Miami born and bred, Mario Cristobal learned tenacity and the value of hard work from his Cuban-born parents. ‘Canes fans are hoping he can impart some of that no-excuses ethos to the football program.
Home Run Hires

Mario Cristobal and Dan Radakovich, both alumni, have come back to Miami. And with their respective roles as football head coach and director of athletics, the dynamic duo have a huge task to tackle.

Cervical Cancer and the WHO

In its fight to eliminate cervical cancer, the World Health Organization has chosen Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center as a lead partner.

Ever Brighter

A $20 million gift, part of Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century, has helped to create the Desai Sethi Urology Institute, which will facilitate discoveries and treatments for urological disease.

Climate Change

The new Climate Resilience Academy provides an instructional and research hub that will help deliver solutions to address issues related to the climate crisis and sustainability.

In Solidarity with Ukraine

The University community expresses its solidarity and support as the war continues, and many have opened their hearts as they hope for peace to return to the region.
Exhibit Pays Homage to First Black Graduates

Using one of the three kiosk screens of UTrailblazers Experience, Roxane Pickens, librarian assistant professor, engages with the archival material on the University’s first Black graduates.

Located in the Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. Brezeway at the Dooly Memorial Classroom Building, The Taylor Family/UTrailblazers Experience features an interactive three-screen kiosk with touchscreen technology that allows users to scroll through hundreds of photographs, documents, newspaper articles, film footage, bios, and other historical artifacts related to the years just after the University’s Board of Trustees voted in 1961 to admit qualified students without regard to race or color.

“The first Black graduates of this institution probably didn’t consider themselves pioneers, but they were. This exhibit is a way of looking back in history to honor them, to show appreciation for the path they ultimately paved for not only people like me but also current and future generations of students,” says Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., B.S.C. ’89, vice chair of the University’s Board of Trustees.

Their efforts evolved into the First Black Graduates Project, which later became known as UTrailblazers. Taylor, who is president and CEO of the Washington, D.C.-based Society for Human Resource Management, stepped forward with a donation to turn the dream of a permanent memorial into a reality. His gift is part of Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century.

The University will commemorate the exhibit’s opening and honor the enduring contributions of the Black community at a special event on the Coral Gables Campus on Aug. 26-27, 2022.

At an exhilarating exhibition space and with participation in a multiplicity of events at the eMerge Americas technology conference, the University showcased its expansive expertise and commitment to transforming lives through education, research, innovation, and service.

Tech innovations such as a seawall that dissipates the energy of dangerous waves, goggles that diagnose eye diseases, and a drone that can map thousands of acres in only days were among the projects on display at the University booth, a centerpiece of the sea of kiosks at the two-day industry conference held in April on Miami Beach.

A wide number of University faculty members and students were on hand at the interactive exhibition space to explain their research. And the work and efforts of many others—such as "Cane Angel Network, which unites entrepreneurs and investors from the University community to provide startups with early-stage funding and a network of advisors—were showcased.

The moderated conversation “Miami at the Intersection of Tech and Democracy,” hosted by President Julio Frenk and in conjunction with the Knight Foundation, opened the first conference day at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

The conversation convened entrepreneurs, legal experts, and luminaries to discuss how to harness the power of technology to strengthen democracy, especially in the Americas. Yelena Yesha, professor and chief innovation officer of the University’s Institute for Data Science and Computing; Jane Teueli Dreyer, professor of political science; and Rony Abovitz, tech entrepreneur and double alumnum, participated in the dialogue.

“It’s the moment to act decisively and create a coalition that proposes the use of technology unleashed with respect for human rights,” Frenk said during the session, “so that it strengthens, elevates, and empowers and becomes a means to solve the complex challenges humanity faces rather than a tool for exacerbating divisions of discrimination, oppression, and inequality.”

Frenk also was a part of the panel “The Future of Education Is Being Shaped by Tech and Innovation,” where together with other university and college presidents he highlighted the University’s shift to a hybrid learning model during the COVID-19 outbreak.

At a separate conference event co-hosted by the Miami Herbert Business School, Jeffrey Duerk, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost, presided over the inaugural Hemispheric University Consortium Social Ideas Challenge.

Teams from six consortium member universities representing Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and the United States were finalists in the competition. Their projects addressed such topics as human trafficking awareness, water purification and rainwater harvesting systems, an AI chatbot for career advancement, and sustainable farming education.—Robert C. Jones Jr. and Michael R. Malone
The University continues to expand its academic programs, research opportunities, and campus life experience for new students, including live-learn communities in the residential colleges that further enhance student learning and engagement.

With more than 2,700 first-year students enrolled at the University in fall of 2021, making it the largest first-year class. International student enrollment also increased during the 2021-22 academic year, growing from 8 to 9 percent of the overall student population.

Center for Global Black Studies Opens

The research platform is part of the University’s broad efforts to advance racial justice.

To the jubilant rhythms of Junkanoo drums and as part of a ceremony to commemorate Black Awareness Month, the Center for Global Black Studies has opened its doors, with offices on the third floor of the Solomon G. Merrick Building. Catalyzed by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the center is designed to address structural racism and inequalities locally and globally.

“Today’s milestone, which has been championed at the highest levels of both the administration and our Board of Trustees, puts our shared values into practice and our words into action,” said President Julio Frenk said at the event.

Donald Spivey, distinguished professor of history and special advisor to the president on racial justice, says the new center will help keep the University “laser-focused on our challenge to improve the racial climate.”

H.T. Smith, University alumnus and member of the Board of Trustees, describes the center’s opening as “a transformational moment in the 97-year history of this great research university.”

Donette Francis and Jafari Allen are the facility’s co-directors. Francis, an associate professor of English, says the center’s main goals are to highlight research on topics related to the global Black diaspora and to foster interdisciplinary collaborations.

Allen, an associate professor of anthropology, describes the center as both a crossroad and an incubator.

“Here at the crossroad between the U.S. South and the Global South, and in the city of Miami, this is where all Black cultures and ideas meet,” he says. “And it’s an incubator—a place where new ideas that impact all of those areas are born and nurtured, and where we can discuss them.”

University Dedicates Building in Honor of Notable Black Alumni

The Harold Long, Jr. and H.T. Smith Student Services Building is named for former law partners.

Harold Long, Jr., R.A. ’68, J.D. ’71, and H.T. Smith, J.D. ’73, formed a successful law partnership on a handshake, neither requiring a written agreement to document their pact. “We were so locked into each other’s philosophy of the practice of law and community service and our connection to the University that we trusted each other enough to not need a contract,” Smith, a longtime University of Miami trustee recalls of his late law partner.

Together, they built what became one of South Florida’s most successful Black law firms, a practice that lasted 10 years. Now, the two School of Law alumni have been reunited in name.

In a milestone event held March 4 on the Coral Gables Campus, the University dedicated its three-story, 30,000-square-foot Student Services Building in their honor, making the structure the University structure erected to serve students. “My name going up on that building is an incredible honor. And having it appear with my only law partner, Harold Long, Jr., is like hitting the lottery—a million to one.” —H.T. Smith

Spring 2022
Celebrating the Life and Career of William R. Butler

The first vice president for student affairs left an indelible mark on student life

William R. “Bill” Butler, who served as the University’s first vice president for student affairs for more than three decades, played an instrumental role in changing institutional policy so that students would have greater power in making decisions that directly affected them. The legendary administrator, who retired in 1997, passed away on Dec. 30 at the age of 95.

Butler arrived at the University in 1965 just as the world was beginning to tilt, with young people around the world traveling an era of tumultuous change. For such a time, a steady hand was called for, and University students would later write that “Butler embraced the energies and the passions of the time” and that “he rejected ideology from the left or right and brought a commitment to openness and an inclusive approach to policymaking and administration.”

Of his many attributes, possibly Butler’s most important was his willingness to listen to students. In his book, “Embracing the World: The University of Miami from Cardboard College to Embracing the World: The University,” he wrote, “Students would have greater power in changing institutional policy so that they would have a voice.”

Butler’s list of accomplishments during his 32-year tenure at the University was robust. He started the student-run radio station, WVUM; helped establish the Hecht and Stanford residential colleges; ensured student fees aided student organizations equitably; and focused on making the University more diverse as it boosted enrollment of Black and international students.

In 1989 Butler founded a center offering students the opportunity to volunteer for service-oriented organizations throughout Miami-Dade County. Today, that initiative bears his name—the William R. Butler Center for Volunteer Service and Leadership Development—and stands as a physical monument to his dedication to students and deep belief in their unique potential for growth and development.

He oversaw construction of the Herbert Wellness Center, served as a professor of education, and was a member of the Iron Arrow Honor Society. During his retirement, Butler published three books that raised money for the Butler Center.

But it was his dedication to students that made Butler famous. Above all, he wanted them to have a voice. He considered it his “greatest privilege” to serve the more than 100,000 students who were enrolled at the University during his tenure. Many of those interactions blossomed into lifelong friendships.

Once asked by a trustee if he ever tired of dealing with the same student problems each year, “absolutely not,” was Butler’s response.

“College is a totally new experience and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for students,” he said then. “They arrive with eager and fresh anticipations, hoping to do well. Some fall down along the way. We have to pick them up, dust them off, and send them on their way.”

“Bill Butler was a force for good who left his mark on the University of Miami and all who knew him,” says President Julio Frenk. “His legacy of service, his heart for students, and his deep love for our community remains palpable on campus.”

Patricia A. Whitely, Ed.D. ’94, senior vice president for student affairs, says Butler “was a tremendous mentor to me and hundreds of others. He always kept the interests of students first and foremost and involved them in all decision-making. He was a visionary with an inclusive heart.”

“His legacy lives on,” says Patricia Whitely. “His life enriched so many students and he will be greatly missed.”

Butler was a visionary with an inclusive heart.” —Patricia A. Whitely

Frost Opera Theater Showcases World Premiere

An opera adapted from the Italian novel “Il Gattopardo,” considered one of the greatest novels in modern Italian literature, debuted in South Florida under the direction and talent of the world-renowned artist faculty and gifted students of the Frost Opera Theater and Frost Symphony Orchestra of the University of Miami Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music.

