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HISTORIC

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI BASKETBALL TEAMS HAD A RECORD-BREAKING SEASON, WITH THE WOMEN ADVANCING TO THE ELITE EIGHT AND THE MEN REACHING THE FINAL FOUR.
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AcCELERATING A PATH FOR TEACHERS

Program guarantees jobs in Miami-Dade Public Schools

In an effort to attract students to the teaching profession and address the national shortage of teachers, a group of Miami education thought leaders—led by philanthropist Leslie Miller Sainzot—created a new initiative, the Teacher Accelerator Program (TAP).

Partners for the project include the University of Miami School of Education and Human Development; Achieve Miami, a nonprofit group founded by Sainzot that builds educational programs to extend learning opportunities in South Florida; and Teach For America, another nonprofit organization that fosters lifelong leaders for educational equity and excellence.

TAP begins with a one-semester course, followed by a paid summer internship in the classroom. University seniors who are not already pursuing a degree in education can put themselves on an accelerated path to a guaranteed teaching position in a Miami-Dade County Public School upon graduation and completion of the program.

“Teaching is a different kind of career in the sense that you get almost immediate feedback on your impact. At the School of Education and Human Development, we’re a school that’s about social impact in a variety of ways,” says Laura Kohn-Wood, dean. “This is an occupation where your ability to make an impact is immediate, and we want our students to be at the forefront of it.”

Sainzot, who also serves as chair of the board for Teach For America, says the TAP course “is an intensive preparation for being a teacher, including teaching methods and classroom management. For students looking for a good job, a career ladder, and job satisfaction, this course is it.”

STUDENTS EXPLORE HEALTH CARE IN SPAIN

Intensive study abroad program provides immersive learning

When Jerusha Jean walked into a hospital room at the Hospital Universitario Quironsalud Madrid, she found a patient crying, awaiting a doctor’s visit. Gently placing her hand on the patient’s shoulder, Jean offered consolation. Despite the language barrier, the Spanish patient understood her sentiment and reciprocated with a calming touch.

“Interacting with the patients on that level confirmed that I was in the right profession. I had more of a sense of appreciation and pride to say, ‘I’m in the field of nursing’ after this program,” Jean says.

Earlier this year in January, Jean was among 20 seniors in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program who spent two weeks in Madrid, Spain, as guests of the Universidad Francisco de Vitoria. It was part of the elective Global Health: Transcultural Nursing, an immersive experience in an international setting that is followed by online activities and face-to-face meetings.

The intensive 14-day curriculum allows students to observe nursing care in several units at two hospitals, including wound care, endoscopy, emergency medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, surgery, pulmonology, and endocrinology. Alison Skubik’s experience attending rotations at the Hospital Universitario del Sureste magnified the similarities and differences in the health care systems abroad versus in the United States and helped her gain a wide variety of clinical experience.

“When we had the opportunity to do a lot of clinical rotations in so many different units while there, I saw a lot of procedures and got a lot of experience I wouldn’t have during a typical rotation in Miami,” says Skubik.

The ambitious educational itinerary gave participants the invaluable opportunity to develop their understanding of health-care systems and care delivery models outside of the United States, says Johis Ortega, B.S.N ’02, M.S.N. ’06, Ph.D. ’11, an associate dean and professor at the school, who led the expedition.

“Opportunities like this enrich their personal and professional lives immensely,” says Ortega.
What Does ChatGPT Mean for Higher Education?

Provost Jeffrey Duerk weighs in on challenges and opportunities

ChatGPT, a new written language software tool powered by artificial intelligence that has gained visibility and popularity, is considered by some as the new enfant terrible of disruptive technology.

ChatGPT is reported to produce text that appears to have been written by humans. It can produce essays, solve calculus problems, and provide software code following text prompts. The software poses challenges for educators, software development managers, and those working in any industry that relies on work that requires human creativity and expertise.

In higher education, many are concerned that students will use the tool to complete assignments. This has made some universities begin to revise curricula to ensure students will find it more difficult to use the technology to complete assignments for academic affairs and provost at the University of Miami, to encourage faculty members to explore ChatGPT and similar technologies to find ways that it can enhance their existing curriculum and expertise.

“Calculators and CliffsNotes, and spell-check fell into these categories. As an AI text generation tool, ChatGPT reflects an evolving and sophisticated technology that users describe as quite good and that will likely continue to develop,” Duerk says. “It can be used, for example, as a study aid.”

Duerk used the software to find a description of DNA methylation and was pleased that the software delivered a concise description of the process at an undergraduate level. “In the case I played with, I could see how it could break through the logjam in the understanding of a topic rather than a student being referred to a website,” he says.

In a note to faculty members, Duerk encourages them to try it for themselves. “We [as educators] are trying to assess if the student has learned something and can provide us with a piece of material that demonstrates the student’s level of understanding,” Duerk says. “If a student gives us a ChatGPT-generated answer as their own work, they are cheating themselves and mistaking a grade with knowledge.

Disruptive technology—innovation that significantly alters the way consumers, businesses, and industries operate—is nearly always, at first, perceived as a threat. Advances such as calculators, CliffNotes, and spell-check fell into these categories.

“Now everyone would say that the calculator is a tool to get to the answer quickly,” he says. “Calculators and computers have not slowed down discoveries in math or science, and they have not replaced them. They have made it easier and faster.”

The provost foresees a humanities class where a teacher may ask a student to write a paper on a given topic, then have ChatGPT offer a paper on the same topic.

“It would be interesting to see the similarities and differences between the two,” he says. “It would be interesting to see what technology can currently do and what it cannot—how the styles differ and what aspects of the topic are discussed and what aspects are identified as most important by each.”

Duerk warns that ChatGPT is not foolproof. The information it provides is only as accurate as the data that is put into its system and the underlying algorithm’s ability to assemble those pieces correctly. His own trials with the algorithm, in some cases, generated solid essays with fundamental logic or factual errors.

“The computer has allowed us to simulate and do things we could not do before. But if you have an error in the logic of your program, the program will give you the wrong answer,” he says.

Flo Rida in Our House
Musician speaks about diversity, social change, and his road to success

Miami native Flo Rida, successful rapper and songwriter, visited the Coral Gables Campus this spring to talk about his career success in the music industry.

“What’s your house,” was how Flo Rida greeted students, referring to one of his hit songs, “My House.”

Part of the Judge-in-Residence program through the College of Arts and Sciences, the event was moderated by Miami Circuit Court Judge Ellen Sue Venzer, B.B.A. ’94, J.D. ’97. The program highlights how the United States legal system affects our lives and prepares students for active citizenship through seminar-style courses, University-wide lectures, and structured conversations with prominent professionals.

During the talk, Venzer asked Flo Rida about his experience with racial identity and implicit bias in the music industry and South Florida community.

“Growing up in Miami, it’s very diverse,” he told her. “It didn’t affect me as much because [diversity] was embraced [here].”

In responding to a question, Flo Rida addressed how record labels can do more to promote social change and diversity. The artist highlighted that now is a great time in the music industry because everyone has a platform, which allows for collaboration that creates the synergy to make social change and diversity more powerful.

Flo Rida, on various occasions, mentioned the important role his mother played in his upbringing and in the creation of his values. He shared that she taught him from a young age to “embrace every moment because it can be taken away at any time.”

Marlee Matlin Deliver Uplifting Message
Oscar-winning actress inspires students to break barriers

Before becoming the first deaf performer to win an Academy Award at the age of 21 for her role in “Children of a Lesser God,” Marlee Matlin had seen only one episode of a television show with someone just like her.

“I used to watch the TV show ‘Happy Days’ as an 8-year-old, and there was an episode that had a deaf woman using American Sign Language,” says Matlin. “I realized, ‘Oh, she’s speaking my language; I want to be on that show.’ And from then on, I set my sights on being an actor.”

As the guest speaker at the What Matters to U event hosted by the University of Miami Student Government this spring, Matlin shared that she lost her hearing at 18 months old and how that impacted her upbringing, as well as her navigation “of a successful acting career in Hollywood.”

“When I read a script, it has to be something that excites me, something I feel a connection with,” she told the students. “I want to be able to portray characters who might even be written as someone who can speak and, because of who I am, portray them as someone who doesn’t speak—yet it’ll make sense anyway.”

Despite the challenges that persist for non-hearing individuals, both within and outside of the entertainment industry, Matlin recognizes there is much more representation and understanding now of the community than there used to be, and she credits stars such as Whoopi Goldberg and Henry Winkler for helping her assimilate into her acting career.

Grace Altidor, a senior majoring in health science, and Kirsten Schwarz Olmedo, an American Sign Language lecturer at the University pursuing a doctorate in speech-language pathology, moderated the discussion with Matlin—and her interpreter, Jack Jason—about her successes, challenges, and social justice advocacy.

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Following their yearlong work to document human rights violations, student members of the School of Law Human Rights Clinic traveled to Los Angeles this spring to partici- pate in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights’ thematic hearing on the rights of Haitian migrants in the United States.

The hearing highlighted the United States’ persistence in deporting Haitian nationals with criminal convictions, despite full knowledge of the grave risks to life, personal security, health, and well-being.

“A year before the world’s largest active volcano erupted, research by two University scientists revealed which of the two rift zones of the Mauna Loa volcano would spew magma. The Mauna Loa began erupting late last fall for the first time in nearly 40 years, spewing lava 100 feet to 200 feet into the air,” says student Clayton Oates.

“Falk Amelung, a professor of marine geosciences at the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, who once

Growing Importance of Health Care

The School of Law launched an area of focus in health law to address the need for specialized practitioners in South Florida, a major international health care hub. Students may fulfill the focus area requirements by taking advantage of specialized and experiential opportunities related to health law, including the Health Rights Clinic.

“Alongside our partners, we argued that systematic racism is at the root of this immigration crisis,” says student Gabrielle Thomas.

The 14 students joined heads of state, ministers, negotiators, climate activists, mayors, civil society representatives, and CEOs all focused on addressing actions to deal with the growing climate crisis.

“This is a unique experience for students to gain a front- row seat to international treaty-making,” says Jessica Owley, faculty director of the School of Law’s environmental law program. “The COP brought together policymakers, academics, and activists from around the world—working together to find solutions to the climate crisis that threatens us all.”

“COP27 was full of eye-opening experiences, and I feel like I experienced three new worlds,” student Gabriela Teixeira noted during a dispatch from the conference. “First, how international agreements work. Witnessing U.N. negotiations allowed me to get a full-picture understanding of how international agreements form and what happens when objectives aren’t met. Second, political greenwashing. I was surprised by the contrasting messages from U.S. politicians during the panels emphasizing celebrations and optimism relative to the concerns expressed in negotiations, emphasizing urgency and the failures to meet various provisions of the Paris Agreement.”

The third observation, Teixeira noted, was “knowing that everyone there ... joined together for the shared purpose of working together to prevent further irreversible destruction of our shared home.”

Climate and the Law

In the fall, another group of School of Law students traveled to Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, to attend the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Commonly referred to as COP27, the meeting worked to renew solidarity among countries to deliver on the landmark Paris Agreement for people and the planet.

