response if we really want to graduate students who will change the world.”

For years, Sandra Reid ’85 has seen Elon as an institution struggling like many others to meet the needs of minority

populations. When she joined the human service studies program full time in 2006, she was the only Black faculty member in the department and one of a handful across the university. It was not that much different from when she was a student in the 1980s. “It’s been a very slow process,” she says, adding she has seen growth in other spaces, such as student life and professional staff. She welcomes the latest initiatives and sees them as necessary in the midst of the turmoil the country is in but cautions the institution not to be reactionary. “I hope we don’t have to continue to have Black men dying on the streets to precipitate change,” Reid says. “I hope we genuinely take on these values. They have to become our values, not in the moment but true values of the institution. It should naturally and authentically happen.”

It’s a sentiment shared by others. Jumar Martin listened intently to all the announcements Elon made this summer. The sophomore computer science and economics double major knows the institution is working to improve the experiences of Black students, but he wonders about the timing of the announcements. He wants to believe Elon’s actions were not just an attempt to save face when confronted with the deaths and unintentional martyring of Black people across the nation. “Treating African Americans better is in vogue. When it is not in vogue, what do we do?” he says. “I want to see Elon continue to focus on the societal ills that are not in the vision of society. I want to see Elon continue building excellence that recognizes us nationally as an inclusive campus.”

He applauds Elon’s efforts to confront its own past, work he was involved in this past spring as a student representative in the Committee on Elon History and Memory (read more on page 30), but wants to see that same dedication applied to everyday things that define the Black experience at Elon.



4

Redesign Elon’s bias response system to be as effective and transparent as the law allows, providing regular updates about incidents of racism as well as the actions taken

5

Make all future merit pay increases for faculty and staff to be based in part on their commitment to professional development related to diversity, equity and inclusion

6

Provide anti-racism education for all new students as part of New Student Orientation and student leader training

7

Infuse anti-racist content and pedagogy throughout the curriculum by examining processes and practices across the university with a goal of remedying areas where inequities exist



{ Jumar Martin '23, left, wants to work alongside Elon students and administrators to improve the conversation around diversity, equity and inclusion on campus. }

He also doesn't want the emphasis on the Black community to leave other underrepresented groups even further behind. He is taking it upon himself to be part of the solution. "I want to be able to further the conversation, be able to create policy at Elon and nationally to improve the conversation around diversity, equity and inclusion," he says. "I see myself as someone who has to do this. If I am able to bring other people with me, I want to do that."

ONGOING STRUGGLES

Like many students of color, Martin knew before coming to Elon that most of his classmates were not going to look like him. He knew he had to make his own way if he wanted to thrive on campus. He found a home in the CREDE, a space where he can be himself, where he can learn about the experiences of other students who came before him. He has also experienced the hostility that comes with being Black in Alamance County, where almost 74 percent of the population is White. "I've stayed in the bubble," he says, referring to the campus, "but we experience Burlington since we are an open campus. You have trucks that go by and yell obscenities to students of color. It's a concern. It's been a concern and it continues to be a concern."

Akilah Weaver '00, who took the reins as EBAN president earlier in the fall, understands Martin's skepticism all too well. Black alumni had been advocating for years for Elon to

seriously invest in increasing the number of students, faculty and staff of color. And while she has seen progress, she knows there is much work still ahead for the institution. "It is a good start," she says of the recent announcements. "It's an opportunity for us to hold Elon administrators accountable." Weaver appreciates President Book's commitment to having the pendulum swing in a direction that embraces all cultures while still focusing on the Black student experience at Elon. "It took 2020 to show us the needs, the things that we were missing," she adds. "This is just the beginning of so much more that Elon is going to need to do to attract great Black students."

Williams agrees with those who want to see Elon do more for the Black community and for all students of color. "I am an administrator here, I'm an employee, but first and foremost I am a member of a marginalized group that has been disadvantaged," he says. "This is personal work for me. There is so much more we have to do. But the way systems often support disparities, there is no expedient response to achieving equity. There has to be a deep commitment to a long haul process toward our goals."

He welcomes external accountability that reflects his own internal demands for action. It's important for him to hear and acknowledge other voices and to help others along in their understanding of why this is not enough. At the same time, he has to acknowledge those who think Elon has gone too far. For Williams, that is a reflection of fear. This country's capitalistic mindset that pushes for innovation and a desire to grow, to be better, to aspire to ascend to higher levels, creates a system of oppression by default. "You cannot have advantage without oppression," he says.

Martin looks forward to the day when that oppression is not resting on his shoulders, when he can be himself in all spaces on campus and doesn't have to tread lightly while interacting with fellow students. The day when he doesn't need to be reserved or worry about walking behind a group of girls at night. The day when he no longer has to put his registration on the visor of his car or be constantly aware of where a police car might be. "I shouldn't have to be afraid of the police. And I am not, but you never know. My dad doesn't want to bury his son," he says. "It's incredibly subconscious; it weighs down in ways you don't know because this has been your life since you've been born. It has become second nature. It has become a part of you, and it should not be."

8

Engage in a sustained partnership with a racial equity organization to support and optimize both internal and external anti-racist and racial equity work

9

Revamp and promote Elon's existing Diversity Course Database to include substantial content about social identity and social justice related to systems of oppression in the U.S.

10

Develop equity-minded hiring protocols for all university divisions to better identify a diverse pool of excellent candidates for open positions (to be completed by December 2020)

11

Implement harassment and discrimination prevention and anti-bias training for all employees (to be completed by December 2020)



{ Sandra Reid '85 }



{ Akilah Weaver '00 }

ONGOING WORK

President Book knows this is the painful reality for many Black members of the Elon community. It's something that motivates her to continue working toward a more equitable and inclusive community for all. "Our Black community is suffering and I am carrying their stories with me as I work to advance excellence at Elon," she says. "My hope is to make diversity, equity and inclusion a natural part of everything we do as an institution and to provide education on these topics so that students graduate from Elon with this essential knowledge and understanding as they prepare for their professional journeys. Only then can we fully live out our mission."

Williams says experiences like Martin's are a reminder that no matter what we do as an institution, we are still influenced by what happens in the nation. He wishes he had the grand answer. There is so much historical trauma that has been passed down, he says, which is stimulated by incidents that occur outside and on campus, whether it's misogyny or some other form of oppression. There is a need for healing, not just for the Black community, but for all.

In order for that to happen, we have to recognize first that the trauma exists, Williams says, which can be difficult in a society driven by individual ruggedness, where the collective and communal value of trauma gets lost. "We need to ask ourselves, 'What are the narratives that are not spoken that explain what we see today?'" he adds. "If we can go back to understand that and see how they manifest over time and reinvent over time through policies and practices, then we can try to see a different narrative from what we see in our traditional history books and start getting to some truths."

That's why diversifying Elon's curriculum is so important. Williams points to a foundational graduate course he co-teaches with President Emeritus Leo M. Lambert as part of the Master of Arts in Higher Education program. In it they use "Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities" by Craig Steven Wilder, a book that deals with the role slavery played in the creation of many of the nation's Ivy League institutions. For many of the students in the class, Williams says, this is the first time they're exposed to this important lesson in history. By offering diverse perspectives, greater truths are discovered, which enriches the experience of all students.

Reid agrees. She sees her obligation as faculty in the class-

room to bring her own experiences, to have difficult conversations and create unique learning moments. She often gets emails from White students who tell her she was their first Black teacher. "I am glad to be at Elon right now to be part of this change because I know what it's going to mean for the world," she says. "Because I am teaching students who want to work in helping professions, they are going to meet all kinds of people; they are going to affect other people's lives. If my students can have a diverse and broad experience, then it is going to be a better experience for those they come in contact with."

Williams is keenly aware there is still a long road ahead. While it's true Elon has improved the graduation and retention rates for students of color, those same students are languishing in areas of acceptance, belonging and other thriving experiences, he adds. And yet, they perform strongly in terms of job and post-graduation placement. "Imagine if they were feeling a greater sense of coming alive with all the gifts and talents they have and not feeling so restricted by macroaggressions, by an ongoing sense of consciousness of how they are speaking to fit in. If they felt a greater sense of acceptance, less discrimination," Williams ponders, "what might they be accomplishing then for us as a campus and as a society? What great ideas might come from them? What innovations, what ways we might see our world better?"

These questions motivate him every day and give him hope, though he is aware of the brutal realities that exist. He is aware there are those who are unwilling to give up their power for the greater good. Yet, he is determined to ensure every person at Elon clearly sees the role they can play in this diversity, equity and inclusion work. "We have to create a shared vision of what we want for inclusive excellence at Elon. It needs to be developed well and communicated broadly so people across all units see themselves in it," he says. "I am a systems thinker. My role is a broker of resources, programs and people so we can have a constellation of resources that will be more systemic to respond to the systemic issues that we face."

As an alumna and EBAN leader, Weaver sees her role as a support for Black students and an advocate to keep the administration accountable. She is optimistic the future will bring change for the better. "As we move to making these changes, even though it's to help with the betterment of Black students, it's going to help attract better students altogether," she says. "The investment that they are making is going to be so overwhelmingly rewarding." ✦

12

Reestablish the pre- and post-doctoral program to promote hiring of exemplary faculty in areas that align with institutional needs

