

U n i v e r s i t y M a g a z i n e

# CREIGHTON

## Beyond Trauma

Renowned Creighton  
trauma surgeon  
seeks a greater healing

Money on My Mind  
Out of the Darkness  
Farm Fresh  
Vitamin D and Cancer

Summer 2017

# Beauty and the Holy See

Creighton's green efforts are garnering attention. The University was named to *Travel and Leisure's* "most beautiful" colleges list, and its sustainability initiatives were recognized by the Vatican – which invited Creighton to have a display inside its pavilion at Expo 2017 "Future Energy," an international exposition being held this summer in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The campus' green thumbprint can be seen in academic, facility and landscaping programs and projects. As part of those efforts, Creighton energy technology students assembled the sprouting EnergiPlant – an eye-catching alternative energy structure that looks like a giant flower and incorporates solar and wind technology. A bench at the base includes outlets for students to power their electronic devices.





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***Creighton University Magazine's Purpose***  
*Creighton University Magazine*, like the University itself, is committed to excellence and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in all its forms. The magazine will be comprehensive in nature. It will support the University's mission of education through thoughtful and compelling feature articles on a variety of topics. It will feature the brightest, the most stimulating, the most inspirational thinking that Creighton offers. The magazine also will promote Creighton, and its Jesuit, Catholic identity, to a broad public and serve as a vital link between the University and its constituents. The magazine will be guided by the core values of Creighton: the inalienable worth of each individual, respect for all of God's creation, a special concern for the poor and the promotion of justice.



## Message from the President

We warmly welcome our latest Creighton University alumni, the class of 2017. Looking out at the graduates assembled at our May commencement ceremonies, I felt hopeful and excited for their — and our — futures.

As they begin careers across professions and geographic locations, I am confident that Creighton has uniquely prepared these graduates with the leadership, critical-thinking, and ethical skills necessary to meet the opportunities and challenges of our ever-changing, increasingly globalized world.

The commencement address delivered by Paul Farmer, MD, PhD, co-founder of Partners In Health, was thoughtful, poignant, and well-received. His work on global health care disparities is congruent with Creighton's mission, and I was pleased that he highlighted personal friends and Creighton alumni Jason Beste, BS'03, MD'08, and his wife, Sara (Franzen) Beste, MD'09, for their work in this area.

This May, we graduated our first cohort of 10 students from our new Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience. This innovative program, which includes hands-on research, prepares undergraduates for careers in this fast-growing field or for continued studies in health-related graduate and professional programs.

Our students continue to find success in the prestigious Fulbright and Goldwater scholarship programs. This spring, Arts and Sciences junior Kathleen Marinelli earned a Goldwater award — our 20th in the last 13 years — while two other students received honorable mention. May Arts and Sciences graduate Peter Goeckner was named a Fulbright scholar — Creighton's 15th in the last 12 years — and is currently teaching English in South Korea.

Undergraduate admissions projects a healthy freshman enrollment for this fall, perhaps our largest class ever. Within our health sciences programs, we are expanding our relationship with Dignity Health St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix. A Creighton campus was established there in 2009 for third- and fourth-year medical students. Beginning in January 2018, we will begin offering select nursing programs there, as well. This partnership not only provides opportunities for our students, but it addresses a critical need for additional health care providers in the Southwest.

This spring, we announced 15 new projects that will receive \$1 million in seed funding through the Creighton Global Initiative (CGI). In its second year, CGI continues to animate our community through important themes of global learning. We also announced the selection of our new provost, Tom Murray, PhD. Murray, who had been serving in the interim role, brings more than 35 years of academic experience to the position, including the past 11 years at Creighton, most recently as associate vice provost for research and scholarship.

Finally, six Creighton athletic teams earned Public Recognition Awards in the NCAA's most recent Academic Progress Rate (APR). Congratulations to these outstanding student-athletes.

Please enjoy this issue of *Creighton University Magazine*, and best wishes for a fruitful and restful summer. As always, you are in my prayers.



Follow me on Twitter @CreightonPres

Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ  
 President

**Beyond Trauma ..... 18**

Professor and trauma surgeon Juan Asensio, MD, has tackled the most complex surgeries under some of the most harrowing circumstances. After escaping Cuba as a teen and losing his brother in a carjacking, he has dedicated his life and career to ending the nightmare of violence.



**Money on My Mind ..... 24**

To truly understand our relationship to money, one needs to travel across millennia and deep into the human psyche. Father and son researchers, experts in the emerging field of financial psychology, are breaking down taboos as they explore what makes us tick when it comes to financial decisions.



**Out of the Darkness ..... 28**

People who think slavery doesn't exist today in the U.S. are wrong. Creighton researchers are documenting the sad truth that human trafficking in the commercial sex industry happens every day across the country.



**Farm Fresh ..... 34**

Forget about shortcuts, artificial colors, preservatives, additives, hormones and anything else that doesn't come from Mother Nature. Talented alumni and faculty are putting a fresh spin on bringing wholesome food and drink to the American table.



**Vitamin D and Cancer ..... 40**

A largely Creighton research team conducted the first randomized clinical trial of the effects of vitamin D supplementation on all types of cancer combined. The team discovered not only that vitamin D reduces cancer by 30 percent, but that the sunshine vitamin is a political football.



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Update your mailing address or send alumni news (births, weddings, promotions, etc.)  
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mail to University Relations, Creighton University, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178

## Fr. Hendrickson Reflects on the 2016-2017 Academic Year

In a wide-ranging interview following his second year as president of Creighton University, the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, highlighted memorable moments and events that shaped the 2016-2017 academic year.

“I would say one of the benchmarks of the year was the sale of our hospital,” Fr. Hendrickson said. CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center at 30th and California streets was vacated in June — making way for apartments and retail shops — as CHI Health and Creighton opened medical campuses at Bergan Mercy Medical Center and a new facility at 24th and Cuming streets.

Fr. Hendrickson said he was excited about the new approach to interprofessional health education and collaborative care being pioneered at the new University Campus clinic at 24th and Cuming.

He also discussed high-profile challenges of the past year, and how the University has used those occasions to address and seek positive solutions to some difficult issues.



Photo by Dave Weaver

Creighton president the Rev. Daniel Hendrickson, SJ, speaks with students during a class in the Heider College of Business last fall.

He also spoke about Creighton being recognized for undergraduate research, the College of Nursing joining the School of Medicine with programs in Phoenix, the first graduating class of the neuroscience bachelor's program, the number of internships and externships the University offers students, and its latest Goldwater and Fulbright student scholars.

A president's panel on race relations,

which attracted a capacity crowd to the Hixson-Lied Auditorium in the Harper Center; the awarding of a scholarship to a Creighton Prep High School student whose parents had been deported years earlier; and the announcement of a new round of funding for Creighton Global Initiative projects also were special moments of the past academic year, he said.



[Watch the complete interview with Fr. Hendrickson here.](#)

## Creighton's Fulbright and Goldwater Scholars



“I think of Creighton as a land of opportunity. The things I've been involved in at Creighton have absolutely shaped me.”

**Peter Goeckner, BA'17**, a May psychology graduate from Burlington, Iowa, earned a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Award and this summer began an 11-month assignment teaching English in South Korea.



“I love the fact that Creighton has really challenged me to be the best version of myself. It's not just a motto — they really push you to be the best you can be.”

**Kathleen Marinelli** of Medicine Lake, Minnesota, a biology major and Italian minor who will begin her senior year this fall, was named a scholar in the 2017 Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program. The prestigious national award recognizes outstanding undergraduate students in mathematics, science and technology.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Creighton has produced 20 Goldwater scholars in the last 13 years — ranking first among Catholic universities — and 15 Fulbright scholars since 2005.

## Welcoming a New Chapter in Health Care

Ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the new dual campuses of CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center were held on June 9, marking an exciting new chapter in health care delivery and education in Omaha.

The University Campus clinic at 2412 Cuming St. integrates family medicine, an imaging center, pediatrics, women's health services, psychiatry, physical therapy, an emergency room and a pharmacy in a one-stop location. The Bergan Mercy campus at 7500 Mercy Road in central Omaha provides inpatient services and Level 1 trauma care.

The opening of the new campuses coincides with the closing of CHI Health CUMC at 30th and California streets after 40 years of care to the community. NuStyle Development Corp. purchased the building and site, and plans to redevelop it into apartments and retail space.

### The Future is Here ...

Creighton health care professionals and students are pioneering a unique team-based approach to clinical care at the new 80,000-square-foot University Campus. Joy Doll, OTD'03, executive director of Creighton's Center for Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research (CIPER), and Thomas Guck, PhD, professor and director of behavioral sciences and head of the family medicine team, explain that this interprofessional approach represents the future of clinical care.



**Watch a video interview with Joy Doll, OTD'03, and Thomas Guck, PhD, here.**

## Nursing Expands into Arizona

New program, with familiar partner, will begin admitting students in 2018

**Employment projections for various professions can keep universities on their toes as they prepare students for the workforce.**

For example, a looming nationwide nursing shortage especially threatens the state of Arizona, which has led the College of Nursing to forge a partnership in the Southwest to help meet the demand.

One recent study showed there could be job openings for 50,000 registered nurses in Arizona over the next decade.

Building upon the relationship between the School of Medicine and Dignity Health St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix, which resulted in creating a Creighton medical campus in Phoenix in 2009, the College of Nursing is establishing an Arizona nursing program that will admit students beginning in 2018.

Creighton will first offer its accelerated BSN and RN-to-BSN programs there and, in the next two to three years, the College of Nursing hopes to offer clinical experiences to support the traditional BSN as well.

The dean of the College of Nursing, Catherine Todero, PhD, BSN'72, is thrilled

about the new partnership, calling it a win for everyone involved.

"The move to Phoenix is great for nursing and great for the University," she says. "This partnership will extend Creighton's brand while also giving the population of Phoenix greater exposure to Creighton graduates."

Todero views the nursing college's expansion as a first step for other opportunities.

"Nursing will begin with our accelerated program, but I could see a model where clinical experiences for our traditional students could be built on two preliminary years on the Omaha campus in a two-plus-two type of model," Todero says. "I also envision that a presence in Phoenix could promote opportunities for future learners to access other programs, including our online RN-to-BSN and DNP programs, but other Creighton options as well."

She is hopeful Creighton will have the full cadre of its health sciences students in the Phoenix community soon. "I envision a campus site with state-of-the-art classrooms and educational spaces and cooperation from a range of clinical partners providing rich learning experiences for Creighton students."



A partnership between Creighton's School of Medicine and Dignity Health St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix was established in 2009. Beginning in January 2018, that partnership will expand to include the College of Nursing.

# Harper Chair's Focus on Business Leadership

The University inaugurated its 41st endowed faculty chair this spring, the Charles “Mike” Harper Endowed Chair in Business Leadership.

Todd Darnold, PhD, is the first holder of the chair. An associate professor of organizational behavior and human resource management, Darnold has taught at Creighton since 2008 and in 2014 became director of leadership programs in the Heider College of Business.



Darnold

The business faculty chair was created through the support of family and friends of philanthropist and community business leader the late Charles “Mike” Harper, HON’95, who was a longtime member of the Creighton community.

In thanking the Harper family and the Harper Family Foundation, Creighton’s president, the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, told those gathered that Mike Harper has had a deep and lasting impact on Creighton.

“For Mike’s long legacy of service on our Board of Trustees, both as a trustee and a trustee emeritus, and for his and the foundation’s philanthropic generosity, Creighton is truly grateful,” Fr. Hendrickson said.

“And, from now on, when students come to the Heider College of Business to become leaders in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition, they will find the very best in business leadership educational excellence, thanks to the legacy of Mike Harper.”

Harper, who died in 2016, was a former chairman and chief executive officer of ConAgra Foods, Inc. He was awarded an honorary degree from Creighton in 1995.

# Commencement 2017 Highlights



From left, occupational therapy graduates Abigail Knock, OTD’17, JP Castillo, OTD’17, Emily Hubl, OTD’17, and Lani Nguyen, OTD’17, celebrate at commencement.



## Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for Teaching Achievement

**Devendra Agrawal, PhD, MBA’04, MS’05**, professor of internal medicine and chair of the Department of Clinical and Translational Science in the School of Medicine, was honored with the 2017 Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for Teaching Achievement.

## Spirit of Creighton Award

**Nicholas Fischer, BSEvS’17**, a biology and environmental science graduate from Council Bluffs, Iowa, received Creighton’s highest student honor — the Spirit of Creighton Award.

## Honorary Degree

Physician, anthropologist and humanitarian **Paul Farmer, MD, PhD**, delivered the commencement address and was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.

“As you leave Creighton for a world in which you are likely to flourish ... think about how we might all do our bit to address health and other disparities, no matter how we define our communities. I’m confident you will.”

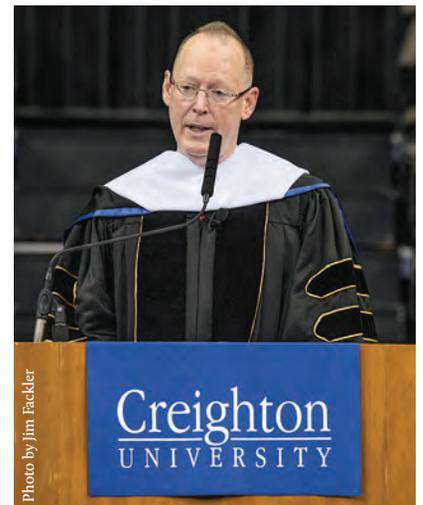


Photo by Jim Fackler

# Catching the Writing Bug

By Adam Klinker

Former All-American and NFL tight end Jim McFarland pursues a master's degree in creative writing

On a dreary, cold day in the fall of 1967, Jim McFarland was a scout-team tight end for the vaunted University of Nebraska Cornhuskers football team, and he was at the end of his rope.

In the locker room after a particularly bone-jarring, mud-spattered practice session in which he took his lumps from the balance of the Husker Blackshirts getting tuned up for a weekend tilt with rival Missouri, McFarland sat dejected and alone. And as he sat, pondering his next move, a figure breezed by him and gave a wave. It was his coach, the legendary Bob Devaney.

"I said, 'Hey, Coach,'" McFarland recalled. "A few moments pass, he walks back and has a seat next to me. 'Jim McFarland,' he says, 'I've been watching you in practice. You keep it up. You're going to play a lot of football for us next year.' Here, I was going to quit! I never forgot that. I've thought about it almost every day since."



McFarland

McFarland stuck with football, and when spring camp started in 1968, he had worked his way up to the second team in then-assistant coach Tom Osborne's receiver corps. By the fall, he was named a starter and caught touchdown passes in each of his first three games that season, speared a game-winner at Oklahoma State and went into his final campaign in 1969

as a preseason All-Big Eight selection. Nebraska wrapped the '69 season at 9-2, and McFarland was named to the AP's Second Team All-America squad. He was a seventh-round selection of the St. Louis Cardinals in the 1970 NFL Draft and played five seasons with the Cardinals and one with the Miami Dolphins.

The 69-year-old McFarland's life is full of the stuff of great stories like this one. It's a major reason why he's come to Creighton University to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing.

"I love the classes and the opportunity to put my words into action, helping to tell stories that are, in some way, influenced by my life but also reaching deeper into fiction," McFarland said. "Just writing stories for my own benefit is good for me. But being in a classroom and interacting with great students like we have at Creighton — you talk about lifelong learning, that's it. I've found it very fulfilling, very satisfying. And the fact that we have such great professors who have been more than willing to work with me as a nontraditional student, I've felt very welcomed."

McFarland is at Creighton, in part, as a beneficiary of the NFL



Jim McFarland, a student in Creighton's Master of Fine Arts in creative writing, has always been interested in writing fiction.

Players Association's Players Trust Foundation, which offers scholarships to former players looking to move into new careers after football.

After his own career ended in 1975, McFarland, influenced by his role as a witness in a landmark labor dispute case involving several NFL players, went to law school at Cornell University at his sports agent's urging. He would later take up a leadership position with the NFLPA's Former Players committee.

While McFarland has had other callings in his post-playing days, many of them involving the precise craft of the written language — including as an attorney, a Nebraska state legislator and a candidate for governor — he said he has always been attracted to the idea of fiction.

"I can write as a lawyer, but to write fiction you really have to unlearn what you got in law school," he said. "And that's OK. You can toss out the short, declarative sentence every now and then and do something else. I'm becoming more acclimated to writing narrative paragraphs."

If a writer writes what he knows, McFarland said the majority of his Creighton MFA work has correspondingly focused on sports and politics. These are stories he has in spades, including the one through which he initially entered the world.

A native of North Platte, Nebraska, McFarland's mother went into labor on a Friday night in October when his father happened to be at the local high school football game.

"For a football player to be born between a Friday night and a Saturday, it was foreordained," he said. "There's certainly a story to be told there."

# Creighton Welcomes New Board Members, Honors Trustees Emeriti

During its spring meeting, the Creighton University Board of Trustees elected four new Board members and recognized four trustees emeriti. The new trustees, all Creighton alumni, are leaders in business, science and health care, each with a dedication to service in their respective communities.