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“The new area of focus will help to highlight the health law opportunities at the law school and enable our graduates to showcase their experience and training in health law,” says Gabriel Scheffler, faculty advisor for the new area of focus.

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Learning Leadership in the Great Outdoors

SEALs program teaches life skills through recreational sports

Prior to attending the University of Miami, Theo Krijnse Locker was a member of the Boy Scouts of America and spent a lot of his free time outdoors in the Northeast. Once Locker arrived at the Coral Gables Campus, he was pleasantly surprised that the Student Affairs Department of Wellness and Recreation offered Outdoor Adventures, a gateway to adventure sports including climbing, hiking, diving, camping, stand-up paddleboarding, and surfing.

His love for the outdoors eventually led him to apply for the Student Experience Adventure Leadership Semester, or SEALs, a program created and taught by full-time staff members of Outdoor Adventures. Students learn to pursue outdoor leadership opportunities and acquire the skills necessary to teach others about what’s needed for outdoor recreation.

“SEALs opened my eyes to all there is to do here,” says Locker, a sophomore studying ecosystem science and policy.

The semester-long course is a cross between classroom, on-campus, and field-based leadership training that is designed to help students learn how to manage large groups as they explore outdoor recreation. Trey Knight, assistant director of wellness and recreation, directs the students in the SEALs program, which includes more than 160 hours of training and development.

“This program is unlike any other training program,” says Knight. “From learning how to handle real-life situations to learning to paddleboard or learning to navigate at sea or land, it will help you gain experience for life to come.”

Brendon Hobbes, from Long Island, New York, is a senior studying business technology and marketing. The SEALs program allowed him to see South Florida in a new light and helped develop his management skills.

“I learned to think on my feet and why you should have a full plan. I also learned the hard way that sometimes things happen,” says Hobbes.

Getting to the Bottom of Pirates’ Secrets

Lecture unearths the history of piracy in the Caribbean

Frederick Hanselmann, a senior lecturer with the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, knows pirates.

In a presentation that was part of the Sea Secrets lecture series earlier this year, he shared enthralling insights on “Real Pirates of the Caribbean: The Search for and Study of Shipwrecks from Captain Morgan and Captain Kidd!” Hanselmann highlighted the role of the archeologist in unearthing historical truths as he charted the exploits and misadventures of two of the most notorious pirates to sail the Spanish Main.

“Archeology makes history tangible,” Hanselmann says. “It allows us to actually interact with the past by providing a unique portal through which we can understand how we came to be and where we are.”

Hanselmann counts himself among the many whose imaginations have long been stirred by the movies, stories, and even the tourism industry that perpetuates pop culture mystique about pirates.

“Love it or hate it, there’s been a ubiquitous characterization and fascination with pirates for a long time. But what drove piracy? What led to the advent of piracy in the Caribbean?” he asks.

For thousands of years, humankind has been blind to the secrets of the ocean waters, yet the aquatic highways preserve an underwater archeological record of what was going on from the times of dugout canoes and Roman shipwrecks to the days of ships sunk in modern conflict.

“Shipwrecks don’t exist in a vacuum,” Hanselmann says. “They are each connected to a range of other social and human activities.”

While Morgan and Kidd thrived for years during the Golden Age of Piracy, from 1650-1730, both met with ignominious deaths. Morgan died of complications with gout most likely related to alcohol consumption. And Kidd swung at the gallows for convictions on piracy and murder.
**Goizueta Pavilion Turns 20**  
University celebrates elegant home of its Cuban Heritage Collection

Located in the Otto G. Richter Library on the Coral Gables Campus, the Roberto C. Goizueta Pavilion celebrated its 20th anniversary at a January event called “Hacia el Futuro,” or “Toward the Future.”

Opened in 2003, the pavilion is named after Cuban-born Roberto C. Goizueta, the former CEO of The Coca-Cola Company. Its elegant foyer features marble floors and a colorful mural by CubanAmerican artist Humberto Calzadeta that resembles an old Havana sitting room. “On behalf of the Goizuela fam-
ily, we congratulate the University of Miami for its dedicated work over the last 20 years to preserve Cuban heritage through the Cuban Heritage Collection,” says Roberto S. Goizueta, the oldest son of the Coca-Cola magnate and director of The Goizuela Foundation. “I know that my father, Roberto C. Goizueta, would be proud to have his name associated with the most important body of resources on Cuba and the Cuban diaspora outside of the island.”

After arriving at the University, “I quickly realized how significant the Cuban Heritage Collection was not only to the scholarly mission of our University but also to the people whose stories have been entrusted to us to preserve and to learn from,” says Jeffrey Dueck, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost. “Charles Eckman, dean of libraries, notes that the collection is considered a “crown jewel” of the University. “The Goizuela and The Goizuela Foundation recognized this as well as that such important scholarly study requires a special space in which to interact with materials,” he says. “The pavilion has had a remarkable growth and impact.”

One of the most valuable gifts the Goizueta family bestowed on the Cuban Heritage Collection is the funding of The Goizueta Foundation Graduate Fellowship Program. This initiative has sponsored 131 fellows to engage with the material in the archives.

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**Librarian Leaves a Legacy**

Esperanza Bravo de Varona helped found Cuban Heritage Collection

Amanda T. Moreno, B.A. ’12, interim Esperanza Bravo de Varona Chair and archivist for the Cuban Heritage Collection, says her mentor was a natural leader, and it was inspi-
ration to see everything she achieved as a woman in this profession.”

Along with librarians Rosa Abella, Ana Rosa Nuñez, Leslie Orta Varona, and Gladys Gomez-Rosse, de Varona began working in the University Libraries division in the late 1960s. With their own initiative, the five Cuban women collected documents, posters, newspapers, maps, books, and anything that had to do with Cuba and the Cuban exile experience. These documents were all stored in different parts of the library. “Esperanza had the drive to bring all the Cuban collections together,” recalls Gomez-Rosse. Born in Sanit íus, Cuba, on Sept. 29, 1927, de Varona was the third of four children of Romulo Bravo and Armantina Lopez Calleja. In her early years, she studied at Colegio del Apostolado and later attended college at the University of Havana, where she gradu-
ated with a Ph.D. in philosophy. “We find comfort knowing her legacy will live on,” says her granddaughter, Laura Rodriguez. “Not only through the Esperanza Bravo de Varona Chair, but also because her contributions left a perma-
nent mark on Cuban history and culture.”

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**eMerge Americas 2023 Spotlights Innovations**

Scientists showcase their technological wares

Even amid the sea of some 20,000 venture capitalists, entrepreneurs, and technologists who, for two days in late April at the eMerge Americas Conference on Miami Beach, bobbed from booth to booth to glimpse and glean the newest innovations, the University of Miami was a standout performer.

Researchers and scientists showcased their newest advancements in technology at the University’s vibrant interactive kiosk. Faculty members representing multiple schools and University executives shared their expertise, from ethics to education, in panels and startup competitions.

And as a Titanium Sponsor of this premier technology event, the University further strengthened its role as a hub and influencer for the Hemispheric University Consortium, which develops innovative and impactful solutions for the social challenges facing the region and the world.

President Julio Frenk; Jeffrey Dueck, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost; Kenneth Goodman, Ph.D. ’91, director of University Ethics Programs and professor of medicine; Felicia Knaul, director of the Institute for Advanced Study of the Americas; Pratim Biswas, dean of the College of Engineering; and GeCheng Zha, a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, were among the 200 speakers, presenters, and session moderators this year that included Academy Award-winning filmmaker Phil Lord and seven-time Super Bowl winner Tom Brady, an emerging entrepreneur.

In his panel that focused on catalyzing higher education in the Americas, Frenk highlighted one of the most important lessons learned from the pandemic—that technology works best when combined with human interaction.

“Technology works best in hybrid—or blended—modalities where you combine the use of technology with human interaction to enhance the classroom experience,” said Frenk, while cautioning against confusing connectivity with connection.

“Connectivity is what technology gives you, and connection is what happens when we’re all together,” he said.

Once again, this year at eMerge Americas, the University celebrated its aptitude to generate the benefits of both connectivity and connection.

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**Projects featured at the University of Miami booth**

MiDar

MiDar is a next-generation remote-sensing device that combines a fluid lensing camera with high-intensity LED light to map and transmit 3D images of the sea floor in unprecedented clarity. MiDar was invented by Ved Chirayuth, Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science professor and National Geographic explorer.

HealthHub

This smart medicine cabinet—a collaboration of the School of Architecture, Miller School of Medicine, and Institute for Data Sciences and Computing—incorporates interactive sensors to create a multipurpose health station in your bathroom.

HairWare

Biomedical engineering student Joy Jackson invented this custom EEG electrode housing that improves adherence between the scalp and electrode—especially beneficial for people with tightly curled or textured hair.

Next Generation Harvey

Developed by the Gordon Center at the Miller School of Medicine, Harvey is the world’s first cardiopulmonary simulator. Now the programmable mannequin has received an extensive upgrade to help health practitioners hone their examination and reasoning skills.
**Eye on Athletics**

**Basketball Ambassador**

As the ‘Canes basketball team advanced toward the NCAA Tournament, players’ popularity soared and none more than Norchad Omier—though not only for his standout play as a defensive demon, rebounding force, and consistent scorer.

Omier has become an unofficial hardcourt ambassador for his native Nicaragua, and when the ‘Canes play, the stands fill with fans waving the Nicaraguan flag or sporting the azure-and-white colors of the Central American nation. When the games end, many of those fans make their way to the court in hopes of saying hello to or snagging a picture with Miami’s energetic, outgoing big man.

And regardless the outcome of the game, Omier does his best to oblige.

Omier says that he understands what his presence means to his compatriots and knows the responsibility that comes with being the first Nicaraguan-born basketball player to earn a Division I scholarship.

It doesn’t hurt that Omier is having a breakout season. Yet his success on the court is all the more surprising given his trajectory—from a youngster in Bluefields, Nicaragua, dreaming of playing big league baseball to the crossover to basketball and a trip to Miami, where his budding talent caught the eye of a local high school coach. Omier had hoped that his impressive high school stint at Miami Prep might attract the ‘Canes attention. But COVID-19 intervened. The pandemic sidelined college basketball recruiting, as it did most every other facet of life. He opted to travel to Arkansas State, where he flourished under the coaching of Miami-native Mike Balado.

He worked hard and even traveled back to Nicaragua in the summer to play with older, experienced players on the national team. Then back at Arkansas State, he earned a cavalcade of basketball honors. Omier entered the transfer portal. This time the ‘Canes did come calling—as did a slew of other top schools.

But the chance to return to Miami and play for his dream school—especially one that had just made a history-making run to the Elite Eight—made the decision relatively easy.

While it has been a long, often solitary road to travel from Bluefields, Omier says he appreciates that his impact transcends what he does on the court and in support of his teammates: He’s an inspiration and a source of pride for Nicaraguans in South Florida and beyond.

**A Big Leap in Leadership**

The youngest of four siblings, Lauryn Harris was inspired by her older sisters to excel, and excel she did as a truck and field star at the prestigous Bullis School in her native Maryland.

But it wasn’t until she arrived at the University in 2021 and joined the Hurricane Leadership Academy that Harris, the co-president of Miami’s Black Student-Athlete Alliance and a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, began to find her voice in a new way, on and off the track.

