

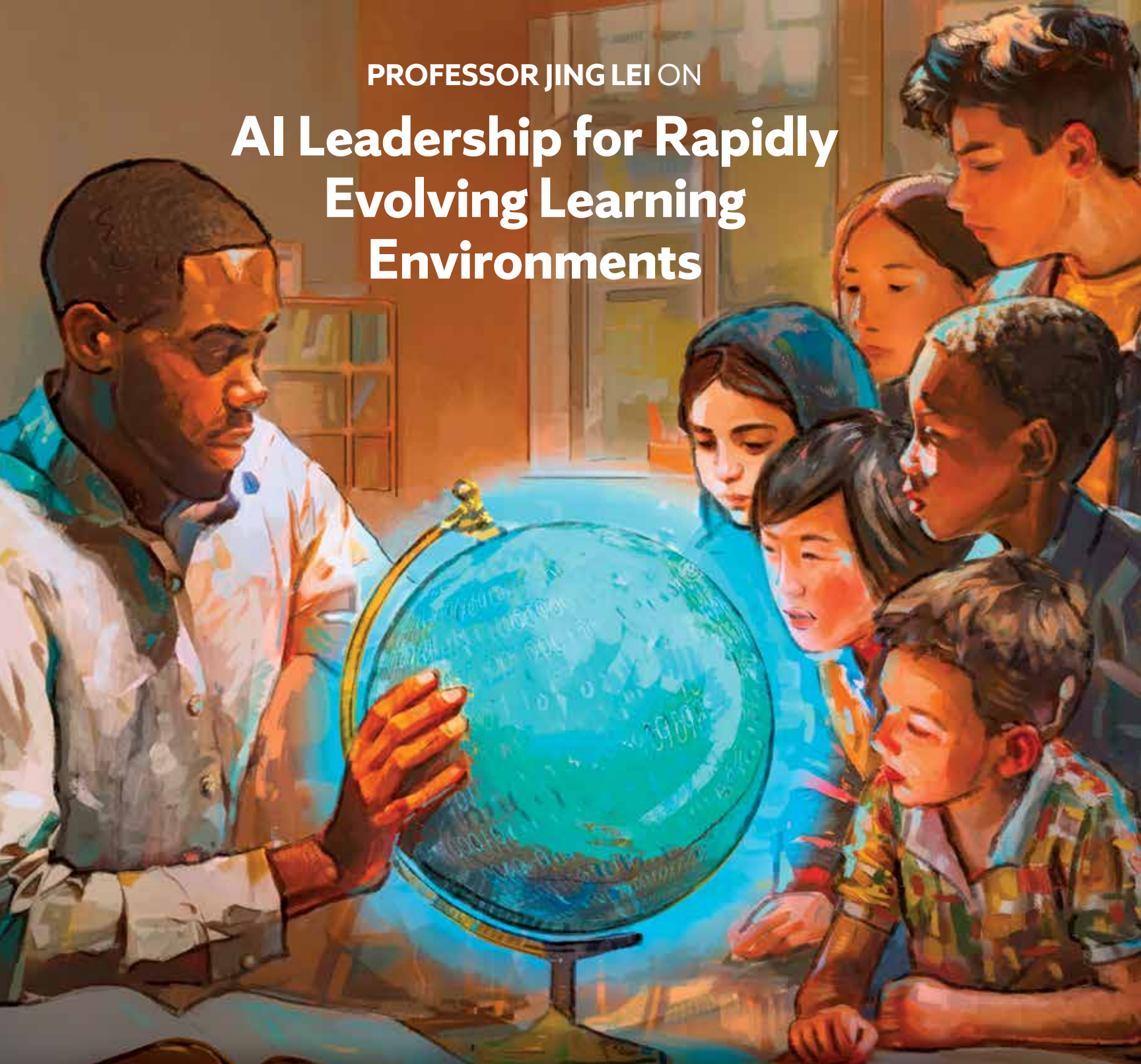
# Education Exchange

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

2025

PROFESSOR JING LEI ON

## AI Leadership for Rapidly Evolving Learning Environments



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- #18** Best Online Programs in Education for Veterans (*U.S. News & World Report*)
- #17** Best Education Bachelor's/Master's Schools (College Factual)
- #7** Best Special Education Schools (College Factual)
- #4** Best Elementary Special Education Schools (College Factual)
- #4** Best Instructional Media Design Schools (College Factual)

**ACADEMICS**



- 5** undergraduate majors
- 6** undergraduate minors
- 17** master's degree programs
- 7** certificate of advanced study programs
- 10** doctoral programs

**POST-GRADUATION**



- 97%** post-graduation placement outcome
- \$56,547** average starting salary
- 100%** NYS Students with Disabilities certification pass rate
- 99%** NYS Educating All Students certification pass rate
- 98%** NYS Content Specialty certification pass rate

**STUDENTS**



- 324** undergraduate students
- 502** graduate students
- 34** states and territories represented
- 28** countries represented
- 27** active duty/military veterans
- 32%** students of color

**FACULTY/RESEARCH**



- 49** full-time faculty members
- \$6.6M** external funding awards
- 3** centers and institutes
- 10:1** student-to-faculty ratio

**ALUMNI**



- 24,113** alumni
- 54** states and territories represented
- 98** countries represented



**FEATURES**

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Professor Jing Lei believes information technology can complement an educator’s work: “Beyond preparing individuals to adapt to technological change, education must now cultivate what I call ‘AI Leadership.’”

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## DEAR EDUCATION EXCHANGE READERS,

**A**s you may know, a big change for the School of Education in the 2025-2026 academic year is that the **School of Social Work** is now under our umbrella (see p11). As of July 1, we welcomed 17 new faculty, 10 new staff, and nearly 500 new students to our community.

On the day when the news of this transition was shared across campus, I was scheduled to co-facilitate an undergraduate event on mental health and wellness with the student members of the **Undergraduate Deans' Advisory Panel**, a leadership group that Assistant Dean for Student Success **Huey Hsiao** and I helped to launch this year.

It can sometimes be challenging to predict how people will respond to change, so I was, perhaps understandably, a little anxious about how

student attendees at the event might react to learning about this move. I should not have worried, however, as the first two students I saw—both seniors—said almost exactly the same thing: “What took you so long?”

They saw natural connections between social workers' goals and values and those of the teachers, counselors, principals, and student affairs professionals already served by our School. And they instantly apprehended the opportunities for extension to social work—and thus greater impact—offered by SOE's **Signature Areas of Distinction** in inclusive, digital, and experiential pedagogy and practice.

In the months following the announcement, my colleagues and I have tried to build on the students' sense of possibility. We have come together in multiple configurations to get to know each other and explore our common interests.

Among other efforts, we celebrated the winter holidays together, submitted several collaborative proposals for funding, selected an all-School class of peer advisors, held a daylong writing retreat for faculty to set summer writing agendas, and unanimously passed a revised set of bylaws to ensure that everyone is enfranchised in our new governing body. We look forward to deepening our knowledge about one another in this exciting year to come.

This issue of the magazine chronicles some of the angles we are likely to take with those joint ventures. If you are not a reader who has previously engaged with the full range of our content, let me borrow and resituate our students' incisive question and ask, “What took you so long?” I hope you enjoy the reading.

Warmly,

**Kelly Chandler-Olcott**

*Dean and Laura J. & L. Douglas Meredith Professor  
for Teaching Excellence*

## Education Exchange

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 Syracuse University School of Education

# AI Leadership for Rapidly Evolving Learning Environments

## Professor Jing Lei on How Information Technology Can Complement an Educator's Work

In April 2025, the White House released a fact sheet on “advancing AI education for American youth,” along with an Executive Order “to create new educational and workforce development opportunities for America’s youth...fostering interest and expertise in AI technology from an early age.”

The fact sheet recognizes that “America’s youth need opportunities to cultivate the skills and understanding necessary to use and create the next generation of AI technology.” Preparing students to be leaders in AI technology, the White House continues, requires investing in educators and providing them with the tools and knowledge to both train students about AI and to utilize the technology in the classroom.

These topics are major areas of focus for Professor **Jing Lei**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and an instructional design expert whose research interests include the use of emerging technologies in education and technology integration in K-12 schools.

Overall, Lei says, integrating AI into K-12 education is the right direction to go: “Many other countries started integrating AI into their education systems several years ago. For example, South Korea unveiled a plan to integrate AI deeply into their public education system in 2023, and in 2019, Japan’s AI Strategy called for AI integration into the whole education system.”

In this *Education Exchange* cover story, Lei looks at the current state of the AI challenge and offers ways for educators to think about incorporating AI into learning.



“We need to shift from solely preparing students for the workforce toward empowering them to lead with purpose, question emerging technologies, and shape a more equitable and humane future.”



Professor **Jing Lei** traveled across China during November 2024 to discuss the impact of AI on teaching and teacher development. She is pictured during the Global Education Deans' Forum (GEDF), which she helped facilitate at East China Normal University (ECNU) in Shanghai.

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## AI is a catch-all term for several related technologies. How do you characterize these technologies, especially as encountered by educators?

When we talk about AI, it often seems that we are talking about one single specific technology, but in reality, AI is diverse, multifaceted, and fast-evolving:

- AI encompasses a wide range of technologies and applications—each with distinct properties, functions, and implications. These differences give rise to varied opportunities and challenges.
- AI is rapidly and continually evolving—new innovations and features emerge constantly, requiring our understanding to be regularly updated.
- AI is inherently social in nature—technology is not neutral; the use of AI inevitably has social, economic, political, psychological, ethical, and legal impacts, sometimes with far-reaching consequences.

## How is the rate of technological change in AI affecting learning environments and the workforce?

The rapid advancement of AI and related information technologies has significantly influenced what talents are needed in the workforce. On the one hand, many traditional jobs have been or will be replaced or changed by technology; on the other hand, AI and related technology will create many new types of work opportunities.

This means that people are very likely to change jobs or even careers many times during their life, either actively or passively. In *Race Against the Machine* (2012), Brynjolfsson and McAfee state that "now is the worst time for a person with only ordinary skills, because computers, robots, and other electronic technologies acquire the same skills at an astonishing rate."

Several sociologists, philosophers, and technologists have offered alternative predictions about the trajectory of AI development. For instance, renowned author Yuval Noah Harari has advocated in recent years for stronger oversight and regulation of AI. He argues that it should not be viewed merely as a technology or system, but as an agent—one capable of independent thought and consciousness.

One particularly unsettling possibility was highlighted by Bill Gates in March 2025. He suggested that AI could replace doctors and teachers within the next decade, even claiming that most jobs may no longer require human involvement.

While this perspective is not universally accepted—and I personally disagree, especially regarding teachers, whose roles encompass far more than content delivery—it nonetheless reflects a potential future. Gates’ prediction may or may not come to pass, but in the coming years, we are likely to gain a clearer understanding of AI’s true impact on learning and the workforce.

In 1970, Alvin Toffler predicted in *Future Shock* that future society would be characterized by “too many changes in too short a time”. That society has arrived, and as AI reshapes society, the traditional goals of education must evolve to meet new challenges.

We need to shift from solely preparing students for the workforce toward empowering them to lead with purpose, question emerging technologies, and shape a more equitable and humane future.

### What are some opportunities and challenges for educators reckoning with AI?

One major opportunity lies in redefining educational objectives: educators must now consider how to best prepare graduates for an AI-driven world, including identifying the essential skills needed: critical thinking, data literacy, and ethical reasoning.

Integration is another key area, requiring thoughtful incorporation of AI into instruction, school management, and student assessment. This raises the urgent need for widespread AI literacy among both educators and students, necessitating professional development and curriculum redesign.

At the same time, educators must grapple with risk management concerns, including privacy, data security, and the creation of policies and regulatory frameworks to ensure safe AI use in schools. Ethical issues further complicate this terrain, ranging from algorithmic bias and discrimination, to threats against academic integrity and a deepening of the digital divide.

Finally, there is the human element: educators must confront the anxiety, skepticism, and shifting attitudes surrounding AI’s role in education, including fears that it may replace instructors.

Navigating these challenges thoughtfully offers a powerful chance to shape a future where AI serves as a tool for enhancing—rather than undermining—the human-centered mission of education.



**“In this new paradigm, learners are encouraged to take ownership of their goals, explore their interests, and shape their paths with confidence and curiosity.”**

## CONSIDER THIS: WORKING WITH AI

**AI TECHNOLOGIES**, appropriately used, can help educators do their job with increased efficiency and effectiveness. Educators should never be expected to compete against AI but rather work with this tech to create enriched and meaningful educational experiences.

- ◆ AI can help **analyze data on students’ learning style and performance**, helping teachers tailor their instruction to meet individual needs.
- ◆ AI can facilitate **automation, repetition, or large-scale responses**, such as providing immediate preset feedback on quizzes to a large number of students simultaneously, thus freeing teachers to focus on creative engagement, individualized responses, and inter-personal connections.
- ◆ AI-generated reports can **identify areas where students need support and guidance**, such as understanding the content and making connections.
- ◆ To develop their digital citizenship, encourage activities that **help students productively use AI technologies with academic integrity** and for personalized learning; allow them to critically analyze AI content to identify errors and biases or explore how it is being used in various working contexts.
- ◆ Having students **learn at their own pace with technological assistance** and guidance from educators has become an increasingly common practice in recent years, particularly in higher education.
- ◆ Educational leaders need to **provide learning opportunities, resources, and ongoing support** to help educators learn, explore, and experiment with AI tools in their classrooms.
- ◆ District level policymaking should involve all stakeholders—educators, students, administrators, and parents and guardians—to set **equitable and inclusive guidelines** and leave room for flexibility based on contextual factors and the evolving nature of AI technologies.

## JING LEI ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AI DETECTORS

“**DETECTION TOOLS** give a probability of a piece of work being produced by AI, and their reliability varies greatly. They also suffer from biases, stereotypes, and lack of contextual understanding. AI detectors should not be used as the sole source of deciding whether work is generated by AI.

“A teacher’s best tool in detecting any potential violation of academic integrity is their understanding of their own students. A teacher who knows their students well would not need an AI detection tool. That human connection can never be replaced by technology.”

*(From SU News: “Navigating the Intersection of AI and Academic Integrity”)*



## How should educators prepare students to learn, live, and work in a future with AI?

I propose a redefinition of the fundamental purpose of education. Beyond preparing individuals to adapt to technological change, education must now cultivate what I call “AI Leadership”—the capacity to actively and thoughtfully lead one’s own life and work in an AI-infused world.

AI Leadership is not merely about technical proficiency. It is a holistic capability that empowers individuals to engage with AI as both a tool and an environment—leveraging its potential while maintaining human agency, ethical grounding, and social responsibility, even as AI systems become increasingly autonomous.