13

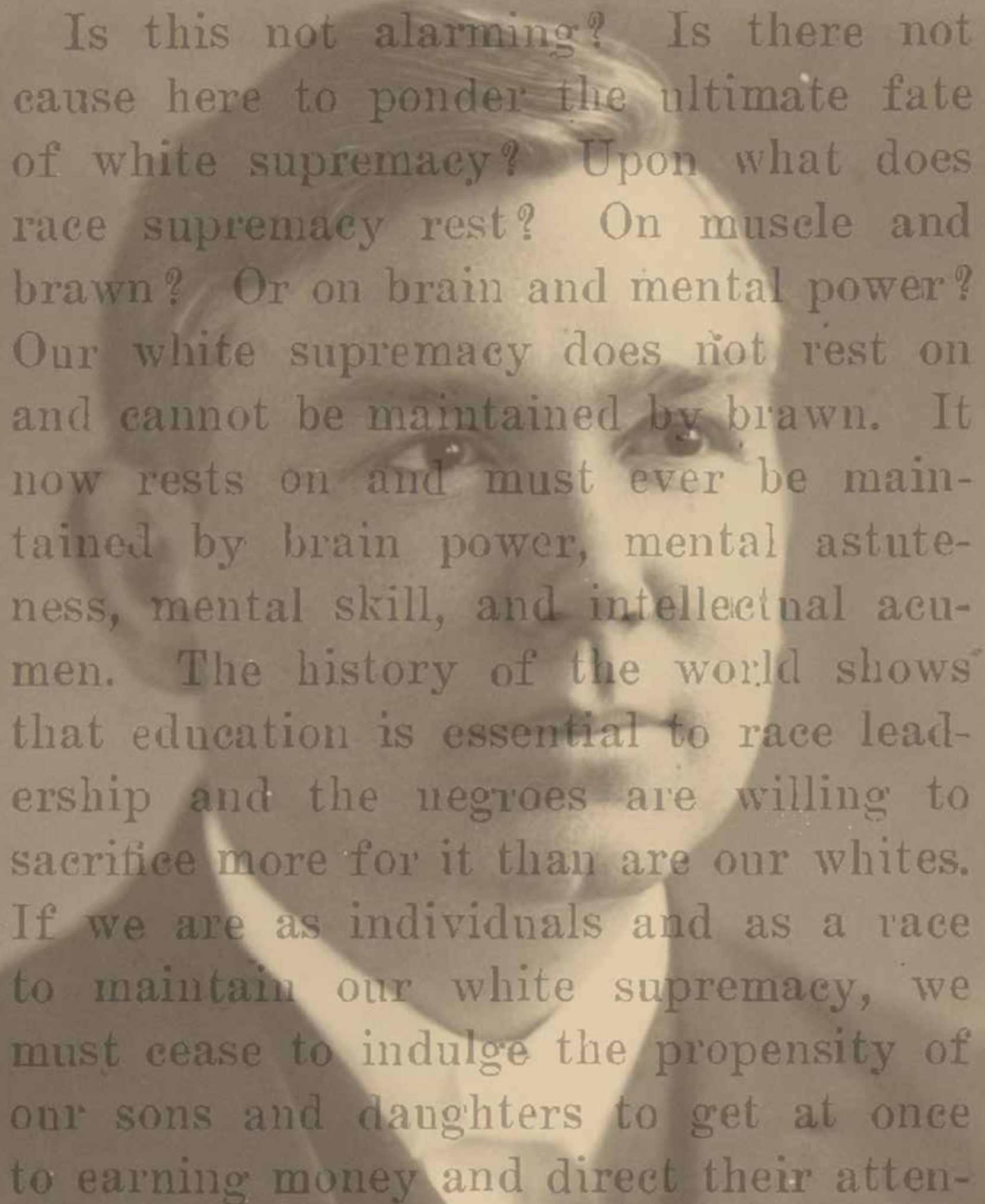
Enhance recruitment efforts for underrepresented students through Elon's new test-optional admissions policy and partnerships with K-12 college preparation programs

14

Expand aid for Black students to attend and experience Elon by creating 200 new scholarships, tripling the endowment of the Black Alumni Scholarship fund and expanding internship support

15

Expand the Black Life Advisory Council, which advises the president and senior staff, to include faculty, staff and students in addition to alumni and parents



Is this not alarming? Is there not cause here to ponder the ultimate fate of white supremacy? Upon what does race supremacy rest? On muscle and brawn? Or on brain and mental power? Our white supremacy does not rest on and cannot be maintained by brawn. It now rests on and must ever be maintained by brain power, mental astuteness, mental skill, and intellectual acumen. The history of the world shows that education is essential to race leadership and the negroes are willing to sacrifice more for it than are our whites. If we are as individuals and as a race to maintain our white supremacy, we must cease to indulge the propensity of our sons and daughters to get at once to earning money and direct their atten-

Hidden Histories

BY ALEXA BOSCHINI '10

The Committee on Elon History and Memory begins to paint a more inclusive picture of Elon's past.

Walk across Elon's campus and you see tributes to many of the people who shaped the university's success throughout its history. You see it in building names, plaques and portraits. William A. Harper, Elon's fourth president, seemed a worthy candidate for such an honor in 1968 when the Harper Center residence complex was built. When it was demolished to make way for the Global Neighborhood, his name was added to one of the residence halls in the Colonnades Neighborhood. His association with the university dates to the late 1800s when he was a student, through stints as a professor, dean and ultimately 20 years as president. He shepherded Elon through a tumultuous period that included World War I, the 1918-19 flu pandemic and the 1923 fire that destroyed most of campus.

But a deeper look at Harper's past reveals a more complex legacy beyond his accomplishments, one that includes evidence of racism. It's an all-too-common scenario that is playing out on campuses across the nation, prompting many institutions to explore untold stories that have been obscured or suppressed in traditional historical narratives filtered through a White lens. It's one of the main reasons why President Connie Ledoux Book announced in 2018 the formation of the Committee on Elon History and Memory. Since then, a university-wide committee of 12 faculty, staff and students has been examining Elon's institutional history "in a transparent, participatory and intellectually rigorous manner."

"I think the first and most important step is acknowl-

edging it, discussing it and owning the truth of it," Book says. "That self-knowledge is critical for institutions and individuals. This effort shouldn't be perceived as a negative; in fact, I feel positive about it, about the fullness of a history we are missing, stories that will help us connect to each other and be agents for change. Without a full history, we are more likely to not make progress, or even worse, make the same mistakes."

After two years of work, the committee released a report in October centered on the idea that telling a more complete version of the past offers the opportunity to create a more inclusive future. "If we really want to be a place characterized by excellence, diversity and inclusion, we need to be attentive to the ways in which we send signals not just with our words but with the stories we tell about ourselves, with the people and things we remember, and with the stories we lift up through commemorative practices," says Charles Irons, William J. Story Sr. Professor of History and chair of the Committee on Elon History and Memory.

Harper's story illustrates how critically important it is for Elon to reckon with its past. In a 1910 editorial in *The Christian Sun*, Harper expressed alarm at the growing number of Black students pursuing a college education. "Our white supremacy does not rest on and cannot be maintained by brawn," Harper argued in the editorial. "It now rests on and must ever be maintained by brain power, mental astuteness, mental skill, and intellectual acumen.



“We’re not trying to erase the memory of Harper. To the contrary, we want people to know more about him than they’ve ever known. That’s the point of all this: to learn about our own past.”

**Charles Irons, William J. Story Sr.
Professor of History and chair
of the department of History
and Geography**

{ On the previous spread: A photo of William A. Harper and an excerpt from his 1910 Christian Sun editorial. Right: A photo of the residence hall bearing his name. The board of trustees collectively agreed to remove the name from the building in July at the request of President Connie Ledoux Book. }

The history of the world shows that education is essential to race leadership and the negroes are willing to sacrifice more for it than are our whites.” He also invited readers to contact him directly “for particulars and terms according to which [Elon] undertakes to foster individual and racial supremacy.”

A decade later, Harper was identified in a 1920 article in the Raleigh News & Observer as the leader of a posse to apprehend John Jeffress, a Black man accused of sexually assaulting a 7-year-old girl. A trial was arranged the same day with Harper set to serve as a witness, but before the trial began, the article states, a mob of unidentified armed men dragged Jeffress from the jail and killed him. Harper’s role in the events that led to Jeffress’ lynching sparked an online petition this summer calling for the removal of the Harper Hall name. It was something the Committee on Elon History and Memory was planning to recommend in its report as well. But when President Book learned about the 1910 editorial, she shared it with the board of trustees, and they collectively agreed to immediately remove his name from the residence hall in July.

“At one point in his career at Elon, [Harper’s] writings advocated that White people pursue higher education as a way to maintain their racial supremacy over Blacks,” Book says, adding that she will be appointing a group to review his writings to gain a fuller understanding of his life’s work. “These views are racist and at odds with our mission.”

The purpose of the committee’s work is twofold: to critically examine specific events and individuals in Elon’s past and how those histories have been recounted and commemorated over time, without serving as gatekeepers of Elon’s history or producing an “authorized version” of events. With that in mind, the committee reviewed some established historical narratives as a starting point, like “Elon College: Its History and Traditions” by former Professor of History Durward T. Stokes, a 1982 book that, the committee’s report notes, neglects to include the experiences of Black students at the university. From there, the committee identified areas for further study.

Irons says committee members and university archivists Chrystal Carpenter and Libby Coyner as well as student researchers were integral in collecting and analyzing historical documents throughout the process. The group also consulted “From a Grove of Oaks,” a book published in 2014 by former University Historian George Troxler, and especially benefited from “Elon’s Black History: A Story to Be Told,” which L’Tanya Richmond ’87 wrote in 2005 as her master’s thesis at Duke University.

“A lot of this information has been out of the limelight, not front and center,” says Randy Williams, vice president and associate provost for inclusive excellence. “As it becomes more visible, we have to assess how does this information that we’ve learned align with who we are as an institution, and how to respond to information that may not be aligned with our mission and values.”

As the committee members researched best practices from other universities conducting history and memory work, they discovered that the bulk of current scholarship focuses on race. They decided to concentrate their initial efforts on the Black experience at Elon — both anti-Black racism and Black achievements that have been only partially told or erased. But Irons says the committee hopes its process will serve as a template for conducting similar work related to other identities at Elon, including sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic status. “Given the energy of the field and the fact that in the context of the history of the American South, race is the most salient aspect of differentiation and exploitation, it seemed appropriate to start with that,” Irons says. “But we want to be emphatic that we know it’s not the only aspect of identity and we know there is additional work to be done.”

The committee’s report details 10 “episodes” related to Black history at Elon, including a deeper look at Harper’s work. Previous research about Harper, Irons says, suggests that his views on race changed over time. From 1926 to 1929 he served as

chairman of the Board of Control of Franklinton Christian College, the Christian Convention's school for Black students in North Carolina. He also called for an end to "racial hatred," and a convention held at Elon during his tenure as president invited students from Black schools to engage in interfaith dialogue with representatives from White schools. But, Irons believes, these positions did not indicate a dramatic shift. Many Southern White progressives came to promote education for Black students, as long as the schools were segregated and their purpose was to assimilate Black people into subservient stations in American life.

Irons says the Harper example raises questions about what aspect of a person is being celebrated when universities commemorate them with a building name or monument, and what message that conveys to the community. It's a complicated process. "We are still learning how to acknowledge the positive contributions of people like Harper, who rebuilt Elon after the fire, while recognizing that his legacy of strident White supremacy is inconsistent with our values," he says. "But we're not trying to erase the memory of Harper. To the contrary, we want people to know more about him than they've ever known. That's the point of all this: to learn about our own past."

Now that the committee's two-year term is over, the report includes recommendations

for ways the university can continue the work as part of its broader diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives (see page 24). Among the suggestions are establishing a permanent version of the Committee on Elon History and Memory and supporting the new Black Lumen Project, an equity initiative specific to the Black experience. In 2019, at the recommendation of the committee, Elon joined Universities Studying Slavery, a consortium of nearly 70 institutions that stemmed from work at the University of Virginia in 2014, and seeks to address both historical and contemporary issues related to race and inequality in higher education. The Black Lumen Project evolved from Elon's Universities Studying Slavery subcommittee and aims to build on existing work related to the Black experience at Elon in collaboration with the Center for Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Education and African & African-American Studies at Elon University.

Other recommendations include implementing a new process for the renaming of spaces on campus; developing new commemorative practices around a more inclusive version of Elon's history, such as oral history projects and tours about the Black experience at Elon; and creating multiple pathways for students to confront race in their coursework. This summer, Book called on faculty to revise the curriculum and require students in all majors to take courses anchored in equity and inclusion. "We use language about the 'Elon bubble,' but Elon is not on an island by

itself," Williams says. "It's connected to and part of the greater society, and racism was and is a huge part of this society. When you see something that's so ubiquitous of a construct as race and it affects us in so many ways, I feel that we should all be studying this."