“I’m involved in many things now that I’d never even thought of when I transferred here—and they’ve been some of the most fulfilling parts of my journey,” Harris says.

The Hurricane Leadership Academy provided the foundation for her involvement. “I gained confidence as a leader, learned my strengths and weaknesses, learned to create goals for an organization, drive those goals, and how to influence and empower others,” she says.

Harris has been instrumental in helping the Black Student-Athlete Alliance revamp its structure and focus on its core components of community engagement, professional development, health and wellness, and Black history.

One of her biggest priorities for the group has been creating a space where fellow student-athletes can connect away from their respective sports and grow both as individuals and as a community.

Harris, who graduates this spring with a degree in political science, is testing her new leadership skills in a range of ways.

She recently completed a 17-month internship with Voice In Sport, an organization that works to elevate the voices of female athletes. As part of her involvement, she researched and analyzed data about women and girls in sports and helped the organization draft Title IX amendments, then talked with federal legislators to advance the effort.

The experience opened the eyes to a career in advocacy work, particularly in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Harris’ efforts—both in her internship and at Miami—have garnered attention.

Last year, she was recognized as one of the University’s two ACC Unite Award winners, and she has embraced her role as one of the leaders on the women’s track and field team.

“Lauryn is one of those people that everybody needs on a team,” says Amy Deem, head coach of men’s and women’s track and field.

“She’s not looking for accolades. She just wants to be the best person on and off the track that she can be.”

**Receiver for Mental Health**

Michael Redding III was a senior in high school when he explored his first psychology textbook. He found the workings of the mind fascinating and has continued to pursue the field as a study interest and career calling—though one that will have to wait a bit.

The third-year redshirt first-year receiver is intent on playing football as long as he can. First, he aspires to star and help the University return to football prominence and then to work his way onto an NFL roster.

But when his playing career is over, Redding has his sights set on a career in psychology as a licensed mental health professional. By doing so, he intends to make a difference in the world and specifically in the Black community.

“Within the Black community, we have a strong stigma about mental health. People see it as weakness—I’m not saying that’s wrong, but it’s not the healthiest perspective,” he says.

Redding is the community co-chair of Miami’s Black Student-Athlete Alliance and a member of the University’s Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and the ACC’s Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. As a participant in the Black Student-Athlete Summit in Houston last year, he became convinced of the need for more Black mental health professionals.

In his conversations with fellow student-athlete leaders, some shared how seeking professional support had helped them, while others expressed their hesitancy to seek help—often because of the lack of Black representation in the mental health field.

Shared personal and cultural experience is important to establishing a therapeutic rapport, he says. Biases are another concern.

Redding, who graduates with a psychology degree this spring, is intent on pursuing a master’s degree in mental health counseling and later a doctorate in psychology as well.
The Smart Cities Miami 2023 conference, co-hosted by the School of Architecture and the Institute for Data Science and Computing (IDSC), partnered this spring with the Climate Resilience Academy to explore how climate change is impacting the way that we manage, design, and inhabit cities. Dean Rodolphe el-Khoury, who spurred the launch of the annual conference six years ago, explains that the gathering strives to build bonds between government, the private sector, and academia to better address the myriad of challenges facing cities—and to do so using an accessible language that engages a nonspecialized audience.

“This year, with climate resilience as our theme, it was especially gratifying to partner with the University’s new Climate Resilience Academy and to have such robust engagement from local government that has been so active on the topic,” says el-Khoury.

Panels and discussions for the two-day conference explored how technology helps cities and counties improve their efficiency in the face of climate impacts. Ben Kirtman, a climate scientist and professor of atmospheric science at the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, delivered a keynote lecture. In one panel, Yelena Yesha, Knight Foundation Endowed Chair of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence and IDSC’s innovation officer, highlighted the value of the data gleaned from existing "smart cities." “We need real-time information to prepare for all types of catastrophic events,” says Yesha, creator of the National "smart cities." "The possibility of actually embedding sensors into the built environment, with the capacity to measure and to build huge datasets in continuous real time as a measurement of environmental variables, is very important in developing climate technology and in developing strategies for climate resilience," el-Khoury says.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava shared the many ways that county government seeks to bolster South Florida’s resilience, including keeping Biscayne Bay clean, supporting climate-focused innovation, and monitoring equity—so that all residents can adapt to the warming temperatures and rising seas as safely as possible.

Andrew Roddick, professor and director of the University of Houston’s Construction Robotics and Fabrication Technologies Lab, delivered the closing keynote speech on how AI technology is impacting the industry. His “Five Points of Architecture and AI” address was eye-opening for Caterina Caffaretta, a Miami native and second-year architecture graduate student. “AI is something that’s being introduced more and more in architecture and other areas of study, and it was really interesting to hear from someone who has their own firm and is implementing it in their own work,” Caffaretta says. “It’s gratifying to see how the conference continues to grow and gain momentum from these new partnerships.”

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Bebek, center, dean of the College of Engineering, and Rodolphe el-Khoury, dean of the School of Architecture

Helping to Curb Youth Emotional Struggles

As a young college student, Jill Ehrenreich-May struggled through her first psychology class. Yet the challenge only motivated her to delve deeper into a field that holds such fascinating complexities.

She registered for a second course at the University of Florida, then began volunteering with her psychology professor Carolyn Tucker, who was operating an afterschool program in Gainesville, Florida, to support healthy behaviors and academic achievement in Black youth.

Impressed by her tenacity as a student, Tucker hired Ehrenreich-May as a project coordinator. “My involvement was incredibly formative,” says Ehrenreich-May, professor and associate chair of graduate studies in psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences. “Conducting prevention work in community settings with youth in need of support was an exciting thing for me, so I thought that I really wanted to keep doing this.”

The experience spurred her to pursue more studies in child psychology and then on to graduate school, where Ehrenreich-May found her niche of treating anxiety and related disorders in kids and teens.

Two of the foremost youth anxiety experts in the nation—professors David Barlow and Donna Pincus—served as her mentors at Boston University.

With her mentors’ guidance, in 2018 she published two manuals—the Unified Protocols for Transdiagnostic Treatments of Emotional Disorders in Children (UP-C) and Adolescents (UP-A)—that give therapists, psychologists, and parents an array of research-based strategies to help children and young adults suffering from a range of emotional disorders in a shorter time span, typically three to four months. The treatments rely heavily on cognitive behavioral strategies, which are research-based tools that stress the importance of shifting a person’s perspective, as well as their patterns of behavior, to help them learn to cope with difficult situations. “We are teaching children and teens about their emotions and how to respond to them in really helpful ways, and these are broad enough concepts that there is an ability for them to be personalized to the individual child,” says Liz Halliday, B.S., ’17, M.S., ’21, a graduate student and therapist at Ehrenreich-May’s Center for Child and Adolescent Mood and Anxiety Treatment Program—the CAMAT clinic—which treats up to 200 youth and families per year in group, telehealth, and individual therapy settings.

Ehrenreich-May’s work has become increasingly relevant as the nation grapples with a growing caseload of youth struggling with mental health conditions. “During the COVID-19 pandemic, I looked at the dramatic rise in youth anxiety and depression and realized we needed to pivot to get these strategies out there faster,” she says. “So, we developed strategies for briefer treatments that could be offered via telehealth sessions and, with the help of a grant, are adapting some of our targeted treatments for anxiety or depression to be offered as single-session virtual modules, where parents or young adults can attend day or night.”

In the past few years, Ehrenreich-May and her colleagues have earned grants to train South Florida providers on how to use these tools, including providers at mental health clinics operated by Chrysalis Health; Lotus House, a shelter for women and children; and Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Recently named president of the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT), Ehrenreich-May intends to use her new role to highlight how the UP-A and UP-C protocols, along with other effective treatments, can be used to help children, teens, and adults suffering from mental health challenges.

“My primary goal now is to make sure effective therapies for youth reach a larger audience of clinicians and families,” she says. “ABCT provides a terrific platform to support that goal.”
In his studio in the south wing of the Patricia Louise Frost Music Studios, Conductor Gerard Schwarz—internationally acclaimed conductor; distinguished professor of music, conducting, and orchestral studies at the Frost School of Music; and music director of the Frost Symphony Orchestra—opens the score for a violin part from Wagner, Haydn, Johannes Brahms, Hector Berlioz, and countless others works by Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach, Georg Friedrich Handel, Joseph Haydn, Johannes Brahms, Hector Berlioz, Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Schubert, Peter Tchaikovsky, Antonin Vivaldi, Richard Wagner, and countless others.

A Maestro’s Music Reaches the Masses

Conductor Gerard Schwarz donates his annotated music collection to the University

He points out the penciled-in markings. “For example, it says pianissimo and there’s a V. That means you start up-bow [bowing upward],” he says. “Then there’s another V, which means you continue up-bow, then there’s what looks like an upside-down U with corners, a down-bow sign. That’s the bowing.”

Marking orchestra parts—to indicate bowing direction, or changes in tempo or dynamics, for example—long has been standard practice among composers, conductors, and musicians. As Schwarz explains, it’s bow conductors convey their artistic vision and interpretation of the music to the ensembles they lead and the students they teach. When students, music scholars, and musicians can compare and analyze different conductors’ notes on different parts, they gain greater insight into contrasting interpretations. Now, after nearly 50 years of collecting scores and putting his own artistic imprint on them, Schwarz has donated his entire collection to the Frost School. Comprising more than 1,200 performance sets and parts, and valued at more than $12.4 million, the Schwarz Collection encompasses the pantheon of 18th and 19th century European composers.

Highlights include complete performance sets for all nine symphonies by Ludwig van Beethoven, as well as numerous works by Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach, Georg Friedrich Handel, Joseph Haydn, Johannes Brahms, Hector Berlioz, Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Schubert, Peter Tchaikovsky, Antonin Vivaldi, Richard Wagner, and countless others.

Schwarz’s gift is part of Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century. The most ambitious in the University’s history, the $2.5 billion campaign is set to conclude in 2025, when the University will celebrate its centennial.

“Gerard Schwarz’s library is filled with priceless annotation for study and performance and is a huge repository of great symphonic music, from standard repertoire to new works commissioned for Maestro Schwarz,” says Shelton Berg, director of the University’s Fundraising Office.

When it came time for college, Yalowitz applied to the University—his top choice of schools—along with others. He’d seen videos and pictures of Miami and learned about the opportunities in real estate, the career he had in mind. Yet he tempered his hopes, aware that the costs were beyond his family’s means. Along with 14,000 other students nationally, Yalowitz applied for the Army ROTC scholarship and—based on his academic excellence, physical fitness, and leadership skills—was selected as one of the recipients. Now in his second semester, he’s enjoying classes at the Miami Herbert Business School, especially one in business law. As a result, he’s now considering law school.

As a cadet in the ROTC program, he’s up at 5:30 a.m. three times a week for an hour of physical training—running, exercises, and weight training. In addition, he trains every night in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and mixed martial arts in a gym off campus.

“I find that on the days that I get up early and exercise, I have more energy and can focus more on schoolwork,” he asserts.