I conceptualize AI Leadership as comprising of four interrelated dimensions:

- 1 Vision and Purpose**—Defining one’s direction, values, and aspirations in a rapidly shifting technological landscape. This includes cultivating foresight, setting meaningful goals, and aligning personal and societal progress.
- 2 AI Literacy**—Developing the competence to work effectively with AI systems, understanding their capabilities and limitations, and integrating them into workflows, decision-making, and creative processes.
- 3 Ethical Reasoning**—Exercising moral judgment and making values-based decisions in contexts where AI is involved. This includes navigating dilemmas around fairness, accountability, transparency, and broader societal impact.
- 4 Social-Emotional Intelligence**—Sustaining empathy, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills in human-AI interactions. As AI mediates more aspects of communication and community, these human capacities become even more essential.

## How will AI change our conception of “educator” and “student”?

This framework positions learners not as passive recipients of AI’s influence, but as proactive agents who can shape how AI is integrated into their lives, careers, institutions, and societies. It invites educators, policymakers, and technologists to rethink curricula, pedagogy, and learning environments to foster this new form of leadership.

This shift also calls for a reimagining of how educators relate to AI—not as a competitor, but as a collaborator. The new paradigm embraces coexistence with AI, encouraging learners to work alongside intelligent systems in complementary ways.

The role of educators must evolve accordingly. The long-standing image of the teacher as the “sage on the stage”—the primary source of knowledge—needs to give way to the “guide on the side,” a mentor who supports inquiry, fosters critical thinking, and helps students navigate complex, AI-mediated environments.

There are areas where a teacher’s role is irreplaceable, such as providing context, understanding student emotions, offering moral support, nurturing interests and aspiration, and fostering critical thinking and creativity. With AI as a complementary tool, teachers become facilitators of learning experiences that are adaptive, collaborative, and deeply human.

Finally, students must be empowered to move from passive recipients of information to active leaders in their own educational journeys. In this new paradigm, learners are encouraged to take ownership of their goals, explore their interests, and shape their paths with confidence and curiosity. They are not just preparing to live in a world shaped by AI; they are being equipped to shape that world themselves. ■

# Bulletin Board

Find these stories and more on our website.



## Honoring and Advocating

Students and staff of the **Lawrence B. Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education** and **InclusiveU** joined national advocacy organization Think College for a visit to the White House in August 2024, to help honor disability pride and to advocate for inclusive higher education.

In the photo above, joining Glenna Wright-Gallo, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at the US Department of Education (second from right), and Dante Allen, Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (third from right), were InclusiveU students **Shafreya Wilkins '25** and **Matthew Falanga '26** (both furthest right).



In May 2025, **Taishoff Center** staff and students returned to Capitol Hill to advocate on Inclusive Postsecondary Education Day (May 1), this time in partnership with the National Down Syndrome Society.



## Fall Reading Kickoff Spikes the Endzone!

SOE, Syracuse Athletics, and Visions Federal Credit Union once again teamed up with Otto the Orange in fall 2024 to inspire student book worming with the seventh annual **Fall Reading Kickoff**.

Last year, we reported a box score of 4,500 participating students from 13 school districts. But like the Orange football program, 2024-2025 was a banner season for the reading drive, with 14,200 participating students from 30 districts.

As part of the initiative, educators and students received free tickets to attend the Orange win over the UConn Huskies on November 23. Plus, a few lucky students got to meet Syracuse's Hall of Fame mascot as a reward for their efforts, including those at Syracuse Latin School (pictured above).



## Book Club Partners with Art Museum

In fall 2024, the **Breedlove Readers Book Club** partnered with the Syracuse University Art Museum to offer a unique literary arts experience for Central New York middle and high school girls.

Facilitated by Professor **Courtney Mauldin-Jones**, Breedlove Readers encourages girls age 13 through 17 to celebrate their lives through reading, writing, and creating in the community.

To echo themes addressed in the exhibition "Homeward to the Prairie I Come: Gordon Parks Photographs from the Beach Museum of Art," the book club read *American Street* by Ibi Zoboi, a novel that resonates with the life of Parks—a pioneering Black photographer, poet, and musician—and visited the Art Museum to explore connections between the novel and his work.



## Golisano Foundation Awards Technical Assistance Grant to CDI

In September, the **Center on Disability and Inclusion** received a grant of \$200,000 from the B. Thomas Golisano Foundation, one of the nation's largest foundations dedicated to supporting programs for people with intellectual disabilities.

Led by Technical Assistance Director **Makram El Hassan**, the initiative will provide technical assistance to schools and colleges in Western and Central New York, to create and enhance inclusive college programs and support services for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"With InclusiveU, Syracuse University has a nationally recognized model," says Professor **Christy Ashby G'01, G'07, G'08**, Director of CDI. "We are grateful to the Golisano Foundation for this generous grant, which will help us build on our expertise in disability-related research and inclusive education, practice, and advocacy to remove barriers that exclude people with disabilities from campus life in New York."



Some of SOE's faculty, staff, and student contingent at the 2024 **State of the Art Conference**. SOTA 2025 is set for October in Syracuse, NY.

### SOTA Sets Record Attendance in North Carolina

Across October 29-30, the **Taishoff Center** helped organize the **State of the Art Conference on Inclusive Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disability (SOTA)** in Chapel Hill, NC.

Chaired by Professor **Beth Myers**, Director of the Taishoff Center, SOTA is a national conference that convenes researchers, program staff, parents, and students to discuss the current state of research and effective practices in the field of inclusive postsecondary and higher education.

Nearly 400 people attended, including Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner Danté Allen, who delivered keynote remarks. Another highlight was a policy discussion led by Denise Rozell

(Association of University Centers on Disabilities) and Stephanie Smith Lee (National Down Syndrome Congress), who gave insights into legislative activity affecting the field.

“With just around 300 inclusive postsecondary programs in the country, our conference brings together the field’s best minds to push for more access. I’m incredibly proud of how SOTA continues to grow year over year,” says Myers.



**Tamara Hamilton**, Project Director of the **Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation**, at the Women in Leadership Cohort 4 graduation in April 2025.

### SOE Leaders Named to WiL Cohort 4

In December, nine SOE alumnae and other community members were named to the University’s Women in Leadership (WiL) Diane Lyden Murphy Cohort 4 Experience. The program has seen nearly 75 participants since it launched in 2022-2023.

Meeting from January to May, the following joined other Cohort 4 members at capacity building sessions to understand University operations and perfect leadership skills:

- **Rachel E. DuBois G’13**, Director of Undergraduate Recruitment, Whitman School of Management
- **Aileen E. Gallagher ’99, G’20**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications
- **Tamara Hamilton**, Project Director, Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, and Ph.D. candidate, Higher Postsecondary Education
- **Lisa M. Liparulo G’09, G’17**, Director of Development, Syracuse University Family Giving
- **Yanhong Liu**, Associate Professor, Counseling and Human Services, SOE
- **Ashley L. Lopez G’12**, Director of Project Management, D’Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families
- **Paula M. Possenti-Perez G’21**, Director, Center for Disability Resources
- **Shannon H. Schantz G’21**, Director, First Year Seminar, and SOE Ambassador
- **Brianna M. Shults G’20**, Director, InclusiveU

## ANNUAL LECTURES ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS, NEURODIVERSITY, AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY



### Understanding Motivations

Human rights expert James Waller weighs a question during the 2025 **Atrocity Studies Lecture**. Drawing from his book *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford, 2007), Waller discussed factors that can lead ordinary people to commit mass atrocities if left unchecked and unexamined. This annual lecture series is coordinated by Professor **Julia White G’05, G’07**, and supported by **Lauri ’77** and **Jeffrey Zell ’77**.



### Autistic and Black

Author, academic, and activist Kala Allen Omeiza signs books after her September 2024 **Harry S. and Elva K. Ganders Memorial Lecture**. The author of *Autistic and Black: Our Experiences of Growth, Progress, and Empowerment* (Jessica Kingsley, 2024), Omeiza discussed lessons and insights that can be drawn from understanding the mental health and well-being challenges of multiply marginalized neurodivergent individuals.



### Education as Freedom

In the March 2025 Ganders Lecture—part of the 2024-2025 Syracuse Symposium—community-engaged scholar Keisha Green addressed justice-oriented and youth-engaged teaching and learning in the context of today’s political climate and culture wars. Revisiting one of bell hooks’ influential texts—*Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*—the talk explored the “liberatory” possibilities of a literacy-rich, multi-modal liberal arts education.

## Who Visits the 'Cuse and Meets SOE? SpongeBob SquarePants!

**InclusiveU** and **Intelligence++** students got a treat in February when Tom Kenny, voice of SpongeBob SquarePants among other popular cartoon characters, visited the University.

In a special informal session before his public appearances, Kenny—a Syracuse native—discussed what it takes to build a creative career and his journey in the film, animation, and music industries. He addressed neurodiversity with the students, calling it a “creative superpower.”

A sense of the fun and mayhem can be seen in our group photo, featuring Kenny (center, glasses skewed and eyes crossed) and Taishoff Center Director **Beth Myers** (kneeling and hamming it up, center left).



**ALEX P. CORBITT** joins SOE as Assistant Professor of Literacy Education, after serving as an assistant professor of literacy at SUNY Cortland. Prior to working in higher education, Corbitt was a seventh-grade English Language Arts teacher in the Bronx, NY.

An expert in literacy and learning, especially through play and gaming, Corbitt's research focuses on how youths and adults represent their identities, communities, and civic lives through processes of play and co-authorship. His recent scholarship examines how gamers collaboratively build worlds and compose narratives across digital role-playing communities and online video game platforms.



**YEHYANG (HANNA) LEE** joins SOE as Assistant Professor of Inclusive Education. Most recently, Lee was an assistant professor in the Department of Special Education, Illinois State University. Before her move to the United States, she served as a Cognitive Behavioral Therapist and Special Education Teacher in her native South Korea.

As a first-generation immigrant scholar, Lee explores the intersectional oppressions faced by students at the interplay of disability, race/ethnicity, language, culture, and other social markers. Specifically, her research examines the post-high school experiences of transition-age youths with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are experiencing homelessness.



**MEREDITH SI S NIECKUS G'21, G'25** joins SOE as Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor of Counseling. A National Certified Counselor and Licensed Mental Health Counselor, while studying for her Ph.D. in Counseling and Counselor Education, Snieckus served as a Teaching Assistant and Instructor at Syracuse University, teaching Career Counseling and Group Work, among other classes.

Snieckus' research interests include motivation and self-determination; feminism; fear, trauma, and resilience; mind-body connection; eating disorders; and parenting and education. She is a member of **The Health and Resilience Interdisciplinary collaboratiVE** (Lab THRIVE), which explores collegiate mental health using a wide range of research methods.



**RHONDA ZAJAC G'07** joins SOE as Assistant Teaching Professor in the Educational Leadership program, replacing Professor **Leela George**, who retired in May. Zajac holds a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Leadership from SOE, as well as a master's degree from SUNY Oswego and bachelor's degree from Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

With extensive experience in K-12 teaching and leadership, Zajac has worked as a literacy coach in the Syracuse City School District (SCSD), instructional specialist at Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES, Dean of Students at SCSD's Grant Middle School, and, most recently, SCSD's Director of English Language Arts.

## Caring Gene Partners with University

In March, the University entered a partnership with the Caring Gene Career Pathways Training Program (CPT) to address healthcare workforce shortages in the hardest-hit areas of New York State.

Through this partnership, eligible residents of New York State and certain bordering states receive full tuition coverage, books, and academic fees while pursuing education in 13 healthcare fields, including Syracuse's M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and M.S.W. in Social Work programs. Caring Gene is funded by the New York State Department of Health.



## Kang Awarded for SOE Coverage

Congratulations to *Education Exchange* contributor, freelance writer, and SOE alumna **Ashley Kang '04, G'11** who won a 2025 Syracuse Press Club Award for her story "‘Very Much Needed’: Indigenous Educators Discuss School of Education’s New Indigenous Teacher Preparation Fund."



## Breakfast on Us!

Congratulations to Bishop Ludden Junior-Senior High School in Syracuse, which won the most votes in the 2025 edition of SOE's **Teacher/Staff Appreciation Contest** in May, besting Wellwood Middle School (Fayetteville, NY) and Delaware Elementary School (Syracuse) in second and third place.

As is tradition for the winner, SOE treated Ludden teachers and staff to donuts and coffee, but our full appreciation goes out to every educator whose energy, passion, and dedication light up our schools and lift up our communities. ■

## SOE DESIGNS A NEW PH.D. IN EDUCATION

The School's 2023 Academic Strategic Plan calls for the development of "a shared and Signature-focused approach to doctoral studies that addresses existing and emerging specializations." Fulfilling that directive, in May 2025 the New York State Education Department approved SOE's re-designed Ph.D. in Education program.

First awarding a Ph.D. in Education in 1932, in recent years, SOE has offered nine doctoral programs, aligned to departments and programs of various sizes. Complementing SOE's "One School" structure, the new program replaces eight former programs—leaving the Ph.D. in Counseling and Counselor Education and the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership as-is—and centers all-School **Signature Areas of Distinction**: inclusive, digital, and experiential pedagogy and practice.

"Doctoral students in the revised program will take two required first-year courses as a cohort—one on educational inquiry and the other addressing systemic racism in education—and an additional course to help prepare students for dissertation work," explains Professor **Beth Ferri**, Associate Dean for Research. "Additional coursework includes research methods; Signature-based electives; and a student-identified, individualized focus area of study."

The program is designed to provide students with opportunities to engage in interdisciplinary, cross-cutting, and equity-focused coursework, along with specialized focus area coursework.

"Instead of being siloed in isolated programs, doctoral students now have opportunities to work across disciplines and to take advantage of the diverse scholarly expertise of SOE faculty when exploring their focus research area of study," says Professor **Cathy Engstrom**, Faculty Director for Graduate Studies. "The program encourages expansive thinking and new ways of examining important educational issues through sustained, interdisciplinary, and rigorous inquiry."

Engstrom adds, "Our new doctorate builds on our history of unparalleled leadership and groundbreaking vision in inclusive and equity-focused education. The adaptable curriculum model can position students to investigate rapidly changing and complicated educational questions, problems, and conditions through cutting-edge, interdisciplinary courses and collaborative research opportunities."



**"Instead of being siloed in isolated programs, doctoral students now have opportunities to work across disciplines with a cohesive cohort of fellow students and to take advantage of the diverse scholarly expertise of SOE faculty."**

Professor Cathy Engstrom

# “Toward Common Goals”

## SOE Welcomes the School of Social Work

In November 2024, Syracuse University announced that as part of a plan to reshape its human dynamics programs, as of July 1, 2025, the **School of Social Work** would be housed within the School of Education. The announcement came after four months of deliberate assessment and cross disciplinary collaboration by members of the Human Dynamics Task Force, gathering feedback from key stakeholders, and compiling recommendations for how these programs can be positioned for success and growth.