For two days in March, the world premiere of “The Leopard” was staged at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center, with Gerald Schwarz, distinguished professor of music, conducting, and orchestral studies, conducting the Frost Symphony Orchestra.

“This world premiere of a significant opera provided a rare opportunity for our gifted students to create roles that have never been performed before, working alongside their famous faculty mentors, under one of the greatest conductors of our time,” says Shelly Berg, dean of the Frost School.

In the lead role of Don Fabrizio Corbera, Prince of Salina, was baritone Kim Josephson, professor of voice at the Frost School. He was joined on stage by star colleagues Robynne Redmon, director of the Frost School of Music’s summer program in Salzburg, Austria; Frank Ragdale, D.M.A. ’04, associate professor of voice, department chair, and program director at the Frost School; bass-baritone Kevin Short; and students of the Frost Opera Theater.

“The spring Frost Opera Theater production is the singular marquee event for student performances,” says music director Alan Johnson, B.M. ’82. “The Frost creative and performing forces making this premiere possible are all dedicated toward a common purpose of enriching the living tradition of opera for this and future generations,” he adds.
Confirmed to Serve on the Highest Court

Ketanji Brown Jackson credits her father, a School of Law alumna, with stirring her passion for the law.

with her crayons, while dad studied torts, contracts, and constitutional law in his textbooks. Speaking from the White House podium on the day of the announcement, Jackson, in fact, credited her father with igniting her passion for the legal profession.

“It was my father who started me on this path,” Jackson said. “When I was a child, my father made the fateful decision to transition from his job as a public high school history teacher and principal to be my father. Some of my earliest memories are of him sitting at the kitchen table, reading his law books. I watched him study, and he became my first professional role model.”

Brown explains why he was so willing to make those early sacrifices for his daughter.

“I did that every day because I knew it would help make a difference in Ketanji’s life. But we never deliberately set out and said we wanted to instill in her certain life lessons. We led by example,“ Brown says of the way he and his wife, Ellery, raised their daughter. “We always tried to put her in the best educational environments that we could find and then let her make the necessary adjustments and decisions from there.”

Born in Washington, D.C., Jackson grew up in Miami, attending Palmetto Senior High School before earning undergraduate and law degrees at Harvard. She currently sits on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

During her confirmation hearing in 2021 for the appellate court, she spoke about her family’s background in public service, noting that her father served as the attorney for the Miami-Dade County School Board, that her mother was principal at New World School of the Arts in Miami, and that her brother was a police officer and served in the military.

Now confirmed as the first Black woman in U.S. history to join the Supreme Court, Jackson also makes history in another regard: becoming the first former public federal defender on the court and the first justice since Thurgood Marshall with extensive criminal defense experience.

Jackson had been considered a front-runner for the position ever since associate justice Stephen Breyer, for whom she clerked in 1999, announced his retirement in January. Biden referred to Jackson as “one of the nation’s most brilliant legal minds” and said that he had sought a candidate with “the strongest credentials, record, character, and dedication to the rule of law.”

Brown wants the nation to look past the fact that her daughter is Black and concentrate on the qualifications the president referenced.

“Everyone is tending to focus on that [that Ketanji is Black], and that’s understandable,” he notes. “But she will bring so much more—insightful intelligence. She understands other people’s points of view, and she will be one of the most brilliant judges sitting on the court. Just watch.” —Robert C. Jones Jr.

Impact of Psychedelics

At the onset of the pandemic, Denise Vidot, B.A. ’08, Ph.D. ’15, an assistant professor in the School of Nursing and Health Studies and epidemiologist who for a decade has studied the impact of cannabis on well-being, began working nonstop to design a COVID-19 Cannabis Health Study. With the spiralizing chaos, it was unclear whether cannabis dispensaries would stay open to serve medical consumers. She soon noticed a surge not only in the self-reported use of cannabis, but also in that of the psychedelic psilocybin. Intrigued, Vidot secured the required designation to broaden her laboratory’s research.

Vidot’s newly designated International Cannabis and Psychedelic Research Lab incorporates the study of psychedelics, which she defines as psilocybin, ketamine (a legalized synthetic variation), and ayahuasca (a plant-based psychedelic). Her lab team assesses how psilocybin independently affects mental health and how, if used in conjunction with cannabis, it impacts mental health symptoms and cardiovascular disease risk.

“Our approach uniquely seeks to add understanding of the impact on the brain, heart, and gut—the three are interconnected,” she says.

Early data indicates that those consuming psilocybin exhibit lower evidence of severe depression and anxiety compared with the other groups—a finding that has prompted Vidot and her research team to dig deeper.

“Cannabis, psychedelics, and other types of alternative medicine approaches are the future,” Vidot says. “Being able to train this generation of scientists or health care professionals, even if they don’t move into this field, is vital. Just the awareness of replacing the stigma with knowledge is extremely important.”

Mert Akin, mechanical engineering graduate assistant, has developed a lithium-extraction technique that is more efficient and environmentally friendly than conventional methods.

“21st-century oil,” or “star mineral,” lithium is vital for batteries that power electric cars, smartphones, and computer electronics—and it is in high demand. Yet the metal is challenging to mine, requiring expensive, costly, time-consuming, and environmentally unfriendly methods to produce.

Akin has a solution. Recently, in the Materials Lab at the College of Engineering, he repeated his novel technique for extracting lithium from geothermal brines. And just as before, when he tested his method under the close observation of faculty mentors, the procedure worked flawlessly, producing a lithium sample nearly free of impurities in just under two hours—a drastic reduction from the 18 hours it usually takes to extract the metal.

“The conventional way of getting to it involves a process of drilling down and then pumping the brine up into solar evaporation ponds, where it actually sits for a year and a half,” explains Akin. His electrochemical technique directly extracts the lithium, eliminating the lengthy solar evaporation process. The new method, Akin asserts, produces a much higher-grade lithium and at a much-reduced cost.

Developed under the supervision of College of Engineering professors Xiangyang Zhou and Hongtan Liu, Akin and his team are a semifinalist in the U.S. Department of Energy’s American-Made Geothermal Lithium Extraction Prize. One of 15 semifinalists, the team is awarded $40,000 and moves on to Phase 2. Eventually three winners will split $2 million in the competition.

As automobile manufacturers ramp up production of electric vehicles, and as more utility companies merge lithium-ion batteries into their power systems, the global demand for lithium is expected to increase exponentially over the next few years.

Akin hopes his groundbreaking technique—which has only been tested under simulated conditions in the lab and requires more experimentation, possibly in the field—will eventually become the blueprint for lithium-extraction methods.
Basketball Teams Make History

Both the men’s and women’s Hurricanes top teams enjoyed their winningest seasons in years, earning berths into their respective NCAA tournaments before losing hard-fought games against the No. 1-seeded teams and eventual national champions.

The men’s team, which ended the season ranked No. 10 in the Ferris Mowers Coaches Poll, used a scrumbling “scramble” defense and nearly error-free offense to play its way into the Elite Eight of the NCAA tournament—the deepest run in program history.

Seeded 10th in the Midwest region, the men ousted the University of Southern California, shocked the No. 2 seed Auburn with a convincing 79-61 win, then advanced to the Sweet 16, where they beat Iowa State, 70-56. Against Kansas in the Elite Eight, the ‘Canes played a near perfect first half and led at halftime only to stumble in the second half against the attacking, deep-bench Jayhawks.

After a rough spell in November, the ‘Canes turned their season around to notch the third-most wins in school history. They placed third among ACC schools in the Coach’s Poll, trailing only second-ranked North Carolina and third-ranked Duke. Miami (26-11, 14-6 ACC) beat those teams during the regular season, winning by two at eventual NCAA semifinalist Duke and by 28 against eventual NCAA runner-up North Carolina.

Head Coach Jim Larrañaga, 72, and in his 11th season as coach, agreed to a two-year contract extension through the 2025-26 season. "I told the players that they had accomplished so much, not just in basketball, but that they had ignited a community," Larrañaga says. "We had so much support throughout the season and especially in the NCAA tournament."

The women’s team closed out its season in the second round of the NCAA tournament, falling 49-33 to the No. 1-seeded South Carolina Gamecocks—top-ranked since the preseason and boasting the most points in a tournament game in program history.

Head coach Katie Meier reached a milestone in the game as well, earning her 400th career victory as a college head coach. Meier is the sixth active ACC coach to reach that milestone and 67th active Division I coach to do so. She remains the all-time winningest coach in Miami basketball history—men or women.

Another first in women’s program history was the team’s appearance in the ACC Championship title game. En route to the finals against top-seeded N.C. State, the ‘Canes staged a dramatic come-from-behind win to upset No. 2-seeded Louisville, 61-59, at the buzzer in the quarterfinals and clinched a 57-54 victory in the semifinals over No. 3-seeded Notre Dame.

Running in Rhythm

Whether he’s on the track as a sprinter or in the studio laying down tracks as a singer, Caleb Chevis, a sophomore pre-physical therapy major, savors the expression that music provides.

Chevis was exposed to music as a member of his church choir. He continued to sing through junior high and high school where he developed a passion for the musical art. At the University, he has sung with the cappella group Phoenix A Cappella.

Chevis turn it into a song? “Singing is performing, just like track is performing. It all connects for me.”

A Double Sense of Purpose

Honorizing the legacy of his father, a former pitcher for the ‘Canes, and the memory of his closest friend, who was in a single-car accident at 16 years old, serves as a doubly powerful motivator for Dorian Gonzalez Jr., a freshman infielder on the baseball squad.

Dorian Gonzalez Sr., B.B.A. ’93, pitched from 1994 to 1996, his strong left arm helping the ‘Canes reach the College World Series in all three seasons, and Gonzalez Jr. grew up hearing stories from his dad about the magic of Mark Light Field. As a youngster, he attended nearly every weekend game and honed his skills in the Jim Morris Baseball Camps.

Less than a week after the fatal accident of his childhood friend Ari Arteaga, Gonzalez verbally committed to become a Miami Hurricane. The two had played together since Little League and were so close that they sometimes joked they were “brothers from another mother.”