Creighton's new trustees are:

**James Blackledge, MBA'98**, president and chief executive officer of Mutual of Omaha.

**Ryan Zabrowski, BSBA'01**, past president of the National Alumni Board, and a partner at Investor Realty Inc. He also served as president of the Creighton Students Union from 1998 to 2000.

**William Roe, BS'76**, recently retired as president and CEO of Coskata Inc., a renewable energy company based out of Warrenville, Illinois. He is the holder of 13 patents.

**Nancy Lakier, BSN'75**, founder and CEO of Novia Strategies and Novia Solutions, a health care consulting firm based in Poway, California. She currently serves as president

of the National Alumni Board.

Creighton's trustees emeriti, departing members who are recognized for their outstanding contributions to the Board, are:

**Bruce Rohde, BSBA'71, JD'73**, has served on the Board of Trustees since 1989 with tenures as Board vice chair from 2000 to 2011 and as Board chairman from 2011 to 2015. He also served as chair of the *WILLING TO LEAD* Campaign Steering Committee. He has a long and distinguished professional career, highlighted by his tenure with ConAgra Inc., where he served as the company's general counsel, president, vice chairman, chairman and chief executive officer, retiring in 2005 as chairman and CEO emeritus.

**Daniel Neary** has served on the Board

of Trustees since 2003 and earned the Presidential Medallion in 2009. He retired as CEO of Mutual of Omaha in 2015 but continues to serve as the company's chairman.

**Mimi Feller, BA'70, JD**, has served on the Board of Trustees since 1993. Feller held several positions in the public sector, including work as legislative assistant and then chief-of-staff for U.S. Sen. John Chafee of Rhode Island. She is a past national board president of CASA, Court-Appointed Special Advocates for abused and neglected children. Feller also served on the boards of the Media Institute and Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia. She retired from the Gannett Company Inc. in 2003, after serving first as vice president of government relations, then as senior vice president of public affairs and government relations.

**Floyd Malveaux, BS'61, MD, PhD**, has served on the Board of Trustees since 1997. He serves as emeritus dean at Howard University and was a professor at the Howard University College of Medicine and the Howard University College of Dentistry. He also served the District of Columbia Public Schools as coordinator of its science program.



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UNIVERSITY

College of Nursing

Creighton  
UNIVERSITY

Graduate School  
Department of Interdisciplinary Studies



Photo by Dave Weaver

## Online Feature

## Let it go, let it go ...

His eyes frozen on the target, Blake Anderson, a junior from Mequon, Wisconsin, doesn't let the cold bother him as he strategically guides "the rock" down the ice at an Omaha rink. Anderson is president of the Creighton curling club, which competes against other collegiate teams. Did you know that Creighton also has a quidditch club (popularized by J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series) and a fishing club?

**Read more about these unique clubs here.**

## Saintly Work

### Professor compiles biography for sainthood

Somewhere in the Vatican right now resides one of the latest research contributions of Heather Fryer, PhD, director of Creighton's American Studies Program and the Fr. Henry W. Casper, SJ Professor of History.

Fryer spent three years quietly researching and writing on the Rev. Edward J. Flanagan, the Roman Catholic priest who in 1917 founded Boys Town, an organization for at-risk children and families based in Omaha. As part



Fr. Flanagan

of the long and arduous process of Fr. Flanagan's candidacy for sainthood, Fryer's charge was to separate the legend from the man.

Fryer received a request in 2012 from the Father

Flanagan League Society of Devotion, the organization backing Fr. Flanagan's sainthood, to serve on a historical commission for the priest's beatification and canonization.

In 2015, Fryer wrapped up her portion of the biography, which detailed Fr. Flanagan's life beginning with his emigration from Ireland to the U.S. in 1904. The Rev. Gerard Cryan, a history teacher at Summerhill College in Sligo, Ireland, where Fr. Flanagan attended secondary school, worked on the priest's early years.

The biography went into one of four huge boxes that were wrapped and sealed by Omaha Archbishop George Lucas. On May 15, the 69th anniversary of Fr. Flanagan's death, the Vatican announced that the case presented by the Father Flanagan League was "complete and without error," giving rise to a decree of validity.

"All we can do now is wait," Fryer said.



Photo by Dave Weaver

## Online Feature

## Dental Student Overcomes Hardships to Find His Passion

Spending his teen years on a remote mountainside in Idaho with little formal schooling, Creighton dental student Stuart Tucker thought higher education might be beyond his reach. But through faith, a desire to learn and the help of a mentor and his wife, Tucker found himself immersed in science and on the road to his dental career. **Read more about Tucker's journey here.**

## 'Latin in the Wild'

Professor Works to Share, Preserve Ancient Graffiti By Tim Kaldahl

Reading — and understanding — the writing on the wall has become an exciting area of research for Kyle Helms, PhD, a resident assistant professor in the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies.

The 30-year-old is part of a team studying and digitizing ancient graffiti from Pompeii and Herculaneum. He spent time on site in Italy in 2014 and 2016, and plans call for a return trip (likely 2018 or 2019), hopefully with Creighton students.



Kyle Helms, PhD, center, examines ancient graffiti in the House of the Telephus Relief in Herculaneum (modern Ercolano, Napoli, Italy) with members of the Ancient Graffiti Project in June 2016.

"Studying the ancient world is cool for a lot of reasons," Helms says. He started at Creighton last August, and he says he sees the University's educational imperative of creating global citizens with global perspectives as being very in sync with his work. Pompeii and Herculaneum were ancient cities preserved by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D.

"You're there and you're looking at something written by an ancient person, and this is as close as you're going to get to that sort of direct communication," he says. Helms has served as a team leader

for the Ancient Graffiti Project (AGP) and typically has four students working with him during field seasons in Italy, which last two and a half to three weeks. The team is led by project director Rebecca Benefiel, a professor of classics at Washington and Lee University. Originally, the AGP core faculty was made up of people at small southern colleges and universities. Helms and a professor from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Matthew Loar, have added a Midwestern element.

In the 19th century, German archeologists were the first people to document the ancient marks on the walls of Herculaneum and Pompeii. The graffiti in both locations have been scratched or etched into plaster

(I sing of arms and the man), is all over the place in Pompeii.

"This is Latin in the wild. I mean, this is really in the wild," he says. "You and the Latin. There's no intermediate in between you."

Reflectance Transformation Imaging is used by the AGP to assist in documenting the graffiti. It's a computational photographic method that carefully and methodically captures images so that mathematical enhancement is able to better reveal detail. Sharing what they find with academics and with the public is important, Helms says.

"If you want to have a rich record of this material, it's imperative that we get that done right now," he says. The graffiti aren't just old. They're fragile, as well. A tourist can easily destroy a graffito by bumping up against a wall with a backpack.

"We know that the rate of loss is significant," Helms says. Methodically documenting a text of graffiti is much more than snapping a photo and providing a simple translation ... and Helms is an expert with both ancient Latin and Greek. In addition to closely examining a graffito and digitizing it, Helms and his fellow researchers fully document the piece and how it was originally identified back to the archeologists of the 1850s. Fully updating what is known about a piece is painstaking. Helms has documented more than 200 texts, and now most of Herculaneum has been completed.

"Each text takes a lot of work and care," he says.

In addition to digitally recording these fragile writings, the AGP has made translations of the graffiti and location maps available online.

"As you study the ancient world, one of the things you are doing is that you're gaining that sort of perspective, right?" Helms says. "You're getting historical depth. You're getting a different culture. You're meeting new ideas that you've never thought of before and places you've never been to. So, in general, I think there's a richness in studying ancient Greece and Rome."

surfaces, and some of it can be small — think centimeters and millimeters — and hard to find. And because the Roman world was a multicultural one, the writing is in both Latin and ancient Greek. Sometimes the writing is even in cursive.

"Each one is its own sort of little challenge and puzzle," Helms says. "And so the more you dig, the more you learn."

Some ancient graffiti are similar in tone to the modern-day form. They can be boastful or bawdy. But others also include lines of poetry. Helms says the first line of *The Aeneid* by Virgil, "*Arma virumque canō*"

# Flipping Houses, Bettering Lives

By Rachel Buttner, BA'03

## How do you make business itself function in a way that's helpful to humanity?

This is the question that Andrew Gustafson, PhD, associate professor of business ethics and society, tackles head on every day through Communion Properties, his real-estate, renovation and management company located in midtown Omaha's Gifford Park neighborhood.

Raised on a farm in central Nebraska, Gustafson studied and taught at universities across the country before returning to his home state 12 years ago. He took root in Gifford Park to be close to the Creighton campus and continue his interest in buying old buildings. His investment in the community took on new meaning when he met Izzy, who was living in his truck behind one of Gustafson's properties and asked to stay until the house was rented. Gustafson made him an offer: "I said, 'Why don't you live in the house until we rent it out and help me fix it up?'"

With help from Izzy, Jeff, Dino, Blue, Mike, Dick and other homeless and semi-homeless men Gustafson has met and hired over the years, they have rehabbed dozens of houses in the neighborhood.

Many of "the guys" struggle with alcoholism and various uncertainties, but

in Gustafson, they find stability. "We can't enable people," Gustafson says, but with paid work "we enable them to have power, to make a decision for themselves. It gives them a sense of dignity and a sense of purpose."

Gustafson recently joined the Economy of Communion (EOC), an initiative founded in 1991 in São Paulo, Brazil, committed to



Andrew Gustafson, PhD, stands outside one of the dozens of houses he and his crew have rehabbed.

promoting an economic culture focused on a sustainable model of business. "The humaneness of business," is at the heart, he says. "How do you practice business in a way that isn't just concerned with money?"

In early February, Gustafson and other

members of the EOC faced this complex question during a conference in Rome, culminating in a meeting with Pope Francis. One particular remark resonated with Gustafson: "Capitalism knows philanthropy, not communion. It is simple to give a part of the profits, without embracing and touching the people who receive those 'crumbs.'" Money is important, but it risks becoming an idol. The pope recognized the EOC's vision of business — one that helps the poor and marginalized while making money, rather than simply offering charity — and encouraged sharing that vision widely.

"We are thinking humanity the whole way through business. I think that's what excites my students," says Gustafson, who teaches an MBA and undergraduate course called Business, Faith and the Common Good and hosts an annual symposium of the same name. "Business is the most important force transforming culture and society — for better or for worse. And we get to be part of it."

An integrated life is important to Gustafson. Communion Properties allows him to bring together faith and business to make a difference. Balancing dual roles of renovator and social worker, he says that "the guys" make it worthwhile.

"They're more like family in some ways than an employee," says Gustafson, who will often find Dino at his kitchen table in the mornings ready to enjoy coffee and conversation. "They make my life better. And I like making their lives better, too, in some small way."



## Ignatian Portrait

Fred Hanna, DMA, left, professor of music, and Bob Whipple, PhD, right, professor of English, created a rich and moving tribute, *Ignatian Portrait*, that celebrated the life and work of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Ignatian tradition. Hanna composed the score for the piece and Whipple wrote the text to accompany the music. Creighton's Symphonic Band and the University Orchestra performed *Ignatian Portrait* on campus in April. After attending the Creighton Colleagues Program, an initiative designed to help University leaders learn more about the Ignatian tradition in education, Hanna and Whipple decided to collaborate on a final project for the program combining music and writing to demonstrate their appreciation of the Jesuit founder and his work.

## health briefs

### New Dental School Taking Shape

Construction continues on the \$84.5 million, 200,000-square-foot School of Dentistry Building located at 21st and Cuming streets. For periodic video updates regarding the construction and other news about the state-of-the-art facility set to open in July 2018, visit [dentistry.creighton.edu/construction-updates](http://dentistry.creighton.edu/construction-updates).

### 125 Years of Medicine

Creighton University is celebrating the 125th year of the School of Medicine. Established as the John A. Creighton Medical College on May 30, 1892, Creighton has been forming a distinctive type of physician in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition since its founding. For a listing of historical highlights about the School of Medicine, visit [medschool.creighton.edu/about/125th-birthday](http://medschool.creighton.edu/about/125th-birthday). Also, share your memories on Twitter using [#CreightonMed125](https://twitter.com/CreightonMed125).

### PTSD Study Funded

At Ease (AEU) provided \$1.2 million to fund the second round of Attention Control Training (ACT) clinical trials, an innovative therapy for the treatment of military veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Amy Badura-Brack, PhD, professor of psychology, will serve as the lead investigator. In 2015, Badura-Brack completed an important trial of the therapy for PTSD in



Photo by Dave Weaver

the U.S. in conjunction with Yair Bar-Haim, PhD, of Tel Aviv University. The results of these initial trials were published in *The American Journal of Psychiatry*.

### NIH Grant to Look at 'Self-Reactive' Antibodies

Patrick Swanson, PhD, professor of medical microbiology and immunology, received a two-year \$400,125 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for his research on the role of the cytokine interleukin-10 (IL-10) in suppressing antibody production in certain autoimmune disorders. Some human autoimmune disorders are caused by unregulated production of "self-reactive" antibodies. Swanson said one example is autoimmune hemolytic anemia, in which

antibodies start targeting one's own red blood cells. In March 2016, Swanson received \$100,950 from the NIH to help purchase a YETI (ZE5) flow cytometer, a state-of-the-art tool for analyzing cells. The YETI flow cytometer is able to analyze up to 15 different markers simultaneously — nearly four times more than with previous equipment. The acquisition of this instrument provides new research possibilities for Creighton scientists, and offers a remarkable opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience with this technology.

### It Does a (Girl's) Body Good

A Creighton University study, just published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, found that increasing dairy intake through milk or yogurt

in adolescent girls neither decreases nor increases gain in body fat percentage or weight compared to similar girls who do not increase dairy intake. Conducted by Joan Lappe, PhD, MS'85, professor of nursing and medicine, and Ann Laughlin, PhD, BSN'76, MS'94, associate professor of nursing, the research further confirms the importance of calcium in developing bone health and muscle mass.

### Health Care Management Degree

Beginning this fall, Creighton will offer classes for the Master of Healthcare Management. The online program prepares students to lead the interprofessional approach to health care. For more information about the program, visit [gradschool.creighton.edu/mhm](http://gradschool.creighton.edu/mhm).

# Building a Legacy

## 15 New Projects Receive CGI Funding for 2017-2018

“The Creighton Global Initiative has established itself as a cornerstone of the University’s mission to produce globally engaged, locally concerned citizens and agents for change. I look forward to seeing what research discoveries, personal insights, and friendships are formed through these projects, and how they will continue to build a CGI legacy.”

The Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ  
Creighton President

A total of 15 new projects received **\$1 million** in seed funding for the 2017-2018 academic year through the Creighton Global Initiative (CGI). This is the second annual round of grants for CGI. Funded projects fall into four broad categories.

understanding the local as global	opening minds, hearts and souls to the world in unique ways
upholding the dignity of all people	bringing a global perspective to Creighton’s research mission



## Unlimited Opportunities Await

In the College of Arts and Sciences, students like Kathleen Marinelli, Creighton’s 20th Goldwater Scholar in the past 13 years, conduct original research and receive national recognition.

Creighton continues to lead among U.S. Catholic universities as the top producer of Goldwater Scholars. The prestigious award recognizes outstanding undergraduates in science and technology.

**Do you know someone who could benefit from the Creighton difference? Have them schedule a visit today.**

..... • [admissions.creighton.edu](http://admissions.creighton.edu)

Creighton  
UNIVERSITY

College of Arts and Sciences

# Woman on a Mission

By Glenn Antonucci

## VIP Center's Ward helps lead Creighton's charge against sexual violence

Lauren Ward arrived on the campus of Penn State in 1999, eager and wide-eyed as any 18-year-old beginning her journey into higher education and adulthood.

She had come to study criminal justice, to join an elite collegiate fencing team and, in that storied undergraduate tradition of discovery, to search out her place in the world.

For Ward, that search quickly took an irreversible detour. She was sexually assaulted in the first semester of her freshman year. Since that time, she has shared her story publicly. She says she was attending an off-campus party, drank too much and passed out. She awoke and found herself being raped by another partygoer — a young man she hardly knew, but who would linger in her psyche for years to come.

Suddenly, she'd found herself with a new identity. She was a victim.

That stigma, Ward would find, can be consuming.

"The victimization becomes the lens through which you see everything, at least for a period of time," she says, from her office in Creighton University's Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Center. "And what's so interesting is that anyone who you tell, it's often the lens through which they see you."

In the years that followed the assault, Ward would undertake a phenomenal personal journey, transforming from victim, to survivor, to a woman on a mission.

Today, she leads Creighton's VIP Center, the aim of which is two-fold: to provide confidential advocacy to survivors of sexual violence, dating violence and stalking, and — crucially — to prevent these incidents through proactive education and awareness programs. Included among these is the Green Dot Program, which seeks to reduce violence by engaging bystanders and promoting positive, proactive behaviors.