The plan also sees the relocation of other human dynamics programs away from the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics—now the Falk College of Sport—into schools and colleges with stronger academic synergies.

Along with Social Work’s move to SOE, the Marriage and Family Therapy and Human Development and Family Science programs have merged into one department within the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Public Health program has joined the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

(continued on next page)

**“We are excited about the many new possibilities for collaborative research and curriculum development.”**

Professor Yvonne Smith  
Director, School of Social Work

## MEET THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

# 1957

established and accredited

# 74

undergraduate students

### SOCIAL WORK LEADERSHIP



Professor **Yvonne (Eevie) Smith**  
Director



Professor **Nadaya Brantley '04, G'06**  
Undergraduate Director

### PREVIOUSLY ASSOCIATED WITH

College of Human Services and Health Professions (2001)

College of Human Ecology (2007)

David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics (2008)

### PROGRAMS OFFERED

**B.S.S.W.**

**Social Justice minor**

**M.S.W.**

(in person/online)

**J.D./M.S.W.**

# 398

graduate students



Professor **Jennifer Cornish Genovese G'83, G'13**  
Graduate Director



Professor **Ken Marfilus '11**  
SOE Faculty Director of Online Programs and Strategic Initiatives



### CAMPUS ADDRESS

White Hall 440

# 6,250

alumni

“From the beginning of this process, my priority has been developing and implementing a plan that repositions and strengthens the human dynamics academic programs, research, and community-wide impact,” says **Lois Agnew**, Interim Vice Chancellor, Provost, and Chief Academic Officer. “This repositioning elevates our human dynamics programs, fosters stronger collaborations across colleges, advances faculty scholarship, and better serves our students and communities.”

“I look forward to the new opportunities presented by closer collaboration with programs that share our historical commitments to inclusive pedagogy and practice, as well as to reciprocally valuable partnerships in Central New York,” says Dean **Kelly Chandler-Olcott**. “We will benefit from our new colleagues’ expertise in online teaching and their dedication to veterans and military-connected families.”

Chandler-Olcott continues, “I am confident that insights from SOE’s Redesign—centering equity, sustainability, and interdisciplinarity—will help our expanded unit position all the programs under its umbrella for greater success and impact.”

**“The core values of Social Work—service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence—align seamlessly with SOE’s core values.”**

Professor Jennifer Genovese

The Task Force was co-chaired by **Rachel Razza**, Associate Dean for Human Dynamics, and **Peter Venable**, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School. It consisted of human dynamics faculty representatives elected from each program, as well as staff and community partners.

“The Task Force agreed that taking a reimagined approach to the human dynamics programs furthers our mission to provide students with a robust, future-focused education that emphasizes both theory and practice,” explains Razza.

“Dean Chandler-Olcott and the SOE faculty have welcomed us graciously, and we are excited about the many new possibilities for collaborative research and curriculum development,” says Professor **Yvonne Smith**, Director, School of Social Work. “We bring deep community partnerships, a strong research profile—on trauma and adversity, community schools, child welfare, chronic illness, and professional training—and enthusiasm for working collaboratively in our new home.”

Professor **Nadaya Brantley**, Undergraduate Director, observes that Social Work students “look forward to interdisciplinary learning and engagement with SOE students who share our commitments to social justice.”

Professor **Jennifer Genovese**, Graduate Director, adds: “The core values of Social Work—service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence—align seamlessly with SOE’s core values, and we are delighted to work together toward common goals.” ■

## CLASS OF 2025 SOCIAL WORK AWARDS

**A YEARLY TRADITION**, the **School of Social Work** honors undergraduate and graduate students with department awards at an annual celebration held in April. Two notable awards from the 2025 ceremony are included here.



**Nicole Corrente G'25** (left), who won the Keith Alford Diversity and Inclusion Award for graduate students, helped present the Carrie Jefferson Smith Social Justice Award for graduate students to **Kirstin Hock G'25**, Corrente’s close friend who earned her master’s degree while battling cancer. “Her grit and determination is unlike anything I’ve ever seen before,” Corrente says.



The Catherine Mary Esposito Achievement Award is given to an outstanding undergraduate student who has demonstrated a commitment to clients with developmental disabilities.

Receiving the award from Professor **Nadaya Brantley** (left) and Assistant M.S.W. Online Field Director **Kristen Esposito** is **Maya Carter '25**: “I served as a home visitor and educator with the Early Head Start program at REACH CNY. Working to support school readiness while strengthening parent-child relationships with families from all walks of life has deepened my passion for the social work profession and reinforced my commitment to community empowerment,” says Carter.

# Faculty News and Notes

Find these stories and more on our website.



## DATA WARRIORS EXPLORE MAPS AND MATH

In March, Nottingham (Syracuse City School District) High School students in the afterschool program **Data Warriors**, coordinated by mathematics education Professor **Nicole Fonger**, visited the Map Room in Syracuse University's Bird Library.

Data Warriors explore mathematics, mapping, and environmental justice in Syracuse, focusing on lead poisoning prevention, Interstate 81, and building safe communities.

The visit to the Map Room gave students a chance to explore Syracuse maps of all kinds to help with their projects, from code enforcement surveys to 19th century street maps to whimsical cartoon versions.

Other events this community-engaged initiative held during spring 2025 included a math community night and student research poster competition at the high school in April and a presentation during the University's Engaged Humanities Network showcase in May.

## Kim Awarded Humanities Fellowship

In September 2024, **Eunjung Kim**, Associate Professor of Cultural Foundations of Education and Women's and Gender Studies (College of Arts and Sciences), was awarded a 2024-2025 National Humanities Center (NHC) Fellowship.

Among 31 fellows chosen for this prestigious award from 492 applicants, Kim is using the fellowship to work on her new book, *Dignity Archives: Accompanying the Dead and Posthumous Care*.

SOE is also represented at NHC by Professor **Michael Gill**, a Resident Fellow, who is currently researching his project, "Fermenting Stories: Exploring Ancestry, Embodiment, and Place."

## Huang Receives NSF Grant for Community-based STEM Project

In October, **Xiaoxia "Silvie" Huang**, Associate Professor in the Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation program, learned she had been awarded a



nearly \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for a two-year Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) project.

Huang is collaborating with an cross-campus team—including professors **Sharon Dotger** (SOE) and **Brice Nordquist** (College of Arts and Sciences)—on "Engaging Refugee and Immigrant Youth in STEM Through Culturally Relevant and Place-Based Digital Storytelling."

The project engages culturally and linguistically diverse refugee and immigrant middle school students in co-designing culturally relevant and place-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning experiences through immersive virtual reality storytelling.

See p18 for more on Huang's research into immersive virtual reality as a learning tool.

## Liu Named Outstanding Mentor

In November, **Yanhong Liu**, Associate Professor of Counseling and Counselor Education, received the 2024 Locke-Paisley Outstanding Mentoring Award



from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). The award acknowledges educators who have been a significant mentor to graduate counseling students, emerging counseling educators, supervisors, and counselors.

Doctoral student **Sarah Litt** was the nominator: "[Professor Liu] embodies the virtues of a servant leader. Through her caring and personal mentoring of both students and professionals, along with her extensive scholarly work and collaborations with current and former students and leaders in counselor education and supervision, she not only guides but models what it means to honor the key roles of a counseling professional."



## Moy Receives American Prize in Choral Performance

(Above) **Wendy Moy**, Associate Professor of Music Education in SOE and the College of Visual and Performing Arts, received the 2024 American Prize in Choral Performance in December. She shares the prize with Jeremiah Selvey and the Chorosynthesis Singers, the professional chamber ensemble that Moy and Selvey co-direct.

The American Prize National Nonprofit Competitions in the Performing Arts was founded by conductor and composer David (Volosin) Katz to honor orchestras, ensembles, and soloists.

### Luke Takes ACA Career Award

**Melissa Luke G'07**, Dean's Professor of Counseling and Counselor Education, accepted the Thomas Hohenshil National Publication Award at the 2025 American Counseling Association Conference and Expo in March.



This is a career award that honors a scholar who has demonstrated leadership in publishing and editorship and who has made outstanding contributions to the publication of counseling-related literature.



### Texas Bound

In January, Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation professors **Moon-Heum Cho** and **Rob Pusch** visited the latest cohort of students in the IDDE Fellowship Program, offered by SOE through the Sergeant Majors Academy in Fort Bliss (El Paso, TX).

"We conducted three two-hour sessions and interacted with the military students," says Cho. "Professor Pusch covered content from his human performance technology course, while I focused on material from the evaluation course. We also sought the students' feedback on how to improve their educational journey."

Explaining why he joined the program, SGM Rene Aleman said, "I want to leverage the program to grow my understanding of technology and educate those around me. Instructional design aligns with my long-term career goals as an educator, instructor, and mentor."



### Making SENSES

Music Education Assistant Professor **David DeAngelis** (center) brought his Chicago-based band Zorila to Syracuse University for a guest residency in late February.

The band performed in the Setnor Auditorium and then joined the **SENSES Project** for an informal chat about music making and production with students. The session included offering advice to a singer-songwriter fronting her own rock trio and adding vocals to one of SENSES' collaborative music projects.

Known for its music making and podcasting opportunities, SENSES (Studying an Environment that Nurtures Self-Exploration in Students) is offered through the **Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program** (HEOP) and **TRIO Student Support Services** (SSS), both housed in SOE's **Center for Academic Achievement and Student Development**.



### Two Honored at One University Awards

Among the faculty and staff honored at the 2025 One University Awards in April were an innovator in teacher preparation and a long-time advocate for student opportunity.

Professor **Benjamin Dotger**, Director of the **Center for Experiential Pedagogy and Practice**, accepted the Chancellor's Citation for Faculty Excellence and Scholarly Distinction, most notably for fostering "innovation and change by expanding the reach of his clinical simulation model."

In the photo, Dotger (back row, sixth from left) is joined by his CEPP team, as well as

Science Education, Professor **Sharon Dotger** (back row, fifth from left) and Dean **Kelly Chandler-Olcott** (far right).

Also at the One University Awards, HEOP/SSS Director **Craig Tucker** received the Enduring Values Award.

### Wang Recognized by Graduate School

Professor **Qiu Wang**, who teaches quantitative research methodology for SOE and across the University, was among 10 faculty members were honored with the Excellence in Graduate Education Faculty Recognition Award at a campus ceremony in late April.



The annual award honors professors who have had a significant impact on graduate education through teaching, service, and research or creative activities.

"We know that talented faculty members are the cornerstone of a quality graduate education," says **Peter Vanable**, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School. "This awards program gives us an opportunity to hear directly from our students, as well as from faculty, staff, and alumni, about which professors have had a significant positive influence on their studies."



### Future World Changers

Professors **Heather Lavender** (Science Education, picture) and **Wendy Moy** (Music Education) were invited by the University's Office of Faculty Affairs to attend the 13th Annual Future World Changers in the Academy National Conference, hosted by Virginia Tech in April.

"The event was awesome," says Lavender. "I attended sessions related to publishing, being in your first few years, surviving in spaces as a member of an underrepresented group, mental health, and more."

One highlight, says Lavender, was catching up with former SOE faculty member Marcelle Haddix, now Dean of Education at the University of Wisconsin. Another, both for Lavender and Moy, was meeting the keynote speaker: world-renowned educational theorist Gloria Ladson-Billings.

## CODL Appoints Cho to Oversee Research

### Moon-Heum

**Cho**, Associate Professor of Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation, has been appointed the inaugural Faculty Director of



Research in the Center for Online and Digital Learning.

CODL is located in the College of Professional Studies but serves as a University-wide resource around online instruction. It has become increasingly important as Chancellor **Kent Syverud** has challenged schools and colleges to increase their online presence.

Cho will continue to teach for SOE and focus on three priorities for CODL, which align with the School's **Signature Area of Distinction** in digital pedagogy and practice:

- Bring design-centric research and innovation to CODL practices and processes.
- Design, conduct, and coordinate interdisciplinary collaborative research on CODL initiatives.
- Design and supervise experiential learning opportunities in CODL for instructional design and other SOE students.

## Lei, Bull Elected

Congratulations to Professor **Jing Lei**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and Assistant Teaching Professor **Tom Bull**, who in May were elected to school boards in Jamesville-DeWitt (NY) Central School District and Baldwinsville (NY) Central School District, respectively. ■

## MAKING THE CALL ON CELLPHONE BANS

The number of school districts considering banning cellphones during the school day is on the rise. As of June 2025, 21 states and Washington, DC, have signed or already enacted laws or policies regarding student cellphone usage in K-12 classrooms. New York's schoolwide ban goes into effect on August 1.

Weighing the costs and benefits of cellphone restrictions in the classroom—in her research and practice, and for the media—is Professor **Sabrina Butler '15, G'18**, who joined the Counseling and Human Services program in fall 2024. Butler is a licensed mental health counselor who looks at process addictions (including cellphone usage) in children and adolescents.



Sabrina Butler

### What is your overall assessment of this debate?

Parents have a legitimate concern about the safety of their child, and it would be difficult to enforce no cellphones in schools. Plus, a lot of kids use tablets. We can't just take technology completely out of the classroom. So, how do we ensure they're not distracted by social media or games while they're supposed to be learning?

### What is the impact of cellphone use on adolescent mental health?

Coming from a harm reduction lens, we want to put limits and boundaries on cellphone usage. Research shows that phone usage is like other addictions: if you are already experiencing anxiety, depression, or self-esteem issues, being on your phone and social media exacerbates that.

### How can cellphone use become a process addiction?

Process addictions hack the same brain mechanisms as other addictions, like nicotine. With phones and social media, pairing positive emotions with external stimuli can become problematic, wiring those two together to make me feel good or less stressed. That feeling is what we can get addicted to.

### How can we alleviate the addictive impact of cellphones?

Limits and age barriers. Some parents take away phones or turn off WiFi at night because they don't want their child up all night on their phone. Parental control measures are really helpful because they lead into how we monitor usage among children.

In general, mental health professionals suggest restricting phone use to less than two hours at a time. Also, social media should not be put into the hands of children and young adolescents under the age of 13, advice that is in line with age barriers put forward by social media companies.

Ultimately, we need to engage with each other—have family dinner without phones, and get children active and connecting with their peers.