Williams says that Elon's racial equity work is personal to him as a Black man because it has real-world implications for him and many people he loves. He hopes the committee's findings and the continuing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives that result from them will make it more personal for people across all identities. He hopes that studying a broader array of voices from Elon's past will foster deeper understanding and empathy. And he hopes that acknowledging and learning from the greater truth of Elon's history will pave the way for healing and a more just future.

"There is a toll that people feel when we talk about race," Williams says. "But until we get back to that truth and reconciliation, we have to confront it. It's going to be hard, it's going to be uncomfortable, it's going to be a long haul, but we have to engage in it. By understanding the history, we can understand how we got to where we are and how we might go into the future differently so we can create a truly inclusive environment, one where we're getting closer and closer to humanity." ♣

Visit elon.edu/u/history-memory to read the Committee on Elon History and Memory's full report.



A Force for Good



CUMULATIVE GIVING TO THE CAMPAIGN AS OF OCTOBER 26

\$200M (80% toward
goal of \$250M) from
26,188 donors

THIS REPORT ILLUSTRATES HOW MEMBERS OF THE ELON COMMUNITY provide essential resources in support of our mission of being an academic community that transforms mind, body and spirit and encourages freedom of thought and liberty of conscience. Fundamentally, our primary action as a university is to educate students who go on to challenge the world with their newfound knowledge and understanding.

Your support of Elon LEADS at all levels has enabled our university campaign to surpass the \$200 million mark toward our historic \$250 million goal. This accomplishment is even more impressive considering the many challenges we have faced together during the past year, including a global pandemic and economic uncertainty.

In the face of these challenges, you have stepped forward to lead by supporting our four main funding priorities: scholarships for graduates the world needs, access to high-impact engaged learning programs, faculty and staff mentors who matter, and our iconic campus. We chose these priorities because they represent what we value as a learning community, and I am grateful for your ongoing commitment to Elon students.

Many of you chose to invest in our outstanding faculty and staff mentors whose close learning relationships with students change lives. Others generously contributed to the Students First Fund, providing vital scholarship assistance to students and families hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. When you give to scholarships, you help more than one student. You create generations of successful college graduates and strengthen families and communities. Now that's impact!

These are just a few of the many examples of impact from the past year that you have made possible through your philanthropy. It is why I firmly believe the Elon LEADS Campaign, and each of you, is a force for good in the world.

We know numbers are important in this campaign, and we still have \$50 million to go to reach our \$250 million goal and make Elon LEADS the most successful campaign in the university's history. Working together, I know we can accomplish this goal and prepare courageous leaders to guide our future.

In the following pages, you will see the impact of gifts large and small. Your impact. I hope you are as proud of these achievements as I am. After all, you made them possible. Elon leads through you!

Connie Ledoux Book
President



“When you give to scholarships, you help more than one student. You create generations of successful college graduates and strengthen families and communities. Now that’s impact!”

— President Connie Ledoux Book



Elon Alumnus Makes Lead Gift to Innovation Quad & Scholarships

THE FIRST OF TWO PLANNED BUILDINGS in Elon University's new Innovation Quad will be named Founders Hall thanks to a naming commitment from **Furman '56 and Susan Moseley** as part of the ELON LEADS Campaign.

The gift from the Seattle couple is designated toward phase one of the Innovation Quad (IQ), a bold step in Elon's effort to advance studies in science, engineering and technology while enhancing the university's nationally recognized leadership in engaged, cross-disciplinary learning. In addition, the gift adds to the Moseleys' previously established Susan Scholars Endowment, which provides scholarships for students in Elon's Odyssey Program.

President Connie Ledoux Book called the gift a major step forward in the ELON LEADS Campaign, which includes fundraising goals to support Elon's leadership in STEM education by connecting those disciplines to programs across campus, including business, entrepreneurship, analytics, sales and communications. "We are deeply grateful to Furman and Susan for this transformative gift, their shared vision and their ongoing support of student scholarships," Book said. "This is an important moment in Elon's history. The Innovation Quad will create a dynamic learning environment that will be the entry point to STEM education on our campus."

The Moseleys chose the name Founders Hall to honor the long legacy of leadership at Elon. "The spirit of this gift honors those who helped build Elon through the years,

especially our presidents," said Jim Piatt, vice president for university advancement. "Furman Moseley was a student during President Smith's tenure and went on to develop close relationships with Presidents Danieley, Young, Lambert and Book. The name 'Founders Hall' is a testament to the dedication and vision of many in the Elon family."

The IQ will be the new home of Elon's engineering and physics departments, with construction anticipated to begin in 2021. The Innovation Quad is among the top priorities of the ELON LEADS Campaign and Boldly Elon, the university's new 10-year strategic plan, which calls for advancing existing STEM programs, adding new STEM programs and expanding science facilities.

President Book continued, "Founders Hall will become an anchor of the Innovation Quad, which in many ways began two decades ago when the McMichael Science Center was built at the corner of Haggard and O'Kelly. The vision and generosity of the McMichael family led to increasing strengths in the sciences, which propels us to this day."

"We are incredibly grateful for this investment in the future of the institution," said Gabie Smith, dean of Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences. "The facilities in the Innovation Quad will provide all Elon students and faculty with rich opportunities to collaborate in inquiry-based design as we address the complex issues affecting our world."

“Being a biomedical engineer, there are many things I could do to help make a difference. I can do medical research. I can be the one who 3D prints a heart for someone to use as a transplant or work on antiviral drugs. There are so many different opportunities for you at Elon that will give you an advantage in your future.”

—Samantha Dominguez '22, right, is pursuing a four-year engineering degree at Elon. She is an Honors Fellow and Phoenix Club scholarship recipient.



An Investment in the Future

The first two buildings represent the heart of the Innovation Quad and constitute the initial phase of a long-term investment by Elon into science, creativity and discovery that will be accessible to all students, regardless of their major. Future phases will include academic and residence halls, as well as a series of incubators and design hubs that will foster cross-disciplinary studies and collaboration.

Plans for Founders Hall include 20,000 square feet for large workshops and prefabrication spaces where students and faculty can take big ideas and transform them into prototypes. The two-story building will be the backbone of Elon’s growing engineering curriculum, which is now a four-year program. The facility will include design labs for engineering, a virtual reality classroom, prefabrication labs and student engagement spaces to spark innovation.

IQ Two will provide connected classrooms and labs, group study rooms and faculty offices. The three-story, 40,000-square-foot facility will be the home for cutting-edge, cross-disciplinary studies and research in biomedicine, physics, astronomy, biophysics, mechanical

engineering and environmental engineering. The facility will face McMichael Science Center on one side and Sankey Hall on the other, solidifying the connection of science to entrepreneurship, sales, design thinking and analytics. Plans to move the engineering and physics programs to the Innovation Quad will pave the way for renovation of McMichael Science Center to support the growth in the university’s biology, chemistry, health and environmental studies programs.

Furman Moseley is the retired chairman of Simpson Paper Co. Susan Moseley is president of the Spark Charitable Foundation. Their gift to the Innovation Quad is the largest single philanthropic commitment to date for the project. This gift will also provide additional funding for the Susan Scholarships, an endowment the Moseleys created in 2007. Through the years, they have also supported the Georgeo Scholarships in the Odyssey Program; construction of the Moseley Center and Ernest A. Koury, Sr. Business Center; and Phoenix athletics, including Schar Center and Rhodes Stadium.



{ Opposite page: A rendering of Founders Hall. Left: Furman Moseley '56, center, joined by President Emeritus Leo M. Lambert and many of the recipients of the Susan Scholarship throughout the years. }



CAMPAIGN PRIORITY:

Graduates the World Needs

Deepening scholarship funding is the top priority of the Elon LEADS Campaign. To date, generous donors have established more than 180 new scholarships, ensuring the university remains accessible to outstanding students who make Elon one of the most dynamic environments for learning. These life-changing investments in Odyssey, Fellows and Elon Engagement scholarships will help prepare the courageous leaders the world needs.

181

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS
ESTABLISHED SO FAR
DURING THE CAMPAIGN

- 72 Odyssey
- 18 Fellows
- 57 Elon Engagement
- 34 Elon Experiences



{ The Sadler family from left: William '19, Miriam P'19 P'20, Annie, John '81 P'19 P'20 & Johnny '20 }

As a student at Elon, **John Sadler '81 P'19 P'20** was a campus leader. He was an adviser in his residence hall for three years, a fraternity member, yearbook editor and student body president his senior year. After graduation, he worked in Elon's Admissions Office for five years. "I was all in for Elon," John said, adding that he and his family are still strongly connected to the school. He and wife Miriam are parents to Elon alumni William '19 and Johnny '20.

"I have lots of great memories at Elon. There is nothing better than to see it grow," he added. "As one of Elon's presidents once said, 'The best schools are the ones that are never finished.' Elon lives that with a passion."

It's not surprising that John and Miriam decided to establish the Sadler Family Elon Engagement Scholarship in honor of their sons. Elon Engagement Scholarships are designed for promising students who embody the spirit and values of the university and are eager to take advantage of the Elon Experiences: study abroad/study USA, undergraduate research, internships, leadership and service-learning. The couple also made a gift to name a room at The Inn at Elon in honor of one of Elon's most beloved staff members, Barry Bradberry '75, associate dean of admissions and special assistant to the vice president for enrollment.

Opening Doors with Endowed Scholarships

Amy and Rob Heinrich P'22 of Grayslake, Illinois, have created transformative opportunities for students in the Odyssey Program, which serves high-achieving students with significant financial need. Many are first-generation college students, often underrepresented on college and university campuses, who might not otherwise be able to attend college.

The Odyssey Program's depth and support of students throughout their college experience stood out to the Heinrichs, parents of Elon junior Emma Heinrich '22 and members of the university's Parents Council. Impressed by the program's peer-to-peer mentoring, dynamic academic courses, leadership opportunities and access to Elon's high-impact engaged learning programs, the couple decided to support the program by endowing the Heinrich Family Odyssey Program Scholarship.

The Heinrichs were moved to tears after hearing students describe their transformation from feelings of nervousness to feelings of pride and belonging. Through the Odyssey Program's support services and family atmosphere, the students gained confidence and are major contributors to a rich culture on campus.

"What really impressed us about the program is that beyond the scholarship, students obtain the support to help them navigate the whole college environment," said Rob. "It's a model scholarship program for nurturing and retaining top-tier, first-generation students. We hope this gift inspires others to invest in the Odyssey Program."



{ Rob & Amy Heinrich P'22 are members of Elon's Parents Council. }



PHOTO: LUCIA LOZANO ROBLEDO

{ Lucia Lozano Robledo '21 presents her research during Elon's Summer Undergraduate Research Experience held virtually this year due to COVID-19. }

Originally from Bogotá, Colombia, **Honors Fellow Lucia Lozano Robledo '21** has immersed herself fully in the Elon experience and assumed leadership roles in the Latinx/Hispanic Union; Elon's Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity Education; Elon Academy; and the "It Takes a Village" Project. An immigrant to the U.S. in 2012, Lucia developed a passion for equity in education and immigration reform. Through her work with Elon's student organization Immigrant Realities, she has developed a social media advocacy campaign, organized education panels and attended a national conference on immigration reform.