Another is an annual "Take Back the Night" rally and march held in the spring, which this year drew nearly 400 people to the steps of St. John's Church. The event coincides with a national month of action

and awareness dedicated to ending sexual violence in all forms. In one of her early acts as Creighton's associate director for violence intervention and prevention, Ward reinstated the University's hosting of the event.

In its approach to victim advocacy, the VIP Center — established on campus in 2011 and steered by Ward since 2014 — takes its critical cue from the Ignatian mantra of *cura personalis*, or care for the individual person.

**"I've always said, I don't work at places I'm not proud to work. I'm not going to be able to be at the forefront of violence response and prevention if I don't believe in what that university is doing."**

**Lauren Ward**

*Associate Director for Violence Intervention and Prevention*

"We take the concept literally, providing individualized support to each student, faculty and staff member who needs us," she says. "Sometimes that simply means we are there to listen. Other times, it means we take action. Always, we meet survivors of violence and abuse 'where they're at' — in other words, we are here to serve their objectives, and no one else's."

That tailored support can take the shape of helping a victim report an incident to authorities, on or off campus; assisting with applying for protection orders; helping to navigate through class absences, coursework

extensions and housing matters; and, for secondhand survivors, resources and support on how to assist a friend, partner, roommate or family member.

As word has spread about the VIP Center, and Ward and her colleagues traverse campus giving prevention and awareness presentations — nearly 100 of them in the last reporting year, reaching more than 6,500 students, faculty and staff — the demand for the center's services has increased markedly. Utilization of the center has quadrupled since 2011.

Is that statistic a cause for concern? Yes, Ward says. But, she explains, it doesn't mean that Creighton has a unique problem with these issues.

"Absolutely it's a problem here. It's a problem on every college campus and in every community nationwide," she says. "Anywhere, especially any college campus, where they tell you it's not a problem, run screaming, because they are hiding something."

What does make Creighton unique, at least among other Nebraska colleges and universities, is that it's the only one with a full-time, campus-based advocate for victims of sexual violence. And Creighton employs two such advocates.

It's testament, Ward says, to the University's commitment to addressing its slice of a national epidemic — an investment in protecting the members of its community; one that isn't beholden to vanishing funds tied to grants.

"We're not subject to a lot of ebb and flow with grant funding, because Creighton has committed almost entirely the funds and the space and all of the resources it takes for what we do here," she says.

What the VIP Center does, and precisely how it spreads awareness, prevention and support across Creighton's campus, is a continual work in progress, Ward says.

"There's always more we can do," she says. "There's always room for improvement, and we're always tweaking and improving our victim response and prevention."

By the numbers, the center is covering a



Photo by Dave Weaver

Lauren Ward, who leads Creighton's Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Center, has found her mission in advocating for victims of sexual violence, dating violence and stalking, and in preventing these incidents through proactive education and awareness programs.

lot of ground. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the most recent reporting period, it served 145 survivors across all types of victimization — 94 firsthand survivors and 51 of the secondhand variety. The vast majority — 121 — were students; 15 were faculty and staff members, and 11 had other Creighton affiliations. Ward herself logged nearly 1,500 direct contacts with these survivors.

Combined with the work involved coordinating the VIP Center's prevention programs and events, it makes for a very full plate for Ward, and requires an unrelenting dedication to the center's mission.

And while the fuse for that dedication was lit long ago, and enflamed by her own encounter with sexual violence back in college and subsequent recovery, she is careful to point out that firsthand experience with victimization is not a prerequisite in her line of work.

"I had to go through my own recovery, because I'd had victimization, to get to a point where I could ever hold space for someone else," Ward says. "But the last person that it's about is me, and you don't need to be directly exposed to this to care about it."

That point is key, she says, to ensure entire communities — not just the victims — join the cause against sexual violence on campuses.

"How else are you going to get men, who are the minority on the victim side, to care about this, when we need them at the front of this?" she says. "The majority of women aren't victimized. How are we going to get them to rally with us and be a part of this effort? It's only up to survivors, then? To fix what happened to them? That doesn't make sense.

"In a way, a lot of people validate what you do because you've been there," Ward says. "And it's unnecessary. We should all be really fired up."

Considering the pace she keeps, the sheer volume of activity she leads and participates in, and the undeniable passion in her voice, she is undoubtedly fired up. But, she points out, it takes an administration committed to change and care of its community to make it all click.

"I've always said, I don't work at places I'm not proud to work," Ward says. "I'm not going to be able to be at the forefront of violence response and prevention if I don't believe in

what that university is doing."

With the University firmly behind her, Ward says she is living out her "dream scenario" — a potent blend of advocacy, prevention and events, all of which inform each other, make the VIP Center effective, "and make us effective advocates."

That's not to say there aren't difficult days.

"On the days that are really hard, I'm taken back to the comments I read in our surveys we send at the end of every semester, and how many students have said that our services have saved their lives," Ward says.

"We can't survive for them. Sometimes we wish we could, but that's not what we do," she says. "What we do is fill their cups. We fill their toolboxes and teach them to use every single thing in there.

"We help people find their power and get safe," she says. "But we can't do this alone. We need to keep getting more people to show up, be supportive and care about this terrible thing that no one wanted to talk about before."

In that endeavor, Ward — the one-time victim, then survivor then, ultimately, relentless advocate — has found her mission.

# Beyond

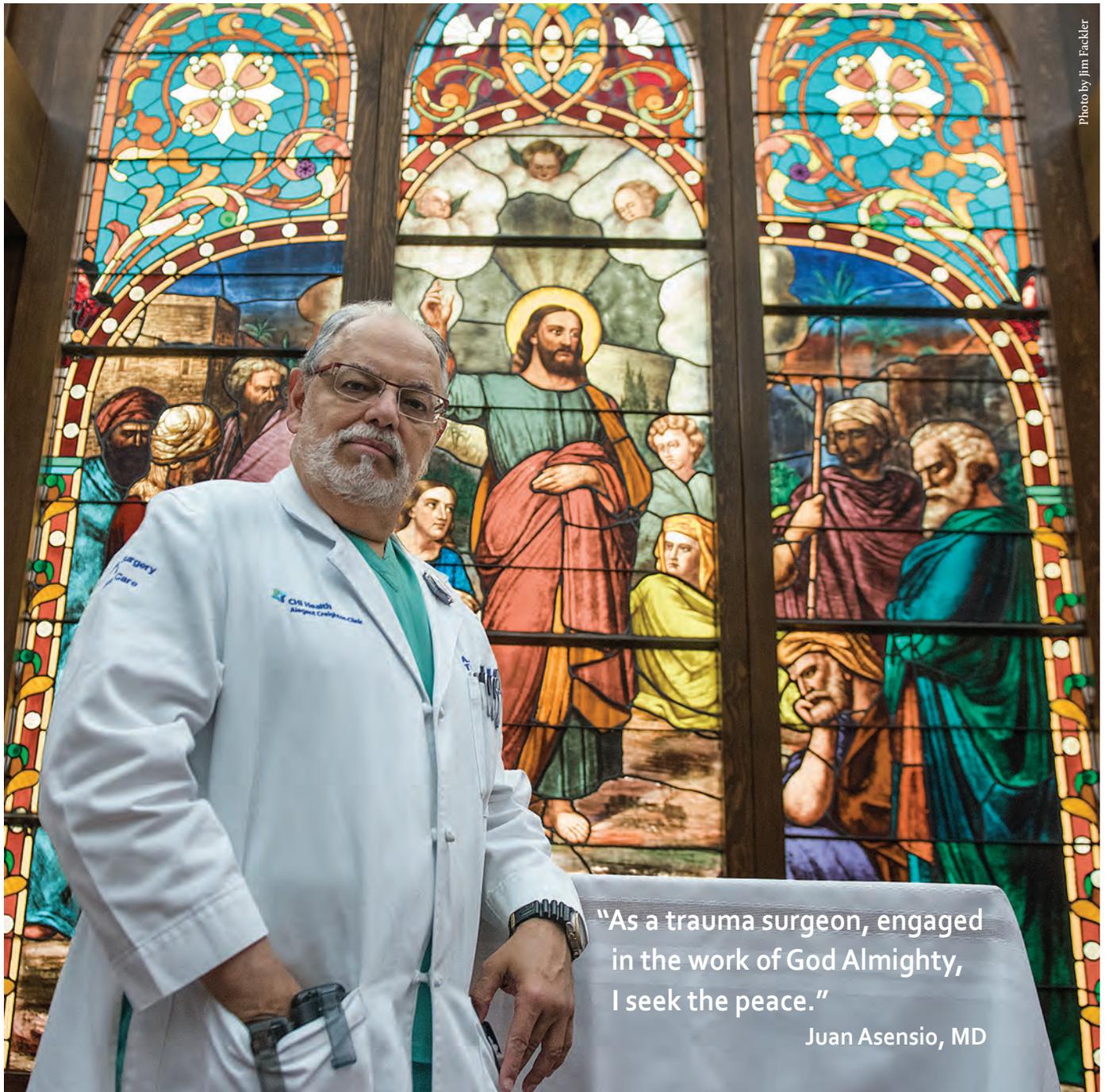


Photo by Jim Fackler

"As a trauma surgeon, engaged in the work of God Almighty, I seek the peace."

Juan Asensio, MD

# Trauma

By Adam Klinker

The horrors of violence and war lay bare — raw and deeply personal — before Juan Asensio, MD. The renowned Creighton trauma surgeon, who, in his youth, fled Cuba with his family, has made it his mission to save lives, bring about physical healing, and passionately crusade for something even more enduring: peace.

In the 12th century, the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, already tasked with defending the Christian faith, was given another sacred charge — the protection of the poor and infirm.

In the intervening 900 years, the Hospitallers, now known as the Order of Malta, continue to regard their position as one aimed at any number of social ills, including war and poverty. It's a mission a 21st century Knight of Malta, Juan Asensio, MD, has taken to heart in his role as the CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center's chief of the Division of Trauma Surgery and Surgical Critical Care and a professor in the School of Medicine's Department of Surgery.

Asensio has dedicated his life and a career spanning nearly four decades to the most complex issues in surgery under some of the most harrowing circumstances. As his forebears in the Order of Malta, he has ministered to the grievously wounded in battle. He has worked trauma centers in hospitals where the bloody tableau of gun violence plays out hourly. He has been up to his

elbows in a patient's chest with no cause for hope and yet he has hoped, all the same.

"My job has been to address the most difficult problems known in life, the impossible challenges in surgery," says Asensio, who arrived at Creighton in 2014 after stints in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago, and as a senior distinguished professor of surgery and surgeon with the armed forces at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, the closest hospital for treating casualties of the American conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. "I have been blessed by God with a set of talents, and I am using those talents. This is what we do. These are the blessings of God. Our profession is the natural guardian of human rights."

From an early age, Asensio became adept at dealing with life's traumas. Born poor in Havana amid the Cuban revolution, Asensio showed promise as a student and was taken from his parents and put into a military academy the Cuban government was using to build a new class of intellectuals. But as a 13-year-old, Asensio balked at what

he saw happening under the regime of Fidel Castro and was thrown into prison. The intervention of an uncle with a high military rank and connections in the Communist Party of Cuba helped spring Asensio from prison. His family departed Cuba shortly thereafter.

"This was not a juvenile hall," he recalls. "It was real prison in a communist totalitarian system. But we got out, and I have never been back. It's a matter of principle. That the country of my birth could imprison me for independently thinking?"

The family landed in Chicago where they found refuge in residences operated under the auspices of the Jane Addams Hull House Association. Asensio attended the venerable Lake View High School and got good grades while working assorted jobs hauling trash, cleaning toilets, selling produce, driving cabs and even laying down rails for the Chicago Transit Authority's trains.

"I'm American, man," he says of his early introduction to his adopted country. "I came from nothing and went somewhere with the help of God."

After earning his undergraduate degree at the University of Illinois, Asensio completed a medical degree at Rush Medical College in Chicago.

Then, during his surgical residency at Northwestern University, something upended Asensio's world. The blood and the pain and the anguish with which he dealt nightly struck close to home as his younger brother, Alfredo, an Army veteran helping build gears for NASA's space shuttle program, was killed during a carjacking.



Photo by Dave Weaver

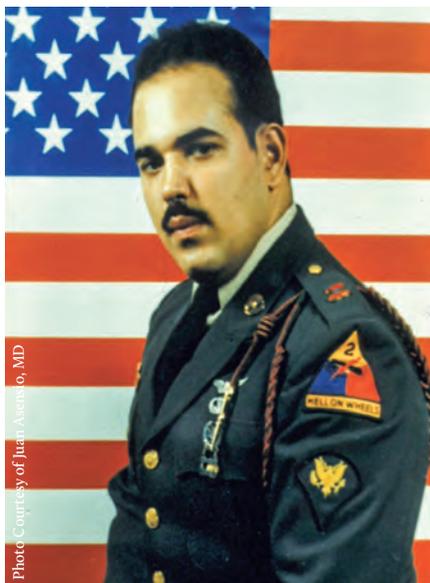


Photo Courtesy of Juan Asensio, MD

Photo top, Asensio checks on a patient in the ICU at CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center.

Photo bottom, Juan Asensio's brother, Alfredo, an Army veteran, who was killed during a carjacking.

“I was devastated,” Asensio says. “All of a sudden, the very disease I was fighting takes away my brother. It became sort of a calling card for me. From that moment, I decided I was going to do something about this violence. I was going to reach out to kids and show them what really happens in the aftermath of all the guns and drugs glamorized on TV. I wanted to show them what happens afterward, after you pull the trigger.”

From then on, and at each of his stops as a professor and trauma surgeon, Asensio has partnered with law enforcement, courts, jails and boards of education to meet with at-risk youth and talk about the wages of street violence and humanity’s sometimes basic inhumanity.

He presents to kids using a set of slides that includes vivid imagery of surgeries he’s performed on victims of such violence and on bodies that have suffered the insults of what Asensio calls humankind’s greatest ugliness: war. The pictures show legs mangled by mines, abdomens punctured by bullets and shrapnel, spilling their contents in great rubbery gouts of intestine and

fascia. There are missing feet, hands, genitals. One photograph is taken from the shoulders up of a soldier. The head is missing.

Asensio estimates his outreach program has been heard by nearly 20,000 at-risk youth, police officers and medical personnel.

“As trauma surgeons, we’d like to put ourselves out of business,” he says. “Unfortunately, these are things that still happen. Through the portals of a trauma center come all of society’s problems: violence, drug and alcohol abuse, motor vehicle accidents, burns. People who show up here have experienced the very worst, the nightmare scenarios. And as trauma surgeons, as physicians, we have to ask ourselves what we can do to bring an end to the nightmare.”

For Maria Reyes, the nightmare was almost ever-present for her first 17 years, until her life intersected with Asensio’s in cataclysmic fashion.

Born in Honduras in the late 1970s, her father was murdered by political rivals when she was 6 and, with her mother and sisters, she fled to the U.S.

The family settled in the Pico-Union neighborhood of Los Angeles where,



Photo by Dave Weaver

Reyes recalls, she and her siblings were often jolted from bed by the sounds of gunfire.

“When we first heard it, it was something new to us,” she says. “We would huddle together and pray and wait for the morning. But after you hear that for a while, you get used to it. And we did get used to it. It became normal and we lived it. Lived it every day.”

She recalls people shot in front of her, of watching people she knew bleed out and die in the streets.

In the early hours of Sept. 11, 1994, a 17-year-old Reyes was sitting in the passenger seat of a pickup truck that belonged to her boyfriend, at the time an active gang member, who was attempting to buy drugs at what he thought was a neutral site.

But as he approached the building, three members of a rival gang emerged. Words were exchanged, but it appeared the three men were going to let Reyes’ boyfriend leave without incident.

“We were just going to leave when I looked back, and there was a 14-year-old boy pointing a gun at me,” she remembers. “And all I heard were shots. Just shots. I could tell I was hit, but all

I heard were just hollow sounds and I didn’t see any blood. But I knew I was hit, and I said, ‘Oh my God. This is where I die.’”

Reyes was struck multiple times in the arms, legs and torso. Her boyfriend was also hit but managed to drive the truck until the couple were stopped by police, who immediately called an ambulance.

“I could barely speak but I remember asking the paramedic in the ambulance: ‘Am I going to die?’” Reyes says. “He said he didn’t know but I was going to go right into surgery at USC General Hospital. I went into surgery. And I woke up 38 days later.”

At Los Angeles County/University of Southern California Medical Center’s Level I trauma unit, Asensio was waiting.

“She came in and right away, we could see it looked bad,” he remembers. “Here is this beautiful girl, 17, and her life is just hanging on. We started surgery and we thought we were going to lose her, and I said, ‘That’s not going to happen.’ And we thought we were going to have to amputate the arm, and I said, ‘Not on my watch.’ And little by little, we were able to save the girl and save her arm.”



Photo Courtesy of Juan Asensio, MD

Photo top, from left, Dennis Thiel, MD, assistant professor of medicine in the Department of Anesthesiology, Asensio and Kiran Hapke, nurse practitioner, on rounds at CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center.