Professor **Michael Gill's** latest publication—"Not Your Grandma's Pickles. (Oh. No. Wait. They Actually Are. (Kinda.))"—bubbled up from his College of Arts and Sciences Engaged Humanities project "Fermenting Stories: Exploring Ancestry, Embodiment, and Place." This project included hands-on community workshops to explore pickling and fermenting as a cultural act. In this photo—taken at an April 2024 workshop—Syracuse resident Valerie Khaloo helps a participant prepare the Mauritian delicacy zazar (pickled vegetables).

**Joanna Masingila.** "Using Video Case Studies to Provide Prospective Secondary Teachers in Kenya Opportunities to Notice and Reflect on Pedagogical Practices." *Teaching Education*, 26 (2025). (With **L. Kamau G'14**, **P. Makumba G'23**, **H. Omoze G'22**, and **P. Rugano G'16**.)

**Qiu Wang** and **Jing Lei.** "More Than High, Medium, and Low: Pre-Service Teacher TPACK Profiles and Intentions to Teach with Technology." *Education and Information Technologies* (2024). (With J. Cheng and J.A. Hall.)

### Experiential Pedagogy and Practice

**David DeAngelis.** "Music Education in Charter Schools: A Scoping Review." *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 43 (2025).

**Sharon Dotger.** "Global Lesson Study Policy, Practice, and Research for Advancing Teacher and Student Learning in STEM." *Frontiers in Education*, 10 (2025). (With K. Brown et al.)

**Nicole Fonger.** "Lessons Learned in Creating Mosaics to Portray the Algebra Strand of US High School Textbooks." In *Lessons Learned in Research on Mathematics Curriculum* (Information Age, 2024). (With M.A. Huntley and M.S. Terrell.)

**Duane Graysay.** "Supporting Students in Exploring, Developing, and Formalizing Mathematical Arguments." *PRIMUS*, 35 (2025). (With **H. Bermudez G'25**.)

**Tiffany Koszalka.** "Development and Validation of a Learner Interactions Behavioral Observation Checklist (BOC)." *American Journal of Distance Education*, 39 (2025). (With **D.G. Whorway G'25**.)

**James Haywood Rolling Jr.** "Making Common Ground for Living: Strategies for Meaningful Intervention into Systemic and Structural Inequities." In *Promoting Civic Engagement Through Art Education* (Routledge, 2024).

**Qiu Wang.** "Mindfulness-Based Programming for Students and Teachers in Public School Settings: Present Findings and Future Directions." *ECNU Review of Education*, 8 (2024). (With J. Felver.) ■

**Alan Foley.** "Accessing Community: Speaking With and Through Mobile Technology." *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, 14 (2025). (With **M. Fialka-Feldman**.)

**Xiaoxia (Silvie) Huang** and **Tiffany Koszalka.** "Prototype Design of XR Technology for Psychomotor Skill Learning (PSL): Layering Content Focus and Feedback to Prompt Deep PSL." *Journal of Applied Instructional Design*, 33 (2024). (With **H.K. Yuvaraja**.)

**Bong Gee Jang.** "Reading Linguistically Diverse Print, Visual, and Digital Texts Across Physical and Virtual Worlds." *Journal of Literacy Research*, 56 (2024). (With E. Bauer, et al.)

**Tiffany Koszalka.** "Investigating Performance Patterns, Dynamics, and Relationships in Asynchronous Online Discussions of the Same Student Cohort: A Cross-Semester Perspective." *American Journal of Distance Education*, 2024. (With **Z. Niu G'24** and **Q. Wu G'24**.)

———. "Enhancing Pre-service Teachers' Reflective Thinking Skills Through Generative AI-assisted Digital Storytelling Creation: A Three-dimensional Framework Analysis." *Computers and Education*, 235 (2025). (With X Wei, et al.)

**Jing Lei.** "Exploring Pre-service Teachers' TPACK Development Through Video Reflection: A Qualitative Case Study." In *Proceedings of the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference* (Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education, 2024.) (With **F. Melese**.)

**Yanhong Liu.** "Machine Learning Predictive Models to Guide Prevention and Intervention Allocation for Anxiety and Depressive Disorders Among College Students." *Journal of Counseling and Development* (2024). (With Y. Zhai, et al.)

A sampling of news stories for which SOE faculty provided expert commentary in 2024-2025:

**Kal Alston:** "Tim Walz Helps Democrats Make the 'Prairie Populist' Case for Public Schools" | *Chalkbeat* (Aug. 9, 2024)

**Kal Alston:** "School Dress Codes Should Be a Thing of the Past" | *Parents.com* (Aug. 13, 2024)

**George Theoharis:** "DOE Collapse Would Leave Millions of Teachers Without Funding" | *Newsweek* (Feb. 4, 2025)

**George Theoharis:** "What to Expect from Students After the Start of Daylight Saving Time" | *Education Week* (March 10, 2025)

**Christy Ashby G'01, G'07, G'08:** "Historic Redlining in Syracuse Continues to Impact Public Schools" | *The Daily Orange* (March 18, 2025)

**Susan Thomas:** "How the US Betrayed International Students" | *TIME* (April 29, 2025)

**George Theoharis:** "Why Amy Coney Barrett May Have Sat Out Huge Supreme Court Case" | *Newsweek* (May 22, 2025)

**George Theoharis:** "My Kindergarten Class Taught Me What's Really at Stake in Mahmoud v. Taylor" | *The Nation* (June 2, 2025)

**Sabrina Butler:** "Some Officials Say New York's Phone Ban Good for Students" | *Spectrum News* (June 5, 2025)

**Jing Lei:** "NY Teachers Push for AI Protections in the Classroom" | *Spectrum News* (July 3, 2025)

# Annotation | IVR and STEM Learning

Syracuse University held its first Micron Day on Feb. 25, 2025, to support the semiconductor manufacturer’s transformational presence in Central New York.

The University will play a key role in training the workforce of the future. That includes preparing the next generation of inclusive science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) educators, instructional designers, educational leaders, and other professionals who will help power Micron’s \$100 billion megafab in Clay, NY.

At the Micron Day event, Professor **Xiaoxia “Silvie” Huang**, an associate professor in the Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation program, demonstrated an immersive virtual reality (IVR) headset to help get visiting high school students thinking about a STEM career.



- 1** Before joining SOE, Huang was a faculty member at Western Kentucky University, where she began her IVR research. The demo used an IVR environment from her original study, a nature trail tour of the Lost River Cave and Valley in Bowling Green, KY. Huang’s scholarship centers on designing, developing, and evaluating technology-supported learning environments in various formal and informal settings.
- 2** The Lost River Cave IVR study led to the publication of “Cognitive and Motivational Benefits of a Theory-based Immersive Virtual Reality Design in Science Learning” (*Computers and Education Open*, 2023). This study investigated the effects of the IVR nature-trail tour on participants’ science learning, self-efficacy, cognitive load, perceived enjoyment, and perceived usefulness, as compared to actual walking tours. It was found that the IVR tour promoted learning, was perceived as enjoyable as an actual walking tour, and did not cause any more cognitive load than walking.
- 3** Two IDDE graduate students assisted Huang with the IVR demo: doctoral student **Yuyue Wang** (center) and master’s degree student **Qitian Jiang G’25**. Huang also works with two undergraduate researchers—Psychology and Forensic Science major **Jinru Zhou ’26** and Inclusive Adolescent Education major **Elyas Layachi ’27**—through the SOURCE grant “Designing and Evaluating Virtual Reality Environments to Facilitate Cognitive, Affective, and Motivational Learning Processes.”
- 4** In 2024, Huang published “Learning in an Immersive VR Environment: Role of Learner Characteristics and Relations Between Learning and Psychological Outcomes” in the *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*. This is one of the first empirical studies investigating the role of age, gender, and prior IVR experience on multiple learning and psychological outcomes in STEM. ■

# Student News and Notes

Find these stories and more on our website.



## Counseling Students Receive AARC Award

Counseling and Counselor Education doctoral students **Kahyen Shin**, **Eunji Park**, **Sarah Litt**, and **Xihe Tian** learned in July 2024 that they had received the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling Multicultural Assessment and Research award, which honors AARC student members working on initiatives that have a multicultural or social justice focus.

“This is great news regarding student achievement. Only one project is sponsored through this award each year,” explains **Yanhong Liu**, Associate Professor of Counseling and Counselor Education.



## Making a Difference for the Blind Community

Friends **Arianna Kuhn '25** and **Megan Panny '25** are pictured above with Tarzan, a black lab, at a Syracuse Mets game. Kuhn, a biology major, and Panny, an English Education major, are raising Tarzan and Juan, a yellow lab, for Guiding Eyes for the Blind, a nonprofit that trains guide dogs for people with vision loss.

“The Central New York region of Guiding Eyes provided me with a home away from home,” Panny told Syracuse University News in an August 2024 profile of the cross-campus initiative. “This program and time spent with the pups is one I will cherish forever.”



## Withee Helps Celebrate 80 Years of the Goon Squad

“We make sure the move-in environment is the most welcoming and inclusive it can be. We’re the first face of the Syracuse community that these students are being introduced to,” says Inclusive Elementary and Special Education major **Jack Withee '26**, in a ‘Cuse Conversations podcast, first aired in August.

“When the Goon Squad helps them move in, they haven’t met the students on their floor yet. We’re greeting them at the door as they come to campus, so it’s important from the get-go that we set the tone that this is your new home.”

In fall 2024, the University’s traditional welcoming committee celebrated 80 years of making a difference for first-year students. Featuring more than 550 student leaders, the team helped move in 4,000 first-year students as part of Syracuse Welcome, the University’s new student orientation program.

## Intelligence++ Names Inaugural Innovation Scholar

In August, **Trey Augliano '27**, a student in the Martin J. Whitman School of Management, was selected as the inaugural **Intelligence++** Innovation Scholar for 2024-2025. This recognition highlights Augliano’s dedication to innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly working with diverse communities.

Intelligence ++ is an interdisciplinary initiative focused on inclusive entrepreneurship, design, and community. It is a partnership among Syracuse Libraries, the College of Visual and Performing Arts School of Design, and the **Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education**. It is supported by **Gianfranco Zaccai '70 H'09** and the Zaccai Foundation for Augmented Intelligence.

## Yuvaraja Receives Early Career Award

In October, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) awarded Instructional Design, Development,



and Evaluation doctoral candidate **Hemalathaa K. Yuvaraja** the highly competitive Phillip Harris Transformational Leadership Development Early Career Award.

The Phil Harris Awards encourage diversity among the next generation of emerging leaders in instructional technology, through experiences focused on educational tech policy, leadership skill-building, and cultural competence.



## IT'S ALL GREEK!

At the 2025 Fraternity and Sorority Affairs Greek Awards in May, **Gabriella Bianchi '26** (left) and **Ashley Cambareri '26** (right) took home Spotlight Awards for their work as President and Vice President, respectively, of Kappa Delta Pi, the education honor society.

It was a good night for SOE, with **Luke Hoffman '27** winning the Interfraternity Council Member of the Year award for his efforts to establish a chapter of Pi Kappa Phi on campus, an inclusive organization that partners with **InclusiveU**.



Their second research award in a year, **Jersey Cosantino G'23** delivers their paper “Resisting Pathologizing Discourses: (Re)claiming Mad, Neurodivergent, and Trans\* Narration via a MadTrans\* Studies Oral History Method(ology)” after accepting the 2025 Graduate Dean’s Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Work.

### Cosantino Takes Home NWSA Trans/Gender Award

Doctoral candidate **Jersey Cosantino G'23** was awarded the 2024 Trans/Gender Variant Caucus Award at November’s National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA) Annual Conference in Detroit, MI.

“This prestigious award is a testament to Jersey’s scholarship and dedication to trans and mad studies,” says Professor **Michael Gill**.

The NWSA award committee notes that Cosantino’s submission—“From Disavowal to Avowal: Cultivating a MadTrans Studies via an Intergroup Dialogue Praxis”—offers “an original, grounded approach to reconciling and co-theorizing the fields of trans and mad studies.”

Other SOE students earning state and national scholarships in 2024-2025 include:

- **Emily Wood G'25** (Clinical Mental Health Counseling): New York State School Counseling Association Graduate Student Scholarship
- **Mirielle Smith '25** (Inclusive Elementary Education; Disability Studies): Kappa Delta Pi Dr. Janette K. and James Rogers Scholarship

### Researching Experiences of Chinese Adoptees

Counseling and Counselor Education doctoral students **Sarah Litt** and **Xihe Tian** received an Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) 2025 research grant in January 2025. Litt’s and Tian’s project examines the experiences of Chinese adoptees in the US

### IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Denaysha Macklin '25** (left) and **Emma Wareing '25** deliver their undergraduate student research at the 2025 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting in Denver across April 23 and 27.

Funded by the Syracuse University Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement (SOURCE), Macklin’s and Wareing’s scholarship continues a five-year project—led by Professor **George Theoharis**—that uses qualitative interviews with minority women who serve or have served as district-level administrators, examining the adversities they have overcome in obtaining their positions.



following the cessation of foreign adoptions by the Chinese government, a policy shift impacting more than 80,000 adoptees.

This award builds on scholarship funded by a 2024 SOE **Graduate Student Research and Creative Grant**. “The ASGW Research Committee reviewed several high-quality proposals and selected this project based on its relevance to group work, thorough methodology, attention to ethical practice, and plan for execution and dissemination of findings,” writes Professor Gene N. Dockery of the Seattle University College of Education.



### Ratliff Takes Action on Mental Health

While **Taylor Ratliff '28** (above, right) earned her Gold Award—the Girl Scouts’ highest achievement—she also discovered her passion for teaching: “I realized I had chosen the right major while I was doing the project. Whenever I was in front of the middle schoolers, I was in my happy place.”

To earn a Gold Award, a Girl Scout must deliver an 80-hour, sustainable community service project. In a February profile, the Inclusive Childhood Education freshman described her “Take Action” project: the Meaningful Mentors Club at Eagle Hill Middle School in the Fayetteville-Manlius (NY) Central School District.

Ratliff chose to focus on “Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools” because of her experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic: “I knew I was not alone in experiencing hard times mentally. I wanted to do something with what I was feeling and share that with others.”

### ACA Recognizes Shin for TCK Research

**Kahyen Shin**, a second-year Counseling and Counselor Education doctoral student, received the American Counseling Association Best Practices in Research (Student Award) in March, for her “Qualitative Investigation on Career Barriers and Career Preparation Behaviors of Third Culture Kids (TCKs) in South Korean Colleges,” published in the October 2024 issue of *Frontiers in Psychology*.

“In this Consensual Qualitative Research study, Kahyen investigated the career experiences of South Korean TCKs and identified barrier behaviors that impact the participants,” explains **Melissa Luke G'07**, Dean’s Professor of Counseling and Counselor Education. “This work was described as ‘innovative’ and ‘well-prepared methodologically.’”