When he finally walked onto Mark Light Field once classes started, he couldn’t help but think about his road to becoming a Hurricane. “Being around the guys and the program I saw growing up, it’s an awesome feeling. It’s incredible to play for your hometown team,” he says.

Growing up 10 minutes from campus, Gonzalez expected his parents to be fixtures in the stands. But they won’t be the only ones there with a glimmer in their eyes. “Dorian’s like a son to me. I saw him born,” says Miami pitching coach J.D. Arteaga, B.A. ’93, Ari’s father. As he approached the season, Gonzalez conceived of ways to honor his childhood friend, such as writing “LLA”—“Live Like Ari”—on his wrist tape, and putting the younger Arteaga’s initials, “AA,” on his cleats and hats.

“I’m going to think about more ways to honor him and his legacy,” Gonzalez says. “I want to form a close bond with the team and become brothers and make the team better because that’s what Ari would do.”
Scholar Keeps an Eye on China

During her more than four decades at the University of Miami, political scientist June Teufel Dreyer has earned her place as a world authority on China. But she doubts she will ever return to the authoritarian nation she began studying more than a half century ago. "I haven’t been to China in three years—mostly due to the pandemic—and I’m afraid if I go now, I would be arrested because I don’t say what the government wants me to say," shares Dreyer, president of the American Association for Chinese Studies and a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

There’s little question that, under President Xi Jinping’s iron rule, China’s vast censorship and surveillance forces know Dreyer attended Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen’s historic 2016 inauguration—a visit that is likely to haunt her for the rest of her life. But Dreyer has no problem keeping an unblinking eye on China from the Coral Gables Campus, where she maintains an extensive personal library of government reports, global newspaper articles, and other materials. Known for her original scholarship, prolific writing; and courses on China, U.S. defense policy, and international relations, the professor of political science also is working on the 11th edition of "China’s Political System: Modernization and Tradition"—which is taught in universities around the world.

Fluent in Chinese, Japanese, and her parents’ native German, she is quoted almost weekly by global news outlets and is often sought by government agencies, the military, think tanks, and diplomats. Last October, the Congressional Research Service cited her article, “Global Warming and Heated Politics in the Arctic,” for the Foreign Policy Research Institute, where she is a senior fellow. In November, Japan’s national council general in Miami paid her a visit—five years after her 2016 book, “Middle Kingdom and Empire of the Rising Sun: Sino-Japanese Relations Past and Present,” was named the top book in Japan by a prominent think tank.

And last December, she participated in a private roundtable discussion on the future of Indo-Pacific geopolitics hosted by the Wilson Center, a key non-partisan policy forum. The panel focused on Taiwan, the subject of her most recent book, “Taiwan in the Era of Tsai Ing-wen: Changes and Challenges.” The daughter of a surgical instrument maker and a homemaker, Dreyer grew up on Brooklyn’s Flatbush Avenue at a time when women in the workforce, much less politics, raised eyebrows. But Dreyer had bigger dreams. In 1958, she went to Wellesley College to study chemistry, but that plan was derailed by an affliction she shared with her father—in cold weather their fingers cracked and bled. “They were cracking and bleedin- ing into all my titrations, so I figured I’d never be a chemist,” she says.

After taking a course on China, Japan, and India, she thought about becoming an India specialist—until “someone pointed out that India has like 248 languages. So, I thought, ‘Well, that won’t do. I’ll just study China,’ thinking everyone there spoke Mandarin.” At the time, the U.S. Department of Defense was offering language fellowships to study Chinese and Japanese. So off Dreyer went to Harvard University, where her Ph.D. dissertation on China’s ethnic minorities would become her first book, “China’s Forty Millions,” and where she met her husband, Edward Dreyer. He would become a renowned historian of military and Chinese history—and, at the time of his 2007 death, one of the University of Miami’s most beloved professors.

Following the births of their two children, she left her post as the senior Far East specialist at the Library of Congress and joined her husband on the University of Miami faculty in 1979. She also has served as Asia advisor to the chief of U.S. naval operations, a lecturer for the United States Information Agency, an adjunct professor at the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School, and on the U.S.-China Security and Economic Review Commission.

The pandemic may have stymied her travel but not her love of teaching. “I love the kids,” she says. “They are what makes teaching fun.”—Maya Bell
Dolphins Challenge Cancer Hits New Record
The 12th annual event raises more than $8 million

It was a day of tears and hugs, smiles and laughter, for thousands of South Floridians who participated in the Dolphins Challenge Cancer (DCC) event under a sunny sky at Hard Rock Stadium. Nearly 4,500 people—a record—turned out to ride, walk, run, or volunteer at the 12th annual DCC on Feb. 26, which raised more than $8 million for Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, the only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center in South Florida.

Participants and volunteers joined virtually and in person to share in the mission to fight cancer and pursue fundraising to support research at Sylvester, and more than 200 teams united to promote that goal, including University of Miami employees, students, donors, and other proud members of the ‘Canes family. This year, DCC welcomed participants’ family and friends to attend the finish line celebration at the stadium, which included activities ranging from face painting and bounce houses to massages. Since its inception in 2010, the DCC has donated 100 percent of participant-raised funds to Sylvester.

Dr. Stephen D. Nimer, director of Sylvester and the Oscar de la Renta Endowed Chair in Cancer Research, completed his 10th consecutive 100-mile ride with Board of Trustees member Stuart Miller, J.D. ’92, who also serves as chair of the UHealth board.

“I am very proud to see all the researchers, clinicians, and staff from Sylvester, and so many patients and their families,” Nimer said at the event. “I want to express our deepest appreciation to the Miami Dolphins and everyone who has been behind the DCC. It’s an event we can all be proud of, and the support of this community is unmatched.”

A Voice for Afghan Women
Scholarship student pledges to help those she left behind

Last August, as most University students were preparing for a first day of classes, Zakera Azizi was boarding a U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo plane bound for Doha, Qatar, and bidding goodbye to her homeland, her family, and everything she had known. Afghanistan was crumbling before the Taliban takeover, and Azizi’s work as a government advisor for women’s rights had earned her eligibility for safe passage out of the country by the U.S. government. Azizi’s evacuation from Kabul launched a several-months’ odyssey that led her to a new beginning in Miami this spring semester as one of two recipients of the Global Crossing Airlines Graduate Business Scholarships at the Miami Herbert Business School.

“I want to thank the U.S. government, Global Crossing Airlines, and especially the University of Miami for this opportunity given to me and to another Afghan refugee,” says Azizi. “I never could have imagined that I could get this kind of chance to study for a master’s degree. I dreamed of coming to Miami for a visit, and now I’m here to study.”

Though English is far from her native language, Azizi is an eager learner, and she has made a quick transition to academic life. During the semester she has met many new friends and immersed herself in a lifestyle she never could have dreamed of. She’s elated for the chance to earn a master’s degree in international finance, so that one day she might launch her own nonprofit in support of Afghan women.

Born in Mazar-i-Sharif, in the Balkh province, Azizi grew up with three brothers and five sisters. Only with her mother's strong support was she able to obtain an education and to study at the local college. To help her family, she got a job as an intern with a U.S. government, Global Crossing Airlines, and especially the University of Miami for this opportunity given to me and to another Afghan refugee,” says Azizi. “I never could have imagined that I could get this kind of chance to study for a master’s degree. I dreamed of coming to Miami for a visit, and now I’m here to study.”

Though English is far from her native language, Azizi is an eager learner, and she has made a quick transition to academic life. During the semester she has met many new friends and immersed herself in a lifestyle she never could have dreamed of. She’s elated for the chance to earn a master’s degree in international finance, so that one day she might launch her own nonprofit in support of Afghan women. Azizi’s odyssey of resettlement continued for months—from the camp in Qatar to a series of others in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Virginia—before she finally arrived in Miami after a fortuitous exchange of emails that resulted in the scholarship opportunity.

The business school team that fielded her application knew immediately that Azizi was a truly special candidate—one with extensive and valuable work experience within an extremely dangerous political terrain.

The challenge of adapting to a new language, culture, and place remains daunting, but Azizi knows she can draw on her experience to persevere.

“I’ve started from zero several times before in my life,” she says. “For now, I need to study hard and to earn this degree. I just want to work and live my life; yet even from here, I can help the women in Afghanistan who are under threat.

“They want to try to sing their song, but they can’t talk,” Azizi continues. “I want to tell everyone to give them a chance to learn. I want to be their voice.”

—Michael R. Malone

Zakera Azizi

Safeguarding Public Health Against Future Pandemics
Research joins national task force to update building codes, design

The surges of contagion during the pandemic caused a critical shortage of beds to care for patients and pushed many hospitals to the brink of collapse. Esther Andiroglu, Ph.D. ’15, associate professor of practice in the Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering, has joined a national task force to explore solutions to prevent a similar pandemic caused a critical shortage of beds to care for patients and pushed many hospitals to the brink of collapse. Esther Andiroglu, Ph.D. ’15, associate professor of practice in the Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering, has joined a national task force to explore solutions to prevent a similar

future scenario.

“Among the many things we’ve learned during this pandemic is that the ways buildings are designed and laid out can actually have a considerable impact on the health and safety of occupants,” says Andiroglu.

Last year, the Washington, D.C.-based International Code Council (ICC) tapped him to serve on a joint task force on pandemics with the National Environmental Health Association. The unit’s goals: Investigate the effects of the pandemic caused a critical shortage of beds to care for patients and pushed many hospitals to the brink of collapse. Esther Andiroglu, Ph.D. ’15, associate professor of practice in the Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering, has joined a national task force to explore solutions to prevent a similar future scenario.