Photo bottom, Maria Reyes, who was saved by Asensio after being shot in Los Angeles in 1994. Today, Reyes is director of development at the Salvation Army’s Cascade Division in Portland, Oregon. She not only credits Asensio for saving her life, but for giving her life purpose.

A few days after Reyes awoke from a coma, she met Asensio.

“And he’s talking about the surgery he performed on me and about a skin graft that will help heal up the wound on my tummy, and it’s all this medical terminology I don’t understand,” she says. “And I have a tube in my throat, so I can’t speak. But I’m looking at this man and he’s saved my life. I can’t really explain what that feeling was like.”

After making a full recovery, both Reyes and her boyfriend joined Asensio in his crusade against gun violence. Reyes said she saw in Asensio a familiar accretion of stories in her own life. Asensio had lost a family member violently. He had also borne witness to the ferocity of political unrest that drove his family from his native land to the streets of an American inner city. And while different from her own Central American accent, his Cuban-inflected speech had a happy poetry that made her smile.

“He is such a great speaker and a great leader,” Reyes says. “His story resonates with kids. He understands the culture because he came from the streets, too.

The kids listen to him. I know I listened to him.”

After her near-death encounter, Reyes returned to her education with a renewed purpose. She earned a college degree and has spent her career working in the nonprofit sector. She is presently the director of development at the Salvation Army’s Cascade Division in Portland, Oregon.

Twenty-three years later, she’s still in contact with the man who saved her life. On a recent Monday, she sent him a short video of how her arm — the one he saved through the minute patchings of vascular surgery — works just like it should. Asensio has countless other stories like Reyes’, stories from which he continues to draw important and bracing lessons from the often weary work of trauma surgery.

“Beautiful,” he says, taking in the video scene as Reyes showed the full range of motion of the arm. Watching, he breathes something between a sigh and a stifled sob. “We have gotten pretty good at this, having, unfortunately, done so much of it. But we operate on God’s creatures. We are artists. We sculpt living tissue and



Dan Rather, left, interviewed Asensio in 2002 for a piece that aired on *60 Minutes* titled “The Crusader.”

muscle. Just look at this. It’s a moment like this that makes you realize what any one person can do to help a person. You find your God-given talents, and you use them to try to help another person.”

Asensio has been the subject of more than 80 documentaries and television news segments detailing his surgical craft. The most prominent are a two-hour Discovery Channel film aired in 2006 when Asensio was serving a sabbatical at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark that referred to Asensio as a “Medical Maverick,” and a *60 Minutes* piece with Dan Rather from 2002 that styled him — in a nod to his actual knighthood — “The Crusader.”

In the swirling crush of blood and noise, pain and time, trauma surgery seems an unlikely place to find academic theory at work, but Asensio has earned the tag of nonconformist and innovator through careful study in the discipline.

Since arriving at Creighton, Asensio has found a new platform from which to operate and a new ally in Devendra Agrawal, PhD, MBA’04, MS’05, professor and chair of the Department of Clinical and Translational Science, where cutting-edge procedures in vascular surgery have been ongoing since the department’s formation a few years ago.



Asensio with patients at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, where he is an adjunct professor of surgery, Uniform Services University of Health Sciences.

“Dr. Asensio has a great practicality about him,” says Agrawal, himself no stranger to pioneering medical technologies and procedures and who, with Asensio, has been pushing the boundaries of shock cardiac, thoracic and vascular surgeries and treatments in his lab. “He has a progressive philosophy to advance the science and the practice of trauma surgery in a way that is accessible to students and faculty. We are very lucky to have him at Creighton. The work in vascular surgery he’s doing, developing new techniques in repair and remodeling, these are crucial components of the curriculum in clinical and translational science.”

Complications in trauma surgery are legion and Asensio has seen them all, in cases from the seemingly casual violence of the streets to the exquisite cruelty of battlefield wounds. As part of the Senior Distinguished Visiting Surgeons Program sponsored by the United States armed forces, Asensio spent parts of a decade during the nation’s wars in Iraq and Afghanistan at Landstuhl in Germany, treating combat casualties.

In his role as a senior surgeon, Asensio was unsettled by the increasing brutality of each new case — the IED packed with nails, the daisy-chain explosives designed to go off to inflict death with the maximum of suffering, the land mines, the rocket-propelled grenades. Even so, Asensio was learning and relearning the tools necessary for his profession and more lessons to take home.

“We can’t cure the common cold, but we have phosphorous and fragment grenades,” he says. “Land mines are cheap. Nothing has changed except maybe the firepower. Somehow, we still think of war as the easier path. We think of prison as the easier part of treating the real diseases of poverty and ignorance. Yes, we treat the most difficult injuries in a trauma center. But tell me that war, poverty and lack of education are not the greatest diseases and injuries our society faces. I was born in poverty. I grew up in inner-city Chicago; I was a first-generation American kid who might have been lost on the streets. It’s time to invest and to evolve so more people, more Americans,

can have the kind of lives where they are not living in a battleground.”

And in this, Asensio has also proved himself a maverick not only in his practice but in his ultimate responsibility as a surgeon and a humanitarian — and in the old undertaking of the Hospitallers.

“People might say that it’s not my area of expertise, to go into the roots of the problem,” Asensio says. “People might say that it’s just my job to perform the surgery. I work on the heart, the lungs, the internal organs, the vascular

injuries. But science is not mutually exclusive of having a strong social conscience.

“It says something to me that the Hospitallers are the only remaining order from the Crusades. These were men who saw battle and, having seen it, like I have, chose to seek the peace. In the midst of all that hell, they sought something higher — how to make it stop. Today’s Hospitallers are the inheritors. We seek the peace. As a trauma surgeon, engaged in the work of God Almighty, I seek that peace.”

## The Asensio File

- > Professor of surgery, professor of clinical and translational science, Creighton University School of Medicine

- > CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center’s chief of the Division of Trauma Surgery and Surgical Critical Care

- > Adjunct professor of surgery, Uniform Services University of Health Sciences, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

- > Fellow, American College of Surgeons; fellow, American College of Critical Care Medicine; fellow, Royal Colleges of Surgeons (United Kingdom)



Juan Asensio, MD, a Knight of Malta, wears the Order’s regalia in the chapel at CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center.

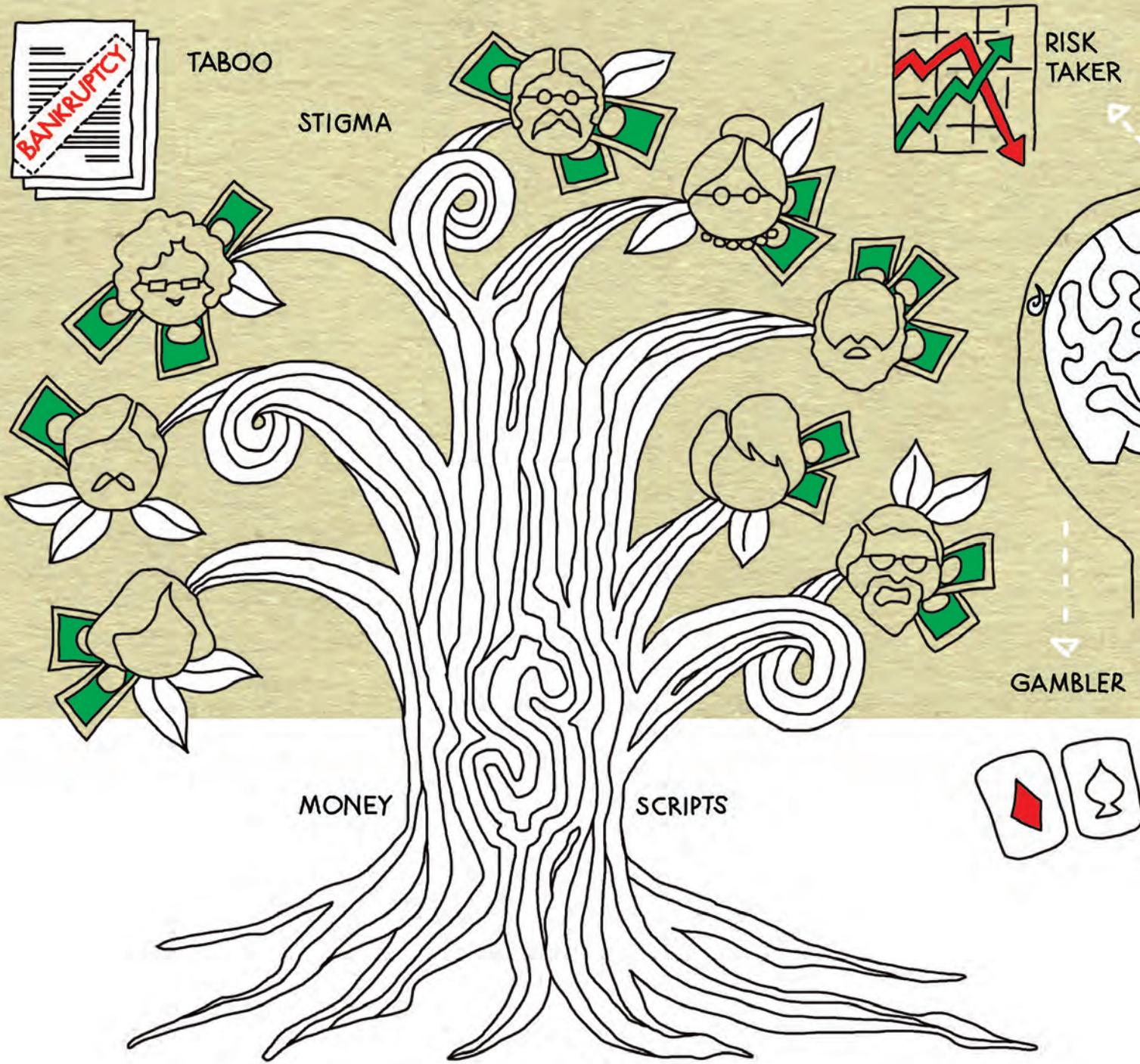
- > Knight of Malta, Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem

- > 521 total publications, including 21 books and monographs, one of which is *Current Therapy of Trauma and Surgical Critical Care*, a standard textbook in trauma surgery classrooms now in its sixth edition

- > Research funding topping \$10 million from the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense and other agencies

- > More than 1,500 invited lectures or invited professorships in 87 countries

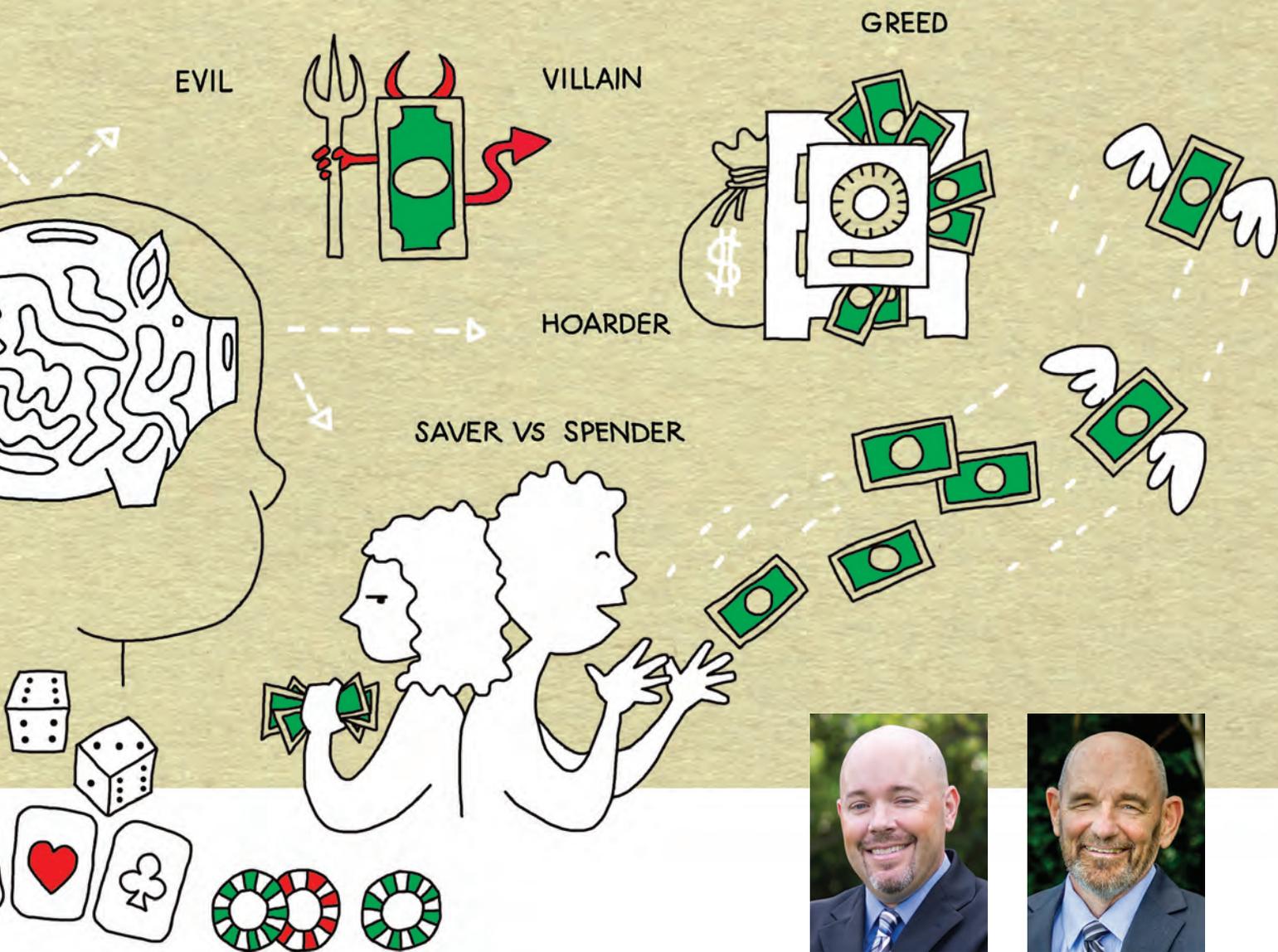
- > Has trained dozens of trauma fellows and more than 120 visiting scholars from 40 countries



# MONEY ON MY MIND

*Fledgling field of financial psychology finds foothold at Creighton*

By Glenn Antonucci



Bradley Klontz



Ted Klontz

**“A wise man should have money in his head, but not in his heart.”**

— Jonathan Swift

No doubt, Swift’s commentary was on the pitfalls of greed. But his 300-year-old quotation is also applicable, if inadvertently, to a much newer phenomenon: the study of financial psychology.

In order to understand the psychological underpinnings of the human relationship with money, you have to go back — way back — across millennia and deep into the human psyche. Our beliefs about money, in fact,

are learned in childhood — probably as 2- or 3-year-old toddlers. And those beliefs are passed down, generation after generation.

This is according to a pair of pioneering researchers, who say there is evidence that our 21st-century behaviors regarding money derive from ancient hardwiring in our brains.

Now, those researchers — Paul (Ted) Klontz, PhD, and Bradley Klontz, PsyD, father and son — have brought their combined body of knowledge on the fledgling field of financial psychology to Creighton University, which they joined last summer as professors, and where they plan to further their research and help grow this emerging field of study. Together with Ed Horwitz, PhD, MBA’08,

they have formulated a new certificate program within the Center for Insurance and Risk Management, part of Creighton’s Heider College of Business.

What makes us really tick when it comes to money? Horwitz, the center’s director, said it’s a question that’s been largely avoided in our cultural history.

“It’s been sort of taboo,” he says. “Why haven’t we been studying this? Behaviors regarding money are the leading cause of things like divorce.”

And, those behaviors are as widespread, and inherently misunderstood, as they are powerful.

“Financial psychology crosses national barriers,” Horwitz says. “It’s a universal phenomenon.”

With this emerging field’s two



research stars on board, Horwitz — in his own right, a recognized leader in applied financial psychology for the financial services industry — and Creighton have taken a bold step in breaking down this longstanding taboo and exploring the psychological core of financial behavior.

### An Epiphany Sparks a New Field of Study

Bradley Klontz's interest in the concept was first piqued when mulling his own puzzling financial behavior. He had just finished graduate school, acquiring his doctorate, along with about \$100,000 in student loans. His middle-class background, he says, made him uncomfortable carrying that kind of debt. Meanwhile, his friends were having a run of good fortune trading stocks.

Bradley decided to give it a try. "I sold everything I owned and put it in the stock market," he says. "I put it all in tech stocks, where all my friends were making six figures. But I came in at the peak of the tech bubble, and soon after, the market dropped and I lost 75 percent

of my investment. "I asked myself, 'Why would a reasonable human being do something so stupid with money?'" He looked for answers, but there were none to be found. "The entire (financial) field had ignored it," he says. "So I helped create

*Central to the Klontzes' research is a concept they coined "money scripts," which are underlying tenets, handed down by our parents and learned in childhood, that inform our financial beliefs and drive behavior.*

the field out of necessity, because I was trying to find my own answers." His father, Ted — an accomplished psychologist — was running a treatment center in Tennessee at the time. The two started discussing a melding of finance and psychology, and things progressed quickly.