**Julie Harnett '18, G'19** speaks at the 2025 SOE Graduate Student Research Symposium.

### Outstanding TAs Celebrated

SOE teaching assistants **Julie Harnett '18, G'19** and **Amanda Kingston** were among 27 standout TAs recognized at an April Graduate School Ceremony. A doctoral student in the Teaching and Curriculum program, Harnett works in the **Center for Experiential Pedagogy and Practice**. Kingston, a doctoral student in the Cultural Foundations of Education program, is a co-facilitator for **Intergroup Dialogue**.

The Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award is given to TAs who have demonstrated

excellence through activities such as classroom teaching or laboratory instruction. “Teaching assistants are vital to the undergraduate experience,” says **Peter Vanable**, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School.



### Grace Joins Professional Lax League

Intercollegiate Athletic Advising and Support (IAAS) Certificate of Advanced Study student **Michael Grace '25**, a defense/longstick midfielder on the Orange men’s lacrosse team, is among four Syracuse players selected in the Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) draft, held on May 6.

Grace, a USILA William C. Stiles Memorial Outstanding Defenseman Award winner while playing for Rochester Institute of

Technology and a two-time NCAA Division III National Champion at RIT, will play for the New York Atlas, teaming up with another former Syracuse standout and IAAS program alumnus **Jake Stevens G'24**.

### Setzkorn Named a Remembrance Scholar

In April, **Zachary Setzkorn '26**, a Social Studies Education major, was among 35 students chosen as 2025-2026 Syracuse University Remembrance Scholars. A native of Overland Park, KS, Setzkorn is also an S. Louise and Howard Phanstiel Scholar and a member of the Renée Crown University Honors Program. He serves as a research assistant for the **Center for Experiential Pedagogy and Practice**.

The scholarships, now in their 36th year, were founded as a tribute to—and means of remembering—the students studying in London and Florence through Syracuse University who were killed in the Dec. 21, 1988, bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. Those students were among the 270 people who perished in the bombing.

## GRADUATES SHOWCASE SIGNATURE RESEARCH

On March 21, the third annual **Graduate Student Research Symposium** was held in the **Sharon H. Jacquet '72 Education Commons**, sponsored by the Office of the Dean, SOE **Graduate Student Council**, and Syracuse University Graduate Student Organization.

The theme—“SOE Signatures In Action”—placed particular emphasis on presentations that explored equity-driven inclusive, digital, and experiential practices.

Papers, roundtables, and posters addressed the post-migration experiences of immigrants, virtual reality integration with pre-service teachers, forest therapy, Black transgender girls in the K-12 education system, consent for special education services, Chinese students’ adaptation to US colleges, and the labeling of “emotionally disturbed” special education students, among other topics.

New this year were incubator sessions in which graduate students workshopped research projects with colleagues and faculty, and a special workshop led by doctoral candidates **Evan Starling-Davis** and **Easton Davis** (inset) titled “I Just Wanna Live: Facilitating a Healing-centered Praxis for Educators Through Storytelling, Somatic Abolitionism, and Afro-surreal Expressionism.”



## INCLUSIVE IN ITALY

Current and former **InclusiveU** students pose outside the Florence Center, where they joined matriculated students for Syracuse University's first ever fully inclusive study abroad trip to Italy in June, led by Professor **Christy Ashby G'01, G'07, G'08**, Director of the Center on Disability and Inclusion, and Professor **Beth Myers**, Director of the Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education.

"This was an incredible opportunity to meet and work with new people, to build on my independence and social skills [and] to see some of the world's most important art works and churches," says **Jack Pasquale '28**.



**Morgan Meddings '25** with honors thesis advisor Professor **George Theoharis** at the University Honors Program Convocation in May.

### Meddings Crowned as Top Honors Student

For the second year in a row, an SOE student has taken home the top award in the Renée Crown University Honors Program. This year, **Morgan Meddings '25** won the David Orlin Prize for Overall Outstanding Thesis Project for her capstone project about challenged books.

As her thesis advisor Professor **George Theoharis** explains, "Morgan worked at her hometown library for several summers. During this, there were challenges to LGBTQ+ themed children's books at her library. This lit a fire in her—she was outraged about the damage book banning can do."

For her thesis, Meddings selected five books that are frequently challenged. She describes each book, offers detailed lessons for each, differentiated for a range of learners and aligned with state standards, and provides a rationale for why the books can and should be used.

"Thus, Morgan armed herself and other teachers with ways to use these books in teaching important, state-approved content," adds Theoharis.



### Parent of the Year

A welcome SOE tradition during Commencement season is the Baccalaureate ceremony for students in **Center for Academic Achievement and Student Development** programs.

Held in Hendricks Chapel on May 9, among the pomp and circumstance were

plenty of heart-warming moments. In this photo, **Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation** graduate **Gabriel Davila-Campos '25** praises his mother, Alfa Jesus Campos Bolaños, who was named LSAMP's Parent of the Year.

### Turner Receives ASERVIC Research Award

In June, Counseling and Counselor Education doctoral student **Alonzo Turner** was awarded a 2025 Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling Research Award for "A Balm in Gilead: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis Study of Black Millennials' Lived Experiences of Religious Trauma." ■

# Contentious Conversations

## Zachary Setzkorn '26 Designs the First Undergraduate-led Clinical Simulation

Education is constantly evolving, and as every educator knows, you should be prepared to expect the unexpected. That's as true for emerging innovations in classroom technology and practice as it is for the shifting sands of politics, culture, and curriculum.

In order to keep its educators-in-training sharp and resilient, SOE has long used immersive and experiential education. The School's first record of student teachers taking part in "practice teaching" and "directed observation" dates from 1924. Today, field placement is augmented by opportunities such as clinical simulations and undergraduate research.

Now, honors student **Zachary Setzkorn '26** has combined two of these experiential opportunities by designing the School's first undergraduate-led clinical simulation while working as a research assistant in the **Center for Experiential Pedagogy and Practice (CEPP)**.

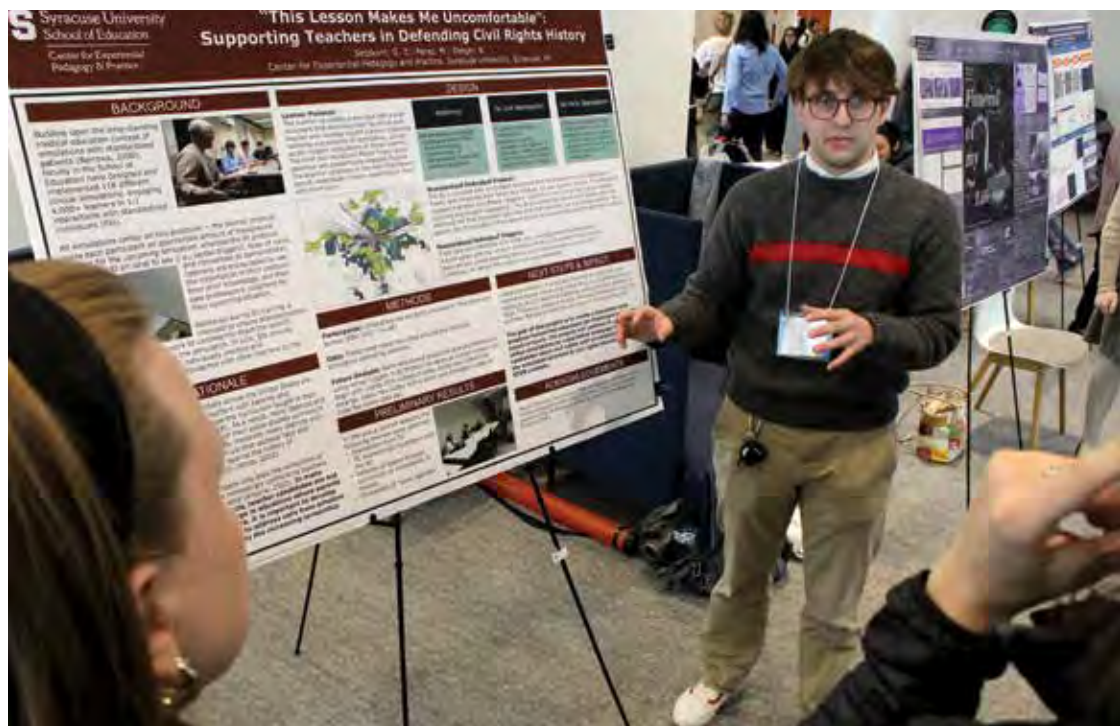
### High-learning Environment

Originally used in medical education, Professor **Benjamin Dotger**, Director of CEPP, has spearheaded the use of clinical simulations for teacher and other pre-professional training.

In a teaching simulation, students take part in one-on-one interaction with trained actors who portray any of various school stakeholders—"standardized individuals," such as parents or administrators—depending on the scenario.

After each simulation, there is an immediate debrief with instructors, and since each session is recorded, students then review and reflect on their interaction, reporting back to their classmates.

The purpose: to give teacher candidates and other pre-professionals real-time, reflexive practice in navigating sensitive, controversial, or emotionally charged topics.



Honors student **Zachary Setzkorn '26** presented his research at the spring 2025 SOURCE Undergraduate Research Symposium.

"Simulations provide a low-risk, high-learning environment in which students can practice handling real-world scenarios," explains Setzkorn. "They help students develop communication skills with parents, colleagues, and others, and they prepare us to navigate professional interactions confidently and effectively."

To date, CEPP has created more than 115 simulation scenarios for more than 6,000 learners across many disciplines, giving teacher candidates, counseling students, military veterans, art therapists, future financial advisors, and others a chance to build their confidence.

**"[Simulations] help students develop communication skills with parents, colleagues, and others."**

Zachary Setzkorn '26

(continued on next page)

## THE FOWLER SIMULATION

### “This Lesson Makes Me Uncomfortable”

Supporting Teachers in Defending Civil Rights History

#### PURPOSE

A clinical simulation to help future educators navigate professional challenges and contentious conversations when teaching about civil rights.

#### AUTHOR

Zachary Setzkorn '26

#### FUNDING

Center for Experiential Pedagogy and Practice; Syracuse Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement (SOURCE)

#### DESIGN

- Initially developed for EDU 310: The American School, an undergraduate course that teaches the social history of schooling.
- Students engage as first-year social studies teachers who have taught a lesson on redlining and segregation in public schools.
- Trained actors portray a “standardized individual”: the parent of “Kate Fowler” who is objecting to lesson content.
- Example objection: “I don’t agree with the version of history you’re presenting.”
- Students debrief with instructors after the simulation and reflect on video footage with peers.

#### PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- Candidates reported some discomfort and frustration during the simulation.
- Many defended their lesson by referring to curriculum standards or historical relevance.

#### Really Valuable

With CEPP ever looking to innovate, when designing this new simulation Setzkorn and Dotger chose to collaborate for the first time with Professor **Mario Perez** and his EDU 310: The American School class, which includes a mix of teacher preparation and other students.

For his honors thesis, Setzkorn wrote a scenario that is particularly appropriate for EDU 310 students, who learn about the history of public schooling, systemic inequality, and civil rights.

The students—representing first-year teachers—meet with actors portraying parents upset about a lesson on school districts, redlining, and segregation. The actors use scripted statements, such as “I don’t agree with the version of history that you’re presenting.” The student-teacher is challenged to defend the lesson content, while navigating questions of classroom censorship and history.

Sounds stressful? Well, that is partly the point. “Lots of students found it to be a really valuable learning experience,” Setzkorn says. “Some did become frustrated, but that frustration was constructive—it showed them how unprepared they might feel when actually teaching.”

“Having my students participate in the clinical simulation was a great opportunity for them to reflect on the contemporary parental rights movement,” says Perez. “Some students in the course are not planning on becoming classroom teachers. They expressed some anxiety about participating, but overall they were excited about getting first-hand experience in how future classroom teachers are trained.”

Setzkorn notes that some students were surprised by how real the interaction felt and how different it was from simply reading about similar situations in the news.

This feedback is one of the ways Dotger measures a simulation’s benefit: “We assess whether students are actively participating in discussions and asking questions. The more they engage in debrief conversations—both in small groups and as a whole class—the more we consider the simulation successful.”

#### Meaningful Project

Both an S. Louise and Howard Phanstiel Scholar and 2025-2026 Remembrance Scholar, Setzkorn admits this project re-invigorated his engagement with the Renée Crown University Honors Program.

“I took the clinical simulations class in the spring of my freshman year and had a great

experience,” Setzkorn recalls. “Dr. Dotger invited me to join his research team, and I’ve been working in CEPP for two years now. I was considering dropping honors, but my colleagues encouraged me to find a meaningful project.”

Setzkorn spent the spring and summer of 2024 researching and writing the protocols, ensuring it included specific dialogue for the actors: “I conducted extensive research, including interviews with teachers who have dealt with parental complaints about race-related topics. Professor Dotger and I also analyzed modern news reports and academic articles to ensure authenticity.”

Dotger observes that the collaboration with EDU 310 was a chance to add to CEPP’s repertoire of history-focused simulations.

“Professor Perez helped ensure historical accuracy. Zachary then created the case details and backstory using existing simulation protocols and mentor texts to guide the design. Actors were then trained according to our standardized individual protocol,” Dotger explains. “After implementation, Zachary and I prepared for the debriefing, ensuring students had an opportunity to discuss their takeaways.”

#### Achieving a Goal

Setzkorn explains that students’ video reflection is a critical part of the learning process.

“Students review the footage to identify strengths and areas for improvement,” says Setzkorn. “We encourage students to pinpoint specific moments in their performance for reflection. They also write reports and sometimes share their findings with peers, which fosters a collaborative learning environment.”

Dotger emphasizes the importance of clinical simulations’ combination of immersive experience, meta-reflection, and collaboration: “I’m skeptical of traditional observation, where someone stands in the corner and watches without participating. In a cohort of 20 simulation participants, every single one will actively participate. Our philosophy is that if a cohort is involved, every individual must engage fully.”

“There’s no single right answer in simulations, so even if students feel they performed poorly, they’re still learning,” adds Setzkorn. “Reviewing their performance allows them to assess their strengths and weaknesses. The key is ensuring it’s a meaningful learning experience, and from the feedback we’ve received, it seems we’ve achieved that goal.” ■

## Dear School of Education Alumni and Friends,

As Chair of the School of Education **Advisory Board** at Syracuse University, it is my great pleasure to extend heartfelt appreciation to each of you—our alumni and friends—who continue to uplift and strengthen our community through your time, talent, and generosity.

Your involvement is the heartbeat of our mission. Whether you’ve served as an **Alumni Ambassador**, mentored a student through our **Mentor Connect** program, or supported us through philanthropy, your contributions have made a lasting impact. You are helping to shape the next generation of educators, leaders, and changemakers—and for that, we are deeply grateful.