The ROTC program requires classroom instruction—lots of leadership training, situational awareness, and self-defense skills. Weapons use, and military ranks and roles. Labs—tactical training exercises—are held Mondays through Thursdays at Snake Creek, the South Florida National Guard training center on the cusp of the Everglades.

Once he graduates, Yalowitz has the option of pursuing a career in the military as a four-year active-duty officer or eight years as a reserve duty officer. He’ll make that decision in his senior year.

“I love Miami and the University and like pretty much everything I’m doing in the ROTC and training, my classes,” says Yalowitz, who does enjoy visiting the city with friends on the weekends.

“The scholarship is a life-changing opportunity,” he says. “I’m able to pursue both my dreams of being in the Army and a career in real estate.”

Yalowitz and other student veterans at the University can now access resources and support through the Veterans Resource Center, located in the new Student Village of the Student Center Complex. Jon Baldessari was named the founding director.
The University now stands in the top tier of advanced research institutions selected to join the prestigious Association of American Universities.
The University of Miami has been chosen as one of the newest members of the esteemed association of American Universities (AAU), a distinguished national organization of leading research universities founded in 1900.

The invitation to join the prestigious organization—considered the gold standard in American higher education—comes as the University’s research and sponsored program expenditures totaled more than $1.43 billion in fiscal year 2022, demonstrating a critical focus to address the world’s most complex issues.

“There are special moments in the life of a university that not only reward our hard work but, more importantly, reaffirm our strategic vision and time-honored mission,” says University President Julio Frenk. “Today is a great day for all of us who love and support the University of Miami and who have invested our efforts and hearts in its continuous quest for excellence.”

The University of Miami received the membership invitation along with Arizona State University; the George Washington University; the University of California, Riverside; the University of Notre Dame; and the University of South Florida. The addition of these six leading research universities brings AAU’s memberships to 71 American and two Canadian universities. The member institutions transform lives through education, research, and innovation.

“We are very proud to have these six distinguished universities from across the United States join AAU,” says AAU President Barbara R. Snyder. “We look forward to working with all of these universities to continue advancing higher education and laying the scientific foundation that helps keep our economy strong and our nation healthy and safe.”

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

Now formally recognized among the top tier of universities in North America, the research taking place at the University of Miami demonstrates the depth and breadth of the institution’s 12 schools and colleges working to boldly identify and seek solutions for the world’s greatest challenges.

At the Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine and UHealth, where research priorities include cancer, neuroscience, immunology, stem cell biology, and genetics, scientists received an unprecedented $175 million in federal grant funding for the 2022 research cycle. Cancer research has grown exponentially to earn National Cancer Institute designation for Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. The Miller School is home to the No. 2 ranked NIH-funded program in genetics, which includes research to tackle Alzheimer’s and other devastating illnesses that affect millions of people. Additionally, research in COVID-19, HIV, and Zika have placed the Miller School at the forefront of discovery in infectious diseases.

At the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, longstanding research in marine science, marine biology, climate and weather prediction and modeling, and ecosystem science and policy have paved the way for further areas of focus, where governmental partners look to the University’s research for answers to keeping millions of people and their property out of harm’s way. As part of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency’s national Reefsense research program, the Rosenstiel School—the top recipient of funding with the $175 million federal grant—will lead the development of innovative hybrid biological and engineered reef structures designed to accelerate the protection of vulnerable coastal regions in Florida and the Caribbean. The total sponsored research annual expenditure at the Rosenstiel School has increased from $41.7 million in 2016 to $70 million in 2023, with an average annual research expenditure per faculty member of $1.03 million.

The University continues to leverage gains in research to attract stellar scholars across disciplines. For instance, the School of Nursing and Health Studies ranks 20th among nursing schools in NIH funding. The Department of Psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences is currently among the top six at private universities, and top 20 of all universities, in NIH funding. Research in the humanities, arts, and social sciences ranks among the top 10 percent of all research universities. And since 2015, the University has increased its engineering research expenditures by 180 percent to $9 million today, growing its College of Engineering Ph.D. student population by 20 percent.

In 2022 the University launched the Climate Resilience Academy—an interdisciplinary unit that supports the University’s 12 schools and colleges in collaborative, problem-driven research and education to train the next generation of researchers, as well as deliver actions to combat climate change impacts and other environmental stressors, in partnership with industry, government, and other stakeholders.

Sixteen University researchers claim membership to the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, whose mission is “to provide independent, objective advice to inform policy with evidence, spark progress and innovation, and confront challenging issues for the benefit of society.” Sixteen University researchers claim membership to the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, whose mission is “to provide independent, objective advice to inform policy with evidence, spark progress and innovation, and confront challenging issues for the benefit of society.”

The University’s sponsored research expenditures reached $143 million in 1972, demonstrating a critical focus to address the world’s most complex issues.

And across the institution, the University of Miami Laboratory for Integrative Knowledge (U-LINK) connects faculty members from a range of disciplines in a shared goal to solve large societal challenges. Fostering relationships with local institutions, government agencies, and community partner organizations, U-LINK research teams last year examined how local communities can preserve and support residents equitably, despite impacts of climate change.

“The AAU offers an invaluable network across higher education and beyond,” Frenk says. “We may have our own individual institutional mandates, but whether we are looking at innovation and discovery, the dissemination of knowledge and promotion of understanding, the celebration of our diverse and unique experiences, the guiding and implementation of evidence-based public policies and best practices—each of these worthy endeavors share the prime directive to promote, protect, and preserve our people and our planet.”

CONTINUED EXCELLENCE

I’m excited to invite these six diverse institutions to AAU,” says Carol L. Folt, AAU board chair and president of the University of Southern California. “AAU members are distinguished by the quality of their education and research. It is a testament to our higher education system that we have this many leading research universities in every corner of our country. Congratulations to the faculty, staff, and students for this recognition of their hard work and their leadership in research and education. We look forward to our joint efforts to continue to transform lives through higher education.”

Membership in AAU is by invitation only and is based on an extensive set of quantitative indicators that assess the breadth and quality of a university’s research and educational mission. AAU invitations do not occur annually; this year’s invitations came after one institution was invited in 2021.

Frenk recognized that the University is one of only two private and a handful of public institutional members established in the 20th century to receive this distinction.

“As we approach our centennial in 2025, we do so with this defining moment firmly realized,” he says. ■
Greenville, South Carolina, was the first stop. Then it was on to Houston.
IT DIDN’T MATTER THAT CASSAUNDRA WIMES HAD TO DRIVE NEARLY A THOUSAND MILES TO GET THERE; SHE WAS DETERMINED TO BE A WITNESS TO HISTORY. THE MIAMI HURRICANES WOMEN’S AND MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAMS WERE PLAYING IN THE ELITE EIGHT AND FINAL FOUR, RESPECTIVELY, OF THEIR NCAA TOURNAMENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN PROGRAM HISTORY.

“This is surreal,” said Wimes, B.A. ’98, M.S.Ed. ’00, a University of Miami adjunct professor and former Hurricanes basketball player, from Houston a day before the men’s team took on the University of Connecticut Huskies at NRG Stadium. Only a few days earlier, she was in Greenville, South Carolina, to watch the women’s squad play the Louisiana State University Tigers.

“It’s every college basketball player’s dream to play on this stage,” Wimes said.

She was among the thousands of Hurricanes fans who experienced the historic run of the women’s and men’s basketball teams this season—many attending team send-offs and watch parties for the Sweet 16 and Final Four rounds, others making the trip to multiple cities around the nation to see both squads compete.

Diehard ‘Canes fan Andres Perez sold some of the prize possessions in his extensive sports memorabilia collection, including a Tom Brady-autographed football helmet, to buy his Final Four tickets.

Alumni, including University Board of Trustees member Carlos Guzmán, B.B.A. ’84, attended watch parties all over the country.

Undergraduates Rohin Vaidya and Benji Shokrian attended every NCAA Tournament game in which the men’s team competed this season, never missing a class during their travels to three cities in two weeks.

And other students traveled to Houston in droves after quickly snatching up the 700 student tickets that were distributed for the Miami-UConn game through the NCAA.

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From left, Cassaundra Wimes, her mother, Joycelyn Lee; and friend Renae Patterson cheer on the men’s basketball team in Houston.

From left, sophomore Zander Samarasinghe, junior Benji Shokrian, and senior Rohin Vaidya throw up the U during an NCAA Tournament game in Albany, New York.

Andrés Pérez

PHOTOS BY MIAMI ATHLETICS AND UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

The men’s basketball team’s dream season would come to an end after a 72-59 loss to UConn in the second of two Final Four games at Houston’s NRG Stadium on April 1.

The team (29-8, 15-5 in Atlantic Coast Conference play) finished third in the USA TODAY Coaches Poll, accomplishing the best year-end ranking in program history.

Meanwhile, the women’s team (22-13, 11-7 ACC), which fell to eventual national champion LSU 54-42 in the Elite Eight, finished its record-breaking season ranked No. 18 in the USA TODAY Coaches Poll.
Jasmyne Roberts, who averaged 19 points and 7 rebounds per game during the NCAA Tournament and was named to the All-ACC recognition on the men’s side after averaging 15.1 points, 6.6 rebounds, and 2.5 assists per game during the regular season. “Coach Meier and Coach L have done a great job of getting both these teams to levels where we can compete in the NCAA Tournament.” –JORDAN MILLER

For the student-athletes on both teams, their magical March Madness runs will be long remembered. “It was amazing, to say the least,” said sophomore guard Jasmyne Roberts, who averaged 19 points and 7.3 rebounds per game during the NCAA Tournament and was named to the Greenville 2 All-Region Team. “We really made history, and we did something that no team at Miami that’s played for (head coach Katie Meier) has done here.” –JASMYNE ROBERTS

“Now that everything’s been soaked in, I think it’s kind of crazy. Because when you think about it, this hadn’t happened in 30 years,” said graduate student forward Destiny Harden. “That’s before I was born. I keep saying that to myself; it took all of us to be born to make some history.”

The players credit their head coaches, Jim Larrañaga and Katie Meier, both of whom have amassed hundreds of wins during their coaching stints at the University, as the pivotal reasons for the success of both programs. “The grit, determination, and resilience with which our student-athletes have played this season, and during this tournament, are to be admired.”

While the players attribute the stellar season to their coaches, Larrañaga and Meier praised their players for the miraculous season. “When they had an opportunity, they kind of kicked the door down,” Meier said. “We’ve had other teams that might have been ranked higher. But this particular team, when there was an opportunity, there was a little crack, they were like, ‘Let’s kick it open.’ And that’s why I’m so happy for them, because they were not intimidated by any matchup, and they just went for it. Nothing to lose, everything to gain. It was fun.”

After the loss to the Huskies, Larrañaga said his players “got the message that I was so proud of them, that I loved them, and that I’d really just been on a magic carpet ride with these young men. They’re so much fun to be around, on the court and off the court. They’ll have great memories of the entire season and some of the great wins we have had. I told them all along these memories last a lifetime. You’ll be telling your grandchildren about it one day.”