In a single week in 2002, they designed a program specifically to treat money disorders. Soon after, the *Wall Street Journal* got wind and covered the Klontzes' innovative new treatment program, launching it into the public eye. That sparked the first of several books the pair wrote on the subject of financial psychology.

### 'Money Scripts' and Origins of a Taboo

Central to the Klontzes' research is a concept they coined "money scripts," which are underlying tenets, handed down by our parents and learned in childhood, that inform our financial beliefs and drive behavior. They are often partial-truths, and typically unconscious, but responsible for our financial outcomes, the Klontzes found. They developed a test to identify their clients' personalized money scripts and make them conscious of why their financial behavior manifests the way it does. These scripts lurk behind the scenes and help explain why one is likely to be a spender, a saver or something more extreme, such as a hoarder or compulsive gambler.

If these money scripts, or embedded



beliefs around finances, have such an impact on us, why isn't it more obvious to us, and hence more easily correctible? Ted Klontz chalks it up to that old societal taboo.

"If you go all the way back to Judeo-Christian stories, money is dirty," he says. "Look at our history books. They're filled with examples of figures — call them villains — who were associated with money.

"Even today, those with money are vilified," he continues. "It's dirty; it's ugly; it's not 'higher-level thinking.' There's a significant prohibition against having a healthy relationship with it."

Ted Klontz compares the taboo to that which used to be wrapped around sexuality. Not all that long ago, it was considered indecent to talk about it, much less admit one had a problem related to it.

So how do we do the same with personal finance and start prying away the stigma surrounding it? We examine it, and its history, through an academic lens.

## Old Wiring in the Attic

"Typically," Ted Klontz says, "the people who do well, come from wealth. The people who tend to struggle financially typically come from nothing." In our species' history, he says, "we live off each other. If someone has a windfall, the whole tribe shares it. And if you don't share, you risk losing your tribe, and that's the worst outcome."

Klontz says there is a financial "comfort zone," and as long as we stay in that zone, we feel comfortable in the context of our tribe, and others in the tribe continue to like us and be comfortable with us.

If we stray from that zone, however, "people start rejecting us, because you're exceeding — or falling behind — the cultural norm."

This context, he says, was formed in us long ago, and continues to carry through today.

"It's how our brains are wired," he says. "We are wired for *tribe*. The key is to accept that our brains were wired 100,000 years ago. Let's accept it, and learn to deal with it."

For example, one of Ted Klontz's

pro-athlete clients, who came from humble beginnings, was having financial problems related to his newfound wealth. He was being generous and benevolent to a vast array of extended family and friends in his hometown community, at such a rate and scale that his once-healthy bank account was diving deeply into the red.

"Performers and athletes don't typically come from wealth, and that was true of this client," Klontz says. "Now he was in a position of having received this windfall, and he was trying to do the right thing by his community, his tribe."

Klontz stepped in, applying his and his son's financial psychology research,

*"This program — both in the way we've built it and in terms of research — is very cutting-edge. There's an academic fascination with this that we're tapping into, and it was a bold move by the dean to make this happen."*

*Ed Horwitz, PhD, MBA'08  
Associate Professor of Practice in  
Behavioral Finance and Mutual of  
Omaha Endowed Executive Director*

and devised a strategy for the client.

Ted recommended he contain his philanthropy to a single, collective kindness rather than a great many individual ones. He suggested the client buy an abandoned building in town and turn it into a community center, then host a potluck dinner each week and feed everyone in town. Thus, the "tribe" was taken care of, but at much lower, more predictable and, ultimately, more manageable personal expense.

"We took his cultural thinking, and instead of trying to change it into an upper-class thinking, we adapted it so he could be a hero to his tribe," Klontz says. "If we had not intervened, he would quickly have been bankrupt."

## Taking It to the Next Level

Horwitz and the Klontzes have taken a decade-plus of their research and practice to design a five-course, online program for graduate students. The program nets students a certificate in financial psychology and behavioral finance.

More importantly, Horwitz said, it gives them a leg up in the field of financial planning. His graduates who have been introduced to the concept and mechanisms of financial psychology already are finding success in their respective firms.

It's made possible, he said, by the groundbreaking findings of Bradley and Ted Klontz.

"They bring a great deal of experience and wisdom to Creighton," Horwitz says. "These are the two leading researchers in the field, the pioneers, and so our University is now the leading institution in this area of study."

The new online program is a prime example of the University's innovative nature, as well as the vision of Anthony Hendrickson, PhD, the dean of Creighton's Heider College of Business, Horwitz says.

"This program — both in the way we've built it and in terms of research — is very cutting-edge. There's an academic fascination with this that we're tapping into, and it was a bold move by the dean to make this happen," Horwitz says.

Bradley Klontz says he's excited to be working with Creighton.

"There's an appreciation and support of innovation here that is extraordinary," he says. "A willingness to explore new territory and think outside of the box."

Klontz says Creighton's mission and values served as a compelling draw to come to the University, because they matched up well with his own.

"There's a real commitment to values here, and instilling those values in students. It's not just about achievement, but how you do good in the world. That's hugely important to me — this work is about benefitting society, doing good for others. And that resonates with my own personal mission, to bring hope and healing to the world."



Crysta Price, BA'14, MA'16  
Co-Director, Human Trafficking Initiative  
Director, Data Science Lab

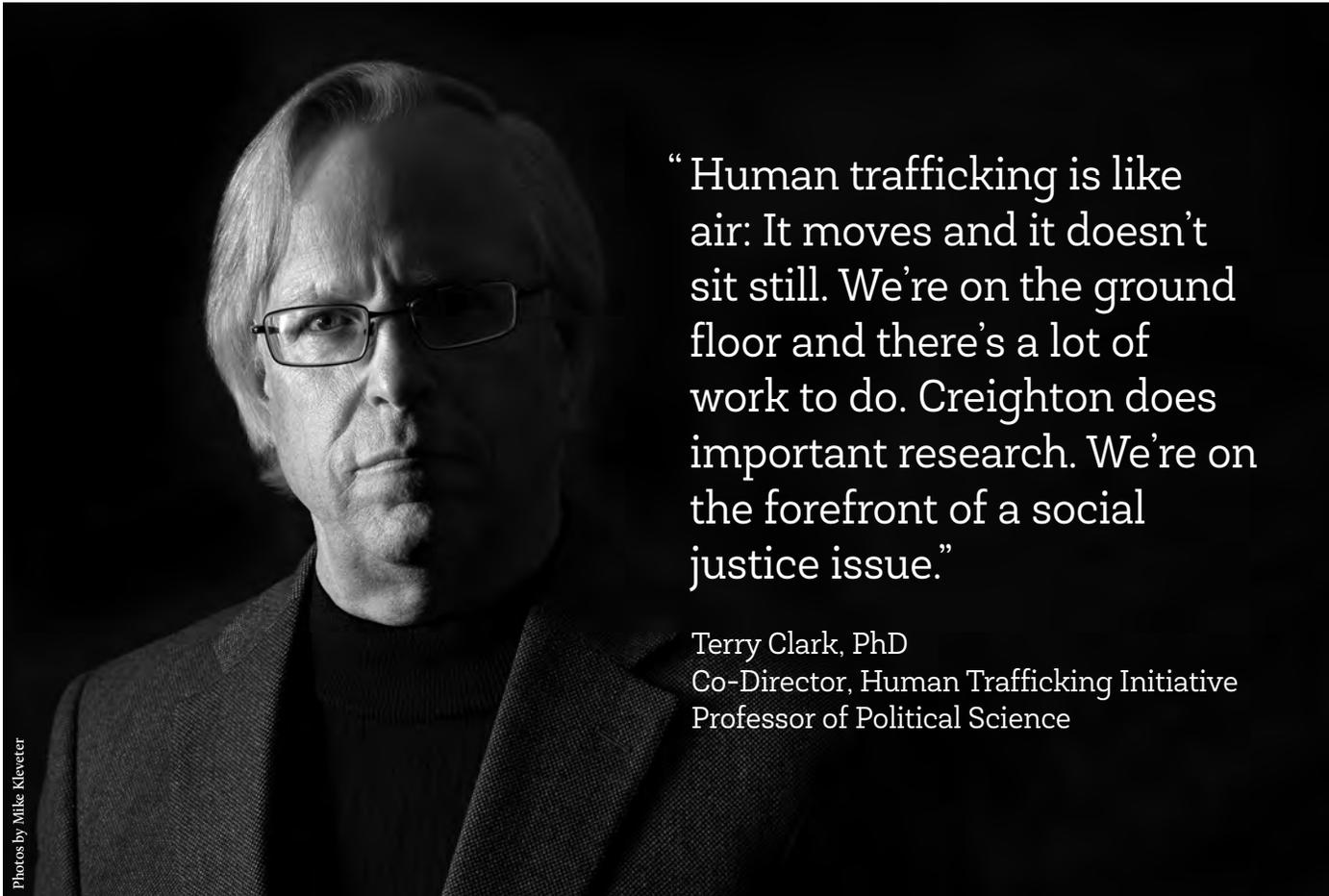
Most people don't think that slavery exists today in the United States, let alone in Nebraska. The sad truth is that human trafficking in the commercial sex industry — those sold involuntarily for sex — occurs every day across the country. Creighton researchers are determining how many victims are affected by this crime — and what can be done about it.

The Human Trafficking Initiative (HTI) at Creighton uses data science to collect, analyze and evaluate the scope of sex trafficking and identify effective policy solutions. Crysta Price, BA'14, MA'16, co-director of HTI and director of the data science lab, along with Terry Clark, PhD, co-director of HTI and professor of political science, combine their expertise to lead a research agenda that focuses not only on understanding trafficking but also combatting it through policy and services for victims/survivors.

# OUT OF THE darkness

By Ann Freestone, BA'89

Housed in the Creighton University Heider College of Business, HTI essentially grew out of an undergraduate project. It got started when Price, an undergraduate majoring in international relations, joined an experimental research laboratory led by Clark and faculty in mathematics and computer science. Price assumed leadership of a project simulating international human trafficking flows. Her jointly authored study of the international human trafficking network resulted in a paper, "Disrupting Human Trafficking," which won "Best Substantive Contribution" at the 2014 Political Networks Conference in Montreal. She subsequently pursued the research as a graduate student at Creighton, earning a master's degree in data science.



Photos by Mike Kleveter

“Human trafficking is like air: It moves and it doesn’t sit still. We’re on the ground floor and there’s a lot of work to do. Creighton does important research. We’re on the forefront of a social justice issue.”

Terry Clark, PhD  
Co-Director, Human Trafficking Initiative  
Professor of Political Science

Price brings her expertise in mathematical, statistical and computational modeling to the table, and pores over the latest literature on the subject of human trafficking. Clark’s background is in formal mathematics and social sciences. Today, the two collaborate on all facets of projects coming out of the Human Trafficking Initiative. HTI work spans local human trafficking networks to international aspects.

“We are called upon every week for support activities, such as testimony before legislative committees and questions for agencies,” Price says. Their HTI research has supported the work of law enforcement, nonprofits and government agencies locally, regionally and nationally — from the FBI to the Salvation Army, the Texas Attorney General’s Office and the Michigan Supreme Court, to name just a few.

“Our main goals are to produce reliable research on the prevalence of trafficking and stronger policy solutions,” Price says. HTI research reveals that Nevada has more sex workers per capita advertising online than any other state, followed by New York, Rhode Island and North Dakota. The nation’s capital is the country’s hot spot — its per capita rate exceeds that of all 50 states. While major cities such as Atlanta and Oakland, California, are hotbeds of

commercial sex activity, lesser populated areas such as Biloxi, Mississippi, and Greenville, South Carolina, also top the list.

Their most recent project was a report that paints a picture of how prevalent human trafficking is in Nebraska. Much of Nebraska is impacted by the Interstate 80 corridor, which has a relatively high per capita rate from Chicago westward. The Nebraska report (“Nebraska’s Commercial Sex Market”), published in February, reveals that every month, 900 individuals are sold for sex, often multiple times in Nebraska and, of those, 135 — or 15 percent — are at high risk of being trafficked. Seven out of 10 individuals sold for sex, have at least one indicator of being trafficked. Being underage or controlled by a third party are indicators that the person is being trafficked as opposed to voluntarily participating as a prostitute. As Clark points out, one is a victim, the other is a criminal.

“We want to better identify victims within the commercial sex industry — what portion is sex trafficking?” Price says. The research determines where individuals lie on a continuum from sex work on one side to sex trafficking on the other. According to Clark, “We have more trafficking than we initially thought.”

The project was done in conjunction with the Women's Fund of Omaha. According to Meghan Malik, trafficking project manager at the Women's Fund of Omaha, she knew the Creighton researchers would be a great fit for their organization.

"The Women's Fund is rooted in research. Our main goals are to research issues, fund innovative solutions and seek change through policy solutions. We knew as we began to dive into this issue that research would be critical," Malik says.

"We have to combat trafficking with good research and promising practices. When we sat down with Creighton, they were looking at international and domestic trafficking," Malik says. "As we had the conversation about all the different pieces, I recognized their skill set was broad: They could look at research in multiple ways, recognize qualitative research was critical and had a broad understanding of trafficking research. Crysta has read every piece of literature on trafficking. It's so important to have that expertise."

She points out that Clark and Price's collaborative approach helps elevate discussions to another level. "We started inviting them to the table for strategizing," Malik says. "They offered to do things beyond the original plan, are flexible, nimble and move to where they are needed. They are so great to work with."

The report fills a void of academic research surrounding sex trafficking. "What we brought to the game is good data that didn't exist," Clark says. "A lot of the current data is crazy — ridiculous numbers that were pulled out of thin air."

To conduct the research for this report, Price and Clark spent nearly a year studying advertisements on an online market hub called backpage, which, at the time of the research, provided advertising for 80 percent of the online commercial sex industry. Buyers and sellers would frequent the page. Separate sites for ads on Backpage included the Nebraska cities of Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island, North Platte and Scottsbluff — all located along I-80.

In January 2017, pressure from the federal government resulted in shutting down Backpage's escort ads; however, the Creighton research was conducted before the website was shuttered. According to Price, Craigslist escort ads were stopped in 2010 and moved to Backpage. In the same manner, HTI found that shutting down Backpage did not change the number of individuals sold for sex, but rather resulted in their moving the marketing of services to other sections on the website.

"We treat this as a market," Price says. "Human trafficking is similar to drug trafficking, but the supply is people. It's bounded by laws of a market — the higher demand for something, the more profit you can get. Traffickers bring the supply to meet the demand."

The Nebraska report found that the younger the

individual, the higher the hourly rate advertised. This creates incentives for traffickers to recruit younger women and girls.

## In Nebraska

"The report is the first empirical data in Nebraska that really illustrates that we do have human trafficking here," Malik says. "It spreads across Nebraska."

The Women's Fund used the research to support LB289, legislation that increases penalties for traffickers and buyers. "The data makes a case that this is here and we have to do something about it," Malik says. "The current penalties are not strong enough. They don't create a big enough risk."

Common venues for human trafficking include large events. In Nebraska, that includes the College World Series in Omaha and the State Fair in Grand Island. "It's not only in our backyard but in our back pockets with smartphones. It's five clicks and you can purchase somebody — that can happen very, very quickly," Malik says.

Both men and women are sex trafficked; however, the majority of sex trafficking victims/survivors are female. They often end up in sex trafficking through men who act like they are their boyfriend, but they are really just

**According to the most recent report prepared by Crysta Price, BA'14, MA16, and Terry Clark, PhD, every month in Nebraska, 900 individuals are sold for sex often multiple times. Of those 900, 135 — or 15 percent — are at high risk of being trafficked.**

trying to build trust so they can traffic the female. It's a lot of psychological manipulation, Clark says. "[The traffickers] control them and get into their head," he says. "They groom the girls by getting to know them, act like they are dating — rope them in — so it's easier to manipulate them. They promise a lifestyle and gifts. It's relationship-based." In Nebraska, the data from the HTI report indicates that young girls rarely enter into the commercial sex industry without what the Creighton researchers call a "facilitator," or pimp, who actively recruits them and breaks them into the industry. In such cases, the facilitator/pimp is a trafficker.

These individuals also use tactics to threaten the victims/survivors. For example, if the victim/survivor is an undocumented migrant, the facilitator/pimp, threatens to turn them over if they don't show up.

One example was a 12-year-old victim/survivor from Grand Island who was forced to do six to 10 sex acts a day.

“This is not uncommon among the situations we’re aware of,” Price says. Since backpage couldn’t list someone under age 18, the average age posted was 23 to 24 years. Therefore, the average age is probably a lot younger. In Nebraska, 11 percent of those sold for sex online are advertised under the age of 21. In fact, 71 percent of child sex trafficking reports received by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children are linked to ads on Backpage.