This year, we are especially excited to welcome the **School of Social Work** and their more than 6,000 alumni into our family. This integration marks a powerful step forward in our shared commitment to equity, inclusion, social justice, and community engagement. We look forward to the new perspectives and partnerships this will bring, and we are thrilled to grow together.

As always, I am **#ProudtoBeSOE**. That pride is rooted in the passion and dedication of people like you—those who believe in the transformative power of education and who show up to make a difference.

I encourage you to stay connected with us. Whether by becoming an Ambassador, joining our mentoring program, or supporting our initiatives through giving, there are so many meaningful ways to engage. Your continued involvement ensures that our legacy of excellence endures.

With sincere appreciation,



**Deborah A. Knoblock '88, G'90**

Chair, SOE Advisory Board



**Deb Knoblock '88, G'90** (front left) leads an **Advisory Board** discussion on the **Indigenous Teacher Preparation Fund** at the Native Student Program headquarters in March 2025.

**“Your involvement is the heartbeat of our mission... You are helping to shape the next generation of educators, leaders, and changemakers—and for that, we are deeply grateful.”**

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P'XX denotes the parents of a Syracuse University student or graduate.

ALUMNI ROUNDTABLE

# Mentor Connect

Helping Students Explore Careers In and Beyond the Classroom

**S**OE launched a new alumni/student mentoring program—**Mentor Connect**—in February 2025. This initiative was developed by student leaders in the Deans’ **Undergraduate Advisory Panel**, with support from the SOE **Advisory Board** and SOE staff.

“Everyone can benefit from a mentor. Through our new program, students working in and beyond the classroom—and specifically our Selected Studies in Education students—can learn about other real-world experiences,” says Career and Certification Counselor **Lauren Gill**. “A lot of students don’t realize the opportunities available for an education graduate, and our alumni have such a wide variety of backgrounds.”

As part of the launch, several alumni gathered for two virtual roundtables, hosted by **Raphael Richard G’12**, **Joshua Spodek ’25**, and **Ashley Cambareri ’26**. Some of what they discussed is excerpted here. To join Mentor Connect, visit [soe.syr.edu/mentor](https://soe.syr.edu/mentor).



## Why did you choose SOE?

### Lawrence Swiader '89, G'93

Chief Digital Officer  
American Battlefield Trust

I was working in the late 80s and early 90s in television production, and I started teaching alongside that. I was unsure about what I wanted to do, but I really loved the classroom experience, so my idea was something that blended technology with education.

I didn't know about instructional design at the time, but I applied to a few schools. It was between Columbia and Syracuse, and I chose SOE's IDDE program. I'm really happy I did that. How people learn and how to change behavior has been an essential part of my work ever since. I was in the right place at the right time.

After Syracuse, I worked at UPS, writing instructor-led materials and helping people deliver packages faster and safer. I thought, if I can do that for UPS, I could do it for my real love: museums. That set me off on a path to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC, where I worked for 10 years, and now the American Battlefield Trust—all the time using learnings that started with instructional design.



### Gladasia Trotman '05

Director of Special Education Compliance  
North Star Academy (Newark, NJ)

I always wanted to go to Syracuse. I grew up in New Jersey, but my dad lived in Rochester, so we would frequently visit the campus to watch basketball games. Those experiences created a deep connection to the University, and I literally couldn't picture myself anywhere else.

When it came to my career, I always knew that I wanted to work with youth. I was considering speech pathology or teaching, and then I just fell in love with SOE because of the mentorship support and the staff. It was a perfect fit for me. The strong academic programs, the supportive community, and the hands-on experience in the Syracuse school district helped my decision.



## What are the most important skills for someone looking at your career?

### Victor Yang '16

Chief Government Affairs Officer  
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging

One of the benefits that SOE offers is developing "soft" skills—especially how to communicate effectively. That's work I do with companies and agencies on issues that impact older adults. We educate lawmakers and companies on public policy solutions to ensure better health access or income security. On top of that, we're educating older people on the US healthcare and financial systems.



One thing I learned as an undergraduate was how to have those types of conversations in a really engaging manner, making the teaching relevant but also memorable, such as when we taught older adults about health screening, making a song out of it.

### Brent Elder G'14, G'16

Associate Professor of Inclusive Education  
Rowan University

Foundational to SOE—particularly in the inclusive education program—is the understanding that everyone benefits from building inclusive communities. We should be conscious about articulating that what's good for people with disabilities is often good for everybody, whether that's teaching in the classroom or creating universally accessible employment spaces. That's the focus of my work—it has always been thanks to the faculty bridging theory and practice and then seeing how that might apply to a variety of settings.



### Katie Scanlon G'15, G'22

Director of Student-Athlete Academic Development  
Syracuse University Athletics

In my field, people often think they need to know about sports, but to be honest with you, I think our students feel refreshed to have conversations about something that isn't their sport and to be seen as whole people.

So people skills, relationship building, and the ability to have a genuine conversation with somebody and connect with them are really important. Oftentimes when we're hiring, some think they need to have a sport management degree, but we actually prefer folks who have an education background.



## What helped you navigate your early job search?

### Gladasia Trotman '05

Building relationships and staying connected in the process is really, really helpful. Utilize SOE alumni willing to mentor—like us—because that goes a very long way. In addition to networking, I would say take advantage of SOE's career services. Do mock interviews and make sure your résumé is ready to go. That really helped me prepare.

(continued on next page)

**"I just fell in love with SOE because of the mentorship support and the staff."**

Gladasia Trotman '05

**Nakia M. Gray-Nicolas G'08, G'09**

*Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership  
Queen's College, NY*

I definitely want to echo networking—it's important. When I first went out to find a job as a teacher, I tapped everyone. Interact with a lot of different school districts because you need to cast a wide net. Professor **Marcelle Haddix** put me in contact with the principal of Stuyvesant. I had an interview there. I had an offer in Baltimore, and New York City Public Schools can set you up with different events throughout the district to find a placement.

Echoing Gladasia, you need someone to look over your résumé. You need to prep your lesson plans. You need to practice standing up in front of people. Make sure you overcome that fear—although that fear is healthy; it's motivating.



**Tyrone Shaw '10**

*History Teacher  
District of Columbia Public Schools*

During my job search I had the opportunity to do a demo lesson. I was like, that's my strong suit. All my placements and taking Professor **Ben Dotger's** experiential learning course really prepared me for an in-person demo lesson.

That's what got me into DCPS. At the time, the principal was also looking for somebody to develop electives. He wanted a Holocaust and genocide course and a race, class, and gender course. That was literally my background because I had done so much genocide work, as well as work around education philosophy. I was able to leverage the background Syracuse gave me. I was hired to teach world history, but I can have these passion projects.



**Desiree Moore '00, G'05**

*Instructional Specialist  
Phoenix (NY) Central School District*

I would definitely say connect and connect and use all your resources. And practice, practice, practice. Figure out what your passion is so that no matter what question they ask you, you have a story to go with it.

Draw on all those practicum experiences, your student teaching, all of that. You end up with this wealth of knowledge and experiences to draw from so that when you do an interview, you don't have a canned answer, you have stories that they remember.



**Where do you see the field of education in the next 10 years?**

**Lawrence Swiader '89, G'93**

It's hard to start the conversation without mentioning artificial intelligence (AI). It's just absolutely the elephant in the room right now. We have to consider how to best use it—how it might save us time and how it might help us reach more people. It's going to be up to us to make sure that we use it the right way.

At the American Battlefield Trust, we do a lot of work with teachers. Our virtual teacher institutes have become more and more important. It's an undeniable fact that they can reach people at scale. I wonder how we can build human quality into what we're already experiencing with AI.

**Brent Elder G'14, G'16**

There's a lot of threat to inclusive communities, specifically disabled and minoritized people. That's not going to go away. That's always been a fight and a struggle. We have a responsibility no matter where we work to defend that. Being able to understand how to advocate while keeping your job, while being effective and using tools that are digestible and that back up your ethical stance even when it's under threat—that's really critical.

**Desiree Moore '00, G'05**

I hope we'll see a move away from standardized testing toward more project-based learning, as well as rethinking grading and maybe moving toward portfolios and capstone projects for high schoolers—that kind of thing. I'm hoping we will get the education that we dreamed of decades and decades ago.

**Julie Padilla '11, G'12**

*Manager of Customer Experience  
Carnegie Learning*

I will say we should be bridging the gap between education and workforce readiness. I think because of AI, there will be more emphasis on preparing students for careers by integrating real world skills. There's a lot of amazing companies that have these profound partnerships that are getting students ready to go straight into the workforce with experiential learning opportunities.



**Kofi Dormah '15**

*Writer/Director  
Nickelodeon*

I think we need to understand that education starts with us. Everything starts with us. No matter AI, no matter what comes our way, we are educators. We are able to lead the youth. I hope instead of feeling down, we are feeling uplifted and more empowered to educate about the things that are being taken away, on the things that are being changed. ■



**“I think we need to understand that education starts with us. Everything starts with us.”**

Kofi Dormah '15



# Five Questions

Stephanie Waterman '83, G'04

**S**tephanie Waterman '83, G'04 (Onondaga, Turtle Clan) is the first Onondagan student to earn an education Ph.D. at Syracuse University and the co-creator of the University's Native Student Program.

As SOE launches its **Indigenous Teacher Preparation Fund Scholarship**—an initiative to support the critical need for Indigenous teachers—Waterman was invited back to her alma mater to serve as 2025 Convocation speaker.

An associate professor in the Department of Leadership, Higher, and Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Waterman teaches in OISE's higher education program and coordinates the student development and student services program stream.

Her current research asks how First Nations/Native American student affairs units work and how they intersect with non-Indigenous units on campuses.

## 1 Describe your current roles and their responsibilities.

As coordinator of the Student Development/Student Services program within our higher education faculty—similar to SOE's higher education master's degree program—I teach required courses and serve on doctoral and campus-wide committees. Also, for the past couple years, I have been advisor to the Provost regarding Indigenous education.

## 2 How did Syracuse prepare you for these roles?

I participated in the Future Professoriate Program, a structured professional development experience for aspiring faculty. The initiative aims to develop mentoring relationships, offer programs and other activities tailored to the disciplinary environment, and support the professional needs of their students. I found that program and the college teaching course to be invaluable experiences.

## 3 What current trends do you see in your specialty and how are you addressing them?

There are so many more Indigenous scholars now from when I was a student! The opportunity for collaboration has been awesome. Indigenous knowledge systems are expected to be incorporated into research and literature regarding Indigenous students.

When I was a student, the literature about Indigenous students, and for marginalized students in general, focused on deficits. It was very negative. Critiquing higher education systems, the status quo, and looking for strengths rather than deficits is a welcome change.

## 4 Which professors stood out for you most as an SOE student?

Professors **Joan Burstyn** and **R. Deborah Davis** supported me 110%. Both are retired now. We had meals together, talked about scholarship, practiced presentations, and we read our writing out loud to each other. They helped me develop as a writer.

## 5 What are your thoughts on the transformative potential of the Indigenous Teacher Preparation Fund?

A scholarship fund can be transformational with the right support and knowledge in place—such as the Native Student Program. This is a place for Indigenous students to be Indigenous, to be surrounded by our own with people who get our humor. The cultural programs and speakers are very important too. It reminds Indigenous students of home. ■

# Alumni News and Notes

Find these stories and more on our website.



## Riley-Tillman Named WSU Provost

In July 2024, **T. Chris Riley-Tillman G'96, G'99** (School Psychology) joined Washington State University as Provost and Executive Vice President. Before joining WSU, Riley-Tillman was Dean of the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Missouri, among other roles.

Riley-Tillman is a co-developer of Direct Behavior Ratings and a recognized authority in evidence-based practice in schools and the application of experimental design and analysis in applied educational settings.



## Toman Leads Peru State School of Professional Studies

Higher Education master's degree alumna **Gina Toman G'88** was named Dean of the School of Professional Studies at Peru State College in Nebraska in July.

Before this appointment, she served as Director of Healthcare Education and the Leadership Doctoral Program at Clarkson College, as well as several leadership positions at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, including Assistant to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.



## An Eye for a New Ear

Artist **Karyn Meyer-Berthel G'21** is known for her ability to combine paint colors into perfect matches for any skin tone. This skill proved critical when Syracuse's Museum of Science and Technology (MOST) wanted to renovate its Upstate Medical University Life Sciences anatomy exhibit and make its representation of human skin tones more inclusive.

Arts Education Professor **James Haywood Rolling Jr.** connected the MOST and Meyer-Berthel and together they chose to upgrade the giant ear in the "Sense of Hearing" exhibit: "Different ethnicities have different shaped ears, but this anatomy is a little more streamlined across the globe, so an adjustment with paint can change the representation," says Meyer-Berthel.

Using her experience as an arts materials expert, Meyer-Berthel changed the ear to a brown skin tone, to help reflect the fact that 28% of Syracuse's population is African American. The new exhibit opened in fall 2024.

"Our main objective was to make sure that models and images in our exhibits reflect the people who visit them," says Emily Stewart, MOST Senior Director of Education and Curation.



## Together Again

Coming Back Together is a special tradition at Syracuse. A triennial reunion, CBT celebrates the Orange legacy of Black and Latino alumni and students. On September 13, SOE celebrated CBT with a get-together and panel discussion in the **Sharon H. Jacquet '72, P'03 Education Commons**.

"Building Leaders in the School of Education" featured Dean Chandler-Olcott and current SOE students discussing their involvement in student groups that have helped shaped their college experiences, while preparing them to become the future leaders of education.



**Maria Murray G'96, G'09** pictured in *The Reading League's* library in downtown Syracuse. In addition to her 2024 'CUSE50 Award, in 2025 Maria Murray was named Nonprofit Executive of the Year by the CNY Business Journal and one of 10 Exceptional Women of Central New York by New York State Assemblymember Pamela J. Hunter.

## Alumni Win 'CUSE50 Entrepreneur Awards

Among recipients of 2024 'CUSE50 Alumni Entrepreneur Awards—announced in October—were literacy expert **Maria Murray G'96, G'09** and disability services entrepreneur **John Torrens G'93**.

Murray is founder of The Reading League, an organization committed to enhancing literacy instruction across the country with

tools and initiatives that aim to revolutionize the way reading is taught.

Torrens—in addition to being a Professor of Entrepreneurial Practice in the Whitman School—leads Sprout Therapy Management, a company focused on providing innovative therapeutic solutions for individuals with disabilities.

### Hockey Coach Earns National Award

In January, West Genesee (NY) Central School District hockey coach and special education master's degree alumnus **Frank Colabufo G'91** picked up a National Coaches of the Year honor from the National Federation of State High School Associations for the 2023-2024 school year. The award recognizes coaches at the state, sectional, and national level.