“Among the many things we’ve learned during this pandemic is that the ways buildings are designed and laid out can actually have a considerable impact on the health and safety of occupants,” says Andiroglu. Everything from heating and ventilation systems to air sensors, lighting, and wastewater disposal. He highlights the relevancy to the committee’s efforts of Dean Pratim Biswas’s work in aerosol science and his committee’s efforts of Dean Pratim Biswas’s work in aerosol science and his

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“Among the many things we’ve learned during this pandemic is that the ways buildings are designed and laid out can actually have a considerable impact on the health and safety of occupants,” says Andiroglu. Everything from heating and ventilation systems to air sensors, lighting, and wastewater disposal. He highlights the relevancy to the committee’s efforts of Dean Pratim Biswas’s work in aerosol science and the development of air quality sensors to detect, track, and help prevent transmission of the coronavirus. The task force expects to complete a first draft of best practices this year.
Home runs have very little to do with the employment process. But in the case of the University of Miami’s hiring of Mario Cristobal as its 26th head football coach and Dan Radakovich as vice president and director of athletics, the phrase—arguably the most familiar in baseball vernacular—couldn’t be more appropriate.

AT LEAST, THAT’S HOW RUDY FERNANDEZ, THE UNIVERSITY’S EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND CHIEF OF STAFF TO PRESIDENT JULIO FRENEK, PUTS IT. “In both cases, we swung for the fences and ended up hitting back-to-back home runs,” says Fernandez, who, along with University CEO Joe Echevarria, B.B.A. ’78, helped guide the process to bring Cristobal and Radakovich back to Miami. The two hires, announced only days apart in early December 2021, have been hailed by many as being transformational for University of Miami Athletics. “A commitment to our student-athletes to provide them with a great education and an opportunity to develop their special talent to the very best of their ability, a recognition of the impact our sports teams have on the University’s brand, and an understanding of how football is so vitally important to the long-term sustainability of our athletics program were all deciding factors in bringing Mario and Dan here. And each of those three principles will be greatly impacted by their presence,” Fernandez explains.

BY ROBERT C. JONES JR.

Mario Cristobal, B.B.A. ’93, M.A.L.S. ’99, never needed a playbook to learn tenacity or the value of hard work.

Long before he ever strapped on shoulder pads for the Miami Hurricanes, he embraced such qualities just by watching his Cuban-born mother and father, who were working two jobs to put food on the table, attending night school to learn English, and studying American history and government to become citizens of the United States. “Being removed from their homeland and their families, not knowing the language, having to start from scratch in another country—they faced it all. And all they did was just buckle up, grind, go to work, and make absolutely zero excuses,” Cristobal recalls of his late parents. “They held themselves to the highest of standards, then demanded nothing short of excellence from us,” he says.
The ‘Canes faithful are hoping Cristobal, who won two national championships as a starting offensive lineman for the Miami Hurricanes, can impart some of that no-excuses ethos on a program that has been mired in mediocrity for most of the past two decades. When he was introduced as Miami’s 26th head football coach last December, expectations for the program soared—and for good reason. With two Pac-12 championships, a Rose Bowl victory, and top-10 picks in three straight NFL Drafts under his belt during a four-year stint as head coach of the Oregon Ducks, Cristobal brings a high-power- ered resume to Miami, one that also includes time spent under the coaching tutelage of Alabama’s Nick Saban.

So far, Cristobal hasn’t disappointed. Almost immediately he gave fans a glimpse of just how hard he will work, hitting the recruiting circuit with only eight days left until early signing day and salvaging a 2022 class that’s now been ranked 15th in the nation and third in the Atlantic Coast Conference by 247Sports.

“Mario’s the best recruiter in the country,” says Fernandez. “He was recruiting talented student-athletes to Oregon, and there are no direct flights to Eugene. It’s a beautiful part of the country, but it’s hard to get to.”

“We envisioned what Mario could do if he were here in South Florida, which is a hotbed for college football talent,” Fernandez continues. “So, when the opportunity presented itself to bring someone of his experience and talents back home, it was too good to pass up. And everything he’s done since arriving has exceeded our expectations. He’s going to be transformational for our program.”

**REALIZING HIS CALLING**

Cristobal applied that same philosophy when he went into coaching. “Along with that comes an obligation to have a positive impact on those around you,” he says. “It’s a 24/7 thing, man.”

No one knows that side of Cristobal better than Bryant McKinnie, the Outland Trophy winner and All-American offensive lineman who was an integral part of Miami’s 2001 national championship squad. Cristobal served as a graduate assistant coach on that team, often pulling some of the offensive linemen aside after practice to study videotape of the top edge rushers they would face and discuss blocking techniques.

“That was the way coach Cristobal was—always analyzing ways to get an advantage,” McKinnie says. “He always took that extra hour.”

In Cristobal, McKinnie could see an elite coach in the making, one who left no stone unturned. “He taught us that our diets could make us even better,” he says. “Oatmeal and hard-boiled egg whites—that’s what he told us to add to our diets. But we told him, ‘We don’t eat that, coach.’ But he was right. He programmed good nutrition into us, and it helped.”

It was a coaching career—which has included stops at the University of Hawaii, the U.S. Secret Service. He had said his goodbyes to the Hurricanes, but at the last moment, he had a change of heart.

After graduating from the University in 1993, Cristobal played two seasons for the Amsterdam Admirals of NFL Europe before retiring to pursue coaching. He latched on as a grad assistant under then-Miami head coach Butch Davis in 1998, but that same year was on the brink of accepting a job with the U.S. Secret Service. He had said his goodbyes to the Hurricanes, but at the last moment, he had a change of heart.

“I had become addicted to teaching, addicted to making an impact on the lives of student-athletes,” Cristobal admits. “I felt like I was finally hitting stride with what I wanted out of life, and that was to make a difference. I’m devoted to it, and it’s not just the coaching, but always the University of Miami. I bleed it. Cut me open; it’s orange and green inside.”

—Mario Cristobal
Ever since earning a master’s degree from the University of Miami, Radakovich has thrived in the field of sports administration, elevating collegiate athletic programs to new heights.

From Long Beach, California, to Columbia, South Carolina; from Washington, D.C., to Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and from Atlanta, Georgia, to Clemson, South Carolina, Radakovich has upgraded facilities, ramped up ticket sales, increased revenue, and helped win national titles at universities across the country. His latest challenge: Make Miami relevant again on the competitive playing field.

The University lured the 63-year-old away from Clemson last December, hiring him as the 14th director of athletics in its history and taking another quantum leap in its quest to restore the luster to an athletics program legendary for its national championship football teams.

He comes to Miami with extensive credentials. During his nine years at Clemson, Radakovich helped spearhead the most successful stretch in Tigers football history: two national championships (2016 and 2018), six Atlantic Coast Conference titles, and six appearances in the College Football Playoffs. He also added softball as the school’s ninth women’s sport.

In 2008, Radakovich helped boost the Tigers’ bottom line by increasing ticket sales and upgrading facilities. He also added softball as the school’s ninth women’s sport.

“Radakovich has helped to pave the way for Clemson to become a top-tier program,” says longtime athletic director University of Miami. “He understands the importance of providing quality athletic programs and has done an excellent job at building momentum in football, basketball, and other sports.”

Radakovich arrives at Miami at a time when the NCAA landscape is drastically different than it was when he started in athletics administration nearly 40 years ago. Last year, a Supreme Court ruling opened the door for greater compensation for student-athletes, who can now profit from name, image, and likeness opportunities. The emergence of the transfer portal also changed how college programs recruit athletes and manage their rosters.

Such changes have made the jobs of athletic directors that much more challenging, Radakovich believes. “There’s never been a time when so many life-changing and business-changing elements have occurred all at once or within a very short period,” he says. “It’s a much more dynamic time than it had been in the past, not just for athletic directors but also the fans. It’s generating more buzz, and it’s keeping college athletics on the minds of our fans, which I think is good.”

He once competed on the playing field as a tight end at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. “We were a couple of steps up from leather helmets back in those days,” he jokes. “But the friendships made on those teams will last forever.”

“The goal is always to achieve success throughout your program.” — Dan Radakovich
BY MAYA BELL

AS A LEAD PARTNER IN THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS THE INADEQUATE TESTING AND TREATMENT OF CERVICAL CANCER, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of the University of Miami Health System and Miller School of Medicine, will work closely with the Pan American Health Organization, the World Health Organization’s (WHO) regional office for the Americas, to identify practices that best enable girls born today to live in a world free of the cancers caused by one of the high-risk strains of the ubiquitous human papillomaviruses (HPVs).

The world is united to end cervical cancer, and the University is immensely proud to officially take a leading role in this ambitious and essential endeavor,” says President Julio Frenk. “From the crossroads of Latin America and the Caribbean to the persistence of disparities around the world, we are honored to expand our collaborations to address a cancer that humankind already has the tools to eliminate.”

Dr. Stephen D. Nimer, director of Sylvester, highlighted the center’s multipronged approaches to develop local partners in marginalized pockets of Miami where the disease is especially virulent and where barriers to prevention, detection, and treatment persist.

“For years, we have worked diligently with our community partners and the WHO to create novel outreach programs that raise awareness and provide screening opportunities in marginalized communities that bear the largest burden of this preventable disease,” says Nimer, who also is the Oscar de la Renta Endowed Chair in Cancer Research and executive dean for research at the Miller School.

Though preventable and curable, cervical cancer still kills more than 300,000 women around the world who usually lack access to the vaccines, screening tests, and treatments that would prevent, detect, or cure the disease in its early stages.

In August 2020, the WHO launched a global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer—which develops silently over years—with the goal of meeting three key targets by 2030.

Known as the 90-70-90 goals, the targets call for 90 percent of all girls to be fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by age 15; 70 percent of all women to be screened with a high-performance HPV detection test by age 35, and again at age 45; and 90 percent of all women with precancer or cervical disease to be treated, as well as 90 percent with advanced cancer to be under managed and palliative care.

“The designation provides a platform for true bidirectional engagement to generate sustainable and scalable solutions that address gaps in vaccinating, screening, and treating cervical cancer. So, by 2030, we really will have accelerated the promise of achieving elimination,” says Erin Kobetz, the John K. and Judy H. Schulte Senior Endowed Chair in Cancer Research at Sylvester and the University’s vice provost for research and scholarship.

A range of other researchers and clinicians across the University have made addressing cervical cancer one of their top academic priorities. They include Dr. Marilyn Huang, an associate professor of clinical medicine and co-director of translational gynecologic oncology research, who is developing new immunotherapies that show the promise of prolonging the survival of women living with recurrent or late-stage cervical cancer in South Florida and beyond.