## Task Force

The research is also helping the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force, which was officially launched by Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson in October 2015 after about six months of preparation. The task force is aided by a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice. Stephen Patrick O’Meara, JD’73, former assistant Nebraska attorney general, helped start the task force and served as coordinator of it until he retired in November 2016. O’Meara has been fighting against violence, abuse and degradation of people for 50 years. The last 10 years, beginning when he was an assistant United States attorney, his emphasis has been

## Price and Clark’s research is helping the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force, established in 2015. The task force is aided by a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice.

fighting human trafficking. O’Meara still volunteers to combat human trafficking with the Coalition on Human Trafficking in Omaha, the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking, and other groups in Nebraska and Iowa.

The task force defines itself as having three primary goals: help victims and survivors, stop human traffickers and eliminate the trafficking market. Participants come from government, social services, law enforcement and other areas. There’s involvement at the local, state and national levels, including Homeland Security. On the services side, for example, the task force now has a statewide administrator for services for victims/survivors through the Salvation Army. In addition to the statewide administrator, there are three human trafficking specialists in Omaha, Grand Island and North Platte, each covering two regions of Nebraska as defined by the task force.

The task force has given seven, two-day comprehensive training sessions in six designated regions across Nebraska, including two training sessions in the greater Omaha area. The presenters used statistics from Creighton’s Human Trafficking Initiative. Since

the approach to dealing with human trafficking is multidisciplinary, between 800 and 900 people attended from law enforcement, service providers and victim/survivor advocacy groups as well as from the health care and education professions. The sessions brought together people likely to be engaged on a response team in that region. (A separate program of the Coalition on Human Trafficking trains people working in the hospitality industry to recognize and respond to sex trafficking in hotels and motels.)

“A friend gave me an analogy. If you see someone floating down the river — drowning — you act to save them. If you begin to see an increasing number of people drowning, you should go upstream and see what’s causing them to fall in the river in the first place,” O’Meara says. “Applying this analogy to human trafficking, while continuing researched-influenced, multidisciplinary intervention and prevention involving integrated enforcement and services, people of faith need to make God part of the discussion and a foundation of the solution, and influence our society to do so. While we certainly must continue enhancing efforts of law enforcement and service providers to ‘rescue people drowning in the river,’ we also need to seek faith-informed cultural change to help prevent ‘people drowning in the river, from dangerously falling into the river in the first place.’”

He says there’s so much to be done to help prevent women and girls, and men and boys, from being likely victims of sex trafficking. “We need to do a better job of dealing with categorical vulnerabilities people experience, which substantially increase their risk of being subjected to sex trafficking,” O’Meara says. He says his 45 years of professional experience, including with the FBI-led Omaha Child Exploitation Task Force, has convinced him that it’s a systemic long-term problem with a list of contributing factors that need to be addressed. A few include child abuse and neglect, mental health, intellectual development, poverty, homelessness, problems with the foster care system, pornography, the commercial sex industry itself, strip clubs, gangs in trafficking, drug abuse and distribution, domestic abuse crimes, and the list goes on.

“We also need to significantly improve efforts to deal with traffickers and buyers. No buyers equals no trafficking. ‘Lowering the river’ would also help prevent victimization of ‘people falling in the river,’” O’Meara says.

No longer a member of the task force, but supporting its general goals, O’Meara says, “If we want to do something about modern-day slavery, we have to look at this slavery in the context of the broad system of evil of which sex trafficking is a part. If we’re going to move toward accomplishing the three goals of the task force, we have to work on related areas of the system as well as sex trafficking itself.”

## Steps Right Now

What can people do right now? According to Malik, “Get educated on it, volunteer for effective antitrafficking organizations doing good work, support legislation and educate others that this is occurring. If you see something, say something by calling the National Human Trafficking Hotline (888.373.7888). If it has a red flag or doesn’t look right, don’t intervene yourself, but make a call on it or call 911. We have an obligation.”

To overcome human trafficking, recommendations from the report include the following:

- > Stronger policies to create job opportunities outside the commercial sex industry.
- > Increased collaboration and information sharing with other states and across jurisdictions between private and public agencies. (The transient nature of individuals sold for sex makes victim identification difficult unless system collaboration occurs.)
- > Anti-trafficking efforts to focus on truck stops, gas stations and hotels along major highways. Increased awareness by working with groups such as Truckers Against Trafficking, as well as help from them in identifying trafficking.
- > Higher penalties for buyers and increased likelihood of being caught.

## What’s Next?

“Moving forward, we’ll do another research design to capture populations we may be missing,” Price says. For example, the Hispanic and Native American communities do not often use online sources, but instead rely on word of mouth to sell services.

Price and Clark are also assisting in screening tools to identify victims/survivors. “The screening process for individuals who have experienced trauma is so burdensome it creates a barrier to get services,” Malik says. “Creighton is helping us think through if individuals come in at multiple points how we can see that data. We’re also having lots of discussions on where does the data reside and how we protect confidentiality, as well as how to use data to help provide better services to individuals.”

According to Clark, the project is likely to go on for 15 to 20 years. “Human trafficking is like air: It moves and it doesn’t sit still,” he says. “We’re on the ground floor and there’s a lot of work to do.”

Individuals sold for sex come from vulnerable populations — youth, low socio-economic and minorities. “Creighton does important research,” Clark says. “We’re on the forefront of a social justice issue.”

“We need to do a better job of dealing with categorical vulnerabilities people experience, which substantially increase their risk of being subjected to sex trafficking. We also need to significantly improve efforts to deal with traffickers and buyers. No buyers equals no trafficking.”

Stephen O’Meara, JD’73  
Former Assistant Nebraska Attorney General  
Former Coordinator, Nebraska Human  
Trafficking Task Force





**P**lanning a potluck? You could do a lot worse than to invite Hannah Connealy Raudsepp, BS'13, Pat Hoffmann, BSBA'89, Faith Kurtyka, PhD, and Taylor Keen.

They're among Creighton alumni and faculty who are putting a fresh spin on raising crops and livestock, bringing wholesome food — and spirits — to their tables and ours.

For these four, it's personal. And it should be.

"Food is such a personal thing," says Raudsepp, whose Honest Beef Company goes so far as to give the names of the Angus cattle from which each cut comes.

Adds Hoffmann, who is among the few distillers in the nation who grows his own grain: "People today think more than ever about what they put into their bodies."

These folks aren't about shortcuts, artificial coloring, preservatives, additives, hormones or anything else that Mother Nature would frown upon.

Sit down and enjoy. Keen will bring the "Four Sisters" and Kurtyka a bounty of raspberries and strawberries. Raudsepp will grill up a juicy T-bone. When we're done, we'll sip some of Hoffmann's smooth-as-silk bourbon.

All fresh, all ways.



Erik Raudsepp and Hannah Connealy Raudsepp, BS'13, on the Connealy Ranch in Whitman, Nebraska.



family's cattle-raising days there date back more than 100 years. And they continue today — her parents and two of her three brothers still work the ranch.

Now Raudsepp is in the business too, as founder and owner of Honest Beef Company ([honestbeefco.com](http://honestbeefco.com)). There, beef lovers (and soon-to-be beef lovers) can make online purchases of beautifully marbled, dry-aged Angus beef cuts as direct from the rancher as possible, bypassing the majority of the conventional beef supply chain.

Almost from grass to grill.

Customers get a packing list with each package naming the cow's ranch of origin and its location, names of the ranchers and butcher, and the cow's pedigree going back at least three generations (it's almost biblical).

"If you know exactly what ranch this animal came from, the rancher has a chance to tell his story," Raudsepp says. "Trust, for our customers, comes when they know the faces, personalities and ethics of the family responsible for the steak on their plate."

Raudsepp owns the business with her husband, Erik, a software designer she met during a study abroad trip to Estonia as a Creighton student. She works with her family's ranch and other cattlemen and a butcher and fulfillment center in

Concerned as much with input as output, she'd always ask clients if they were getting enough protein.

Not from beef, many would say.

"There was an underlying feeling of distrust that I detected — especially around beef," Raudsepp says. "How it's raised, its nutrition, and from where it comes."

They saw beef as environmentally harmful, too corporate and bad for your health.

"I was just floored at the amount of misinformation out there," Raudsepp says. "Kind of frustrating to the point where I was scared for the industry."

Worse than the unfounded bias, she says, was that people were speaking with their wallets by simply not buying.

"That's a travesty for thousands of families who work their tails off."

Including her own. Raudsepp was raised and worked on an Angus cattle ranch in Whitman, Nebraska, in the Sandhills just off Highway 2. The



**B**ostonians might know clam chowder and lobster, but as Hannah Connealy Raudsepp might tell you, they don't know a hill of baked beans about ... beef.

A 2013 Creighton exercise science graduate, Raudsepp came to that realization shortly after moving to Beantown following graduation and starting a gig as a personal trainer.

Hastings, Nebraska, to pull it all off.

The beef is cut, flash-frozen, then shipped with dry ice in corrugated boxes insulated by a liner made from recycled jeans by a Norfolk, Nebraska, company.

Wait, frozen beef? Isn't that a no-no?

No. Raudsepp points to studies that show that consumers get whatever was there — all the quality, taste and nutrition — at the moment a cut is frozen. “That’s way better than what’s fresh but has been sitting out a couple of weeks,” she says.

The beef is shipped in various-sized packages with different cuts. The first shipments went out in May 2016. Sales have hit both coasts and urban centers (yes, Boston) with lots of repeat business and growth.

And her story is resonating. CNBC, the *Wall Street Journal* and others have reported on her startup. It appears to have some staying power.

Like the four generations of ranchers on the Connealy Ranch.

Amy and Pat Hoffmann, BSBA'89, right, are owners of the Lonely Oak Distillery in Earling, Iowa. One of the distillery's first products was North 40 Vodka.



grains he grew into vodka, gin, bourbon and more — a “seed-to-spirit” concept done by few in the country.

Hoffmann kept the concept to himself for nearly a year. “I kept thinking, ‘Maybe it’s just a crazy idea and I would talk myself out of it.’”

He never did. Instead, he talked his wife, Amy, into it. Early this spring — about five years after Hoffmann’s idea began to ferment — the 1989 Creighton business graduate bottled the first batch of North 40 Vodka for his Lonely Oak Distillery ([lonelyoakdistillery.com](http://lonelyoakdistillery.com)).

It’s a third career for Hoffmann. Since finishing his Creighton studies, he’s worked in administration for his family-owned Little Flower Haven Nursing and Rehab in Earling. And for the past decade, he’s helped his father raise corn and soybeans on 600 acres.

His idea makes sense. No one would expect a Napa Valley winery to truck in Iowa grapes, right? So why should Hoffmann get grains for his spirits from anywhere but what he calls some of “the most fertile ground probably in the world.”



Photo by Mark Jacobs

It satisfies his almost primal desire to see the fruit of his labors.

“I’ve always wanted to have a finished product ever since I started farming,” Hoffmann says. “We talked about the joy of planting seed and watching it grow over hundreds of acres.”

But it’s out of sight, if not out of mind, soon after harvest. It used to be



**F**or months, Pat Hoffmann kept the secret from his wife. No wonder, given the malodorous aroma he raised whenever he brewed beer.

“Stinks up the house terrible,” Hoffmann says. “My wife wasn’t fond of it.”

The new idea Hoffmann was brewing also involved alcohol — but he figured it had the smell of success. Hoffmann, who farms a spread in Earling, Iowa, with his father, wanted to turn the



commonplace for farmers to have a still, Hoffmann says. “Distilling was just another way of preserving grain,” he says.

Then came Prohibition. When it went away, so did many of the recipes and ways of distilling.

Hoffmann started from scratch but had plenty of help. He bought a new,

German-engineered still made by Kothe — perfect given the area’s German-Catholic roots. He solicited consultation from experts including “Mr. Whiskey,” former Maker’s Mark master distiller Dave Pickerell. “If you’re Catholic and you get to talk to the pope, that’s kind of like if you want to make bourbon, you’d want to talk to Dave Pickerell.”

Help like that gives Hoffmann faith there’s something to this seed-to-spirit idea. It used to be he grew corn for disease and insect resistance. For yield and “standability.”

“But ask me what it tastes like? I don’t have any idea.”

Now he knows, thanks to the spirits abounding at Lonely Oak.



Participants in a neighborhood garden walk got quite the surprise when stopping at Faith Kurtyka's backyard a couple years back.

And it wasn't pretty.

"It's ugly," Kurtyka says about her garden. "Our yard has nothing beautiful."

But, there is plenty that's tasty in there.

Kurtyka, assistant professor of English, and her husband, LaRue Diehl, have grown a "food forest" in their Omaha backyard, supplying them and their infant daughter, Juniper, with plenty of vegetables, fruits, nuts and more.

So the folks on the garden walk didn't get what they were expecting — chrysanthemums, roses, zinnias and other decorative beauties beautifully arranged and manicured.

"But when they came to our yard and we explained the philosophy of it, you could see people's minds change," Kurtyka says. "Our garden is a lot more than something beautiful to look at. It's practical, useful and sustainable. A food forest is a little bit different than a garden. Typically, we think of gardening as rows of plants. It's exposed dirt. In a food forest, we're trying to mimic a natural ecosystem with an overstory of trees.

"Instead of growing a single plant all by itself, we're growing plants in a certain ecology where it's going to survive best."

Her husband, a biology teacher at Papillion-LaVista South High School, was the one pushing for the food forest. "This is more borne out of his interest in the natural world in general," Kurtyka says.

In September 2013, the couple moved into their current home with a large triple lot purchased in part so they could build their food forest. They tore out a concrete patio and put in a small pond.

They cleaned and put up a fence. Friends helped. So did Creighton students logging service hours.

They ordered from a seed catalog and got a head start with grow lights in their basement.

Then they planted. Lots. Three years later, they have fruit and nut trees, kale, collard greens, tomatoes, snap peas, raspberries, strawberries, pear and



apple trees, a hardy kiwi, herbs, carrots, radishes, figs and rose hips that make a sort of tea.

Oh, yeah, and a goose, ducks and chickens.

Not everything went so well. Sweet potatoes came out the size of quarters. "Just because something is supposed to grow does not mean it will," Kurtyka says. "Mother Nature does not read books. It's hard to predict, but that's what we like about it."

But there have been plenty of successes. Enough that the family stays busy come harvest preserving with a food dehydrator and freezing. They can go a week eating only food grown in the yard.

Kurtyka's not trying to fool anyone — this isn't easy.

"No way we could do this if we were not teachers and didn't have summers off, especially the first couple of years getting the infrastructure going," she says. "It takes a lot of work."

But the results?

Beautiful.

Faith Kurtyka plants beet seeds in the garden at her home. Kurtyka and her family have turned their backyard into an expansive garden, which is also home to a goose, ducks and chickens.



Photo by Megan Farmer/Omaha-World Herald



Taylor Keen, a member of the Omaha Tribal and Cherokee Nation, oversees planting in his backyard as part of the Sacred Seed project. In the garden are Jackie Bonham, left, and Keen's mother, Octa Keen.

"All consider having their own stories," Keen says.

Some grow yellow, some blue, red or white. Keen plants the corn in his own yard and in about a dozen plots in and around Omaha. All are in urban areas, far away from where they might cross-pollinate with "GMO stuff" in big rural fields.

The success of "sacred" seeds, though, is not as easy as pushing a seed into the ground then letting Mother Nature do the rest.

"Organic farming is really hard," Keen says. Some of his first plantings, in the Creighton greenhouse, didn't go so well. "The local raccoons pretty much decimated it," he says.

Last year, it rained too much and some of the water-soaked shoots had trouble bearing all the weight. "Across our other ambassador plots, we probably lost 50 percent of what we planted last year in terms of corn."

What he did get, though, was worth the wait.



Photos by Ryan Soudell/Omaha-World Herald

Better yet, Keen grew this corn with his own hands.

A Heider College of Business faculty member, Keen's harvest came through Sacred Seed, a nonprofit he began in 2014 to collect, preserve and grow indigenous and heirloom seeds once known to his native Omaha and Cherokee tribes.

"We're just trying to embrace and continue our tribal tradition, revive something very, very essential to tribal culture for almost all of the indigenous tribes in the Americas," Keen says. "As a member of the Omaha tribe, it's very important for me to revive as many of our traditions as we can, and corn is such an essential part of our relationship with the land. It's the thing used in our sacred ceremonies, and we're trying to reconnect with this."

His efforts, he says, are part of a larger seed sovereignty movement occurring across the country. Most of his first seeds came from a Cherokee Nation Seed Saving Project. He since has gotten seeds elsewhere, sometimes through trade — Ponca, Osage, Pawnee and Cherokee varieties.



**T**aylor Keen insists it was the best corn he ever ate.

"It's different, for sure," he says. "It was real, not genetically modified. It had a lot more taste — like the difference between eating white rice and eating wild rice."

It's also the oldest corn he ever ate. Corn that traces its roots to a time when bison freely roamed the wide open plains and tribes like the Omaha planted corn that was much different from the plain yellow variety that stands in field after field across the Midwest today.