For Larrañaga, the season was also historic on a personal level. The last time he had taken a team this far in the post-season, he was head coach at another school in another city in another state and in a different time. It was March of 2006, and the then-56-year-old Larrañaga had led his 11th-seeded George Mason men’s basketball team to an improbable Final Four berth, defeating No. 2 UConn 86-84 in overtime in an Elite Eight matchup.

Seventeen years later, he was back in the Final Four, but this time as head coach of the Miami Hurricanes men’s team. In fact, the entire 2022-23 campaign he led was historic on all fronts. Such as how way back in October, his squad was picked to finish fourth in the ACC conference, behind Virginia and basketball blue bloods North Carolina and Duke. Yet, the team went on to defeat all three of those schools during the regular season on its way to capturing the conference championship. And how the Hurricanes, listed as underdogs to Indiana, No. 1-seed Houston, and Texas in NCAA Tournament games, knocked off all three to reach the coveted Final Four.

Perhaps University of Miami President Julio Frenk, in an emailed letter to the ‘Canes community, said it best: “The grit, determination, and resilience with which our student-athletes have played this season, and during this tournament, are to be admired.”
“In that moment, I remember thinking this is something that I always want to be a part of,” says Haskell, now a junior at the University of Miami majoring in international studies with minors in dance and psychology.

Like his brother, Haskell performed in high school musicals and theater productions. Though he has no desire to pursue dance professionally, he came to the University seeking a way to incorporate dance into his curriculum.

“For me, there’s a lot of creativity I find in dance that other classes might not embrace, and it’s an opportunity to think outside the box and be imaginative,” Haskell explains.

He learned of the Creative Arts in Therapy cognate and registered for a dance therapy class with Carol Kaminsky, senior lecturer in dance and coordinator of the dance program at the Frost School of Music. Kaminsky and five other dance instructors this spring taught 21 classes, most involving students who are not dance majors and have no formal training.

“My colleagues and I all give students time in class to create their own way of dancing,” Kaminsky says. “They might be learning routines, but most important is that they learn where the concepts come from, how they align historically with dance principles, and why we’re doing this and what it’s good for. That all requires strong critical thinking skills.”

To gauge success, Kaminsky assesses where students started versus where they end up, how they integrate concepts, and how much risk they take to try something new. The aim is not to develop professional dancers but to sharpen skills that can be applied to other studies, including improvisation, which Kaminsky says “is able to really grow your brain.”

Kaminsky hopes students “find that something they’ve done in dance—maybe through collaborating and putting ideas together to make a dance piece—will later become valuable in a business class, where they need to entertain someone’s wild ideas and come to a consensus. Or if they’re in medicine, that they’re better able to express empathy for people who are different, or when examining a patient, that they’re able to read body language. Dance teaches the ability to be sensitive to people on so many levels.”

Whether called to a career in the creative arts or, like Haskell, to explore and express an inner yearning, students at the University have ample artistic opportunity. Creativity and originality are fostered through 50 internationally acclaimed art degree programs, while renowned faculty and student artists drive innovation through myriad explorations and modes of expression.
Yash Ramanujam

Student actors in the Jerry Herman Ring Theatre production of “The Three Musketeers” practice a fencing scene.

Jasvin THROWER DESVENDRAS, PHILADELPHIA

CAMERON TAVOKOLY /SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION
Rethinking the Learning Landscape

Expanded service-learning opportunities, a new center for democracy, and conferences that spur hemispheric exchange are just some of the ways the University is amplifying the educational experience.

BY MICHAEL R. MALONE

Tightly woven into the fabric of one of the courses were regular meetings with the Overtown Community Champions, a group of residents and advocates for families living in one of Miami’s most historically underserved neighborhoods—one literally severed by the construction of the I-95 expressway. Chao and other students gathered oral histories of residents and engaged with them about issues of climate-based gentrification and displacement.

“Through the interactions, there was the critical matter of developing trust, getting to know the community and the problems they were facing in much more of an intimate way than I ever could have from a textbook or in the classroom,” Chao says. “To learn about their lived experiences in real time was part of a unique, difficult, yet enriching process.”

The experience for Chao, who grew up attending the best area schools and “never wanting for anything,” was life changing and cemented his passion for “doing” history. “I still have a lot of love and respect for these people who have lived either all their lives or a significant time of their lives in these communities and are willing to fight tooth and nail to stay where they live,” Chao says.

“A class like that provides a very important perspective for students like me who have lived all their lives in South Florida but knew none of that history,” he adds. “And possibly even more for students who are from other states and places and don’t know the community at all.”

Chailin Lewis, a junior pursuing a major in political science and minor in sociology, and Mia Valente, a sophomore with the same major, this semester have undertaken community-based projects that explore affordable housing. Their projects stem from the coursework for “Urban Politics,” taught by political science assistant professor Matthew Nelsen, whose research focuses on community empowerment.

Both Lewis and Valente transferred to the University from other colleges and grew up elsewhere. This semester the two are gaining firsthand knowledge of the affordable housing crisis—Lewis in Coconut Grove and Valente in South Miami—and its impact on real people’s lives.

Robin Bachin, who in addition to being a history professor is also the founding director of the Office of Civic and Community Engagement (CEE), has long served as the quarterback for the University’s community-based learning and civic engagement efforts. The CEE celebrated its 10th anniversary last year.

“We have tremendous resources and expertise throughout the University and are using them to address some of the most pressing problems facing our local community, including housing affordability and climate change,” Bachin says. “By developing teaching, research, and institutional strategies that directly link academic scholarship and teaching to public and community needs, we aim to create a lasting impact.”

Alec Chao, B.A. ’22, looks back to two community-engaged learning courses he took at the University and traces a clear line to his job with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C., which he began seven months ago.

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practice, the University is helping to fulfill our mandate to produce the next generation of citizens who have the knowledge, skills, and values to be effective civic leaders and can reinvigorate our democracy.

Bach highlights the importance of the convergence of academia and community engagement and notes that the real-life problems and conflicts that they reflect can be challenging for students and any progression toward solutions can be painstaking.

“It is important that we do this work in a way that is mindful of the need to establish trust and long-term relationships with community partners,” she urges. “We approach our community work through a commitment to collaboration and an ethic of reciprocity. That way our partnerships can be at once community engaged and equity minded.”

In March, the University officially named and dedicated the George P. Hanley Democracy Center, which is named after philanthropist George P. Hanley and designed to be a campus hub where students and faculty members can convene and engage in discussions around politics and the future of democracy at home and abroad.

Greg Koger, center director and professor and chair of the Department of Political Science, emphasizes the opportunity for students to research, organize, and attend the center’s events and efforts.

“The civic synergy discussion groups are intended to give students the chance to participate in policy deliberation across party and ideological lines and to try to generate common sense solutions,” Koger explains.

Interns and researchers garner firsthand experience working with Koger to establish the center’s online presence, organize discussion groups for students, and help students apply for internships in public affairs.

Thirty students applied to form the first Hanley Democracy Center intern cohort. And Antonella Criscola, Emily Danzinger, and Lauren Ferrer and student researchers Nayonika Choudhury and Carly Payne were selected based on their impressive records of engagement and participation.

The Concordia Americas Summit was hosted in May for the second time by the University, which this year also served as a principal programming partner. The partnership between Concordia and the University extends through 2025.

Over two days, university specialists representing a number of schools and units participated on panels together with leaders of the public, nonprofit, and private sector across the Americas. They shared insights on the most challenging issues in the hemisphere and sought solutions on health care, education, trade, security, women’s involvement, and economic vibrancy, among others.

President Julio Frenk participated on multiple panels and moderated the session “Climate Resilience’s Ground Zero: Miami Seas,” which featured University experts including Rodolphe el-Khoury, dean of the School of Architecture, and Katherine Mach, professor in the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science.

Students especially welcomed the opportunity to explore the changes and evolution of the post-pandemic period with some of the most innovative thinkers in the Americas.

Kathi Kern, vice provost for educational innovation, explains that these emerging educational modalities geared to deepen learning fall under the umbrella of inquiry-based learning.

Community-engaged learning describes an academic institution’s intent to partner in the community through city government, grassroots advocacy organizations, nonprofits, or local businesses and are like “inquiry-based learning on steroids,” she says. Each semester, the University offers close to 100 community-engagement courses for students, tagged as CIVIC in CanLink.

“For so long, universities could be seen as entities that selectively engaged in the community when it was useful for them, rather than the sense that we’re here in a specific place and landscape, and that we are an intellectual generator—bringing and attracting smart people, working on problems, and teaching students,” Kern says.

She often emphasizes to new faculty members the notion that they’re not “portable.”

“It’s important to appreciate that we are being supported and sustained in a place and that, as a university, we have a relationship and responsibility to the place where we are,” Kern says.

The paradigm shift that community-engaged learning brings is the understanding that community members are very capable of articulating their own problems and that they probably have a lot of ideas, knowledge, and problem-solving abilities, according to Kern.

Both university and community should recognize the assets they bring to the partnership, while trust is the foundational ingredient, she emphasizes.

“We’re trying to build trust in the relationship even before we ever introduce students into a situation,” Kern says. “It’s important that as a faculty we do that work and also that we talk to our students about it.”

“The opportunity in community-engaged learning is for students to be able to try out some of the theoretical knowledge that they’re gaining in a real-world setting with real people,” she continues. “But we don’t have all the answers and it’s easy for that to go wrong.”

Kern contrasts the sustained, trust-building work often of multiple partners to address a complicated social ill—community-engaged learning—to the episodic, one-shot work of “community service,” such as cleaning up a park on an afternoon.

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Kern contrasts the sustained, trust-building work often of multiple partners to address a complicated social ill—community-engaged learning—to the episodic, one-shot work of “community service,” such as cleaning up a park on an afternoon. Both have value, but they’re very different.

Through the umbrella of inquiry-based courses, the intent is to rethink how we bring students into the academic disciplines.

“Ultimately, we’re trying to pull back the veil on education for students and engage them right away in hands-on academic work. Traditionally, in some fields, the assumption has been that students didn’t know enough to do their own analysis. So faculty would do it for them and point to a distant ‘capstone project’ in the student’s future, essentially saying, ‘Pay attention, you will need to do this in the end.’” Kern says. “Instead, we’re trying to engage students in an apprenticeship where we expose them to the disciplinary values, the habits of mind, and the kinds of critical tools at their disposal—and let them go to work.”

In that regard, she and many faculty view the undergraduate experience as a journey.

“Are you going to get a map of the journey at the very beginning? That seems like a good idea, rather than presenting students with what might feel like a list of random requirements,” Kern says. “We want to expose them early on to the big questions and the vexing problems, including the way that interdisciplinary work intersects or sometimes conflicts.”

She highlights the Climate Resilience Academy as a prime example of this aim come to fruition. “Eleven different faculty have all been filmed about their research on climate,” says Kern. “Students watch and come together for a three-hour class to get hands-on challenges to do with faculty.”

“The University is a hidden gem,” Kern adds. “Our students love our faculty. They believe their professors really care about them and that they’re amazing. Whether it’s working in the Fab Lab in architecture, modeling the VR initiative, helping to build part of the UM metaverse or doing oral histories in Overtown, as a young person you’re not just a sponge to absorb. You are part of the project of constructing new knowledge.”
Connecting Canes Everywhere
Global Networking Week in February hosts an array of events

“The engagement was off the charts, and the willingness to help each other was overwhelming,” says Los Angeles ‘Cane Hector Munoz, M.B.A. ‘05, President’s Council member, in summarizing Global Networking Week 2023, held in February.