In addition, Dr. Matthew Schlumbrecht, Sylvester’s chief of gynecologic oncology, is pursuing critical epidemiologic research demonstrating the global challenges in addressing persistent incidence of cervical cancer.

And, Sylvia Daunert, the Lucille P. Markey Chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and Sapna Deo, a professor in the same department, collaborated with Kobetz and research associate professor Jean-Marc Zingg to develop a rapid HPV test that women anywhere in the world can administer themselves.

According to Kobetz, the test could be a game-changer in the fight against cervical cancer because women who live in places devoid of laboratories—or even regular electricity—would have access to secondary prevention and, in turn, life-saving treatment.

“The most important lesson that we have learned at Sylvester, and in working with the WHO, is to match our research priorities with the needs of communities and to engage local stakeholders in collaborative science and action that creates solutions to address gaps in cancer care, from screening to survivorship,” asserts Kobetz.

Recognizing its dedication to address the inequities that perpetuate cervical cancer in South Florida and beyond, the World Health Organization designated Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center as the First Collaborating Centre for Cervical Cancer Elimination.
A $20 million gift sets the stage for the creation of the Desai Sethi Urology Institute at the Miller School of Medicine.

Throughout his career, Dr. Dipen J. Parekh has distinguished himself as an expert in urology. He is considered one of the world’s most experienced and talented robotic surgeons in urologic oncology, and his transformative research is changing the landscape of clinical practice in his field.

A year after joining the faculty of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine in 2012, Parekh received the American Urological Association’s prestigious Gold Cystoscope Award, which recognizes urologists who have made outstanding contributions to the profession.

Now, Parekh is on the cusp of another milestone—being the founding director of the Desai Sethi Urology Institute at the Miller School, created through an extraordinary commitment of $20 million from the Desai Sethi Family Foundation.

“This generous gift will transform our ability to expand the scope and influence of our work, creating a thriving environment for new discoveries in the field that will benefit patients worldwide,” says Parekh, the chief operating officer at the University of Miami Health System, executive dean for clinical affairs and chair of the Department of Urology at the Miller School, and the Victor A. Politano, M.D. Endowed Chair in Urology.

“We are dedicated to exploring the latest discoveries in the laboratory and accelerating the most promising therapies from the lab into our clinics for the best possible treatment for patients,” says Parekh, who is also director of robotic surgery and works closely with the NCI-designated Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the Miller School.

Located in South Florida, the institute will affirm the Miller School as a global leader in the field and be an international destination for care, attracting the brightest minds and recruiting the most talented physician-scientists dedicated to the study and treatment of urologic disorders.

“The Desai Sethi Family Foundation’s generosity propels the University into the upper echelon of institutes dedicated to the discovery and treatment of urologic disease—not just in South Florida, but worldwide,” says President Julio Frenk. “We are grateful for this commitment to the types of advances in health care that are only possible at an academic health system.”
The Desai Sethi Family Foundation commitment is part of Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century. The most ambitious in the University’s history, the fundraising campaign has already secured more than $1.8 billion toward its $2.5 billion goal.

The institute has received additional support from philanthropic benefactors.

Shortly after the Desai Sethi gift announcement, Eliza and Hugh Culverhouse Jr. made a $1 million donation to support the institute and honor Parekh, who performed Hugh Culverhouse’s successful prostate surgery.

“The outcome has been nothing short of incredible,” says Hugh Culverhouse Jr., a South Florida attorney and businessman. “I live without the fear of dying in the same manner as my father and grandfather. A life without fear is precious.”

In February a prominent South Florida couple, Terry and Carla Taylor, announced they were making a $3 million commitment to further position the Miller School as a global leader in the field of urology. Shortly after the Desai Sethi gift announcement, Eliza and Hugh Culverhouse Jr. made a $1 million donation to support the institute and honor Parekh, who performed Hugh Culverhouse’s successful prostate surgery.

by measure, Michele Bowman Underwood has a life well lived—worldly, well traveled, sporting, and adventurous. An avid golfer and multilingual explorer, she embraced the University with a gift that supports several areas of sport and study. Having had no children, Bowman Underwood says that “the University of Miami is my child.” In that spirit, she has made a $25 million bequest that will benefit the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures—named in her honor at a reception in the College of Arts and Sciences on Feb. 9. The generous gift also will fund research focused on women’s health at the Miller School of Medicine and provide scholarships and program support for the women’s golf team. Bowman Underwood has previously supported the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science and the Department of Chemistry.

In December, Laurie Silvers, B.A. ’74, J.D. ’77, chair of the University of Miami Board of Trustees, and her husband, Mitchell Rubenstein, donated $2.5 million to the School of Law, just the latest example of generous giving she has made to the University she describes as having a “profound influence on her life.” Silvers has had a brilliant career in communications law, as an entrepreneur, and as a visionary who built a media conglomerate of radio, TV, and cable, including founding one of cable television’s most popular networks, the SyFy Channel.

By any measure, Michele Bowman Underwood has a life well lived—worldly, well traveled, sporting, and adventurous. An avid golfer and multilingual explorer, she embraced the University with a gift that supports several areas of sport and study. Having had no children, Bowman Underwood says that “the University of Miami is my child.” In that spirit, she has made a $25 million bequest that will benefit the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures—named in her honor at a reception in the College of Arts and Sciences on Feb. 9. The generous gift also will fund research focused on women’s health at the Miller School of Medicine and provide scholarships and program support for the women’s golf team. Bowman Underwood has previously supported the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science and the Department of Chemistry.

The Carmen and Joe Unanue Family Foundation, led by Andy Unanue, B.B.A. ’81, donated $3.3 million to the Miami Herbert Business School in honor of Unanue’s late parents, who led philanthropic initiatives in education and health care through the foundation that carries their names. The donation, matched by the Herbert Challenge Endowment Gift Match for a total of $5 million, will strengthen the school’s capabilities to prepare graduate students to successfully enter the workforce or advance their careers upon graduation. An alumnus of the business school and managing partner of AUA Private Equity Partners, Unanue says, “My parents always wanted to help educate people and prepare them for the real world so that they could get good jobs with which to provide for their families.”

For Jeff Kinkead, M.B.A. ’85, and his wife, Mimi Ragolta Kinkead, Hurricane athletics is a source of pride that has inspired them to maintain close ties with the University through the decades. The couple announced a planned bequest of $1 million in support of scholarships and career development for student-athletes. “I feel like the University gave me something so much greater than what I’m giving back. It helped me to mature, to become a man, to get educated, and to get started in the business world,” says Jeff Kinkead, CEO of Advanced Systems Resources, a company specializing in mobile technology solutions.
On Earth Day, as students linked hands to “Hug the Lake”—the University tradition symbolizing a united appreciation for nature and the campus’ natural beauty—President Julio Frenk announced the official launch of a new unified University commitment to planetary well-being, one destined to have broad and sustaining reach: the Climate Resilience Academy.

The new research and instructional hub is the first of its kind in University history and opens a new era that highlights its role as a top research institution and leader for positive hemispheric and global change.

Modeled on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, the Climate Resilience Academy will help drive studies and solutions to address issues related to climate crisis, sustainability, and resilience.

“The Climate Research Academy will educate the next generation of scientists as we help deliver the solutions to climate change; its impact; and related stressors in partnership with industry, universities, civil society organizations and other stakeholders,” Frenk explains.

“The concept of ‘resilience’ is foundational to the history and mission of the University,” Frenk adds. “Far from just a byword, resilience is first and foremost how our people face the inevitable element of change.”
A generous $5 million commitment from Eric T. Levin, a former University trustee and the former president of the University’s Citizens Board, has propelled the new initiative. The gift is part of the University’s fundraising campaign, Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century. The initial phase includes a search for a founding executive director to oversee the academy and a new academic “resilience” elective course to be featured in the fall semester.

“Climate change is the challenge of a lifetime, and here in Miami we sit at the epicenter of the climate challenge,” says Levin. “It’s imperative to get others involved to work collaboratively to tackle these big problems.”

Levin, a financial strategist, investor, and entrepreneur, suggests that many of the projects fostered through the academy will “ultimately become entrepreneurial ventures which will implement business solutions to the stressors of climate change, create more revenue, and become self-sustaining and financially additive to the overall mission of the University.”

Jeffrey Duerk, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost, highlights the academy’s unique design and its timeliness and value for the University and the South Florida community.

“The academy is best described as an interdisciplinary functional structure that will bring together experts from within the University and others through partnerships and relationships to ensure the necessary expertise to solve challenges that are by their very nature interdisciplinary,” says Duerk.

David Kelly, academic director of the sustainable business master’s degree program and co-chair of the Sustainable Business Research Cluster in the Miami Herbert Business School, notes the economic benefits the academy’s efforts will yield.

“Companies are increasingly focused on adaptation and resilience to climate change, and the academy will work together with companies and municipalities to ensure that the most evidenced-based adaptation and resilience strategies are implemented,” says Kelly. He reports that the academy will coordinate the use of big data, causal inference, and other advanced statistical techniques to measure the economic impact of resilience funding and thereby guide the most productive investments.

“Governments, in particular, have been very engaged because they’re the ones being tasked to do something about sea level rise, monitor and understand these trends and technologies better, and generate new designs for infrastructure, among other areas,” she says. “Those are all things that we could be responsive to at the University if we have the right framework—and that’s where the Climate Resilience Academy comes in.”

“Those are all things that we could be responsive to at the University if we have the right framework—and that’s where the Climate Resilience Academy comes in,” Clement points out. “The University has an important role in figuring this out because there’s no playbook for it—this is an unprecedented change that we’re experiencing in an unprecedented time.”

Days after the academy’s official launch, the University hosted a Climate Resilience Academy symposium at the Lakeside Village Expo Hall, a green-certified event that symbolized the academy’s interdisciplinary and collaborative focus.