And it's not just corn. Keen's corn is planted alongside the rest of the "Four Sisters" — beans, squash and sunflowers.

"They are meant to be planted together. Pretty much intermingle in the same plot," Keen says. "True companion planting."

With a taste that's new — and centuries old.

# Vitamin D and Cancer

*Creighton study  
finds 30 percent  
reduction in cancer  
from vitamin D  
supplements*

By Therese Vaughn



It's said that statistics is the art of never having to say you're wrong. When a much-awaited Creighton University study on vitamin D and cancer fell just a whisker short of statistical significance, principal investigator Joan Lappe, PhD, MS'85, said no problem, we are not wrong.

Lappe and her Creighton research colleagues — including Robert Recker, MD'63, director of Creighton's Osteoporosis Research Center; Dianne Travers-Gustafson, PhD, BSN'79, MS'93; and Patrice Watson, PhD — made pioneer tracks with their work on vitamin D's relationship to cancer risk, showing a 30 percent lower incidence. Professor Robert Heaney, BS'47, MD'51, who died last August, helped to inspire and plan the study. Co-investigators were professors Cedric Garland, PhD, and Edward Gorham, PhD, of the University

of California San Diego, and professor Keith Baggerly, PhD, and Sharon McDonnell from MD Anderson.

The team met the gold standard of scientific rigor through the first randomized clinical trial of the effects of vitamin D supplementation on all types of cancer combined. Their findings were published in March by the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA).

Funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the four-year study included 2,303 healthy, older women in rural Nebraska, in which half were randomized to daily doses of 2,000 International Units (IU) of vitamin D3 and 1,500 milligrams of calcium supplements and the rest were given placebos. Cancer struck at a 30 percent lower incidence in the supplemented group than in the control group.



While that 30 percent narrowly missed statistical significance in the study, the findings add to a critical mass of evidence that supports that vitamin D does offer important value in health promotion and disease prevention.

“It’s enough to keep me taking my vitamin D every day,” says Lappe, who is a professor of nursing and medicine and holder of the Criss/Beirne Endowed Chair in Nursing.

Lappe’s adventures in vitamin D research began more than 30 years ago with the relatively new study of osteoporosis. In 1984, she joined the Creighton faculty with a joint appointment in the College of Nursing and the School of Medicine. In 1988, Heaney invited her to join the team at the Osteoporosis Research Center half-time as a project manager. There, she fell in love with clinical research — that dynamic process of investigation, “doing the thinking, reading and coming up with the right research questions,” she says. The “right question” is where scientific scrupulousness comes together with awe at the hidden workings of creation.

One of Lappe’s first questions considered bone health in children. She and her national research partners helped to establish the normal bone density reference levels for children and to demonstrate the importance of physical activity and calcium in their bone development. The study continues to impact public health policy.

Later, Lappe worked on a project through a Department of Defense grant to look at the high risk for stress fractures among young military recruits. Finding that calcium and vitamin D supplements decreased fractures by 20 percent, the Navy implemented a new regimen for all female basic trainees. When

the study appeared in the *New York Times*, President George W. Bush’s personal physician called Lappe to ask what supplements to suggest to the president’s wife.

Lappe’s research not only breaks ground, it ripples out seismically. Just like the work of her late mentor and research partner, Heaney, who was widely acknowledged as the world’s foremost expert on bone biology, calcium and vitamin D.

“He was a brilliant man and a rigorous scientist,” she says. “He understood the importance of vitamin D in every cell in our body and the role it plays in every step of cancer development and progression. He was convinced by the large body of evidence that it had an effect — not just on cancer — but on many diseases.”

In the early 2000s, Lappe was principal investigator on a study to determine whether vitamin D and calcium protected against osteoporosis fractures. She and her team conducted a secondary analysis of the nutrients’ effect on cancer. “At that time, researchers were beginning to find a link between living in a sunny climate and a lower incidence of cancer,” she explains. “We found that really intriguing.”

When the results of Lappe’s analysis indicated a 60 percent lower incidence of cancer with supplementation, their paper “went viral,” generating headlines around the globe.

“What was unique about our study was that it was the first randomized clinical trial of vitamin D and cancer,” she says. “However, in the scientific field, there is a tremendous emphasis on rigor. We needed a study in which cancer was a primary outcome. At that point, we submitted a proposal, which was very similar to the first study, to the NIH, and this was funded.”

While this second study showed a 30 percent reduction in cancer, there were several confounding factors involved, Lappe explains. For instance, the women in the trial showed a higher baseline level of vitamin D in their blood. This indicated that they were closer to being vitamin D replete and less likely to show any effect of vitamin D supplementation as compared to individuals with lower blood levels of vitamin D.

“Vitamin D is a threshold nutrient; once you have enough, taking more won’t do you any good,” Lappe adds.

But, not getting enough vitamin D poses a serious risk: blood levels of the nutrient, specifically 25-hydroxyvitamin D (25(OH)D), were significantly lower in women who developed cancer during the study than in those who remained healthy. The average 25(OH)D level in the women’s blood at the beginning of the study (33 nanograms/milliliter, ng/mL) was higher than the usual target levels that currently range from 20-30 ng/mL, according to various guidelines. This suggests that higher vitamin D levels than are currently recommended are needed for substantially decreasing risk of cancer.

“The findings were very exciting,” Lappe says. “They confirm what a number of vitamin D proponents have suspected for some time but that, until now, have not been substantiated through clinical trial.

“Decreasing cancer incidence by 30 percent is substantial, so the clinical effect is important, even though the analysis did not quite reach statistical significance. It was close, however. In fact, if there had been one more cancer case in the placebo group, the findings would have been statistically significant.”

## Vitamin D and Cancer Study: By the Numbers

**\$4.4 million**

Funded by National Institutes of Health

**2,303**

study participants  
(half were given vitamin D3 and calcium supplements, and half were given placebos)

**JAMA**

Findings published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*

**30%**

lower incidence of cancer among those receiving vitamin D3 and calcium supplements





Photo by Dave Weaver

Statistical significance is a tricky business. Basically, it is the mathematical probability that a difference between two or more factors exists. Practical significance, on the other hand, is when science meets its maker: What works for the greater good and causes the least harm?

Since the study of vitamin D's effect on developing cancer failed to meet statistical significance, the findings from this study will not be used to set clinical guidelines for use of vitamin D.

"What we do know is that lack of statistical significance does not mean that it had no effect," Lappe says. "We really believe that the 30 percent reduction is important, and it's consistent with all the literature. There's a huge body of evidence that points to the positive effects of vitamin D."

While many people in the science community, health professions and households worldwide will recognize the strength of cumulative evidence in the case for vitamin D, the media seems to cast a whole lot of shade on the sun nutrient. Days after the landmark study's publication in *JAMA*, several news outlets responded with gloomy headlines: "High doses of vitamin D fail to cut cancer risk, study finds" wrote *Health U.S. News*, "New study raises doubts" claimed *CBS News* and "Sorry, your vitamin D megadose is basically useless" heralded *Wall Street Pit*.

"When Creighton published the press release that vitamin D does have an effect, I knew it would cause controversy," Lappe says. "But statistical significance and real effect are not mutually exclusive.

"One of the things that fascinates me is the political nature of vitamin D. There are scientists and community groups that are very passionate about it. Advocates such as Dr. Heaney have proposed that everyone should be taking supplements and raising their blood levels of vitamin D higher than current recommendations. Others caution that there is no evidence of a positive effect and that there may be unknown risks of too much vitamin D. I've been in conference rooms and lecture halls where there have been heated debates."

What we do know is that lack of statistical significance does not mean that it had no effect. We really believe that the 30 percent reduction is important, and it's consistent with all the literature. There's a huge body of evidence that points to the positive effects of vitamin D.

*Joan Lappe, PhD, MS'85*

Lappe says her mentor, though gracious in temperament and rigorous in science, never shied away from the fight. "Dr. Heaney was part of the political debate, right out there, with all the policymakers and stakeholders. He was even considered somewhat of a radical. He was so convinced by the science, and, as his career and life were coming to a close, he felt it was very important that the world accept the significance of vitamin D."

Over the course of his career, Heaney led a valiant push for increasing vitamin D intake from the government's Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of 600 IU for most people and 800 IU for people over 70 years of age. While Lappe suggests an intake of at least 2,000 IU of vitamin D daily, as well as getting your blood levels checked, Heaney recommended more than twice that amount.

Can one overdose on vitamin D? Lappe says vitamin D has been shown to be very safe except in people with tuberculosis, sarcoidosis or metastatic cancer. "It appears that there are no ill effects for daily doses below 10,000 IU, but I would not recommend doses nearly that high," she cautions.

How about sunshine? Since humans make their own vitamin D3 when they are exposed to sunlight, can we catch too many rays?

Acknowledging the risks of photoaging and skin cancer from overexposure to sunlight, Lappe says, "Most dermatologists would probably say some sunlight is helpful. We don't want to be giving children a bunch of supplements. It's OK if they run and play outside, get a little color."

In further research on vitamin D and cancer, a study involving 26,000 subjects is underway today at Harvard University. This large-scale trial will examine the role of vitamin D supplementation in preventing cancer and cardiovascular disease.

"I knew when it started that this larger Harvard study would be the decisive trial," Lappe says modestly, even though it is her work that first lit up the field.

# Balancing Act

By Eugene Curtin

## OT graduate, business owner, mother of four inspired by kindness and tragedy



Photos by Dave Weaver

Elizabeth Hladky Lilla, OTD'03, at Metro Stars Gymnastics, one of the two facilities she and her husband own and operate.

**N**ever underestimate the power of a chat. Metro Stars Gymnastics, which today operates at two sprawling locations in the Omaha metro area and serves about 2,500 students, is the result of much effort and sacrifice by the husband-and-wife team of Elizabeth Hladky Lilla and Erik Lilla.

But a little help along the way never hurts. Elizabeth, 37, a 2003 occupational therapy graduate, a mother of four (ages 4, 6, 8 and 10) and a successful business owner, is quick to credit divine guidance — recalling the evening when a few brief words with former Creighton University President the Rev. Michael G. Morrison, SJ, saved her occupational therapy studies.

She was attending an annual banquet hosted by the G. Robert Muchemore Foundation, which provides scholarships to undergraduate students and which

had supported her undergraduate education. But she was moving straight into Creighton's newly launched, entry-level OT clinical doctorate program. The problem was financing, because the Muchemore scholarship did not apply to postgraduate courses, and so when Fr. Morrison, getting ready to depart the banquet, said he looked forward to seeing her "next year," Elizabeth explained the problem.

To which Fr. Morrison said, "Let me see what I can do."

"I didn't really think anything of it," Elizabeth said. "He was a busy man and had more things to worry about than me, but then I got a phone call saying he had worked it out with the Muchemore Foundation, and the scholarship would continue."

It was a welcome kindness, and a respite from a run of hardship and sadness that had seen Elizabeth endure for nine years the slow death of her father from kidney cancer, and in 1997 the near death of her closest friend in a horrific car accident.

It was her friend's brush with death that turned Elizabeth to OT.

Her friend is largely recovered now, Elizabeth said, and is the mother of a little boy. But in 1998, when the friend graduated from a suburban high school in Denver, a year after the accident, she could barely walk across the stage to receive her diploma. Some time later, Elizabeth would ask her a fateful question: "What was the biggest help in your recovery?"

"My occupational therapist," her friend replied.

"That was what got her through," Elizabeth said. "I didn't know anything about OT, but I decided to look into it." She narrowed her choice to a school in Minnesota and Creighton, where her family members were all within reach. She chose Creighton.

Her Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree proved a useful foundation after her soon-to-be husband, Erik, who held a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Nebraska Omaha, called to tell her that people are not meant merely to work and die.

It was a philosophical rumination that opened a whole new path of risk and opportunity. Erik did not believe he would be happy as a mechanical engineer, and he did not want to go to graduate school. Instead, he wanted to open a gym. He meant it. Elizabeth realized he meant it. And so she said OK.

It was 2002, and Erik and Elizabeth were about to embark on a journey that would soon see Erik rising at 4 a.m. to work as a personal trainer and Elizabeth working full time in occupational therapy, both spending additional time at their newly opened and very modest suburban Omaha gym — 1,500 square feet, including

bathrooms, lobby and office space.

The gym was Erik's idea, but Elizabeth took to it easily. A gymnast herself, she had always loved the sport, and the idea of running a gymnasium for eager kids was appealing. She had coached the sport since she was 13 years old and was ready and able when she and Erik opened the first Metro Stars Gymnastics in Millard in 2006.

It would be, they both decided, a school for everyone.

"Every kid who walks through that door is important, whether it's an 18-month-old toddler whose mother needs to get out of the house, all the way to a child who wants



Lilla works with her daughter, Samantha, on gymnastics techniques.

to compete in the Olympics," she said. "We work with kids with special needs too."

In fact, Metro Stars helped with a Creighton study on the benefits of gymnastics for kids with autism (see article at right).

The day does not pass, Elizabeth said, that she does not marvel at what she and her husband have built. But she remains conscious of her wider world, of Fr. Morrison's intervention, of her husband's vigorous work ethic, and of her extended family members who helped with childcare while she and Erik were building their business.

"It takes a village," she said. "No way I could have done this by myself."

## Creighton Study Finds Gymnastics May Benefit Children with Autism

Sooner or later, the difficulty of finding sporting or recreational opportunities confronts all parents caring for a child with a disability.

So when Bobbi Greiner, OTD'05, BSHS'05, assistant professor of occupational therapy at Creighton, decided to see if regular participation in gymnastics might improve the quality of life for children with autism, she turned to Elizabeth Lilla and Metro Stars Gymnastics (see article at left).

"Our research group spoke with Metro Stars and asked if they would help us develop a class just for kids with autism to see if recreational gymnastics might impact their social skills, their social interactions and the stereotypical behaviors associated with autism," she said.

The research group, composed of Greiner and OT students Bailey Cunningham, OTD'17; Caitlin Eis, OTD'17; Teresa Eklund, OTD'17; Jennifer Rauch, BA'13, OTD'17; and Carly Sloboth, OTD'17, had no difficulty persuading the gymnastics school to participate. Metro Stars already caters to students with special needs, and Lilla, its founder and owner, is herself a graduate of Creighton's Doctor of Occupational Therapy program.

The students created two classes for the children. One class participated in structured gymnastics classes, the other in unstructured activities. Pre- and post-study assessments were performed on the children, ages 5 to 11.

The results, which Greiner said she hopes will be published, found that weekly participation in recreational gymnastics, for a period of eight weeks, improved the ability of the children to interact with other children.

"The qualitative information provided by the parents showed that they felt the program was beneficial in terms of social interaction," she said. "They also expressed that the people at the facility understood aspects of autism and other disabilities, which made it more comfortable for them as compared with more mainstream sports where there can be a lot more uncertainty.

"Preliminary findings indicate that recreational gymnastics may have positive implications on social skills and the development of leisure interests for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder," Greiner said.

And while that's promising news, Greiner said the program also proved a much-needed boost for the participating children and their families.

"Most kids their ages are in softball or baseball or something," she said. "But kids with autism often have a more difficult time participating in that type of thing, so this gymnastics class was one thing they could participate in that provided a pretty positive experience."

**“Preliminary findings indicate that recreational gymnastics may have positive implications ... for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.”**

**Bobbi Greiner, OTD'05, BSHS'05**  
Assistant Professor of  
Occupational Therapy



Jono Anzalone, BA'02, center, on a recent site visit in Filadelfia, Costa Rica. During the visit, Anzalone's team met with more than 100 community members to promote disaster risk reduction activities, including those to mitigate the effects of climate change.

## Dream Job By Rick Davis, BA'88

### From teenage volunteer to executive, Creighton alumnus finds his calling with the Red Cross

Jono Anzalone, BA'02, discovered what has become his lifelong passion while taking a CPR and first-aid class from the American Red Cross more than 20 years ago — as a prerequisite for a summer job as a lifeguard.

“I remember picking up a brochure about what the Red Cross did around humanitarian assistance,” Anzalone says. “And I was hooked.”

The then 15-year-old Omaha Central High School student jumped right in, and began volunteering with the local Red Cross — a practice he continued while a political science student at Creighton. He instructed water safety and first-aid courses, helped with relief efforts following flooding and assisted families whose homes were destroyed by fire.

You could say the Red Cross — and helping others — got into his blood.

After graduating from Creighton, Anzalone earned his master's degree in economics from the University of Nebraska Omaha, while continuing to volunteer for the Red Cross.

The youngest of three children and a first-generation college student, Anzalone worked his way through school, with jobs in banking and at Charles Schwab. He did quite well as a financial advisor, and even earned an investment broker's license.

“As great of an experience as I had working for a local bank, I knew I did not want to stay in that industry,” he says.

After Hurricane Katrina — one of the deadliest and costliest hurricanes in U.S. history — slammed into the Gulf Coast in 2005, Anzalone participated in Omaha's efforts to assist and house evacuees.

Then as luck, or perhaps fate, would have it, in August of 2006, after he had earned his master's degree, the Heartland Chapter of the Red Cross in Omaha was looking for a director of emergency services.