Lucia, an international studies and French double major with minors in Latin American studies and African & African-American studies, is conducting honors research on the political consciousness of Latinx migrants in Alamance County. "Working one-on-one with a faculty mentor has been an incredibly enriching experience," she says. "I would not have been able to afford higher education at an institution such as Elon, not to mention all of the opportunities I have been a part of here, without the support and generous donations from Elon donors. I cannot help but feel immensely grateful for the financial support that has made my higher education possible."



CAMPAIGN PRIORITY:

Engaged Learning



{ Lumiere Rostick '20, a strategic communications & cinema and television arts double major, attends the GLAAD Awards ceremony in Los Angeles as part of their internship with the video department at The Advocate during spring 2019. }

Increasing access to the Elon Experiences, the university's renowned engaged learning programs, is a critical priority in the Elon LEADS Campaign. Gifts from alumni, parents and friends are propelling the university forward, fulfilling Elon's commitment to providing access to transformative engaged learning opportunities through global study, internships, undergraduate research, service and leadership development.

From her own experiences as a student, a parent and as a professional and volunteer in education, **Mary Stuart McCamy P'21 P'23** of Chevy Chase, Maryland, has witnessed the power of engaged learning firsthand. Through her own internship as a college student working for an organization in Washington, D.C., connected to international education, she gained knowledge, experience, networking skills, references and connections.

"Internships are so valuable for making academics relevant, but even more so for building a young person's confidence. Internship opportunities have benefits beyond the immediately observable," says Mary Stuart, the mother of Elon students Eleanor Irion '21 and Leighton Irion '23. Opportunities generated by internships are among the reasons she created the McCamy Family Internship Endowment at Elon.





CAMPAIGN PRIORITY:

Mentors Who Matter

Elon nurtures powerful learning relationships between students and faculty and staff, connections that continue long after graduation. Gifts to this priority enable these mentors to create innovative courses and programs, advance teaching techniques and support research opportunities that enhance student learning.

John and Kristin Replogle P’18 of Raleigh, North Carolina, made a generous gift to establish the Elizabeth “Tate” Replogle Endowment for Team Teaching in Religious Studies in honor of their daughter, Tate, who graduated from Elon in 2018 with a degree in religious studies. The endowment will be used to support one course in the Department of Religious Studies each year that will be co-taught by two faculty members. Team teaching creates a dynamic and interactive learning atmosphere that offers students a variety of viewpoints from different perspectives.

The Replogles were impressed with the religious studies department, its faculty and the impact it had on their daughter. Kristin shared that as a student, Tate was heavily involved in the Elon Experiences engaged learning programs, especially undergraduate research, service learning and study abroad. She was a Periclean Scholar and traveled for studies to India, Greece and Africa.

Kristin and John served on Elon’s Parents Council, including a term as co-chairs, and are committed to staying involved with Elon. “We feel that the best is yet to come for Elon,” John says. “If you simply look at the trajectory of everything that’s occurring — its student-centered focus, the distinction it receives for all facets of learning and engaged learning, its national ranking, the pulse and feel on campus, the vision of the board and the strength of the leadership team.”



{ Kristin & John Replogle P’18 visiting daughter Tate Replogle ’18 in Albania, where she serves with the Peace Corps. }



{ Jess Burchett ’20 spent the summer of 2019 as an intern at Dark Pines Studio in Graham, N.C., where she gained a better understanding of electronics, acoustics and how they interact to best record a given instrument or sound. Jess graduated in May 2020 with a double major in music production and recording arts and psychology, with a minor in women’s, gender, and sexualities studies. }

“We are justifiably proud of Elon being recognized as a national model for engaged and experiential learning. What is even more impressive to me is Elon’s clear commitment to ensuring that opportunities for experiential learning are available to all students, which is why our family chose to support the internship program,” Mary Stuart says. “We know that early professional experience bolsters academic achievement, builds confidence and networks, and positively impacts career outcomes. Internships don’t just provide valuable experience and exposure; they have actually become prerequisites for employment in certain fields. We are grateful to have a small part in encouraging greater participation in the program.”

Mary Stuart, who is a member of Parents Council, also believes higher education and students need support now as society copes with a global pandemic. “Every institution has suffered a financial blow, particularly for students who may not have the opportunity to come back to campus or have to pursue employment sooner than they thought. The disruption for the institutions and students is something Elon has been very mindful of and that’s something I haven’t seen in other places. I’m impressed by that.”

{ Left: The Class of 2020 Honors Fellows engaging in service. }



CAMPAIGN PRIORITY:

Iconic Learning Environment

Elon is regularly recognized as one of the nation’s most beautiful environments for learning. Support from some of the university’s most generous donors has significantly expanded Elon’s campus. New investments in academic, residential and athletics facilities promote collaboration and spark bold ideas, creating a dynamic learning environment for all students.



{ The LaRose family: Gail LaRose '64, center, with son Scott & daughter Michelle, an Elon trustee. }

NEARLY 500,000 SQUARE FEET OF ACADEMIC, ATHLETIC AND STUDENT LIFE SPACE ADDED

- › School of Communications: Schar Hall, Steers Pavilion, Snow Family Grand Atrium, Citrone Plaza, Turner Theatre
- › Richard W. Sankey Hall
- › Schar Center
- › LaRose Student Commons
- › Koenigsberger Learning Center
- › The Inn at Elon



Whether it’s in a lab inside Sankey Hall or the Williams TV studio in the expanded School of Communications, on the court at Schar Center or in a study nook in the Koenigsberger Learning Center, students have plenty of spaces to engage with their curricular and extracurricular interests. New spaces like the LaRose Student Commons also provide room for students to connect with one another.

The Inn at Elon at a Glance

The Inn at Elon has captured the hearts of alumni, parents and friends who were inspired to make gifts in honor of their families, students or beloved faculty or staff mentors. The on-campus boutique hotel features 70 rooms, 10 suites, an upscale restaurant and lounge, and a ballroom, among other amenities. Many alumni and parents stepped forward to name rooms and other spaces at the inn, whose profits support student scholarships. Many naming opportunities remain as part of Elon LEADS.



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34 The number of capital gifts made to The Inn at Elon during fiscal year 2019-20

27 The number of rooms and suites at the inn named by alumni representing the Classes of 1953 to 2021



For **Christian Wiggins '03**, a first-generation college student who grew up in rural North Carolina, providing support for students was a driving factor for his gift. “The inn serves a population of students that might not have access to Elon otherwise and that’s important to me,” Christian says. “I knew the excitement surrounding the inn firsthand.” He serves as CEO of Farmhouse International Fraternity, as well as president of his own consulting firm, both based in Kansas City, Missouri. “I was really excited when I heard it would be a revenue generator for the university with those revenues going into scholarships for students. This was an opportunity to invest in something that pays off immediately,” he adds.



.....
“As an alumni couple, we were excited to have the opportunity to support The Inn at Elon. We look forward to staying there. We are also thrilled that our gift will help increase scholarship funding for future students. Elon has been instrumental in shaping our lives and we are proud to support our alma mater.”

— Mike '98 and Jaime '00 Proctor

Annual Giving — Every Gift Counts

2019-20 GIVING

\$18.7M

received

12,721

donors

1,153

Elon Society members

8,653

1889 Society members

The Elon community collectively steps up to the plate every day, with our donors making annual gifts to their favorite academic schools and departments, student organizations, sports, religious life groups or to Elon’s Greatest Needs and Elon Student Scholarships.



“Elon afforded so many opportunities for me to grow in leadership and grow professionally. As I’ve gotten older and our society has changed, my gift means more because it creates the opportunity for students who look like me to pursue their dreams despite social or economic disadvantages they may face.”

— Brandon Helton ’10, recurring donor to the Elon Black Alumni Scholarship

Caring For Our Community

“As a 2018 graduate, I know these are difficult times for Elon students. I hope this contribution can help. We are sure to come out on the other end stronger.”

—Nick Everage '18

“I was fortunate that my parents were granted the funds so they could go to college and create a good life for their family. I hope my gift helps in some small way.”

—Naeemah Clark, right, J. Earl Danieley Distinguished Professor of Cinema and Television Arts

When it became apparent that the spring 2020 semester was going to be finished remotely, and as the families of current and prospective students began to be affected financially by the COVID-19 pandemic, Elon turned to the **Chaplains Fund** to provide quick emergency help for things like flying students home from campus or their study abroad locations. In addition, Elon created a new fund, the **Students First Fund**, to ensure that those impacted would have the opportunity to return to or begin their Elon education in fall 2020. More than 280 Elon donors gave \$360,000, providing one-time grants to more than 100 students from all four class years.



Annual Giving — A Record-Breaking Day

The Elon family went all in on Thursday, March 5, to create even more opportunities for students as part of this annual day of giving. In total, Elon Day donors gave \$2.5 million (a new record!) and 6,199 gifts. Over the course of the day, five new endowed scholarships were also created.

“My love for this school grows every year, and I’m thankful for the fabulous education that two of my children received. Keep up the great work!”

—Laurie Roshfeld P’12 P’16, supported Elon student scholarships on Elon Day

“Thank you, Elon, for giving me a great education and a home for life.”

—David Joyner ’77

ELON DAY 03|05|20

Thank You for going “ALL IN” for Elon!

\$2,525,504
A NEW RECORD!

214 Campus Funds Impacted

45 Events with **3,000+** Attendees

5 NEW ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

NUMBER OF GIFTS
6,199

Planning Your Impact

Leaving a Legacy

Carl Allen III of Durham, North Carolina, made an estate gift to endow the **L. Carl Allen Jr. '48 and Louise C. Allen '47 Undergraduate Research Award** in honor of his parents, who met while they were students at Elon. Louise Allen, 93, lives in Durham; Carl Allen Jr. passed away in 2015.



Carl said he wanted to honor his parents for all they had done to support him and his three siblings in their lives. He thought it was appropriate to establish an endowment to help students gain access to one of the university's renowned engaged learning programs. The L. Carl Allen Jr. '48 and Louise C. Allen '47 Undergraduate Research Award will go to students with financial need with first preference for students from non-urban areas, as both of Carl's parents were from small rural towns in North Carolina.

Mentored undergraduate research is one of the five Elon Experiences. Undergraduate research is a high-impact and often career-defining program that allows students to participate in academic research with significant faculty mentoring. Students from across campus work with professors to develop scholarly research projects or create new works that are presented during spring and summer events on campus and at national conferences.

From Distribution to Dreams Realized

When it comes to loyal Elon alumni, **Don '60 and Glenda '61 Blalock P'92** have set the standard. The couple has a history of giving to their alma mater that stretches back more than 50 years — a rare and exceptional testament to their support for Elon.