More than 1,150 guests attended events hosted by 18 Canes Communities around the country. The events spanned the spectrum from professional development lectures to more informal networking gatherings like a bonfire party and TopGolf session.

The week kicked off with a virtual program, Building Your Brand, hosted by the Washington, D.C., ‘Canes and introduced by Maribel Perez Wadsworth, B.S.C. ’93, president-elect of the University of Miami Alumni Association.

The program’s centerpiece was a conversation with MacKenzie Green, B.S.C. ’10, vice president of social media for Who What Wear and Clique Brands, and immediate past president of the Young Alumni Leaders Council. Award-winning marine biologist Erica Towe, B.S.M.A.S. ’10, Ph.D. ’15, moderated the conversation with Green.

Green emphasized the importance of taking charge of one’s career and personal brand—especially in an uncertain economy—and not waiting to be noticed. “I graduated in 2010, and like the later COVID-era graduates, we came out into an unstable job market,” she says.

Green studied broadcast journalism at the School of Communication and planned to pursue a career in sports broadcasting. “I was going to be an ESPN anchor but found myself in a small boutique financial advisory firm,” she recalls.

“The first time I sat in a meeting, I thought, ‘these guys are making no sense,’ so I used what I had learned taking complicated sports plays and making them relatable and accessible. I took that [skill] with me into the financial space and turned the ‘quant-speak’ into plain English.”

As the youngest person in her office at the time, Green “raised her hand” when an executive wondered aloud how to make Twitter work for the business. “The mark of a social media job is that a lot of us decided to manage our companies’ Facebook pages, and here we are, a dozen years later,” she says. Green later started her own social media and digital marketing consultancy, then went back to school to pursue her M.B.A. before going on to work in the media and entertainment industries.

“I think people miss out on taking ownership of their expertise.” —MacKenzie Green

Green emphasizes showing up, speaking up, exhibiting confidence and competence, and expressing one’s authentic self. She cites LinkedIn as a powerful tool for building and communicating a personal brand. “It’s one of the few places where you can go and you can run the narrative of your expertise,” she says. “I think people miss out on taking ownership of their expertise. When you are on LinkedIn, don’t just go on there to update your resume. Start posting for the industry you want to get into, reshare articles, tag people whom you admire, and share your thoughts.” Green adds. “And don’t be afraid to cold-email people. Get that network around you of people [who think] ‘that person really knows their industry.’

Green’s call for meaningful networking was put into practice at the various regional Global Networking Week events.

For example, the Chicago ‘Canes Community participated in a thought-provoking presentation that focused on negotiating skills and strategies, led by Leigh Melton, J.D. ’98. Chicago ‘Canes president Rebecca Hoffman, B.A. ’92, M.S.Ed. ’94, hopes to offer more networking opportunities for members in 2023.

In South Florida, the Broward/Palm Beach ‘Canes held a networking reception featuring a panel of University of Miami faculty members and alumni who led a conversation around influences on business and entrepreneurship, including technology and new generations of workers. The Miami ‘Canes Community opted for a more informal approach, hosting a networking event at TopGolf, a local driving range.

Jerry Goldstein, B.B.A. ’89, president of the New York ‘Canes Community, said it best in the wake of the New York networking reception—which featured Claudia Lexano, B.G.S.C. ’07, CEO of Fuku—“Never underestimate the fact that you are immediately part of the powerful global Miami Hurricanes network—the moment you step foot on that campus in Coral Gables!”

“The audience for the spring 2023 edition of the Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series (DALS) was treated to a rollicking conversation with Tony Award-winning Broadway producer Kenneth Greenblatt, B.B.A. ’68, who received the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Greenblatt traced his journey from New York to Miami, where he studied business, then back to New York, where he followed his father into the textile business.

The producer had a love for Broadway from an early age. “My grandmother took me to a show every year,” Greenblatt says. “And I used to say, ‘Grandma, we are going to do this again in 364 more days.’ I loved every show I ever saw. So, when I sold my textile company and someone asked if I would like to invest in a Broadway show, I said if I could come and see rehearsals, I would say yes.”

That production, “Nine,” won the 1982 Tony for best musical, a feat Greenblatt repeated in 1984 with “La Cage aux Folles,” whose co-author was fellow ‘Cane Jerry Herman, B.A. ’53. Greenblatt won his third Tony, for best musical revival, for the 2005 production of “La Cage aux Folles.”

A highlight of the evening was provided by students from the B.F.A. Musical Theatre program, directed by David Williams, senior lecturer in the Department of Theatre Arts, who performed songs from Greenblatt’s productions.

DALS was established in 1995 with a gift from Stuart M. Bloch, B.A. ’84, or “StuBloch;” and his wife, Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch. Earlier this year, the Blochs made a $1 million bequest to secure the program’s future.

StuBloch and Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch attend the spring 2023 Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series.
UPup Campaign Fetches Strong Alumni Support

Donations help students raise service dogs for people in need

UPup—a student organization focused on raising, training, and creating awareness of service dogs—is a perfect example of how alumni support makes a difference. Thanks to generous donations from more than 200 alumni in the past year, UPup has been able to provide invaluable training for participating students. Donations also help cover costs, such as food and veterinary care, associated with raising dogs.

In addition to financial contributions, alumni also can offer expertise, mentorship, and career guidance. Cristina Maristany, B.S. ‘01, is a Miami-area veterinarian who heard about UPup through an Alumni Association email. Maristany, who founded an animal-focused club called Humans Helping Animals during her time as an undergraduate, instantly felt inspired to reach out and see how she could give back to her alma mater by helping UPup. She visited UPup during a training session, advising students on careers and caring for dogs. “Being able to give back was very rewarding,” she says. “It felt great to talk to the students and share my experience with them and see their interest in the cause.”

Whether with UPup or another organization, by donating money or volunteering as mentors, alumni truly can make a lasting impact on the lives of current and future generations of ‘Canes.

Day of Service Helps Transform Lives

‘Canes Care for ‘Canes ethos extends into the community

Amazing things happen when ‘Canes come together—just ask the low-income seniors and veterans in Atlanta whose homes were spruced up by the Atlanta ‘Canes Community, in partnership with HouseProud Atlanta as part of the 2023 ‘Canes Day of Service. Volunteers worked to help their neighbors by making upgrades that increased the livability of the beneficiaries’ homes.

From exterior painting to general landscaping and yard work, volunteers showed that the ‘Canes Care for ‘Canes ethos extends well beyond our alumni community. The annual ‘Canes Day of Service—offering University of Miami alumni, students, families, and friends an opportunity to give back by participating in local service projects—shines as a beacon of the University’s commitment to transforming lives through education, research, innovation and, in this case, service.

“Service is a bedrock of our mission at the University of Miami,” says Erica Arroyo, B.S.C. ‘03, M.A.L.S. ‘08, associate vice president of engagement. “‘Canes Day of Service is an example of the power of our collective capacity to make a positive impact on the communities around us. This is one of the annual initiatives that I look forward to most each year.”

This April, hundreds of ‘Canes across the country rallied to better their communities by partnering with local nonprofits. Some gathered for beach cleanups—removing trash and helping to weed out invasive plant species—while others packed literacy kits for local shelters or worked food banks to provide nourishment to underserved people in their area.

UPup—The Rallying Cry

C-A-N-E-S! The rallying cry could be heard from every corner as alumni and donors near and far gathered to cheer on the men’s and women’s basketball teams during the University of Miami’s historic March Madness run. Beginning with the NCAA tournament’s first round in mid-March, ‘Canes Communities from Los Angeles to New York organized game watch parties in their local markets. As the teams continued to win, ‘Canes spirit grew larger and louder. By the time the men’s team reached the Final Four, the excitement had reached a fever pitch, culminating in Miami’s historic March Madness run.

The team players and staff appeared at the Watsco Center, watching the action on the big screen alongside the Frost Band of the Hour and the Spirit Squads. “Being able to cheer our Miami Hurricanes on with students, alumni, and fans was electrifying,” says Alumni Association president Devang Desai, B.A. ‘97, J.D. ’03.

“What a historic moment, and I was thrilled to experience the fun-filled atmosphere alongside my parents,” says Alumni Association president Devang Desai, B.A. ‘97, J.D. ’03.

Alumni, students, faculty and staff members, and fans packed the Watsco Center in Coral Gables for a Final Four game watch party.

Alumni Pride Beams During March Madness

Watch parties across the country create unforgettable experiences

“It was like having 600 of your closest friends together to witness yet another point of Hurricane pride! Amazing!”

—Jerry Goldstein

Alumni Digest
"It’s so much easier to sell something that you’re passionate about." —Mitchel Berger

‘Star Wars’ Fan Has Fun Following His Passion

Growing up, Mitchel Berger, B.M. ’93, was a self-described “massive ‘Star Wars’ nerd.” He saw all the movies and had, as he puts it, “all the toys.” It has been part of his life for as long as he can remember—and it has left a profound imprint.

Now, as senior vice president of global commerce for Crunchyroll, Berger does what he loves best: Use his deep understanding of what it means to be a fan to serve the worldwide community of anime fans. A Japanese form of hand-drawn or computer-generated animation, anime has exploded in popularity since the advent of the Internet and streaming media. With its animation, anime has exploded in popularity since the advent of the Internet and streaming media. With its

A subsidiary of Sony, Crunchyroll is a major destination for anime fans, with its streaming subscription service, theatrical distribution, games, licensing, merchandising, events, and collectibles. Berger oversees the company’s consumer products and merchandise, content sales, and theatrical businesses.

For Berger, anime’s legions of fans and ethos of belonging are the keys to its success. “I attended the University of Miami in the 1990s and graduated with a health science degree, then I married a soldier, started a family, and postponed my dream of becoming a nurse,” he explains.

Instead, Boling spent several decades raising a family and working in the legal field. “And then came the pandemic; so much changed for so many people that I knew I had to go back to school to help others and to make a difference. Being a part of the U stands for the commitment of being a lifelong learner, so deciding to become a student again was not such a big leap,” Boling says.

Mother-Daughter Duo Brings Dreams Within Reach

A pair of newly minted Hurricane alumnus are bringing new meaning to the saying “like mother, like daughter.” Two decades after earning her first degree from the University of Miami, 46-year-old Paula Boling decided to fulfill a lifetime dream and return for another degree, inspiring her daughter, 24-year-old Margarita Espinal, to do the same. The two walked together at commencement last December.

For Boling, B.H.S. ’00, B.S.N. ’22, it was a dream deferred. “I attended the University of Miami in the 1990s and graduated with a health science degree, then I married a soldier, started a family, and postponed my dream of becoming a nurse,” she explains.

Instead, Boling spent several decades raising a family and working in the legal field. “And then came the pandemic; so much changed for so many people that I knew I had to go back to school to help others and to make a difference. Being a part of the U stands for the commitment of being a lifelong learner, so deciding to become a student again was not such a big leap,” Boling says.