A member of the 500 win club, Colabufo has coached the Wildcats since 1994-1995, taking the team to three state championships and 14 Section III titles.



**James Duah-Agyeman G'99** speaks at the Center for Academic Achievement and Student Development Baccalaureate in May 2025.

### Duah-Agyeman Recognized as Unsung Hero

The 40th Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Planning Committee named **James Duah-Agyeman G'99** as one of five recipients of the Unsung Hero Award in January 2025. The award is given to community members, students, faculty, and staff who have made a positive impact on the lives of others but who are not widely recognized for their contributions.

Holding a Ph.D. in Mathematics Education, Duah-Agyeman is former Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and special advisor to the Men of Color Initiative. He has a 38-year record of achievement at the University—as a graduate student, teacher, academic counselor, administrator, and leader.



### WATERMAN URGES STUDENTS TO REMEMBER THE “Rs”

In her May 10 Convocation address to the Class of 2025, SOE alumna Stephanie Waterman '83, G'04 urged graduates to first consider the 4Rs of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility, as enumerated by scholars Verna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt in their essay “First Nations and Higher Education” (1991).

Waterman explained that although the authors specifically address Indigenous students, “you will see how the Rs can apply to all students and inform how you can move forward in your career.”

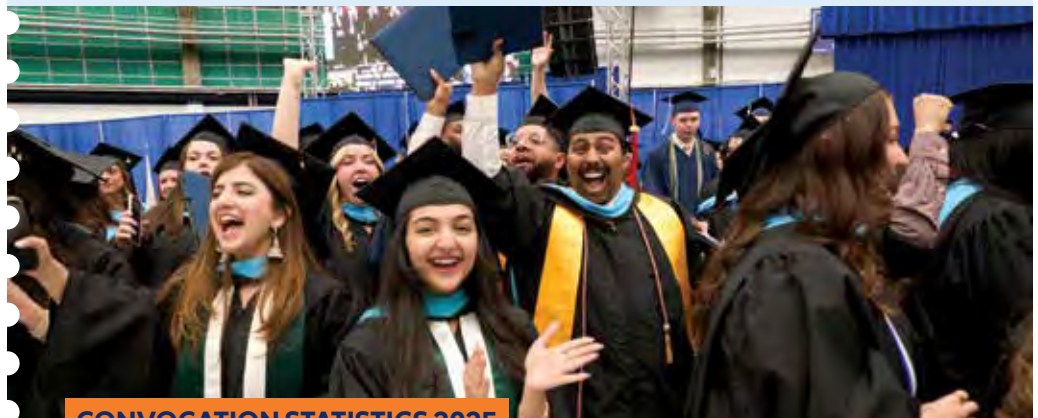
**Respect**—Be respectful of students and our communities, the knowledge they possess, the ways they learn, and as people.

**Relevance**—Be sure curriculum and programs respond to the needs of Indigenous students and community.

**Reciprocity**—We learn together. I learn from students; the institution can learn from students and communities.

**Responsibility**—This is also two-way. Students are responsible for learning and sharing, and institutions are responsible to learn about students and their communities and to support them in meaningful ways.

Waterman continued, “Some people add a fifth R—relationships. Think about your relationships with your relatives, your cousins, aunts, and uncles, perhaps a favorite teacher. Those close relationships carry a deep responsibility.”



### CONVOCATION STATISTICS 2025

**81**

bachelor's degrees

**137**

master's degrees

**29**

certificates of advanced study

**33**

doctoral degrees

**25**

InclusiveU graduates

**SOE Commencement Marshals**

**Sofia DaCruz '25 and Joshua Spodek '25**

**Undergraduate Speaker**

**Sofia DaCruz '25**

**Graduate Speaker**

**Chelsea Nicole Bouldin G'25**



### Nabors Named Pitt AVP

In January, the new year ushered in a new school and position for **Marlin Nabors G'02**, who after four years as Associate Vice President and Dean of Students at Endicott College in Massachusetts started at the University of Pittsburgh as AVP and Dean of Students.

Nabors brings 20 years of experience in higher education to Pitt, where he oversees the Community and Inclusion, Wellness and Student Engagement, and Professional Development teams. A first-generation college graduate, Nabors earned a B.S. in journalism and sociology from Central Michigan University and a 2002 master's degree from SOE's Cultural Foundations of Education program.



### West Receives ACPA Diamond Award

Higher education administrator **Jordan Shelby West G'16, G'18** was recognized as an American College Personnel Association 2025 Diamond Honoree at ACPA's 2025 Conference in Long Beach, CA, in February.

West is Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement at The George Washington University, where she leads the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Community Engagement.



### Alumnae Help Launch Professional Women's Lax League

Alumnae **Megan K. Carney '22, G'23** (pictured) and **Emily J. Hawryschuk '20, G'21, G'22** helped launch the Women's Lacrosse League (part of the Premier Lacrosse League) in February, joining the new league's New York Charging franchise.

Both Carney and Hawryschuk hold certificates of advanced study in Intercollegiate Athletic Advising and Support, having taken bachelor's degrees in Sport Management and in Accounting, respectively. Hawryschuk also holds a master's degree in Entrepreneurship and Emerging Enterprises.



### Adams Receives Tolley Award

Educator, entrepreneur, author, and Higher Education doctoral program alumnus **Howard G. Adams G'78** receives the **William Pearson Tolley Medal for Distinguished Leadership** in Lifelong Learning from Chancellor **Kent Syverud** and Dean **Kelly Chandler-Olcott** at the 2025 One University Awards in March.

A few highlights from career achievements too numerous to list here: Adams is Founder and President of consultancy H.G. Adams and Associates Inc.; former Executive Director of the National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science Inc.; former member of the US Congressional Task Force on Women, Minorities, and the Handicapped in Science and Technology; and recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Mentoring.

### Alums Take the Lead

In March, two alums were appointed to Syracuse-area school leadership positions. Liverpool Central School District appointed special education graduate **Brian Nolan '85, G'90** as Interim School Superintendent. Nolan had retired in 2016 after 31 years with the Syracuse City School District (SCSD), serving numerous roles, including the Executive Director of High Schools. He also has been Principal of Bishop Grimes Junior/Senior High School in Syracuse, Acting Superintendent in the Utica (NY) School District, and an SCSD administrative coach.

Science education graduate **Audrey L. Yeager G'01** is the new Dean of Academics at Manlius Pebble Hill School (MPH), leading the design, articulation, and evolution of the school's academic program and curriculum. Prior to this role, she served as Coordinator of Teaching and Learning at MPH.

### Howlett Receives Advising Award

NACADA, the professional organization for academic advising, bestowed an Excellence in Advising-New Advisor award on **Ryan R. Howlett G'12, G'15** at its Region 1 and 2 Conference held in Buffalo in early April.

Holding a master's degree in English Education, Howlett is Lead Academic and Professional Advisor for the College of Arts and Sciences. The award, he says, is a "testament more to those who have mentored and guided my professional journey."



### Ducett Takes AERA Accolade

In April, **Katie Ducett G'22, G'23** took home the Outstanding Dissertation Award from the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Special and Inclusive Education Research Special Interest Group.

Now an assistant professor at SUNY Cortland, Ducett's doctoral research focuses on special education. "Social Lives at College: Experiences of Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disability" highlights the

experiences that students with intellectual disability have while in college and includes findings about ableism and relationship.



### Greenberg Seinfeld Receives Honorary Degree

Visionary philanthropist, innovative businessperson, and SOE alumna **Judith Greenberg Seinfeld '56, H'25** received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the University's 2025 Commencement exercises.

A leader in business and in service to others, Seinfeld has made extraordinary contributions to social causes, communities, and the arts and has had a transformative impact on the University through her tireless commitment to education, not least through the creation of the Judith Greenberg Seinfeld Prize for Creative Teaching Endowment in 2000.

### Powless Inducted into Hall of Fame

University ombuds **Neal Powless G'08** (Onondaga, Eel Clan) was inducted into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame in May 2025. A school counseling master's program alumnus and member of a legendary lacrosse family, he was recognized for his decades of dedication and contributions to the game.

Powless played lacrosse in college and professionally, and he still coaches and plays for Box Lacrosse teams. His uniforms and gear are now on display at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City.

### Alums Named to Grammy Educator Shortlist

From quarter notes to the quarter finals! Out of the 200 quarter finalists in the Grammy Foundation's 2026 Music Educator Award, no less than five are Syracuse University graduates.

In the running for 2026 are: **Erin L. Althen '03, G'04**; **Laura H. Del Rosso '17, G'18**; **Erin E. McConnell '06, G'07**; **Zachary T. Moser '09, G'10**; and **Alexandra L. Snabon-Jun '03, G'04**. ■



### ORANGE ATHLETICS RETIRES ALEXANDER'S JERSEY

Women's basketball standout and SOE alumna **Kayla Alexander '13** was honored on the court in December when her famed #40 jersey was hoisted to the JMA Wireless Dome rafters and officially retired.

Holding a bachelor's degree in History and Social Studies Education, Alexander is Syracuse's all-time leader in career points and the only player in program history to score 2,000 points. She is the second women's basketball player and the third SOE alumna to receive this high honor.

### SOE WOMEN'S SPORTS HALL OF FAME ... SO FAR!

Alexander joins four other standout female athletes who make us #ProudtoBeSOE!



#### BASKETBALL

**Kayla Alexander '13**  
(History and Social Studies Education)  
Retired Jersey #40  
Team Canada  
Olympian (2020, 2024)



#### LACROSSE

**Katie Rowan Thompson '09, G'10**  
(Inclusive Elementary and Special Education; Literacy Education)  
Retired Jersey #21  
Team USA



#### SOFTBALL

**Jenna Caira '12**  
(Physical Education)  
Retired Jersey #29  
Team Canada  
Olympian (2020)



#### TRACK & FIELD

**Katie Hursey Zaferes '12**  
(Physical Education)  
Team USA  
Olympian (2016, 2020)

#### Kayla Treanor '16

(Selected Studies in Education)  
Team USA

# “We Want to Find Everyone’s Gift”

Sitting in their home in Skaneateles, NY, **Garry P’22** and **Cindy ’88, P’22 Payne** mention that they are looking forward to a weekend visit from their daughter, **Chloe ’22**, now that the **InclusiveU** graduate has returned from the inaugural, fully inclusive Syracuse Abroad immersion course in Italy, organized by the **Center on Disability and Inclusion (CDI)**.

“Chloe had a blast. It was such a great experience for her and for us,” says Birmingham, UK, born Garry, a partner with Cypress Financial Consultants. “All the kids had a great time. I wish there were more opportunities like that,” agrees Cindy, an S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications alumna and a co-founder of NorthStar Insurance Consulting Services.

**“Everyone has a gift in life. We want to find everyone’s gift and create something.”**

## Move the Needle

Now, thanks to a generous gift of \$100,000 to the **Dream Big Campaign**, more InclusiveU students will have the same opportunities as the Payne’s daughter, both within the program and beyond.

Dream Big was launched in April 2024 by University Trustee **Capt. Robert P. Taishoff ’86** and his wife Kathy. This \$2.5 million matching gift opportunity supports the next phase of growth for CDI, the **Lawrence B. Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education**, and InclusiveU.

The Paynes first learned about InclusiveU from **Advisory Council** member **Amy Allyn P’23, P’26**. At that time, Chloe was finishing high school and wanted to have a college experience like her older brother, Matthew. “We never thought that would happen,” says Garry, a member of the Taishoff Center’s Advisory Council and **Business Engagement Group**. “But InclusiveU gave her an opportunity to go to her mom’s University.”

“Chloe found her people at InclusiveU,” says Cindy, adding, “but why does the journey have to end? We want to help move the needle on the percentage of InclusiveU graduates moving on positively with their careers and lives.”

## Continuous Wishes

The journey certainly has not ended for Chloe, now 26, who studied human development and family science while at Syracuse (and who joined the University’s belly dancing troupe). Since graduating, she has worked as a teacher’s assistant at Little Luke’s Daycare and Preschool in DeWitt, NY, and at Sprout Therapy in Liverpool, NY.

“She loves her work, and they love her,” continues Cindy, explaining that they hope their gift will help to build InclusiveU’s capacity and ability to serve graduates in their careers and lives. “We want to see all the kids have that opportunity. The work relationships and the sense of independence make them feel good.”

“When they are done with college, now what?” asks Garry. “Can InclusiveU graduates find work? How do they get there? Where do they live?” To jobs, transportation, and housing, Cindy adds the importance of social interactions for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. “Everyone has a gift in life. We want to find everyone’s gift and create something.”



*The Payne Family: (from L to R) Matthew; Cindy ’88, P’22; Chloe ’22; and Garry P’22.*

Garry and Cindy have an extensive history of philanthropy and service. Garry is a past-president and a board member of Ronald McDonald House of Central New York and is currently on the board of Elmcrest Children’s Center, in addition to his service for the Taishoff Center. Cindy has served Ronald McDonald House, Syracuse City Ballet, Elmcrest Children’s Center, and Make-A-Wish CNY.

Referencing their similar pledge to Make-A-Wish CNY, Garry notes, “We felt a gift to **Dream Big** was necessary, and Rob Taishoff put the marker out there for us. This gift is about making continuous wishes, about future happiness.”

Cindy adds, “This gift amount was a stretch for us, but think about how far a gift will go when Rob Taishoff matches it. It’s an incredible opportunity.” ■

## BUILD ON A LEGACY, LEAD FOR THE FUTURE

To join the Paynes and support **Dream Big**, please contact Assistant Dean for Advancement **Torin Washington** at [tjwashin@syr.edu](mailto:tjwashin@syr.edu) or 315.412.8512.

[disabilityinclusioncenter.syr.edu/dream-big](http://disabilityinclusioncenter.syr.edu/dream-big)

# Live Like Liam

**A**t an April 29 ceremony in Hendricks Chapel, the University announced a \$100,000 endowed scholarship from the Live Like Liam Foundation in support of **InclusiveU** and expanding access to this flagship program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The scholarship was established in loving memory of **Liam Zoghby**, a cherished member of the University community who passed away in January 2024. Liam was a sophomore at InclusiveU and served as a student manager for the Orange men's basketball team, leaving a lasting impact on all who knew him.

"When we lost Liam, we had two options: either surrender to what had occurred or make a difference and 'Find The Good.' What we learned from Liam is that, through everything he went through, he never gave up and always sought the good," say Liam's parents Jalal and Eileen Zoghby. "With all the love and amazing support Liam experienced at InclusiveU, we are continuing Liam's legacy and hopeful others will support this important work. May we find the good together."