Through their philanthropy, they created the Donald K. and Glenda I. Blalock Athletic Scholarship, which recognizes academic excellence. The couple, who direct their gifts through an IRA required minimum distribution, also supports Elon's Greatest Needs, a fund that provides scholarships for students.

"Elon was the background of our careers, we met some of our dearest and longtime friends, and we have continued to enjoy activities and programs that happen at Elon," says Glenda Blalock. "We were looking for a way to support Elon, and this was an opportunity to help. We wanted to provide an opportunity for deserving students to receive an education and establish lasting relationships."



Looking Ahead

Opportunities to continue engaging with alumni and parents

- **Stay connected!** We look forward to engaging with members of the Elon community in the coming year either virtually or in-person as conditions allow. Stay tuned to the Elon LEADS (elonleads.com), alumni (elon.edu/alumni) and parents (elon.edu/parents) websites, as well as the university's social media channels, to learn about upcoming events.
- **Be counted!** Everyone has a role in this campaign. Every gift to any designation counts as part of Elon LEADS and will help your university reach the historic \$250 million goal.



{ During 2019-20, eight regional Elon LEADS Campaign launch celebrations were held in Boston, Charlotte, N.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, Raleigh, N.C., San Francisco & Washington, D.C. }



Thank you for Making a Difference



Martin Beckelhymmer '22 is part of two strong campus cohorts. He is an Edward W. Doherty and Joan K. Doherty Odyssey Scholarship recipient and a founding hermano of Elon's chapter of Lambda Upsilon Lambda fraternity, which he achieved by being a driven, creative, independent thinker.

The entrepreneurship major and game design minor is a leader in the Innovation Living Learning Community (LLC) as well as chair of recruiting for his fraternity. Martin says co-founding the Elon provisional chapter of La Unidad Latina and creating a new space for Latinx students to be empowered and advanced is one of his greatest achievements thus far at Elon.

"My journey of discovery, both personal and professional, has improved my quality of life and given to me what I consider the most meaningful aspect of living — experiences," he says. "I reflect on the amazing experiences and growth I had in the past two years and stand in awe. I humbly thank you for investing in me."

"You are a major part of the reason that I will be graduating at the end of this academic year with degrees in both economics and philosophy, a drive to continue learning and very minimal debt. I am inspired by the generosity of donors such as yourself, who let the dreams of students like me come to life via a private college education through your donations. I am confident that once I am able to start making money for myself in my career, I will model the reciprocity that you have shown me throughout my college education. Again, thank you very much. I am forever grateful."

—**Alexa Rasmussen '21**, Odyssey Program Scholar



Checking facts is not enough

BY AMANDA STURGILL

It should not surprise you that sometimes, public figures are dishonest. It has always been that way, so fact checking is one of the very first lessons covered in journalism schools. Truth matters, and it's our job to get it right. We tell our students that repeatedly.

There's another kind of accuracy that matters, too, as public figures abuse logic and language to distract and confuse. And those who share news, whether paid reporters or people who retweet interesting things on their own accounts, need to be aware so they don't help deception to succeed.



It's a tough time to be in the truth business. In recent years, public figures have racked up falsehoods by the tens of thousands while shouting "fake news" to discourage journalists and audiences from questioning what they say. Dishonesty always happens, but the volume of falsehoods presented a real challenge. After an adjustment period, the media are getting better at pointing out factual errors in real time.

But getting it right is more than spelling the name correctly or making sure the percentages add up. It's more than just checking the facts: It includes spotting when people are manipulating the truth to try to deceive. These same public figures can make it seem like they are saying one thing when they are in fact saying another. In late September, a statement from White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany greeted a new tell-all book by saying, "Michael Cohen is a disgraced felon and disbarred lawyer, who lied to Congress. He has lost all credibility, and it's unsurprising to see his latest attempt to profit off of lies." It's true. Cohen was convicted of a felony and disbarred. That doesn't necessarily mean that the content of the book is false — even the boy who cried wolf was honest once, and it mattered. You have to evaluate the message itself, even if concerns about the messenger mean you give it a harder-than-normal look.

Public figures of all stripes use these kinds of deceptions. You may remember President Bill Clinton claiming his lying in a deposition was up for interpretation. "It depends on what your definition of is, is," he said, trying to use confusion about past and present to get out of consequences for his actions (it didn't work). He's far from the only politician to be slippery with language. President Lyndon Johnson was asked in 1970 if the country had sufficient funds to tackle both poverty and overseas interests. He replied that it was a bad argument because he could take care of both his daughters — a bad analogy for national budgeting.

Today, people arguing that athletes should play and students and teachers should fill classrooms during a pandemic note that the death rate from COVID-19 has declined. That's true. But there are other, meaningful impacts of the disease that fall short of death. It's deceptive to act as if those somehow do not matter. You also matter when it comes to deceptive arguments like these because of your potential role in continuing their spread. Research shows that most people get their news from social media, and personal referral through a share from a friend matters a lot. We also know that people often share links and summaries that they haven't actually read, driven by the emotion of the post or headline. A scathing insult of one public figure by another can make you want to share your outrage or your schadenfreude, depending upon if you agree with it. But you've really just spread a personal attack.

Public figures design their words to deceive and to encourage this kind of misinterpretation. So you, as a reader for yourself and as a publisher for your contacts, need to consider not just what they say, but what they mean. Always consider if a statement is based on good evidence before you repeat it. History shows public figures of all affiliations won't hold themselves to a higher standard. It's up to us to not repeat the deception. ♣

Amanda Sturgill is an associate professor of journalism at Elon's School of Communications.

Keeping Elon Strong

Dear fellow alumni,



In August, I found myself at the helm of a very different fall meeting for the Elon Alumni Board. With the session happening virtually, I realized how much I missed what would typically be a trip back to campus. There's just something special about walking those brick pathways and hearing the train roll by in the distance.

But not surprisingly, Elon delivered an experience — even virtually — that quickly reshaped my thinking. We engaged in productive discussions with President Connie Ledoux Book and other senior staff about topics that will shape Elon for generations to come. I learned more about the herculean efforts Elon made to bring students back to campus this fall as part of the Ready & Resilient plan (see page 13), while simultaneously launching 15 new diversity, equity and inclusion measures (see page 24). I felt pride in the hard work happening to keep Elon growing and rising for the students who are following in our footsteps.

I share all of this because I believe that Elon needs each of us to keep engaging with the university and with each other, even from afar. Like every lifelong relationship, our connection to Elon has its ups and downs. Yet in honor of everything Elon has and will continue to give me, I choose to lean in to keep Elon strong even in the difficult moments. *Especially* in the difficult moments.

I hope you'll consider leaning in, too. Attend a virtual event hosted by your regional alumni chapter. Join the professional network available at Lifelongelon.com. Reach out to your Elon classmates. Make a gift.

And one day, I look forward to being back on campus with all of you, walking Elon's brick pathways and hearing the train roll by in the distance, together.

Brian Scales '96

President, Elon Alumni Board

Phoenix Virtual 5K

Join the Phoenix Club Virtual 5K from Nov. 23–29!
Participation supports Elon student-athlete scholarships.
Learn more about how you can do good for yourself and for others at elonphoenix.com/5K.



Ready for 2021?

Start the New Year with an Elon calendar! Learn more at elon.edu/calendargift

alumni on the town



{ Pittsburgh }



{ San Francisco }

Beginning in mid-September, Elon's regional alumni chapters gathered virtually to welcome the Class of 2020 and relocated alumni to their city. Elon graduates had the opportunity to network with each other and hear from their regional chapter leadership about events and ways to stay engaged with Elon this upcoming year. Each region-based event was filled with tips and tricks about navigating and living in a new location, city-specific games and fun activities. Thank you to everyone who participated in your local Welcome to the City. Check out elon.edu/alumni for more upcoming events from your regional alumni chapter!

→ → → STAYING CONNECTED

In March, the Office of Alumni Engagement began hosting a series of virtual events with alumni participating from across the country. From professional development webinars to "Elon Jeopardy," these events keep alumni connected to each other and their alma mater!



Young Alumni Council Leadership Advance



The Young Alumni Council leadership team held its 2020-21 planning meeting with staff from the Office of Alumni Engagement in August to set the course for an exciting year. Committee leaders and the executive team were given updates on Elon's Ready & Resilient plan, the ELON LEADS Campaign and other university advancement initiatives. "While this year is going to bring many uncertainties," said YAC President **Darien Flowers '13** to close the meeting, "one of the few things I am certain of is this: YAC will be able to answer the call and assist Elon as it navigates this unique time."

Regional Alumni Chapter Retreat



{ Morgan O'Brien '16, president of the Boston Alumni Chapter, shares an update during the retreat }

Alumni leadership from 38 regional alumni chapters across the country and in London joined a Zoom video call July 18 to discuss plans for the upcoming fiscal year with staff members from the Office of Alumni Engagement. During the retreat, chapter presidents were able to meet as a large group, as well as in smaller break-out rooms, to talk about chapter goals. Additionally, the alumni brainstormed creative ideas on how to transition chapter events from the typical in-person format to mainly virtual this fall. A sincere thank you to the regional chapter leadership that participated in the retreat and for the dedication they provide in connecting Elon alumni in their city.

Regional Engagement



The alumni chapters in Baltimore and Washington, D.C., brought all the nostalgia to their region by co-hosting an Elon favorite event: Virtual Trivia Night at the Fat Frogg. With more than 50 alumni registered,

bar owner Jason Thomas Cat joined in on the fun serving as trivia host. In between each trivia round, a local barista provided cocktail demonstrations, recreating some of the famous drinks served at the bar including the ever-coveted Fat Frogg's Mind Eraser. Following trivia, alumni were led on a craft beer tasting as Baltimore Brews beer blogger **Anna Zwingelberg '18** profiled local brews registrants were able to purchase prior to the event. Thank you to all who joined and to the regional chapter leaders for hosting the event.



HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU

ELON ALUMNI

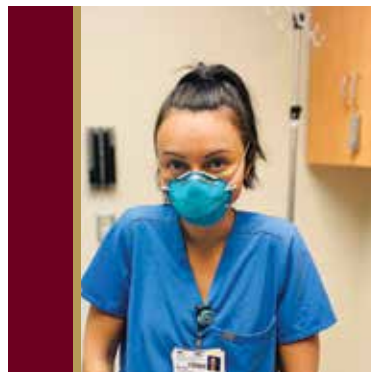
Throughout the pandemic, the Office of Alumni Engagement has shared stories of alumni who are doing important and uplifting work in their careers and their communities as part of the "Alumni in Action" series. As we close 2020, we look back at some of those stories.



Crafting the country's pandemic response

In his role as a senior public health adviser for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Emergency Operations Center in Atlanta, **Cedric Pulliam '12** finds himself often in virtual meetings with the White House task force on COVID-19, assisting leaders as they formulate plans to end the pandemic. "My hopes and aspirations for

how we get through this COVID-19 pandemic are that we make sound, smart and logical decisions. That means personal decisions backed by thinking things through and common sense," he says. "There are so many things we have to work on, and work on together so that we can keep people safe and healthy."