The motivation for Espinal, B.S.N. ’22, was straight from the heart. “I’ve always wanted to study with my mom because she’s my best friend, and I’ve seen her dedication with anything she undertakes,” explains Espinal. “She’s a hard worker with a brilliant mind.”

The two enrolled in January 2022 in the 12-month Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (A.B.S.N.) Program at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. The program is extremely challenging, but the mother-daughter duo proved the adage that two are better than one.

“Together we were able to stay strong and encourage each other,” says Boling. “What is amazing is that we became stronger alongside each other with the help from the best professors. Completing nursing school with my daughter was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I was blessed to experience. It was also the hardest and most rewarding year of my life.”

Both graduates agree that the A.B.S.N. program is one of a kind. They cite the diverse culture, top-notch curriculum, and excellent professors for helping mold them and all the other students into strong leaders. “We have been prepared to transform lives, bring forth change for a healthy and strong community, and provide the best possible health care to our patients,” says Espinal.

The mother and daughter also share the same vision of what it means to be a nurse. They say it’s not only your knowledge you impart to your patients, but its your compassion and love that you provide in caring for your patients. They both believe the nursing profession carries a huge responsibility to provide safe and appropriate care in order to help patients be at their optimal health.

The two have spent the time since commencement interviewing at hospitals across South Florida and trying to decide what’s next for both. While their decisions are not yet final, they know for sure that, after sharing an educational journey, they intend to experience their nursing careers together, too.
Blazing Trails and Lifting as She Climbs

Deborah Enix-Ross, B.F.A ’78, J.D. ’81, has never forgotten the opportunities, people, and institutions that proved foundational to her ascent to the presidency of the American Bar Association (ABA). She is the third University of Miami alumna and just the second Black woman to head the 145-year-old organization.

When Enix-Ross showed aptitude for writing as a child, her church took notice and encouraged her to nurture her gift by presenting her writings to the congregation. “Like a lot of Black families,” she says, “the church was the center of our lives—religiously, socially, and culturally. And whenever there was a speech to be given, they would say to me, ‘Okay, you give it.’”

During a college tour, Enix-Ross fell in love with the idea of Florida. She chose the University of Miami for its journalism program, hoping to combine dual passions for writing and public speaking into one discipline.

The first high school graduate in her family, Enix-Ross completed her bachelor’s degree and enrolled at the School of Law in 1978. As she recalls, she “was one of only two Black female students. One was me, and the other is [now] a retired judge. You had to be a strong person to be a woman training to be a lawyer at that time.”

Enix-Ross was encouraged to join the ABA, the organization she would be elected to lead decades later. “Among Enix-Ross’s most gratifying professional moments is her delivery of an address celebrating the 50th anniversary of Ghana’s independence on behalf of the American Bar Association’s International Law Section. Also 50 years old at the time, she said the experience “felt very synergistic.”

She also recalls the struggle to break into international arbitration as a young lawyer and the triumph she later felt when she eventually became the American representative for the International Chamber of Commerce Court of Arbitration, representing the U.S. legal community internationally. “For a girl from Harlem, I didn’t think anything could top that,” she notes.

Looking back on her journey, Enix-Ross admits it “was not easy. There were moments when people would doubt me, but I never doubted myself.”

However, she warns, “don’t get complacent. I don’t want to be an old lady sitting in the back saying, ‘You kids don’t know how easy you have it.’ But there is a sense that it wasn’t always this easy. What we have now is because we built it. And you need to take it to the next level.”

Enix-Ross was optimistic for the future when she thinks about the students she encounters today. “The students whom I’ve seen are far smarter, far more sophisticated than I was at their age,” she says. “The things they know and the questions they ask … I have a lot of hope.”

Boundless Curiosity and a Zest for Problem-Solving

Lila Snyder, B.S.M.E. ’94, chief executive officer of Bose Corporation, was destined for a technology-oriented career. Growing up near Toledo, Ohio, close to the epicenter of the American automotive industry, she was raised in a household “where we fixed things—cars, appliances—and built things” and where aspiring to be an engineer was second nature.

“I loved science, learning about how things worked, and everything about math,” Snyder recalls. “When I looked around my world, mechanical engineering seemed like such a natural thing to do.”

Snyder arrived at the University of Miami in 1990. “I was the classical mechanical engineer,” she says. “I loved it—we were a relatively small group [that] tracked through our coursework together. I ended up doing some cool research at the Rosenstiel School during my junior and senior years, which got me interested in the kinds of research graduate students do.”

Snyder was a member of the cheerleading squad—on the sidelines at the Orange Bowl when the Hurricanes defeated Nebraska to win the 1991 national championship—and was tapped into the Iron Arrow Honor Society. “It was a magical time in my life,” she says of her experience at the U. “It was only four years, but it feels like such a bigger part of my history and my memories.”

After graduate school, Snyder went to work for McKinsey & Company, working with clients in the technology, media, and communications sectors. Later, she was executive vice president and president for commerce services at Pitney Bowes, Inc.

Snyder joined Bose in 2020, and oversees all aspects of the company’s consumer electronics, automotive, professional systems, and related businesses.

“I think of my engineering experience starting at Miami as learning how to be a great problem-solver,” Snyder says. “It’s what I enjoy most—digging into really hard problems to try to figure them out. And the great thing about having that engineering education is that you get a really structured way of solving problems. There is a problem, there is an answer, and there is a bunch of variables, and it’s how you solve through all those variables,” she adds.

As Bose’s first female CEO, Snyder is something of a pioneer. Despite recent progress, women are still underrepresented in the engineering and technology sectors. “I would say, as someone who hires a lot of engineers, that we need more engineers, period. And we certainly need a lot more women,” Snyder says. “I was lucky. I had parents who encouraged my sister and me that we could do anything we wanted.”

Snyder views her own career in part as an outgrowth of her innate curiosity and self-awareness. “I never thought of [being a woman in tech] as challenging,” she says. “I think of it as a great opportunity to differentiate. What has worked for me is to focus on what I’m good at, be aware of what I’m not good at, and lean into my strengths. Different perspectives make for better problem-solving.”

Snyder’s advice to new graduates: “Take more risks. Take on projects that you don’t think you’re ready for. Raise your hand for something that sounds hard. Have the courage to go further than you think you can.”
Class Notes

1960s

Gregory S. Isaacs, B.M. ’69, joined Osage HIV as a music critic.

Bradford B. Peck, B.S. ’68, completed the harmful algae blob training at the Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences.

Robert E. Welin, Ed.D. ’69, designed the scenery for Rotterdam’s Island City Stage and Florida’s Repertory Theater.

1970s
Michael N. Kesslemann, B.Ed. ’72, M.Ed. ’75, Ed.D. ’79, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award issued by Marquis Who’s Who. He is currently retired after 37 full-time years in education (K-12), graduate school, and conflict resolution.

Robert R. Rhynearson, B.B.A. ’72, retired from Miami Dade Fire Rescue after 30 years. He now is working as the chief financial officer of ZooFari in Pensacola Beach, Florida. Rhynearson also is developing an RV park in the Florida Panhandle.

Gill S. Freeman, M.Ed. ’72, J.D. ’77, was honored on the 30th anniversary of the ADA Miami Jurisprudence Awards. Now retired, she served as a circuit court judge for 19 years. Upon retirement, Freeman was awarded the Florida Bar’s Young Lawyer’s Division Jurist of the Year Award. She served as the president of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers.

John L. Lahey, Ph.D. ’73, was inducted into the Irish American Hall of Fame. He serves on the boards of the United Illuminating Company, the Aristotle Corporation, the Yale New Haven Hospital, and the Alliance for Gene Cancer Therapy. Lahey is also the vice chairman of the New York City St. Patrick’s Day Parade Committee and has devoted much of his time to educating the public about the historic implications of Ireland’s Great Hunger. Currently a retired professor, Lahey was named Irish American of the Year by Irish America magazine.


Gerardo G. Pelaez, B.S.C.E. ’78, is the current president of the US-Panama Business Council.

Vickie L. Rubin, B.S. ’78, received the Reader’s Favorite Gold Medal for her memoir “Raising Jews: A Story of Hope.” In addition to the medal, the memoir previously received a five-star review from Kirkus Reviews.

1980s
Paul D. Novack, B.B.A. ’80, former mayor of Surfside and current member of the Florida Highway Patrol’s state-wide advisory council, assisted state troopers with the distribution of food and supplies in Hurricane Ian’s recovery efforts.

Frederic J. Guerrier, M.D. ’81, was recognized as the 2023 Legend in African American History at the Woodson African American Museum of Florida’s Board of Directors.

Venkat Rangan, M.S. ’81, received a series of funding from Blackstone Growth for the company he co-founded, Cavi, Inc. Rangan is the chief technology officer at Cavi, Inc.

Odalis Smith, B.A. ’86, retired from Gurnett County Public Schools after 30 years as a school psychologist.

Laird A. Lile, LL.M.E. ’87, board-certified wills, trusts, and estates attorney, was appointed to a fifth term on the Florida Supreme Court Florida Courts Technology Commission. He also was appointed to two committees of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel. Lile was recently named to Best Lawyers in America for the 26th consecutive year.

1990s
Wendy S. Walberg, B.A. ’90, joined Lynn University as a professor of business law. Prior to that she was a law professor at Johnson & Wales University.

Chris Ghaemmaghami, B.S. ’91, M.D. ’93, was appointed as the executive vice president, chief physician executive, and chief clinical officer at Jackson Health System in Miami. He will lead the system’s clinical strategy, quality, and safety.

Derek W. Shoup, B.A. ’91, received the Legion of Merit upon retiring from the First Special Forces Command. He was then selected for the U.S. President’s Management Council, conducting transnational organized crime for the Department of Homeland Security.

Esther F. Panitch, B.S.C.E. ’92, J.D. ’95, assumed office as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives, representing District 51.

Mitchell W. Berger, B.M. ’93, instituted the next-day electronic sell-through (EST) strategy that brought both subscriptions and dubbed episodes of new anime shows to major EST platforms. Berger also has helped establish the Funimation Shop e-commerce business. Before joining Crunchyroll and Funimation, Berger was part of Universal Pictures Home Entertainment for 21 years.

Frederick W. Brown, B.A. ’93, was promoted to partner at Weber Gallagher’s law firm. He has decades of experience and has handled litigation cases involving serious injuries with multiple defendants that occur at construction sites and complex contractual indemnity claims amongst the defendants.

Matthew J. Hallisy, B.S.C. ’94, is attending the California Western School of Law as a second-year law student.

Af S. Johnson-Parris, B.B.A. ’94, was elected vice chair of the American Bar Association’s Law Practice Division for the 2022-23 year. She will lead the Strategy and Planning Committee, which oversees the Law division’s strategic plan development and assists the council with its implementation.

Michela Drucker, J.D. ’95, the assistant chief counsel of the Department of Homeland Security, was a task force voting member for the sustainability plan to draft a 100 percent Clean Energy by 2030 resolution for Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Shawn J. Maas, B.A. ’95, a media specialist, published the article “A Digital Library Spurs More Reading,” which highlights the effect e-books have on student reading habits and improving their proficiency.