Keynote speaker Jane Gilbert, chief heat officer for Miami-Dade County, highlighted extreme heat as a critical climate change stressor, and 10 teams showcased University Laboratory for Integrative Knowledge (U-LINK) funded projects that propose solutions for climate-related challenges. The projects are the first resilience-related designs destined to progress through the Climate Resilience Academy’s collaborative framework.
PRESIDENT JULIO FRENK EXPRESSED THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY’S SENSE OF TRAGEDY AND DISTRESS—AND ITS COMMITMENT TO STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE—IN A MESSAGE SOON AFTER THE INVASION BEGAN.

“The images of violence, news of lives lost, stories of citizens joining the army en masse to defend their country, and accounts of families fleeing their homes to find safety are disturbing,” Frenk stated. “War is frightening, especially given the cruelty, disinformation, and opportunism exhibited by an unprovoked aggressor. Our hearts are heavy for Ukrainians, and we are hopeful that a return to peace in this region is forthcoming.”

Together with the rest of the world, the University anxiously monitors the Russian invasion of Ukraine as it rages. Faculty, staff, and students apply their academic expertise to analyze the unfathomable and open their hearts to the Ukrainian people.

In Solidarity With Ukraine

BY MICHAEL R. MALONE

Even as the first news of the invasion circulated, Diana Khodan’s tennis teammates rallied around the junior from Ukraine. Next to the emblematic “U” on their uniforms, the players affixed yellow-and-blue ribbons when the team took the court against their Clemson opponent.

“When I saw my flag, the flag of Ukraine, I couldn’t really describe my feelings,” notes Khodan, who hail from Ivano-Frankivsk, a city in western Ukraine. “There is nothing more important than my country and what is going on there right now.”

Ukrainian students, such as senior Kateryna Ghandour, did their best to stay focused on their studies even as they worried for family and childhood friends scattered across Ukraine, some messaging frantically from bomb shelters.

“I have many friends saying they will not make it. One was even on the bathroom floor hiding while shooting was going on outside her apartment,” says Ghandour, an international relations major who fled her native Ukraine in 2014 as a teen with her parents when protests mounted.

In an ongoing series of articles published in News@TheU, University scholars scrutinized the invasion from multiple perspectives.

Ira Sheskin, professor of geography and sustainable development, as well as director of the Jewish Demography Project at the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies, and Haim Shaked, the center’s founding director, explored how Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s leadership and pride in his Jewish cultural and religious roots have inspired support from Jews around the world. Sociology professors Olena Antonaccio and Robert J. Johnson, with Anastasiia Timmer, Ph.D.’20, surveyed more than 1,200 residents and 300 internally displaced persons in the Ukrainian cities of Lviv and Kharkiv three years after the conflicts with Russia that started in 2014 to analyze the impacts of war.

Policy experts Marcia Beck, a political science lecturer; Dina Moulioukova, Ph.D.’17, an international relations lecturer; and Antonaccio, a Ukraine native, analyzed the Russian president’s motivations for invading a neighboring country with deep, long-standing linkages.

June Teufel Dreyer, political science professor and a veteran China scholar, and Joaquín Roy, international studies professor and director of the European Union Center of Excellence, assessed China’s role in the conflict and U.S. intelligence attempts to sway the Asian powerhouse.

Pablo Rueda-Saiz, an associate professor in the School of Law, outlined the legal parameters of war crimes and the complexities of gathering such evidence in an article that assessed whether Russia has committed war crimes during the invasion.

Separately, Rueda-Saiz and policy expert Roy detailed how Putin’s invasion appears to have generated what the Russian president least wanted—unified European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliances and a long-term scenario that portends costly consequences for Russia.

Caleb Everett, professor of anthropology and senior associate dean for academic affairs, and Moulioukova examined the meanings and emotions evoked by symbols such as the letter “Z”—which has appeared in Russia as an emblem of support for the invasion of Ukraine.

Karlin Wilkins, dean of the School of Communication, and Heidi Carr, an expert on global media, assessed the use of new technologies that have increased access for everyone to stories, images, and videos chronicling Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the resulting destruction and misery.

The two highlighted the immediacy and importance of social media produced through online platforms.

“Our access through digital media allows us to witness the violence and resistance experienced by people around the world,” notes Wilkins, an expert on global media. “We are more connected as a global community than ever before.”
Citizens Board Celebrates 75 Years

Composed of more than 250 volunteers today, the group is a vital philanthropic partner

“It gives community members a chance to hear directly from students on projects that make a difference.”

—Roberta Jacoby

It began just after World War II as an idea shared by a Miami Beach resident, the then-mayor of the city of Miami, and a fundraiser for the University of Miami. The trio gathered a group of local business, professional, and civic leaders who shared a belief in the importance of a strong educational institution in South Florida and were committed to investing their time and talent to help it flourish.

Seventy-five years later, the Citizens Board is a core philanthropic partner of the University of Miami. Currently made up of more than 250 volunteer members, the board has raised an estimated $454 million for the University. It has helped transform the Coral Gables campus, established scholarships for students, strengthened student programs, and advanced vital research.

One of the signature Citizens Board initiatives is the Changemakers Student Fund, which is supported by annual gifts from members. For the past 24 years, Changemakers has funded innovative projects across the University that enhance learning and expand meaningful engagement with the wider community.

Of the three finalists selected for the Changemakers Student Fund for Fiscal year 2022, Future Docs—a project of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement at the Miller School of Medicine—won the $25,000 Citizens Board Sebastian Hero Award.

Future Docs aims to reduce racial disparities and improve health equity by developing a next generation of physicians that is representative of the diverse communities it serves. To spark interest in medical professions among traditionally underrepresented students, the project will provide support, encouragement, and education about health careers to local sixth- and seventh-graders.

Receiving the $10,000 Citizens Board ‘Cane Crusader Awards were Taking Baby Steps into the Future: Training Students to Provide Telehealth Nursing Care for Vulnerable Infants and Families, a project of the School of Nursing and Health Studies, and Polyneering: Tuve Lab Innovation and Entrepreneurship Dictionary for Teaching and Sharing, from the Miami Herbert Business School.

“Sponsoring the Changemakers Student Fund is a highlight for the Citizens Board,” says Roberta Jacoby, chair of the Change-makers Committee, immediate past president of the Citizens Board, and member of the University’s Board of Trustees. “It gives community members a chance to hear directly from students on projects that make a difference. It also showcases the students’ abilities to communicate what they’re passionate about, think outside the box, and utilize what they’re learning at the U.”

Panel Addresses Ocean-Based Climate Solutions

Alumni experts offer strategies as part of the annual Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series

With 40 percent of the world’s human population living along coasts, at the front line of the adverse impacts of climate change, the survival of current and future generations depends on viable oceans.

An April webinar brought together a panel of notable University of Miami alumni experts to explain how the ocean—the major regulating force in the Earth’s climate system—holds a wide range of potential climate solutions.

The lecture, “In Hot Water: Finding Ocean-Based Solutions to the Climate Crisis,” examined the critical role of the oceans in a multiproposed response to the global climate crisis.

Erica Rule, M.A. ’99, chief of staff for science planning and operations at NOAA’s Southeast Fisheries Science Center, moderated the discussion.

The panel consisted of Stacy Aguilera-Peterson, Ph.D. ’17, ocean policy advisor at the National Science Foundation; Kerri Barsh, J.D. ’94, shareholder and co-chair of national environmental practice at law firm Greenberg Traurig; Pedro DiNezio, M.S. ’09, Ph.D. ’17, associate professor of atmospheric and oceanic sciences at the University of Colorado Boulder; and Galen Trouer, Ph.D. ’17, resilience coordinator for strategic outcomes for Miami-Dade County.

Encompassing science, policy, industry, and regional and local action, and providing perspectives from a broad spectrum of expertise, “In Hot Water” underscored the need for strategic thinking, innovative partnerships, and a holistic approach to combatting climate change.

Panels addressed several climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, including renewable energy by harnessing the power of offshore winds; blue carbon sequestration, which is the removal of carbon dioxide from the Earth’s atmosphere by oceanic and coastal ecosystems; and net-zero shipping, in which any emissions from a vessel are completely offset.

The event, which was held as part of the Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series, also included the vital issue of climate justice. Because climate change tends to have more severe social, economic, public health, and other impacts on vulnerable populations, the global approach to climate mitigation and adaptation must also aim to remedy those inequities.

“The impacts of climate change demand our attention and thoughtful action,” says Rule. “Forums like this one are important to bring together experts to educate and talk about solutions for our communities and the planet.”

Established in 1995 by a gift from Stu Bloch, B.A. ’64, and Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch, the lecture series is intended to recognize alumni who have achieved distinction in their fields, foster intellectual dialogue among the University community, and encourage the lifelong pursuit of learning.

As international efforts, such as the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), have increased global awareness of the critical role of the oceans in solving the climate crisis, scientists from around the world are collaborating to develop solutions-oriented research under rapidly changing climatic conditions.

“In Hot Water” corresponded with Brighter Future for Our Planet, one of the seven themes of Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century. The lecture was scheduled in with Earth Day 2022’s theme, Invest in Our Planet.

At the lecture’s conclusion, host Devang Desai, B.A. ’97, J.D. ’03, president of the University of Miami Alumni Association, presented the moderator and panelists with the Distinguished Alumni Award.
**Black Alumni Society Takes a Fantastic Voyage**

Annual reunion includes two days of virtual sessions exploring aspects of the diaspora.

On Feb. 18-19, the University of Miami Black Alumni Society gathered virtually for its annual reunion, with explorations of Black art, fashion, cuisine, and wellness traditions, plus thought-provoking panel discussions and networking opportunities. The reunion’s theme was “Fantastic Voyage: Across the Diaspora.” Attendees participated in the ‘Canes Day of Service flagship event and beach cleanup, hosted by the Miami ‘Canes Community in partnership with Virginia Key Outdoor Center.

The annual ‘Canes Day of Service provides opportunities for the University of Miami community to participate in local service projects—from beach cleanups to serving at food kitchens and everything in between. In addition to the Miami event, 10 other ‘Canes Communities across the country hosted service projects in their areas, bringing alumni and friends together in service of a brighter future for our planet and its people.