Providing care for the sick

As a registered nurse in the emergency room at the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C., **Nichole McCormick '18** faces the unknown every day, providing care for emergency room patients who require various levels of medical attention. Her job demands multitasking, time management and an empathetic mindset, all skills that have been

put to the test during the pandemic. "I feel like as ER nurses we always consider ourselves to be team players; however, COVID-19 has really made us step it up," she says. "It has pushed me to limits I didn't know were possible and I am so proud to have been a nurse during this time."

Know an Elon alum doing great work related to the COVID-19 pandemic or another important cause? Send their name to alumni@elon.edu.

EBAN Summit 2020

More than 80 members of the Elon Black Alumni Network came together to meet virtually on Sept. 26 for its annual fall summit. Topics included university updates and strategic planning within the network

that seek to expand access and resources available to Black students and alumni, as well as increasing recruitment efforts of Black students to Elon. The annual meeting also serves as an opportunity for Black alumni to ask questions to university administrators and provide direct feedback for future initiatives.

A number of senior Elon leaders spoke at the summit, including President Connie Ledoux Book, who shared updates about the university's ongoing plans for enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Additionally,



Jim Piatt, vice president of university advancement, discussed plans to triple the Black Alumni Scholarship endowment by 2025. This scholarship exists to help make an Elon education available to deserving Black students.

EBAN is an official affinity network under the Office of Alumni Engagement. Its purpose is to unite and represent the interests of Black alumni and strives to empower, connect and celebrate Elon's Black community.



CLASS NOTES

81 | **Cindy Simmons** retired from State Farm in April after 35 years of service in the states of Florida, Alabama and Georgia handling auto accident injury claims as a claims specialist. Cindy misses home so she plans to move back to North Carolina from Cumming, Ga.

91 | After 28 years as an elementary school classroom teacher, **Lisa Olgers Witt** started the 2020-21 school year as the instructional designer at Matoaca Elementary School in Virginia's Chesterfield County Public Schools. In that position, she supports teachers in developing and implementing student-engaged assessment practices and customizing the curriculum to meet student needs while using technology to leverage instruction, personalize learning and promote student agency. She lives in Sutherland.

99 | **John Bryant** has been named the next superintendent of Henderson County Public Schools in North Carolina. He starts his new role Dec. 1. An advocate for public education in his community and statewide, John is a member of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators, Personnel Administrators of North Carolina, School Superintendents Association, North Carolina High School Athletics Association, Kappa Delta Pi education honor society and Sigma Tau Delta international English honor society. He and wife **Lisa Bryant '97** live in Hendersonville. • **Emily Matesic** and husband



57 | **Eddie Bridges** has been recognized by the Greensboro, N.C., News & Record with one of 2020's "7 Over Seventy" awards in recognition of his work as a leading advocate for the great outdoors. He is the founder of the N.C. Wildlife Habitat Foundation, a nonprofit that has supported dozens of conservation projects as a cost-sharing partner with donors. A former member of Elon's football and track and field teams, he was inducted into the N.C. Sports Hall of Fame in 2019. He lives in Greensboro.

Adam Rockman welcomed son Adam on 10/4/19. Emily is the Fox Valley bureau chief for WBAV-TV, the ABC affiliate in Green Bay, Wis. The family lives in De Pere.

00 | **Ariene Dennis Bethea** was featured in the September issue of Essence magazine. The story highlighted Ariene's business, Dressing Rooms Interiors Studio, a vintage home furnishing boutique she launched in 2011 in Charlotte, N.C. • **Kellie Stansbury** is happy to report that Ellie, the Elon sapling she planted on her family's 500-acre rice and soybean farm south of Abbeville, La., after graduation, has survived yet another hurricane. In late August, Ellie endured 150 mph winds and storm surges from Hurricane Laura and also survived the ravages of Hurricane Rita, which devastated the surrounding area in 2005. Kellie is an elementary school teacher at Wildwood Elementary. She lives in Baton Rouge.

07 | In May, **Melanie Goergmaier {MBA}** received her doctoral degree in international studies from the University of Miami in Florida, where she works as associate director, research associate, editor and program consultant for the European Union Center and Jean Monnet Chair. She looks forward to connecting with fellow Elon alumni as she embarks on this new opportunity. • **Ryan Andrew Newson** recently published a new book, "Cut in Stone: Confederate Monuments and Theological Disruption." The book, which was published by Baylor University Press, explores the theological impact of Confederate monuments. Ryan is an assistant professor of theology and ethics at Campbell University. He is the author and editor of several books that explore the interconnections between Christian theology and politics. He lives in Raleigh, N.C., with his wife and two children.

ALUMNI ALBUM



John Bryant '99



Emily Matesic '99, Adam Rockman & children



Kellie Stansbury '00 & her Elon sapling, Ellie

PAYING IT FORWARD

BY CAROLINE DIFRANGO '23


This past summer, **Robert Danis '16** joined his father, George, and brother, Joe, to complete the 2020 Pan-Massachusetts Challenge (PMC), a fundraising bike-a-thon that benefits the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

But the Danis family's involvement with the challenge did not begin there. Robert, a cancer survivor, first learned about the PMC 10 years ago, when a team reached out to him and asked him to be their pedal partner. Since then, George has completed the challenge every year in honor of his son.

This year, Robert felt it was his turn to join the ride. After seeing people wearing shirts saying "Commit, you'll figure it out" at the race each year, Robert decided it was finally time to put that saying into action. After all, 2020 marked his dad's 10th ride and 10 years since his last cancer treatment. "It seemed like a perfect fit," Robert says.

Diagnosed with lymphoma in July 2009, Robert spent more than two years receiving extensive chemotherapy and radiation treatment from the Jimmy Fund Clinic at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Children's Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. So on Christmas Day 2019, he gifted his father a letter, committing himself to riding alongside him this summer.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the official PMC could not happen as they had hoped. That did not stop the Danises, who decided to participate in the reimagined challenge and biked by themselves. While the mental preparation for the race was no



{ Joe, George & Robert '16 Danis pose for a photo after completing the 2020 Pan-Massachusetts Challenge this summer. }

challenge for Robert, the physical aspect of training was another story. "Living in Boston, I quickly realized that it would be difficult to go on 20-plus-mile training rides throughout the city," he said, "so I started looking around at nearby bike trails and found the Minuteman Bikeway trail, which spans Alewife to Bedford and lasts 10 miles each way."

PMC has been a huge part of Robert's healing process. Seeing his dad train and ride each year, he says, has been a constant reminder of how lucky he is to have had a successful treatment. At the same time, it is a reminder there is much work ahead to find a cure. "My ride this summer was, in a way, for everyone who helped me along the way, whether it be doctors, nurses, my family, etc.," he says. "It seemed like the least I could do to raise money and spread awareness of a great event like the PMC.

"It was also for the patients that I got to know during my two-plus-year treatment, some who are with us today, and some who aren't." ♣

ALUMNI ALBUM



Melanie Goergmaier G '07



Ryan Andrew Newson '07



Adam Leonard '08 & Lesley-Anne Lamb

ALUMNI ALBUM



Troy Carlton '09



Brian Gibbons '09



Ben Smith '09 & Eric Hale '11

08 **Adam Leonard** is happy to announce he got engaged to Lesley-Anne Lamb on Valentine's Day. He lives in Winston-Salem, N.C., where he works as studio manager for Wake Forest School of Business.

09 **Troy Carlton** received his doctoral degree in sport management from N.C. State University this spring. He now works as an assistant professor of sport management at Catawba College. He and wife **Marella '08** live in Salisbury with their three children. • **Brian Gibbons** was named an associate with Hermes, Netburn, O'Connor & Spearing P.C. in the spring. As part of the firm's litigation group, which is based in Boston, Brian represents businesses and insurers in insurance coverage, product liability, toxic tort and professional liability claims. • **Ben Smith** and **Eric Hale '11** went on a summer trip together. They visited seven national parks and took photos of stunning vistas while wearing their

Elon gear. Ben is a teacher at Peabody School in Charlottesville, Va. They are both members of the Elon LGBTQIA Alumni Network. • **Coral Zayas** received a master's degree in education with a concentration in learning design and technology from Purdue University. She has started a new position as the dual language social studies and intro to STEM teacher for the new program at Danielson Middle School in Austin's Leander Independent School District in Texas. She is also a 2020-21 Teach Plus Ready to Lead Fellow working to start an affinity group of minority teachers to address recruitment and retention of teachers of color in the Austin metro area. She lives in Georgetown.

10 **Angela Sparrow McKeand** and husband Timothy McKeand welcomed son James on 1/20/20. Angela is a registered nurse at UNC Rex Healthcare. The family lives in Raleigh, N.C.

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{ An exterior shot of Powell Building and the wall that surrounded campus in 1976. }

CLOSING THE

GAP

A group of Elon Law alumni have big plans for a small nonprofit that serves clients who can't afford traditional legal fees but aren't eligible for Legal Aid or help from the Office of the Public Defender.

BY ERIC TOWNSEND

It's known as the "justice gap." Millions of Americans earn enough income each year to avoid indigency but not enough to hire quality legal help for everyday civil and criminal matters. Given the confluence of current events, from a global pandemic to spikes in unemployment to a reinvigorated push for racial justice in the wake of police violence against the Black community, the gap only shows signs of widening. Yet a small group of Elon Law alumni are looking to bridge that chasm in the form of Triad Legal Group Inc., a nonprofit general practice law firm formerly known as Gate City Legal Services that resides on the ninth floor of Greensboro's Self-Help Building.

Founded by **Daniel Karlsson L'16** and **Lauren Jeffries L'10**, the firm is today led by Karlsson as executive managing director and **Sharon Dunmore L'17** as director and chief executive officer. Recent hires include attorney **Je'Vonne Knox L'19** and **Michelle Scott L'19**, the firm's practice manager. Ryan Hargrave, a former Guilford County assistant district attorney, completes the team. Their business model is rare in the legal profession. Rather than charge set hourly rates, Triad Legal Group assesses a client's income before determining fees on a sliding scale. The team only provides services to clients earning up to 400 percent of the federal poverty level.

"We have to be conscious of our role in society," Dunmore said. "There's a privilege that comes with our status as attorneys. The people we're helping need to know we're not so different from them. Aside from our suits, we have a lot of similarities with them, and we want to make sure they can navigate the system with the right tools." The justice gap that inspires the firm's work is the growing population in North Carolina of those who live and work in a community but can't afford more conventional law firms for civil matters like child custody. Divorce. Immigration. Even traffic tickets or criminal charges, which the firm also manages. According to a 2017 report from the Legal Services Corporation, 86 percent of the civil legal problems reported by low-income Americans received inadequate or no legal help.

"I fell in love with the idea of providing a needed service," Karlsson said of his motivation three years ago to help launch what

is now Triad Legal Group. "Even cases with things like divorce and child custody — I'm not talking complex litigation — many people just don't have a place to go."