Michelle D. Beauchamp, B.B.A. ’96, was appointed to the board of directors of Entertainment to Effect Change. She also was appointed as the chief marketing officer of Elevenk VN VIodka.

Christopher M. Coleman, B.B.A. ’96, M.P.A. ’97, is the current chief accounting officer at Ferran Construction.

Janet L. Denis, B.A. ’96, J.D. ’99, was honored on the 30th anniversary of the ADA Miami Jurisprudence Awards. She is the co-managing shareholder of the Miami office of Greenberg Traurig, P.A. and a member of the firm’s global executive committee. Denis also served as chairman of the board of directors of Nicklaus Children’s Hospital and currently serves as co-founder and general counsel of the eVolve America global technology conference.

Sonash L. Mood, B.B.A. ’96, area general manager of central at Ovolo Hotels, oversees a collection of hotels within southern California. Prior to joining Ovolo Group, he owned his own men’s apparel and accessories company.

Jesse A. Acedo, B.S. ’97, recently accepted a position with the Federal Aviation Administration as an air traffic representative serving the Central Service Area.

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Donor-funded scholarships extend the promise of a University of Miami education to the most promising students. They light the way for the next generation of bold thinkers, inspiring artists, daring innovators, compassionate caregivers, and global leaders.

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Please support the General Scholarship Fund and help Cane’s make their educational dreams a reality.

To learn more, contact the Office of Philanthropic Giving at 305-284-2872 or philanthropicgiving@miami.edu.
The University of Miami is a large and vibrant institution known for its academic excellence and diverse campus life. With a range of majors and programs, the University of Miami is home to some of the brightest minds in the world. In this document, we will take a closer look at some of the notable alumni who have gone on to make significant contributions to various fields.

**Class Notes**

**30 Under 30**

**Know a ‘Cane who shines?**

Tell us about exceptional University of Miami alumni* who represent the best of our ‘Canes community. Nominate someone to the University of Miami Young Alumni Council’s 30Under30.

The nomination portal is now open! And we want to know if you think you deserve to join this prestigious group of young professionals who are illuminating an ever brighter future.

*For the 2024 University of Miami 30Under30, nominees must have a University of Miami undergraduate or graduate degree and be 29 years old or younger as of May 31, 2024.

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**2000s**

Shana L. Cichon, B.B.A. ’00, ran an aerospace company as a chief financial officer after graduation. She currently owns and operates True Blue Farm, a successful Hunter/jumper farm horse operation in Sarasota, Florida.

Danika Mendrygal, B.B.A. ’00, has expanded her boutique law firm to a team of seven lawyers, a paralegal, and administrative support. Mendrygal Law is dedicated exclusively to guiding nonprofits, charities, and other tax-exempt organizations.

Alex Merchan, B.B.A. ’00, M.B.A. ’04, was promoted to chief marketing officer at ASM Global, a leading producer of entertainment experiences, venue management, and event strategies. He has reimagined the marketing support infrastructure of the firm and also oversees strategic marketing, public relations, creative services, and digital efforts.

Douglas A. Wolfe, J.D. ’06, expanded his boutique law firm with a growing health care practice. The Wolfe Pincavage firm serves major health care systems, hospitals, private practice groups, and other ancillary enterprises.

Jennifer Duval Lindy, B.S.C.E. ’98, M.P.H. ’04, joined the newly merged design firm of Wood/O’Donnell & Naccarato as project manager. He also is actively involved in Sarasota, Florida.

Sergio Fagundo, B.S.E. ’98, joined the newly merged design firm of Wood/O’Donnell & Naccarato as project manager. He also is actively involved in Sarasota, Florida.

**2010s**


Jennifer Guvendal, B.A. ’11, LLM. ’15, ’15, was invited to equity shareholder and shareowner at Chamberlain Heidicke. He is a member of the Tax Controversy Litigation and International Tax Practice Groups in Atlanta.

Katerishia A. Verrett, B.S.E. ’01, was promoted to chief diversity officer at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Department of Athletics.

Wagner G. Pierre, B.S.E. ’03, was relocated by the Department of Defense Education Activity to Germany.

Theresa M. Yong, M.B.A. ’03, published her first book, “Money Moves: This is Not a Get-Rich-Quick Scheme! It’s a Conversation about Money.”

Marc King, B.S.E. ’04, joined Burch-Wald Talent Agency as a director of podcasting.

Danika Mendrygal, B.B.A. ’00, ran an aerospace company as a chief financial officer after graduation. She currently owns and operates True Blue Farm, a successful Hunter/jumper farm horse operation in Sarasota, Florida.

Larkin & Tapans. Espino was elected to two terms to the city council for Miami Springs and served for more than a decade as a city attorney and for several Miami-Dade County municipalities.

Douglas A. Wolfe, J.D. ’06, expanded his boutique law firm with a growing health care practice. The Wolfe Pincavage firm serves major health care systems, hospitals, private practice groups, and other ancillary enterprises.

**2020s**

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worked with celebrities such as Katy Perry, Hailee Steinfeld, and Josh Richards.

Connor P. Bradley, B.B.A. ‘22, a former marketing intern, became a youth broker with Denison Yachting.

Sarah E. Coleman, J.D. ‘22, joined the Fort Lauderdale office of the U.S.-based law firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP as an associate.

Enric Ripoll Gonzalez, J.D. ‘22, L.M.M.A. ‘22, was appointed chair of the Integrity Board of the International Table Tennis Federation.

He also was included in the Sports Industry Thought Leaders for a third year in a row.

Eleanor E. Pettis, B.S.C. ‘22, coordinated the 2022 Chiefs Training Camp and participated in the Super Bowl LVII in Arizona with ESPN.

Cole C. Plosniski, B.A. ‘22, was accepted to the Florida State University Urban and Regional Planning master’s degree program.

Sergio A. Reyes, B.B.A. ‘22, rebranded and repackaged his company Dink to make apparel for businesses and startups in Miami.

Christina D. Smiley, B.S.C. ‘22, began her Ph.D. degree in psychology at Washington University.

Sydney L. Thorne, B.B.A. ‘22, became a certified paralegal from the University of Miami’s paralegal program and graduated from the University of Miami Herbert School of Business.

Yichu Yu, B.A. ‘22, built a proof-of-concept prototype for Vision Infinity Coprskop which is a precursor to a fully autonomous home kitchen.

The University of Miami Alumni Association notes the passing of the following graduates.

In Memoriam

1920s
Harriet Cooperman, B.A. ‘27
Dorothy L. Anderson, B.S. ‘28
Mabel W. Lipp, B.A. ‘28
Jean E. Hannahs, B.S. ‘29
Vito M. Reid, B.A. ‘29
Leona M. Runnels, B.A. ‘29

1930s
William A. Forster, B.A. ‘30
June W. Hammond, B.A. ‘30
George W. Linn, B.A. ‘30
George D. Roseke, B.A. ‘30
Claude S. Schuette, B.A. ‘30
Caroline Hanson, B.A. ‘31
Ila M. Winslow, B.A. ‘31
Mary C. Misera, B.A. ‘31
Loran G. Smith, J.D. ‘31
Marion C. Watson, B.A. ‘31
Elizabeth C. Corbet, B.A. ‘32
William J. Jones, B.A. ‘32
Ada T. Mapes, B.A. ‘32
Ethel E. Murrell, J.D. ‘32
Elmar J. Ruben, M.B. ‘32
Joseph Rublin, B.A. ‘32
Gertrude K. Shaffer, B.E. ‘32
Francois S. Starch, B.A. ‘32
Millen W. Chamberlain, B.A. ‘33
Milford Greengoeb, B.M. ‘33
Harold Lisson, J.D. ‘33
Ruth K. Smith, B.A. ‘33
Jeanne M. Stallings, B.A. ‘33
Doris L. Stockwell, B.A. ‘33
Hazel Weatherly, B.A. ‘33
Robert A. Weirobn, B.S. ‘33
Julie L. Rarick, B.A. ‘33
Marion D. Best, B.A. ‘34
Grace D. Cromwell, B.Ed. ‘34

Paul J. DiMare

Paul J. DiMare, a member of the University of Miami Board of Trustees for 18 years, one of the largest growers of fresh-market tomatoes in the countryside, and a benefactor who left an indelible mark on the University, died on Dec. 30, 2022.

He was 81.

Earning the affectionate nickname “Mr. Tomato,” the seeds of DiMare’s brilliant career as a businessman and farmer were sowed on the streets of Homaymarket in Boston, Massachusetts. His family expanded a small venture selling fresh vegetables to a lucrative repacking plant for vegetables, vegetables, and nuts.

DiMare, chief executive officer and president of DiMare Fresh in Florida, supported key initiatives at the University ranging from athletics and the arts to business, scientific research, and medical education. He and his wife, Swanee, made a transformational gift for medical student scholarships at the Miller School of Medicine in 2014. DiMare’s son, Gino, serves as head coach of the Miami Hurricanes baseball team, where The DiMare Champions Plaza at Alex Rodriguez Park at Mark Light Field is named in his honor.

“One of our University’s most ardent supporters, Paul lived a life worth emulating, marked by generosity, leadership, and a gregarious spirit that made him unforgettable,” says University of Miami President Julio Frenk.

Emulating Paul’s commitment to the arts to business, scientific research, and medical education. He and his wife, Swanee, made a transformational gift for medical student scholarships at the Miller School of Medicine in 2014. DiMare’s son, Gino, serves as head coach of the Miami Hurricanes baseball team, where The DiMare Champions Plaza at Alex Rodriguez Park at Mark Light Field is named in his honor.

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Paul J. DiMare Jr., and Scott, and stepson Jim Husk.

Consider giving the gift that extends well beyond graduation. With the right planned gift, you can leave your legacy, protect your loved ones, and open educational doors for many talented students.

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 305-284-2914 or at kpaige@miami.edu. Visit us at miami.edu/plannedgiving.
Amber Mosse

Amber Mosse, who became a brilliant professor and dean of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Miami after a storied career in the U.S. Department of State—both in the foreign service and as an ambassador to Panama—died Dec. 27, 2022, at his Coral Gables home. He was 85.

In his 37 years at the University, faculty members said Mosse elevated its ties to Latin America and the world and helped entice students to join the foreign service. Before moving to Miami, Mosse was involved in negotiating the U.S.-Panama Canal Treaties and their ratification and was U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. He served as U.S. Ambassador to Panama from 1978 until 1982, after being appointed by both President Jimmy Carter and President Ronald Reagan.

He also served as a member of the U.S.-Panama Consultative Committee from 1978 to 1992 and from 1995 to 2001. Prior to that, as a member of the foreign service, he served in the U.S. delegation to the Organization of American States, and as a Spanish Desk Officer in the U.S. Department of State. Mosse, who came to the University in 1984, is survived by his wife, Severa; his daughter, Serena; and sons Ambler, Benjamin, and Nicholas; along with grandchildren, Sidra, Acacia, and Oliver.
Reef Restoration

A barge lowers a SEAHIVE honeycomb-shaped concrete structure, which will be part of two hybrid reefs, into the ocean off northern Miami Beach. The project stems from a study by University of Miami researchers in collaboration with the city of Miami Beach to protect shorelines from storm surge and erosion and restore coral reefs.
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