Volunteers in Miami spread out along the beach, some scouthing shorelines and others paddling through waterways on kayaks or paddleboards to collect washed-up debris. Other volunteers weeded out invasive plant species to allow for native flora and fauna to flourish.

Afterward, guests were treated to a lunch-and-learn event, where graduate students from the Rosenstiel School discussed the long-term impacts of beach erosion, building coastal resilience, reef restoration, and the future of water quality for South Florida and beyond.

The gathering also recognized The Taylor Family/UTrailblazers Experience, located in the Johnny C. Taylor, Jr. Breezeway on the Coral Gables Campus. Made possible by a gift from University trustee Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., B.S.C. ’89, this interactive kiosk highlights the past, current, and expected future contributions of Black students at the University.

Sessions showcased art and fashion in the diaspora, a powerful new travel movement that has emerged among people of color, virtual cooking and mixology demonstrations, and performances by OLEKU, the University’s African dance team. Dr. Kimberly Hunter-Reynolds, B.S. ’04, a Miami-based pediatrician, led a discussion on integrating holistic well-being into everyday life, as Black communities embrace the rituals, traditions, and healing modalities of their ancestors that, along with modern medicine, can create a healthy balance of mind, body, and spirit.

Also featured was a preview of the Center for Global Black Studies, a key initiative in a plan unveiled by President Julio Frenk detailing the University’s commitment to diversifying the student body.

**Bugs and Baseball Makes a Rousing Return**

Signature event takes ‘Canes back out to the ballgame.

After a two-year hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bugs and Baseball, one of the signature events of the University of Miami Alumni Association (UMAA), returned on April 8 as the Hurricanes took on the Virginia Cavaliers at Alex Rodriguez Park at Mark Light Field.

Hosted by the UMAA in partnership with the Iron Arrow Honor Society, the Miami ‘Canes Community, and University of Miami Athletics, Bugs and Baseball drew an excited crowd of alumni, parents, and friends who came out to cheer the ‘Canes on to a 6-2 victory over No. 3 Virginia. A portion of ticket proceeds funded scholarships for student-athletes.

‘Canes baseball fans enjoyed a pre-game feast of burgers and hot dogs with all the fixings, topped off with the legendary Mark Light shakes. Sebastian the Ibis and the Miami Maniacs were on hand to interact with fans.

Welcome and attendees who then toured the Jimmy and Karen Klotz Player Development Center—a la “game changer” for ‘Canes baseball when it opened in 2020—and got what for many was a first glimpse of the new, state-of-the-art Mark Light scoreboard. The Klotz Center and scoreboard are two of the highest profile outcomes of an ambitious effort to expand and upgrade Hurricanes baseball facilities as part of University of Miami’s Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century. ‘Canes fans at the Night got a taste of Ever Brighter, with special giveaways throughout the night.

**Leveraging the Power of the ‘Canes Network**

Alumni communities around the world connect through a week of activities.

University of Miami alumni form a diverse and powerful global network of young and mid-career professionals and seasoned leaders across all fields of endeavor. ‘Canes Communities in 40 United States regions and six other countries give these alumni the opportunities to share experiences and connect with fellow ‘Canes in the same region or industry.

On the evening of March 29, the ‘Canes Communities network gathered virtually to kick off the 2022 edition of Global Networking Week. Attendees had the opportunity to learn from experts about trends in their professions, navigate the current career landscape in their industries, and build their professional brands as proud ‘Canes.

The featured speakers were two of the U’s professional development experts: Greg Brenner, assistant vice president for talent and organizational development, and Sarah Seavey, director of professional development and training for the Division of Development and Alumni Relations. Complementing their presentations were breakout sessions led by alumni that focused on specific industry or professional sectors, including banking and finance, technology and engineering, health care, marketing and communications, law, and business development.

The Miami ‘Canes Community gathers at Top Golf for Global Networking Night.

During the following week, 11 ‘Canes Communities from coast to coast hosted local professional networking events where alumni could connect, engage, and do business together, while learning about job trends in their regions. Participating ‘Canes Communities included Atlanta, Broward/Palm Beach Counties, Charlotte, Dallas/Fort Worth, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Orlando, Tampa, and Washington, D.C.

Throughout the Global Networking Week sessions, alumni accessed professional tools, resources, and guidance to help them own their careers, and they leveraged the power of ‘Canes Communities to strengthen their professional networks.
An Animated Voice for South Florida Waters

As a girl growing up in San Diego, California, Rachel Silverstein, Ph.D. ’12, was fascinated by marine environments and the creatures that inhabit them. That interest sparked what eventually became her life’s calling. Now, as executive director and waterkeeper of the nonprofit organization Miami Waterkeeper—with a mission to ensure swimmable, drinkable, and fishable water for all—her work is animated by a passion for the environment and the creatures that inhabit them.

Silverstein followed Baker to the Rosenstiel School, where she worked in his lab, studied the effects of climate change on corals, and earned her doctorate. During her time at the Rosenstiel School, she became passionately committed to coral conservation, and after a post-doctoral fellowship in Washington, D.C., was determined to return to Miami and continue the work she began at the University of Miami from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for his first year, he quickly realized that Miami was different from his hometown in ways that would prove beneficial to him and his future.

When Terry Roberts, B.A. ’00, arrived at the University of Miami from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for his first year, he quickly realized that Miami was different from his hometown in ways that would prove beneficial to him and his future. “[Coming to Miami] was a huge cultural change,” he says. “Culturally, [Miami] is a unique place, and I think if you embrace that, it allows you to gain a lot of skills to respond to the world in a way that’s going to be very helpful to you moving forward.”

For Roberts, being a waterkeeper is a multidimensional, multidisciplinary job. At its core she serves as a spokesperson for developing and articulating inclusion and diversity strategy across the entire enterprise.

It’s a role that emerged and grew organically from his belief that he could make a difference in an area he is passionate about. “I had built up a lot of credibility in the organization,” Roberts says, recalling how he got into the inclusion and diversity work at American Eagle. “I have great relationships with people who trust me, and I have a level of influence. Ultimately, if I think I can make a positive difference and do something that’s going to help people and the company, who am I to just sit on the sidelines?”

That same year—2020—brought unprecedented upheaval to the U.S. society and workplaces in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic and the wide-spread anger and protests in the wake of George Floyd’s murder. “Trying to navigate a company through this was massively difficult and it really takes leadership to give people hope through all the struggle, change, and uncertainty,” Roberts says.

Silverstein says that, Miami-Dade County has one of the strongest residential fertilizer ordinances in Florida. “No fertilizer use [is permitted] between May 15 and October 15, and never within 20 feet of storm drains or waterways,” she says. “We are now working on a statewide ordinance—we want Miami-Dade to become a model for the state, tailored to the different regions.”

Above all, there is the existential threat posed by sea-level rise. South Florida’s aging sewer infrastructure and $120,000 septic systems are vulnerable to rising groundwater and seawater intrusion. Silverstein and Miami Waterkeeper advocate for sustainable solutions, including the removal of flood-vulnerable septic tanks and increased funding to strengthen the county’s sewers.

For Silverstein, being a waterkeeper is a multidimensional, multidisciplinary job. At its core she serves as a spokesperson for the water. “Our water is what makes Miami, Miami,” she says. “We have a lot to lose if we don’t get water pollution under control. My job is to represent our environment in our community.”
Cooking up a Creative Experience

Ever since Lisa Weintraub, B.B.A. ’13, was in sixth grade, she has wanted to run her own restaurant. A native of Southern California, Weintraub—or Chef Lisa, as she is known to her clients and fans—grew up immersed in the farmers markets and cuisines of greater Los Angeles. As she worked to realize her dream, she persevered in the face of daunting odds and endless challenges and learned the value of adaptability in driving innovation.

“At one point, someone told me ‘No,’” Weintraub says, recalling her early startup efforts. “I’m grateful for that ‘no’ because I turned that into a ‘yes’ and instead of [opening] a restaurant, I [also] find myself helping to run a business.”

This reinvention of her childhood dream is Plates by Lisa, a curated food experience that offers customers customized, in-home gourmet dining. Weintraub uses locally sourced organic ingredients and draws on the global culinary influences she has absorbed, both in her hometown and her travels, to develop personalized menus for a clientele that includes professional athletes and celebrities.

In January 2022, Plates by Lisa was showcased in “Cooking with a ‘Cane,” an interactive virtual event presented by the University of Miami Alumni Association and hosted by the Los Angeles Canes Community. A nationwide audience of more than 200 alumni got a glimpse into Weintraub’s kitchen, enjoyed a dynamic culinary demonstration featuring Hawaiian salmon with mango salsa, and picked up some of Chef Lisa’s secrets for raising their dinner party game with dazzling tablescapes.

Guests had the opportunity to ask Weintraub questions about recipes, participate in audience polls, and share photos on Instagram for the chance to win a Plates by Lisa farmers market and cooking experience. And a dash of green and orange glitter gave her luxurious creations a special Hurricane touch. This last flourish is fitting, as Weintraub credits her undergraduate education at the University of Miami for giving her the strong entrepreneurial foundation to succeed beyond her wildest dreams.

“Studying entrepreneurship at the University of Miami created the well-rounded businesswoman that I am today,” she says. “My education allowed me to excel and to navigate my business through any hardship or conflict that may come. The tools I [acquired] at the U prepared me to handle the many unknowns of owning a business. As an entrepreneur, I see the possibilities of concepts. I don’t see risk with fear; I see risk as an avenue to make something happen.”

Looking back at her time at the University, Weintraub marvels at Miami’s melting pot of people, new places, and new things. This is simply part of my family’s personality to care about the world who spent time at the University. "Sophomore year, I lived on a floor with the study abroad kids," she says, referring to students from around the world who spent time at the University. “It opened my eyes and exposed me to new people, new places, and new things. This is what a college experience should be!”

Weintraub spent a summer in Milan, an experience that she says further fueled her desire to travel and explore new cultures. “This exposure was impactful not just in my career, but in learning the importance of diversity and integrating that into my soul and how I walk through the world,” she says.