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced much of the nation to shut down in March, Triad Legal Group was no exception. Upon reopening, the attorneys started offering free consultations for all clients, no questions asked. They were able to do so through a grant from the Greensboro Virus Relief Fund due to the firm's nonprofit status. The attorneys also stayed true to core values over the summer by offering free legal representation to nearly two dozen clients arrested during Black Lives Matter protests. Bringing about systemic change drives much of how attorneys approach their roles as advocates for marginalized communities and the working class.

"It's a crisis situation. You have police brutality, questionable deaths at the hands of police, people who are upset and feel betrayed by the system," Karlsson said. "This goes lockstep with our mission. It's the least we can do." The firm has established a de facto pipeline from Elon Law. Four of its five staff members are alumni, and it hosted four interns from the law school this summer. Knox was hired after completing her residency in-practice with the firm and Scott had interned with the nonprofit during her studies. "I appreciate having Elon Law students in the office," Dunmore added. "I want them to get the opportunities that Dan and I sometimes wish we had been able to get. We like to see ourselves as an extension of the practical learning the law school already provides."

For all involved, working for a nonprofit law firm with a strategic plan to expand on the coast, in the mountains and in Charlotte, where a federal immigration court is located, brings countless personal rewards. "A lot of people who come to us already contacted several other firms and couldn't afford them, or the firms didn't have the manpower and resources to take on the case for the price clients were able to pay," Scott said. "I get satisfaction knowing that we can help who we can, especially once they went elsewhere and were told no, and we're able to say, 'yes, we can help.'" 🌱



{ Michelle Scott L'19, Ryan Hargrave, Sharon Dunmore L'17 & Daniel Karlsson L'16 comprise Triad Legal Group. }

PHOTO: VANDERVEEN

ALUMNI ALBUM



Coral Zayas '09



Angela Sparrow McKeand '10, Timothy McKeand & son James



Luke Gillenwater G '11



Gregory "Carl" Hairston Jr. '11 G'15 & Veronica Hairston



Michael Nachajski '11, Katie Vitiello Nachajski '13 & friends



Jeremy Ray G '11



Theresa Helmer '12 was named Disney Channel's executive director of integrated content strategy and development, a newly created position responsible for helping spotlight underrepresented groups in its content for kids ages 2 to 14. Helmer will serve on the channel's senior leadership team and report to Gary Marsh, president and CCO of Disney Channels Worldwide. In her role, the Elon alumna will collaborate with internal departments at Disney Channel and divisions within it like Disney Television Animation. She will also work with the marketing team to broaden the presence of underrepresented communities in the channel's content. Theresa began her career at Disney in 2014 as a social media analyst for parks and resorts, and has been promoted to various executive roles, most recently director of social media strategy in Disney Channel's marketing group. She also served two years as co-president of The Bond, which serves as the steward for Black/African American employees and Black consumer interests at the company.

TURN YOURSELF IN!



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elon.edu/classnotes

Lifting up UNDERREPRESENTED VOICES

BY OWEN COVINGTON

During their senior year at Elon, **Kelsea Johnson '17** and **Kyle Porro '17** teamed up as Student Government Association leaders to advocate for their fellow students. Now they are collaborating again — this time to help lift up the voices of underrepresented populations through their publishing venture, Stirred Stories.

Launched in 2019, the nascent publishing company released its first work, "The Grocery Game," in the spring. Penned by classmate **Tori Murphy '17** and her grandmother, Theodora Smiley Lacey, the children's book is available online and is expected to be the first in a wide variety of works in various genres and coming from multiple perspectives. "Our real mission comes from a belief that the publishing industry is stagnant, and there is a lot of room for improvement by stirring things up," said Porro, who served as executive president of SGA at Elon and recently graduated from New England Law | Boston.

Johnson, who works in political communications in Washington, D.C., says the name of their publishing house is "catchy, but with a purpose," noting that "we have always said that the same stories keep being told repeatedly, and that's one of the things we're trying to address."

Johnson and Porro met during their first year at Elon as residents of the Global Neighborhood, and became more connected through their work with student government. The pair remained connected following graduation, in part due to discussions they had while still at Elon about the lack of representation of a diverse array of cultures in the media.

Plans began to take shape during the summer of 2018 and by early spring 2019, Stirred Stories had solidified as a concept. They started by soliciting ideas from friends and members of the public for books without limitations on the type of work. "The biggest thing for us is to make sure it



aligns with our mission to uplift narratives that don't receive mainstream attention," Johnson said.

That led them to Murphy, who teaches preschool in New York City. She saw a Facebook post from Porro about Stirred Stories looking for authors, and it

seemed like a perfect avenue for a book she had been working on with her grandmother, who taught for more than 40 years. The pair had been talking for some time about writing a children's book together.

They decided to focus on the questions that kids ask in "The Grocery Game," a story about a child called Maya at the store with her grandmother playing a game of "what if." The story speaks to the value that variety and diversity bring to the world, with Maya finally asking, "What if all people in the whole world looked just the same?" to which her grandmother responds, "You would miss what makes each of us unique, and wouldn't that be a shame?"

Murphy said it's been an amazing experience to work with her grandmother, who was born and raised in Montgomery, Alabama, and was active in the Civil Rights Movement.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced Stirred Stories to shift its plans to release "The Grocery Game." Instead of a traditional release of a print version of the book, Stirred Stories released the book online for free in May, in large part so that parents and teachers could take advantage of it as a resource for children and students during such a challenging time. Strong initial response from teachers in particular is laying the groundwork for a release of a print edition later this year. "We just wanted to have the story out there for people to enjoy," Porro said. "Our hope is to really create this publishing universe that offers authentic and genuine stories that society can really benefit from."

Visit stirredstories.com to learn more. ✎

11 **Gregory "Carl" Hairston Jr.** {MBA'15} and Veronica Hairston were married 11/2/19. Alumni in attendance included **Bernard Faulk '79**, **Lisa Foster Faulk '80**, **Latwoia Belk '07**, **Roy Belk '08**, **Peyton Hairston III '09**, **James Williams '09**, **Keadrick Peters '10**, **Don Marshall**, **Jasmine Spencer**, **Evan Glover '12**, **Brandon McGee '12**, **Deanna Fox '13**, **Courtland Garrett '13**, **Kyle Graham '14**, **Shelby McKay '14**, **Danny Sellers '14**, **Aiyana Williams '14**, **Dave Williams '14**, **Kristopher Jiles '15** and **Kennedy Ojimadu '17**. Carl is the associate director of athletics at North Carolina A&T State University. He and Veronica live in Greensboro, N.C. • As attorneys for the North Carolina General Assembly, **Luke Gillenwater {LAW}** and **Jeremy Ray {LAW}** assisted state lawmakers this spring with bipartisan legislation aimed at countering the economic and public health damage caused by COVID-19. Luke, an attorney in the bill drafting division, assists lawmakers who request his expertise in writing legislation. A legislative analyst for both chambers, Jeremy is among those who help lawmakers rewrite legislation debated in committee. He is primarily assigned to committees that handle legislation affecting insurance, administrative law and unemployment in North Carolina. • **Michael Nachajski** and **Katie Vitiello '13** were married 3/14/20 in Raleigh, N.C., surrounded by many of their Elon friends. They live in Malvern, Pa.

12 **Ashley Fulkerson** and Trey Erb were married 3/21/20. While the pandemic forced them to drastically change their plans, Ashley is thankful they were still able to take pictures on Elon's campus before their ceremony. They live in Bryn Mawr, Pa. • **Elise Lake** and **Alex Lake '13** welcomed daughter Adelaide Skelly Lake on 5/7/19. Elise is a freelance strategic communicator and serves on Elon's Young Alumni Council, and Alex is a consumer insights consultant at Numerator. The family lives in Bentonville, Ark. • **Anthony Schifano** and **Mackenzie Conley '16** were married 9/14/19 surrounded by many of their Elon friends. Anthony is a certified financial planner with Northwestern Mutual and Mackenzie is a research associate with TRC Companies. They live in St. Louis.

13 Philip Anderson served on a panel hosted by the international company TeaLeaves in September that discussed innovative journalism through The Outlaw Ocean Music Project. Launched by New York Times reporter Ian Urbina, the initiative uses film and music to create new forms of journalism and promote stories to a wider audience. Philip is a composer and lives in Atlanta. • Janice Spearbeck and Stephen Gheysens were married 11/2/19 in Arlington, Va. Alumni in attendance included Dan Hanson '05, Kristin Simonetti Hanson '05, Rachel Horne Wanke '09, Jessica Dobyms Gray '11, Andrew Glass '12, Dan Henke '12, Cecilia Smith Amick,

Genevieve D'Cruz, Darien Flowers, Kirsten Ferreira Flowers, Alye Villani Kelly, Amy Kenney, Jessica Simermeyer, Lindy Terry '14 and Aly Yarwood '15. Janice is a realtor with Remax Getaway. They live in Arlington, Va. • In September, Jeffrey Williamson {INTERACTIVE MEDIA '14} started as the digital media manager at Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C. In this role, he works directly with the Office of the President, Public Relations and the Office of Institutional Advancement. Earlier in the year, his wedding photography was highlighted in Out magazine as part of a story about how gay weddings are boosting the state economy. Jeffrey is the owner of Jeffrey Lynn Media Photography.



15 After joining the Alamance County Health Department temporarily as a contact tracer in the spring to reach out to residents who tested positive for COVID-19, Shelby Smith is now the communicable disease coordinator for the department. In that role, she handles the department's response to diseases such as rabies, gastrointestinal disorders and COVID-19. Shelby also oversees a contact tracing suite, helps lead the department's response to outbreaks and offers guidance to K-12 schools, universities and businesses about how to proceed during the pandemic.

ALUMNI ALBUM



Ashley Fulkerson '12 & Trey Erb



Elise Lake '12, Alex Lake '13 & daughter Adelaide Skelly



Antonio Schifano '12, Mackenzie Conley Schifano '16 & friends



Janice Spearbeck Gheysens '13, Stephen Gheysens & friends



Jeffrey Williamson '13 G'14



Ali Thomas '14

14 **Ali Thomas** was among the St. Matthew's School elementary teachers in Virginia Beach who returned to in-person teaching this fall. She was interviewed by her local CBS-affiliate TV station, 3WTKR, in August about teaching in the time of COVID-19.

15 **Ryan Hurley** and **Liz Whelan** were married 8/23/19. Alumni in attendance included **Julia Basiliere, Elizabeth Bassett, Dylan Brock, Abby Dean, Sara Devinney, Erica Martin, Carolyn Moore, Tyler Parrott, Nick Ramsey, Matt Roberts, Sarah Smith** and **Kara Soler-Sala**. Ryan and Liz live in Boston. • **Madison Margeson** and **Wiley Marsteller** were married 2/22/20 surrounded by many of their Elon friends, including a group of Rip_Chord a cappella alumni

who performed a short song at the reception. Alumni in the wedding party included bridesmaids **Lindsay Marshall** and **Teresa Kuhns '16** and groomsmen **Bert Brokaw '13** and **Adam Salaymeh '16**. Other alumni in attendance included **Chase Pitman '13, David Cardoze '14, Katie Cardoze '14, Jessie Berman, Julia Denick, Lizzy Lykens, Bridget Moffet, Katie Perez, Alison Ryncarz, Victoria Selover, Matt Kleyla '16, Becca Pierpont '16** and **Maddi Roberts '16**. Madison is an account manager with Dell Technologies and Wiley is an account manager with Brooksource. They live in Charlotte, N.C.