Formed in 2024, Live Like Liam Inc. is a charitable foundation created to honor Liam's legacy. In partnership with the Central New York Community Foundation, the organization supports families of children with disabilities or life-threatening illnesses by providing critical financial assistance.

"Liam was a student whose love for Syracuse ran deep—and the feeling was mutual. His warmth, generosity, and kindness left a lasting impression on everyone who knew him," says **Brianna Shults**, Director of InclusiveU. "We are deeply grateful to the Live Like Liam Foundation. It is an honor to help carry Liam's spirit forward by sharing his story and enthusiasm for life with the students who will benefit from this meaningful gift." ■



**"With all the love and amazing support Liam experienced at InclusiveU, we are continuing Liam's legacy and hopeful others will support this important work. May we find the good together."**

Honoring **Liam Zoghby's** life and legacy, Chancellor **Kent Syverud** and Professor **Beth Myers**, Director of the **Lawrence B. Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education**, joined the Zoghby family for a check presentation in April 2025.



# The Rosens Help Students “RISE”



**“The best way to be thankful is to give back to the University and pay it forward to students who are coming along.”**

Thanks to a \$125,000 gift from **Alice Hammerschlag Rosen ’83, P’11**, and **Bruce A. Rosen ’83, P’11**, SOE students with family or other emergencies won’t necessarily have to leave the University for lack of funds.

The **Rosen Resolving Individual Student Emergency Fund (RISE Fund)** will help provide for student needs—such as tuition or room and board—arising from “an immediate emergency.”

“A need of \$2,500 might make or break a student from staying in the University. We want to help students who need a little assistance” explains Bruce. “We know of some students for whom, unfortunately, lacking \$2,500 forced them to leave.”

For Alice, a former teacher and current SOE **Advisory Board** member, paying for college was “always a struggle.” She continues, “My brother went to state college, but I wanted to go to Syracuse because of its great School of Education. My parents said, ‘We can’t give you that kind of money,’ so I got scholarships and financial aid, and I was a work study student.”

At the end of her freshman year, tuition rose, so Alice got another job as a resident advisor. Then, at the start of her master’s degree, tragedy struck when her father suddenly passed. “My mother said, you’re going to have to figure it out yourself, so I did so again and I became a graduate assistant and completed my master’s.”

This gift continues the Rosens’ history of philanthropy and service. Bruce, a Whitman School of Management graduate, was Treasurer of Syracuse Hillel for 14 years and is a current board member. Alice has been a member of the SOE Advisory Board for many years and is Chairperson of the **Study Away Advisory Committee**. Acknowledging their son **David’s ’11, G’12**, education at the School of Information Studies, the couple have supported the 140 Cuse Program and numerous iSchool immersion and road trips.

Over 40 years ago, Bruce (a Lawrinson Hall resident) and Alice (a Sadler Hall resident) met as freshmen. Their love for Syracuse is as strong today as it was then: “We have tons of Syracuse paraphernalia in our house—tissue boxes, a Carrier Dome sign, a stuffed Otto for our grandson, among other items,” Bruce exclaims.

One can clearly see that the Rosens bleed Orange, and their love and gratitude for their alma mater is the motivation for creating the RISE Fund.

“We are blessed and very fortunate to be able to do this,” says Bruce. “We always say to each other that we know where we are today because of the education we received at Syracuse. The best way to be thankful is to give back to the University and pay it forward to students who are coming along.” ■

## GIVING DAY 2025 A “Global” Success



**ON MARCH 27**, the SOE community united in support of the University’s annual Giving Day tradition. This year’s theme was Around the World, with visitors to Huntington Hall treated to snacks and treats from different countries, swag giveaways, and a special guest appearance by Syracuse’s globe-shaped mascot.

Thanks to overwhelming generosity, we not only easily exceeded our donation goal but also secured second place in participation across all schools and colleges. ■

**303**  
total  
donations  
121% of goal

**\$35,000**  
raised for programs  
and opportunities

**2nd Place**  
in donor participation  
among all schools  
and colleges

**CENTER ON DISABILITY  
AND INCLUSION**

**103 donations**  
171% of goal

**CENTER FOR EXPERIENTIAL  
PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE**

**40 donations**  
200% of goal

REBECCA (LUYAO) KANG '23



## Past, Present, and Future

**A** Selected Studies in Education (SSE) and Sociology double major, SOE Alumni Ambassador **Rebecca (Luyao) Kang '23** recently graduated with an Education Policy master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania. During her SSE internship, Kang was a student consultant to the Partnership for Inclusive Education and Students Consulting on Education.

### PAST: What memory from your time at SOE do you most cherish?

I always have been proud of being part of SOE. One of the most cherished memories is the incredible support and encouragement I received from my professors and advisors. Their passion for education and dedication to their students created an environment where I felt truly empowered to grow academically and professionally.

### PRESENT: What are you working on now that you'd like to share with fellow alums?

I am working as a Graduate Assistant at Penn's Weingarten Center, where I help support disability services and collaborate with students to foster a more inclusive and accessible learning environment.

### FUTURE: What is your hope for the future of education and learning?

I envision a society where every child—regardless of circumstances, background, or ability—has fair access to high-quality education and the necessary tools to succeed. In my ideal educational institutions, diversity is acknowledged and each student feels noticed, appreciated, and supported.

# THANK YOU, AMBASSADORS!

**T**he first year of the **Alumni Ambassador Program** has been a great success! Thank you to the 104 alums and friends of SOE who signed up to volunteer in many different ways, from mentoring students, to offering testimonials, to helping recruitment efforts.

Becoming an SOE Alumni Ambassador is easy! Follow the QR code to choose from two volunteer tiers depending on the level of commitment you are comfortable with.

We will reach out to you with instructions, materials, training, and other information. Ambassadors receive recognition, exclusive communications, and a very special pin once you successfully complete activities! ■



Ambassadors can help by attending events and mentoring students. Both opportunities were seized in February 2025 with the launch of **Mentor Connect**, a pilot student-alumni mentoring program that bridges undergraduate students to alumni (see also p26).

## Ambassador Program Volunteer Opportunities SIGN UP TODAY!

### Tier 1

(Select at least two options)

- Attend** virtual or in-person SOE events
- Follow** us on social media/promote our new and events to your network
- Tell** us your story/provide a testimonial
- Refer** a prospective undergraduate or graduate student to our admissions team

### Tier 2

(Optional)

- Mentor** a student
- Host** a virtual or in-person event
- Assist** with recruitment (e.g., contact a prospective or admitted student)
- Host** a student intern (e.g., via our Selected Studies in Education program)



Scan the QR code to sign up, or visit [go.syr.edu/soe/ambassadors](https://go.syr.edu/soe/ambassadors)

# From the Archive

It's time for history class! In this feature, we dip into the School of Education's archive to uncover our fascinating and groundbreaking past.



**T**his photo was unearthed in the University's Special Collections Research Center by Selected Studies in Education student **Nick Trivelpiece '26**.

In spring 2025, Trivelpiece was enrolled in Professor **Mario Perez's** EDU 400: Historical Methods for Educators course (co-taught with doctoral student **Caitlin Cafiero G'24**). This course invited students to explore the University archives and delve into the history of the School and of Huntington Hall, especially in the context of our extensive role in disability studies and disability rights.

This photo shows a scene from the Gebbie Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic when it was housed in the Hoople Special Education Building on South Crouse Avenue (colorized postcard inset).

Given that one of the boys is enjoying juice and cookies and the other is being read to from Edna Walker Chandler's 1952 book *Cowboy Sam and Porky*, likely this photo was taken in Hoople's children's playroom.

Unfortunately, like many archived prints, this one comes with no information about the subjects, so if you know the names of the boys or the clinician, please email [SUSchoolofEd@syr.edu](mailto:SUSchoolofEd@syr.edu). ■

# In Memoriam

The School of Education mourns the passing of three of our beloved community members.



**Ann C. Howe**  
(1924-2024)

**A** professor of science education, **Ann Clark Howe** passed peacefully at her home in Raleigh, NC, on Aug. 14, 2024. She was 99. Howe was born in Richmond, VA, on Oct. 18, 1924. She grew up on the family farm before entering Westhampton College, University of Richmond, at age 16, graduating with a bachelor's degree in chemistry. She later earned a master's degree in organic chemistry at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Before taking a break from her career to raise her family, Howe worked at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez, UNC-Chapel Hill, and the Lab School, part of the University of Chicago, where her husband was a seminary student.

After receiving a Ph.D. in Science Education from the University of Texas at Austin in 1970, Howe joined the SOE faculty. She then led the Department of Math and Science Education at North Carolina State University and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Maryland.

The first woman to hold a faculty position in her department at both Syracuse and NC State, Howe was President of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, a Senior Fulbright Scholar (Chile), and served as an editor for professional journals.



**Walter N. Dodge**  
'61, G'68, P'87, P'88  
(1936-2024)

**W**alter N. Dodge departed on Oct. 2, 2024. He was 87 years old. Born in Watertown, NY, in 1936, "Coach Dodge" lived in Philadelphia during his childhood. As an undergraduate, he was a star on the Syracuse gymnastics team, excelling at the horizontal and parallel bars and pommel horse.

Dodge coached Jamesville-Dewitt (NY) High School gymnastics from 1962 to 1979, receiving his M.S. in Physical Education in 1968. Having joined the Orange as a coach in 1978, he was named national Coach of the Year in 1984. In 1992, he became Head Coach, and his 1996 team went undefeated.

Dodge also served as a high school and collegiate gymnastic official and was a substitute teacher for 20 years after his retirement from full-time work.

As an Orange fan, he attended many lacrosse games. He is also remembered as a voracious reader, a friend of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, a watercolor artist, a lover of card and board games, and a lifelong learner, taking French classes across many years in Trois-Rivieres, QC.



**Constance Foote**  
'61, G'63, P'92  
(1939-2025)

**C**onstance Foote of Westminster, MD, died peacefully on April 23, 2025. Born on June 25, 1939, in Niagara Falls, NY, she earned an undergraduate degree from the School of Education and a master's in library science from the School of Information Studies. Among her many service positions was SOE's Board of Visitors (now **Advisory Board**).

Foote had a love for books, which was reflected in her many years of employment, starting with the Niagara Falls Public Library while in high school and then continuing as a school librarian with Syracuse City School District. In her retirement, she served as President of the LaFayette Public Library, Onondaga County Public Library Advisory Council, and the Carriage House Foundation Board.

Enjoyments included traveling with her husband, Knowlton, and summers with friends and family at their cottage at Wellesley Island State Park in the Thousand Islands region of Upstate New York. ■

# IN MEMORIAM



Includes alumni whose passings were reported to the School of Education from June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025.

**1949** Wallace W. Kravitz **1952** Jane M. Dunham **1953** Nancy B. Gold, Dana E. Clark **1955** Jean T. Davis, Samuel C. Pagano, Carl L. Savino, Margaret Loftus **1956** Frances F. Gold, Joanne H. Gorman, Emil J. Cost, Richard M. Park, Helen F. Lester **1957** Janet L. Zanetti, Judith B. Schnier **1958** Evelyn A. Ashley, Anne Schaffer, Rita L. Wells **1959** Cosmine Mulvihill, Nancy L. Gager, Marilyn A. Lambert, Beverly C. Wise, Verna G. Clark, Myra F. Sterman **1960** Paul L. Pierce, June H. Bisson, Toloa S. Perry, Jane I. Dunham, Patricia J. Morton, Susan J. Zrebiec **1961** Walter N. Dodge, John D. Carlyle, Warren A. Schantz, Constance C. Foote **1962** Doris A. Blydenburgh, Bennie D. Warner, Estella M. Rapke, Carol H. Bennet, Nancy E. Danko **1963** Wayne L. Sengstock, Ellen J. Cohen, Lisa M. Trayser, Cynthia G. Berkowitz, Ruth E. Schaeffer **1964** Nancy E. Hulse, Alfonse B. Gillis, Berta M. Sonntag, Margaret G. Woods, Priscilla S. DeLong, Thomas D. Butterfield, Janet C. Bogdan, Margaret A. Van Schaick, Marilyn A. Farrar **1965** Carol M. Kahny, Maureen C. Molloy, Mary U. Hilinski, Patricia K. Pugrant, Shirley L. DiMatteo, Douglas R. Macbeth, Barbara U. Fleming, Zandra M. Walker **1966** William J. Barnoski, Ruth Teuchtler-Blanding, Carl R. Gumina **1967** Patricia J. Dixon, Regina C. Brunner, Robert H. Birchenough, Margaret L. Buchanan, Jack R. Clarcq, Robert C. Harcharek, H.L. Swartz, Alice V. Randall **1968** William G. de Coligny, Shirley H. DeHond, Carol C. McGregor, Charles L. Currey, Sophie R. Godward, Lynn R. Blood **1969** John R. Butler, Mary E. Marusa, Robert G. Lasky, James D. Peebles **1970** Jasun C. Chung, Jacqueline Nichols, Jean Vachon, Jean F. Hubinger, Barbara H. Richardson, John H. Abbott, James H. Price, Sandra G. Jacobson **1971** Francis A. Sacco, Sheila P. Fleishman, Mary L. Batch Burgess, Kenneth J. Konstanty, Albert E. Beilby, Josephine F. Abalos, Frederick F. Penna **1972** Elizabeth S. Glies, Richard J. Camarra, Pauline M. Walker, Patricia R. Bradt, Sidney J. Mann **1973** Linda B. Vincent, Ronald W. Grady, Robert F. Heyl **1974** Anne B. Roth, John J. Mcloughlin, Daniel L. Driscoll **1975** Mary S. Berkery, Carl G. Roller, Eugene L. Hannah **1976** Ann O. Gebhard, Timothy F. Daly, Kerry A. Johnson **1977** Christopher M. Kalwara, Larry M. Bergrin **1978** Ekkehard Simla, Stephen C. Fleury, George M. Crosby **1979** Lisa D. Lockhart **1980** Susan J. Eckrich, Esther A. Norton **1981** June M. Peterson **1982** Herbert A. Shay, Joan V. Headd, Mary Anne Wilson **1983** Cecile R. Buck **1985** Betty J. Noordsy, Michael D'Amara **1986** Kathleen T. Tulloch **1987** Donald A. Parks, Marlana Daher-Rahman **1990** John J. Peregoy **1991** Tracey A. McAuliffe **1992** Jane F. Miller **1993** Michael A. Welsh **1995** Joanne M. Cepelak **1996** Gail G. Sheffield, Lawrence A. Savino **1998** Elizabeth A. Gerling **2003** Virginia H. Hallock, Diana D. Weber **2009** Charlene N. Baker **2010** Danielle M. Cowley **2015** David M. Gerlach ■

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