A Mindful Approach to Business, Service, and Life

For George Williamson III, Ph.D. ’20, known as Trae, mindfulness isn’t a buzzword—it’s the foundation on which he has built a life of compassion and engagement with the world around him.

His family’s car dealership, Williamson Cadillac-Buick-GMC, has been a Miami-Dade County landmark since its founding in 1967. Williamson, president of the dealership, is the fourth generation of his family to work in the automotive business.

He also has an abiding interest in psychology and spirituality, which culminated in 2020 in his earning an interdisciplinary doctorate at the University of Miami, combining religion, psychology, and management. “I have always been passionate about psychology and personal development, as well as the role of spirituality to promote well-being, and I [also] find myself helping to run a business,” he says.

Williamson’s part-time position as an instructor at the Miami Herbert Business School offers what he calls “great synergy” with his day job at the dealership. “I bring real-world examples from the dealership into the classroom,” he says. “And I bring aspirational academic theories into the dealership, especially regarding matters of leadership, corporate culture, and employee well-being.”

“The aspiration is not just ‘work-life balance,’ but ‘work-life integration,’” he continues. “Mindfulness in the workplace involves bringing the whole person into their work environment, where people are regarded as human beings, not just ‘human doings’ getting things done.”

Williamson jokingly refers to himself as the Williamson Cadillac-Buick-GMC’s CEO—chief emotional officer—using his background to nurture a familial corporate culture. “Caring for, and catering to, our team members isn’t part of any action plan for corporate growth,” he says. “It is simply part of my family’s personality to care about the people we work with.”

That same approach informs Williamson’s community service and advocacy. “We are all interdependent with each other, whether we realize it or not,” he says. “I think our personal growth, and our happiness, come from leaning into supportive relationships with each other. Remembering that love in all its forms is more important than fear. It follows that I would honor that interconnectedness by engaging with my community.”

Williamson is a thoughtful and compassionate voice for young LGBTQ+ people. He was recently the keynote speaker at the University’s annual Lavender Celebration, which honors students and leaders of the LGBTQ+ campus community and recognizes the accomplishments of those who graduate each spring.

He believes that events like the Lavender Celebration are important in helping shape the campus community into smaller, more approachable families. “It’s [when] everyone can feel free to be themselves. . . . [And] the more that LGBTQ students can present themselves in a comfortable and confident way, whatever their gender identity or sexual orientation may be, the more that other people will respond to them reflexively with calm, comfort, curiosity, and support.”

In talking about his approach to community advocacy and philanthropy, Williamson cites the example of his parents, Ed and Carol Williamson.

“I remember my father [who is a member of the University’s Board of Trustees] helping me understand that, when it comes to philanthropy, you’re not just giving to causes, you’re also giving to people,” he says. “We try to honor as many people in our sphere as possible by supporting what they care about. This keeps the connections close to our friends, co-workers, and customers.”
Michael Bashawiner, M.A. '71, writing under the pen name Mike Shaw, announced the release of two new books: a literary novel "The Musician" and an overview of global economics principles titled "Understanding Economic Equilibria." Bashawiner is a neurologist who works in healthcare and law enforcement.

Barbara S. Giessert, B.S. '72, is the recipient of the distinguished 2022 American Brain Foundation (ABF) Tideman-Harmon in Nanotechnology Award. Giessert is a bioengineer who works in the field of tissue biomimetics.

Virginia Berlin Klinger, B. Ed. '74, a former New York City Department of Education teacher and author, is also a Second Language for several decades. Klinger thanks her for her dedication to teaching English at the United Nations and her work with refugees in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This project was sponsored by the ASCAP Foundation.

Paul D. Novak, B.A. '80, former mayor of the Town of Surfside, helped solve the 1980s cold kidnapping case of 17-year-old Surfside resident Danny Goldman.

Abraham A. Emile, M.B.A. '89, is a professor of management at the University of California, Berkeley. Emile is a management consultant who works in the field of healthcare and technology.

Eliseo J. Perez-Stable, M.D. '80, is the director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the chief of the Intramural Research Program at the National Institutes of Health. Perez-Stable is a renowned expert in the field of environmental health and is a leader in the development of new treatments for cancer.

Eliseo J. Perez-Stable, M.D. '80, is a Second Language for several decades. Perez-Stable thanks his for his dedication to teaching English at the United Nations and his work with refugees in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This project was sponsored by the ASCAP Foundation.

Kimberly R. Mann, B.A. '88, is an assistant dean at the University of California, Berkeley. Mann is a social worker who works in the field of social work and is a leader in the development of new treatments for cancer.

Andrea D. Green, B.S. '89, is a Second Language for several decades. Green thanks her for her dedication to teaching English at the United Nations and her work with refugees in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This project was sponsored by the ASCAP Foundation.

Daniel Z. Kullman, B.S. '91, is a Second Language for several decades. Kullman thanks his for his dedication to teaching English at the United Nations and his work with refugees in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This project was sponsored by the ASCAP Foundation.

Marcial E. Robiou, M.D. '91, is a Second Language for several decades. Robiou thanks his for his dedication to teaching English at the United Nations and his work with refugees in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This project was sponsored by the ASCAP Foundation.

David T. De Celis, B.A. '87, is a Second Language for several decades. De Celis thanks his for his dedication to teaching English at the United Nations and his work with refugees in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This project was sponsored by the ASCAP Foundation.

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Mary E. Gibbs, O.M.A. '10, was the recipient of a Fulbright Senior Teaching Award to Spain for spring of 2022. She will be teaching in the University of the Basque Country in San Sebastian, and also working with choirs and conductors in Barcelona through the Catalonian Choral Federation.

Joseph A. Held, B.S.C. '10, wrote, "Kind, But Kind of Weird: Short Stories on How to Raise Radicals," which is a collection about all of the people we encounter in our lives. Held's stories shine a light on the quirky, the eccentric, and all too-natural landscape that colors relationships.

Rockelle Y. Lewis, B.A. '10, M.P.A. '11, featured as one of Legacy Miami’s 40 Under 40 Black Leaders of Today and Tomorrow.

Omar Paredes, M.B.A. '10, has been appointed associate director of industry engagement at SoundExchange, a premier music tech organization. With more than 15 years of experiences in the music industry, Paredes will lead the development, initiation, and execution of proprietary initiatives that enhance SoundExchange’s position in the entertainment and music tech space.

Andrew T. Coley, B.A. '11, has been appointed as the chief executive officer of the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association. He held leadership and advocacy roles in the nursery and landscape industry and in legislative outreach capacities for fellow veterans at Concerned Veterans of America. He also served for four years in the United States Air Force as a Russian cryptologic linguist.

Benjamin J. Silver, B.S.C. '14, M.D. '18, was awarded the 2021 Regional Food System Partnerships grant program to use trademarked branding in showcasing the region’s food producers. The grant was awarded by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.

Maria Lamasu, B.A. '19 and Fernanda Lamuño Cabanas, B.A. '19, are the founders of Wall Street Notes, an education startup that helps students prepare for a globally-recognized financial certification. Wall Street Notes has launched its online platform.

Alex Paez, M.S.F. '19, has joined the Miami Project, a groundbreaking organization in South Florida that aims to promote a healthy and active lifestyle for individuals with physical disabilities. He ran the 2022 Miami Marathon alongside Alberto Gavilán, a psychologist and coach who lost his sight more than 13 years ago and is a big advocate of the inclusion of athletes with disabilities.

For more information on how you can leave a legacy that shines ever brighter, contact: Kyle Paige, executive director, Office of Estate and Gift Planning, at 305-284-2266 or kpaige@miami.edu, or visit us at miami.edu/plannedgiving.
Jonathan West

Johnathan West, whose career spanned four decades at the University of Miami College of Arts and Sciences, died on Jan. 2. He is remembered as having a profound impact “on the University, the community, and the public administration” during his career at the University, which began in January 1981, according to Dean Leonidas Bachas. West, who received advanced degrees at Northwestern University, was a member of the Iron Arrow Honor Society, a recipient of the Luis Building, the Winn-Dixie Hope Lodge, and the Schoninger Research Quadrangle. West was a recipient of the Panhellenic Hall of Fame Award in 1981, and a recipient of the University of Miami American Society for Public Administration’s Section on Ethics.

Helen N. Fagan

A Holocaust survivor and beloved educator at the University of Miami, Helen N. Fagan, B.A. ’66, M.A. ’89, made it her mission for the world to remember the millions of victims of the Holocaust. She was 104 when she died in Sarasota, Florida, in March. Fagan, who joined the English department faculty in 1971, soon after named fresh water Teacher of the Year and later received the Panhellenic Council Best Professor award. She then won program director of Judas. Studies and helped establish a number of research centers focused on Holocaust victims, including the Holocaust Memorial in Miami Beach; the Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. She also served on the committee that established the University of Miami American Society for Public Administration’s Section on Ethics.

Dr. Bernard “Benny” Fargo

Dr. Bernard “Benny” Fargo, who served as dean of the Miller School of Medicine from 1981 to 1995 and advised and mentored hundreds of colleagues and students during his tenure, died on March 30. He was 85. A diplomat and native of Bronx, New York, he helped raise the national profile of the Miller School, particularly in areas of AIDS, diabetes, and cancer. During his tenure as dean, the school launched The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, the Center for Adult Development and Aging, the Comprehensive AIDS Program, and the Ear Institute. The school also built the Papanicoulaou center, the Gutter Lab, the Winn-Donald Hope Lodge, and the Schoninger Research Quadrangle during his time.
The Knight Center for Music Innovation—which will include an elegant, 200-seat performance hall with superior acoustics, practice rooms, a recording studio, and an outdoor LED “window cast” projection system—is on track to open in spring of 2023.
THERE IS BRIGHTNESS ALL AROUND US

And, we’re not talking about the South Florida sun. At the University of Miami, we are dedicated to becoming an even greater force for good. With so many critical challenges facing our communities, we invite you to join us on this ambitious journey that we call Ever Brighter. This is our moment to shine.

Visit everbrighter.miami.edu to learn how you can help shape our next century.