16 **Caleigh Fidler** and **Kevin Blum** were married 5/18/18. Alumni in attendance included **Clare Burton, Margaux Holly,**

Caela Shay, Marissa Garst Costner '17 and **Molly Sweeney '17**. Caleigh is an elementary school teacher. She and Kevin live in Charlotte, N.C. • **Adam Gill** and **Theresa Gilligan** were married 9/20/19 in Charlotte, N.C. **Noah Sakin '16** officiated the wedding. Alumni in the bridal party included **Derek Scully '14, Sam Ackerman, Miriam Eltus Cummings, Robbie Linklater, Colby Meagle, Jeremy Recoon, Kerianne Doran Zenobio** and **Julia Guilfoyle '17**. Other alumni in attendance included **David Campbell '13, Rachel Southmayd Campbell '13, Nick Kurtz '14, Kyra Gemberling Molinaro '14, Tyler Molinaro '14, Jason Puckett '14, Chase Strom '14, Lexi Stones Strom '14, Alexandra Kipp '15, Evan "Herbie" Lutvak '15, Caitlyn Balkcum, Eric Goding, Amy Livingston, Lindsey McCay, Jacob Penn,**

Becca Johnson '17, Nathan Pool '17, Chelsea Weber '17, Emily Ambrose '18 and **Alex Gambini '19.**

17 In April, **Andreas J. Mosby {LAW} {MBA '19}** joined Barnwell Whaley Patterson & Helms, LLC as an associate attorney. His law practice concentrates in the areas of business law, civil litigation and commercial litigation in both North and South Carolina through the firm's offices in Wilmington and Charleston, respectively.

19 **Mollie Richter** recently joined the U.K.-based marketing team for the short film "19 Covid Lane," which was created during quarantine and is raising money to provide relief to individuals affected by the virus. She lives in Canton, Conn. ☘

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ALUMNI ALBUM



Ryan Hurley '15, Liz Whelan Hurley '15 & friends



Caleigh Fidler Blum '16 & friends



Adam Gill '16, Theresa Gilligan '16 & friends



Andreas J. Mosby G '17 G'19

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YOURSELF
IN!**



elon.edu/classnotes

IN MEMORIAM

Oscie M. Glass '34,
Potterville, Calif., 7/5/20.

Ernest A. Koury Sr. '40
P'82 GP'11 GP'18,
Burlington, N.C., 7/24/20.
Ernest served on Elon's board of trustees from 1976 until 1996, when he was elected trustee emeritus. The recipient of the Elon Medallion in 1997, he was granted an honorary doctorate from Elon in 2001. The Ernest A. Koury Sr. Business Center is named in his honor.

William "Bill" O'Connor '42
P'73 P'75 P'81 P'86,
Boca Raton, Fla., 1/3/20.

Elizabeth "Lib" Holland Claytor '46,
Shelby, N.C., 4/5/20.

Jane Langston '48,
Fern Park, Fla., 7/15/20.

William "Bill" Armstrong '50,
Virginia Beach, Va., 4/18/20.

Burley Walter Dunn '50 P'83,
Roxboro, N.C., 7/1/20.

The Rev. Hugh "Reid" Montgomery Sr. '50,
Davidson, N.C., 4/21/20.

Lester A. Foster Jr. '51,
Baltimore, Md., 6/7/20.

William Andrew Hopkins '51,
Annapolis, Md., 1/29/20.

Sherrill Hall '55 GP'08 GP'12,
Greensboro, N.C., 8/30/20.
Sherrill, who served the university for 35 years as a member of its board of trustees, was elected trustee emeritus in 2006. He was one of the founding members of Elon's Planned Giving Council in 1996 and was a lifetime supporter of Elon athletics.

Phil Norman Carter '56,
Hickory, N.C., 5/24/20.

Maurice Jennings '57 P'87 GP'13 GP'18,
Greensboro, N.C., 9/19/20. Maurice chaired Elon's Presidential Board of Advisers in the mid-1970s before joining the board of trustees in 1978. He became trustee emeritus in 1998. A lifelong Elon supporter, he was the founder of Biscuitville. He received the Elon Medallion in 2006.

William "Bill" Monroe Ray '57,
High Point, N.C., 4/15/20.

Loretta Hilliard Allen-Adams '61,
Fairfax, Va., 5/18/20.

J.C. Turner '61,
Roseville, Mich., 4/1/20.

Max B. Clayton '62,
Myrtle Beach, S.C., 5/6/20.

Florence "Lou" Moore Spitzner '65,
Mebane, N.C., 7/20/20.

Samuel Maurice Litton '66,
Mt. Pleasant, S.C., 6/6/20.

Samuel Murray Rankin III '67,
Reston, Va., 6/8/20.

Charles VanLear '68,
Roanoke, Va., 5/18/19.

Martha S. Johnson '69,
Alexandria, Va., 4/2/20.

Martha Holt-Moffitt '70,
Mebane, N.C., 1/18/11.

The Rev. C. L. Homer Frye '70,
Mebane, N.C., 6/20/20.

Charlene Draper Horton '74,
Hurdle Mills, N.C., 5/22/20.

David Habern MacMillan '77,
Norfolk, Va., 4/8/20.

John Nicholas Thompson '77,
Greensboro, N.C., 6/8/20.

John Barry "Mitch" Meacham '84,
Burlington, N.C., 6/6/20.

Mary Kelly Swim '85,
Greensboro, N.C., 4/5/20.

Fredrik "Clay" Forsberg '88,
Norfolk, Va., 4/10/20.

Mary Lancaster Young '88,
Graham, N.C., 5/1/20.

Michael B. McCurdy '89,
Salisbury, N.C., 5/6/20.

Jeffrey "Jeff" Alan Cook '90,
Burlington, N.C., 7/29/20.

Michael A. Duggins '92,
Salisbury, Md., 4/29/20.

Maurice D. Vezina '93,
Wilmington, N.C., 6/11/17.

Brian Bogle '98,
Hickory, N.C., 7/26/20.

William Boone Dixon '04,
Maryville, Tenn., 5/21/20.

Cameron McGlenn '11,
Charlotte, N.C., 5/6/20.

Hannah Hartman '17,
Raleigh, N.C., 5/17/20.

ELON ENGAGED

The fall semester was not what most students expected due to the pandemic, but they managed to make the most of it with the help of their faculty mentors.



“ I am extremely thankful to be in person for dance classes, which are hands down my favorite kind of classes to take at Elon. Dance is just a great way to express emotion, and even if I begin the class in a sluggish mood, I end up feeling accomplished and good about myself by the end.”

— **Hannah Giessler '23**, a double major in psychology and dance performance and choreography, practicing ballet on a barre striped with tape markers for social distancing under the instruction of Associate Professor of Dance Jen Guy Metcalf



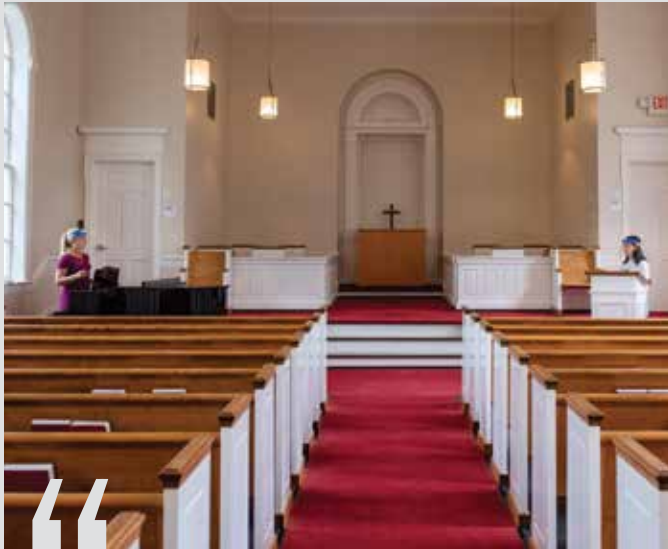
“ Being back in person this fall brings back the feeling of a home away from home. The community and the atmosphere are things I believe are unique to Elon University, and I know that in the future, I could never forget about this experience that I have been blessed with.”

— **Kayla Liles '22**, working with a partner to test and evaluate heart rates in her exercise science lab with Assistant Professor of Exercise Science Titch Madzima



“ As an engineering student, being able to learn via hands-on work is of the utmost importance to me. I learn best via in-class participation and group projects, and that's why I believe engineering labs are so beneficial. It's one thing to learn an equation but to actually witness the equation at work in reality allows us to gain a complete understanding of a physical principle.”

— **Henry Chance '21**, center, adjusting the airfoil of a flow visualization channel device in Assistant Professor of Engineering Jonathan Su's fluid mechanics lab



“
Even with the face shields and maintaining our distance, the energy and focus from an in-person voice lesson cannot be replicated remotely.”

— **Sarah Poythress '22**, right, a vocal performance major, during a recent voice lesson with Gretchen Bruesehoff, adjunct instructor in music, at Holt Chapel



I enjoy being challenged by new topics in computer science, and it's a field where there's always something new to learn. Therefore, the main benefit of having in-person classes this semester is that I can easily reach out to my peers for advice and guidance. This aspect of in-person learning is very important to me.”

— **Thomas Poteat '22**, checking the path he programmed for the robot he built in his robotics class



“
It's always a joy to get to work with Dr. Hamel in person, and I learn so much from her when we meet for scouting trips to search for insects. In biology labs, I get to apply the knowledge I learned in lecture to a hands-on experience investigating animal behavior.”

— **Rebecca Carranza '22**, right, examining and sorting insect specimens with Associate Professor of Biology Jen Hamel in a lab in McMichael Science Center



“
Being able to attend classes in person has been a breath of fresh air, and it's difficult to imagine having to learn production virtually. Film has always been my passion, and the iMedia program is the building block that will help me achieve my goals.”

— **Jasmine Simmons G'21**, spending a sunny afternoon in Elon's Historic Neighborhood working with a classmate on how to record video for their class

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PHOTO: WILLEM BUTLER '22

{ Candace Rhodes '24 takes part in the Department of Performing Arts' inaugural all-Black cabaret, "The Moment," in October. Through the lenses of Black artists, the virtual performance questioned how the performing arts can be transformed, deconstructed and rebuilt. Music theatre major Kamal Lado '21 provided artistic direction with the help of Kevin Lacey '21, Jaelyn Alexander '22, Hannah Hubbard '22 and Zion Middleton '23. Assistant Professor of Cinema & Television Arts Jason McMerty '00 and students in Elon's Master of Arts in Interactive Media program also provided assistance. }