“They said, ‘Are you sure this is what you want to do?’” Anzalone remembers, considering his potential for a lucrative career in financial services. “And I said, ‘Absolutely, I do!’”

Anzalone says he was immediately struck by the dedication and compassion of Red Cross volunteers. He particularly remembers one older Omaha couple, both active volunteers. The wife had been a licensed mental health worker, and she fielded a call at 2 a.m. from a family whose child had died.

“The family didn't need any financial assistance. They didn't

# AlumniNotes

need food or clothing. They just needed someone to listen to them,” Anzalone says. “I remember thinking, ‘These are things that volunteers wake up in the middle of the night to do, because they want to alleviate human suffering — which is our mission.’”

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Anzalone says, Congress recommended that the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) do more joint planning, and he was eventually transferred to Kansas City, Missouri, to serve as a Red Cross representative at the FEMA regional office there.

Anzalone assisted in the aftermath of the Greensburg tornado in 2007. The storm, with winds estimated at more than 200 mph, virtually destroyed the small Kansas farming town. President George W. Bush flew in by helicopter to assess the damage and offer support.

“We tried to find housing solutions for a town that was completely damaged,” Anzalone says. He helped coordinate services and responses from government and nonprofit agencies, including the Red Cross.

Anzalone says he was emotionally moved not only by the extent of the devastation, but by the resilient spirit shown by the members of that community.

“It was just incredible,” he says. “On one hand, they are devastated. But you also see a community completely come together and start to envision how they are going to rebuild their community. It’s pretty darn amazing.”

In 2008, Anzalone traveled to Panama City, Panama, with the International Federation of the Red Cross, overseeing disaster relief in the English-speaking areas of the Caribbean, Belize and Suriname.

“It’s a different level of human needs,” Anzalone says of his international work. “Overseas it’s more about life-saving measures.” Without relief, for instance, those affected by a disaster might not only go hungry but could starve. “That was really eye-opening for me.”

Anzalone is one of about only 50 American Red Cross staffers and volunteers trained and preapproved to participate in international work for the Red Cross. As a member of the organization’s international roster, he travels overseas about once a year.

In 2015, he was named disaster executive for the North Central Division of the Red Cross, overseeing disaster response, preparedness and recovery for an 11-state region. He was on the ground in Louisiana for a month following the catastrophic flooding there in 2016.

Shortly following, in October 2016, he and his partner moved to Washington, D.C., as Anzalone began his current job as vice president for International Services, reporting to Red Cross CEO Gail McGovern.

“We have programs in 34 countries across the globe,” he says, “working with other Red Cross or Red Crescent societies.”

For the 38-year-old Anzalone, it continues to be a connection to serving others that enthralled him as a teenager.

“I never go to bed at night thinking, ‘Gosh, I wonder if I’m doing the right thing with my life.’”

**71 John J. Kirby, DDS,** Hillsborough, California, participated in the annual Mending Faces Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate Mission in Lucena, Philippines, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 3, 2017, providing pro bono surgeries to 61 patients.

**73 Bruce C. Rohde, BSBA’71, JD,** Omaha, has been recognized as trustee emeritus on the Creighton University Board of Trustees. Rohde had served on the Creighton Board of Trustees since 1989. He was Board vice chair from 2000-2011 and Board chairman from 2011-2015.

**74 Thomas J. Sanders, BASoc,** Wichita, Kansas, received the Quiet Hero Award from the Difference Makers for Wichita in December 2016. He also was the first recipient of the Ivonne Goldstein Award for Community Volunteer. Sanders, who retired following a 35-year career in health care, including 10 years as executive director of the Robert J. Dole VA Medical Center in Wichita, volunteers for more than 12 organizations that help the Wichita community.

**75 Roger A. Meyer, MD,** Greensboro, Georgia, received the Freihaut Lifetime Achievement Award from the Georgia Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons in February 2017. The award was given to Meyer, who also holds a DDS degree, for exemplary and important research, education and patient care in the treatment of peripheral nerve injuries.

**76 William H. McCartney, JD,** Burnet, Texas, has co-chaired a Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) task force for two years. The task force is studying current issues in the regulation of insurance. His co-authored report, “Improving U.S. Insurance Regulation,” was published by BPC in April 2017.

**78 Susan M. Dunn, BSN,** Denver, has been elected vice president/president-elect of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network/United Network for Organ Sharing board of directors. She is

president and chief executive officer of Donor Alliance, the Denver-based organ procurement organization serving Colorado and most of Wyoming. **Albert L. Schmeiser, JD,** Gilbert, Arizona, was elected president of the board of directors of the Arizona Hemophilia Association in 2016.

**79 Amy L. Longo, BSN’70, JD,** Omaha, received the Omaha Bar Association Lifetime Achievement Award in May 2017. Longo is a partner at the law firm Ellick, Jones, Buel, Blazek & Longo in Omaha.

**81 Monica Markel Biety, BA,** Golden, Colorado, participated in the annual Mending Faces Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate Mission in Lucena, Philippines, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 3, 2017, providing pro bono surgeries to 61 patients. **Christopher M. Biety, BS’77, DDS,** Golden, Colorado, participated in the annual Mending Faces Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate Mission in Lucena, Philippines, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 3, 2017, providing pro bono surgeries to 61 patients. **Gary J. Ostrow, BSBA’79, JD,** Sharon, Massachusetts, was awarded the National Outstanding Eagle Scout Award by the Boy Scouts of America in February 2017. This award is given to an Eagle Scout for distinguished service to his profession and community over his lifetime. It has been given to only about 1,500 recipients out of the approximately 2.4 million Eagle Scout awards earned. **Michael G. Reilly, BSBA’79, JD,** Council Bluffs, Iowa, has been named partner at Stuart Tinley Law Firm in Council Bluffs. He will focus his practice on personal injury and general trial practice.

**83 Kevin J. Pidgeon, BS’79, MD,** Woodland Hills, California, joined St. Luke’s Rehabilitation Institute in Spokane, Washington, in its psychiatry practice.

**84 Robert J. McDonald, BA,** Lincoln, Nebraska, joined the Steier Group in Omaha as a campaign manager. **Mark J. Milone, JD,** Omaha, joined the law firm Koukol & Johnson in Omaha.



## Do you have alumni news to share?

Have a new job? Recently married? Earned a promotion? Had a baby? Received special recognition? If so, we want to know about it!

Please send to [alumninews@creighton.edu](mailto:alumninews@creighton.edu).

**85 David P. Wilson, BSBA'82, JD,** Omaha, has been named partner at the law firm Walentin O'Toole in Omaha. Wilson specializes in tax planning, estates and trusts, corporate and commercial law.

**87 Michael J. Schekall, BS'83, MD,** Wichita, Kansas, was elected to the board of directors at the Hutchinson Clinic in Hutchinson, Kansas.

**88 Dr. Greg J. Batenhorst, BA'84, MS,** O'Fallon, Missouri, has been named superintendent of Mount Vernon Community Schools in Mount Vernon, Iowa.

**89 Katherine I. Funk, BSBA,** Bethesda, Maryland, participated in the annual Mending Faces Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate Mission in Lucena, Philippines, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 3, 2017, providing pro bono surgeries to 61 patients. **Steven M. Kupka, JD,** Washington, D.C., joined the law firm King & Spalding as a partner in its government advocacy and public policy practice in Washington, D.C. **Dr. Michelle M. "Mimi" Wong, BS,** Golden, Colorado, participated in the annual Mending Faces Cleft Lip/Cleft Palate Mission in Lucena, Philippines, from Jan. 29 to Feb. 3, 2017, providing pro bono surgeries to 61 patients.

**90 Jennifer Wolfe Jerram, BSN'86, JD,** Omaha, has joined Mutual of Omaha as associate

general counsel. Jerram will work in the group benefit services operation. **Maurice R. Johnson, JD,** Ankeny, Iowa, has joined Goosmann Law Firm in its Sioux City, Iowa, office. Johnson focuses his practice on helping business executives navigate complex transactions.

**91 Michael W. Zacher, DDS,** Phoenix, is the dentist for the Arizona Cardinals and Arizona Diamondbacks.

**97 Corey M. O'Brien, JD,** Lincoln, Nebraska, has been selected as the new criminal bureau chief in the office of the Nebraska Attorney General. O'Brien has been with the attorney general's office since 2003. **Shannon Dell'Orfano Simpson, JD,** Treynor, Iowa, opened Simpson Legal Group in May 2017 in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

**98 Ann L. Anderson Berry, MD,** Omaha, received the Innovation, Development and Engagement Award (IDEA) from the University of Nebraska. Anderson Berry is an associate professor in the University of Nebraska Medical Center Division of Newborn Medicine and medical director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Nebraska Medicine.

**99 Samuel T. Lopez, DPT,** Morgantown, West Virginia, has been appointed assistant vice president for diversity initiatives

at West Virginia University in Morgantown. **Allison Hacker Temple, BS,** Papillion, Nebraska, earned a doctorate degree in organizational leadership in effective skills from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix.

**00 Chad P. Richter, JD,** Omaha, has been named office managing principal at the law office Jackson Lewis in Omaha. Richter focuses his practice on preventive counseling and training, traditional labor law and workplace litigation.

**01 Douglas B. Jones, BS,** Gering, Nebraska, was named Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year at Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Jones currently teaches in the human performance department and is the school's athletic trainer. **Jay P. Langhurst, BSBA,** Indianapolis, has joined the Indianapolis Public Library Foundation board of directors. Langhurst is the principal IT systems architect for Salesforce.com. **Kara Wituski Washburn, BA,** Aurora, Colorado, was awarded a graduate certificate in nonprofit organizational capacity building from Regis University in Denver in May 2017.

**02 Patrick S. Cooper, BA'99, JD,** Bennington, Nebraska, was one of two coaches for this year's Creighton Prep Mock Trial team. The team won the Nebraska competition and performed well at

the national competition. **Richard P. McGowan, JD,** Omaha, received the Omaha Bar Association's Ellick Service Award in May 2017. The Ellick Award recognizes those who have served as members of the Lawyer Referral Service for 10 or more years.

**03 Eric W. Tiritilli, JD,** Omaha, has joined the law firm Lamson Dugan & Murray as senior counsel. Tiritilli focuses on employment and traditional labor law.

**04 Abraham D. Kuhl, BSBA,** Lee's Summit, Missouri, received the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association's Young Lawyer of the Year Award. The award recognizes a lawyer under the age of 36 for significant community, civic and professional work. **Matthew E. Morrissey, JD,** Omaha, was sworn in as an immigration judge in the Omaha Immigration Court in April 2017.

**06 Britt M. Haxton, BSBA,** Washington, D.C., was named partner at the law firm McDermott Will & Emery in Washington, D.C., in January 2017. **Dale M. Johnson II, MA,** Olathe, Kansas, was named partner at the law firm Shook, Hardy & Bacon in Kansas City, Missouri, in March 2017. **Aimee L. Lowe, JD,** Elkhorn, Nebraska, joined the law firm Vandennack Weaver in Omaha. Lowe practices in the areas of commercial, construction, real estate, employment and trusts and estates litigation.



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- Master of Science in Business Intelligence and Analytics/Business Administration (MS-BIA/MBA)
- Master of Investment Management and Financial Analysis/Business Administration (MIMFA/MBA)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Accounting (MBA/MAC)
- Master of Business Administration/Master of Finance (MBA/MSF)

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# Into the Fire

By John Darwin, BA'13

**Physically exhausting, emotionally taxing, but ultimately rewarding, alumna enjoys work as Forest Service hotshot**

Her journalism degree has taken her to the rugged wilderness of Alaska and the dry deserts of the Southwest. But Laura Fremgen, BA'10, isn't working as a journalist — she's a forestry technician, or hotshot, for the U.S. Forest Service.

Fremgen spent time camping and hiking as a kid growing up in Idaho, but it wasn't until she joined AmeriCorps after graduation that she became truly enamored of the great outdoors. She worked in Utah maintaining trails and improving forest health, all while hiking in and camping with her crew — her first taste of what it was like to live and work in a rugged setting.

After getting used to the demands of the job — Fremgen recalled that the transition from casual camping to living in a tent all summer was difficult — she knew she'd chosen the right path.

"When I got my job in Utah, I figured it would be nice to go back out West," she said. "Once I got there, I quickly made the decision never to leave."

Her work with AmeriCorps turned out to be a natural pathway to firefighting, the field she still works in today.

Fremgen's work as a hotshot varies wildly day to day depending on the conditions and where she's needed. Though she's based in Montana, she's been dispatched to fires in Oregon, Canada and the Alaskan tundra.

Some days, she works with helicopters to get water and supplies to the front lines. Other days, she's on the ground



Laura Fremgen, BA'10, joined AmeriCorps after graduating from Creighton. It was her work there — maintaining trails and improving forest health — that was a natural pathway to her work today.

clearing brush and digging trenches to stop a wildfire from spreading. On tamer days, you might find her thinning local forests or doing other preventive work to reduce the risk of a major fire.

For Fremgen, the best part of the job can also be the worst.

"You get to see areas of the country — sunrises, sunsets — and be out in the wilderness, all while helping people," she said. "But that time can also be physically and emotionally taxing. It's hard on every aspect of your life being away from home for so long. It's a very basic existence."

During peak season, a hotshot crew could work 16-hour days for two weeks straight with only a few days of rest before doing it all over again.

The danger of the job can't be ignored, either.

"Our crew does have lots of fun hiking around and being out in the mountains all summer," she said, "but I have lost some close friends doing this work. Wildland firefighters put themselves in a great deal of

danger on a daily basis."

Still, Fremgen said, the work is incredibly fulfilling. The crew she works on — 20 men and women who work together fighting fires from late spring to the start of winter — are like brothers and sisters. They have plenty of memories to share, most of them made miles from civilization where cellphone service is limited and "home" is a tent and sleeping bag.

"It's a mix of things that make me want to come back every day," said Fremgen. "People are appreciative of the work we do. Working as a team to go out and help people is extremely rewarding."

Weddings, vacations and other commitments with friends, though important, will have to wait. Until the first snowfall, Fremgen and the rest of her hotshot crew will be on the front lines, employing all the firefighting tools in their arsenal and doing their best to keep the season's wildfires far away from anywhere they might do harm.

# Creighton Brings Alumna Home to the D.R.

By Cindy Murphy McMahon, BA'74

From the Dominican Republic to Creighton University and back, alumna Margarita Dubocq, BSBA'04, MS'08, is living what she feels is an ideal life.

Dubocq is completing her fifth year as the academic director for Creighton's *Encuentro Dominicano* program, a semester-long service-learning undergraduate program that largely takes place in the Dominican Republic.

The fact that Dubocq lives and works just miles from where she grew up, after spending a dozen years living in the United States, is more than good luck.

"My life has come full circle," Dubocq says on a recent visit to Creighton's main campus. "I'm so grateful. Creighton transformed my life, and I'm very fortunate now to be able to replicate that experience for other students."

Dubocq was a Creighton freshman in 2000, the recipient of a full tuition scholarship the University had established in 1999 with her school in Santiago and still offers today.

As a child, she was not aware of Creighton, but she did attend Mass at the Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) center outside of Santiago, which is where Creighton's programs in the D.R. are based and where she works today.

"We just called the people at the center 'the Americans at the ILAC,'" she laughs.

While she was attending Creighton for her undergraduate degree, Dubocq volunteered the first summer as an *ayudante*, or assistant, with the summer ILAC program for health professions students and health care professionals.

"It was an awakening to my own country," she says. "I realized my experience of my country was not the majority experience, as a member of the upper-middle class. Working in the rural

clinic, I started having the same questions many of our students have, such as, 'Why the differences in how people live?'"

She stayed in close contact with Creighton's ILAC office during her undergraduate years, helping in any way she could, including speaking at retreats about the cultural differences the students would experience in the D.R. After she graduated with her degree in business administration in 2004, she attained a summer job working with high school groups participating in ILAC and later became a coordinator of one of the teams.



She eventually was hired as a full-time ILAC coordinator, a position she held for the next four years.

During that time, ILAC's outreach expanded to include a water quality program with two local high schools and the law school.

Dubocq also earned her master's degree in counseling education, with a concentration in college student affairs.

She eventually left Creighton to serve as the assistant director for poverty concerns and faith connections at Loyola Maryland, concentrating on hunger, homelessness, service and spirituality programs. But she knew she always hoped to return.

Then, after four years, just as her work visa was ending, the previous academic director for Creighton's *Encuentro* program

left, she applied and was hired. "It felt like a 'God-incidence.' I had been one of the student members of the restructuring of the *Encuentro* program, and now I would be working with it."

As the academic director, she wears multiple hats. She is an instructor for several classes, including one on Dominican history. She accompanies students on immersion trips into the *campos*, or rural communities, where they stay with local families, and on academic trips to various locations in the D.R., including a trip to the border

**"Creighton transformed my life, and I'm very fortunate now to be able to replicate that experience for other students."**

Margarita Dubocq, BSBA'04, MS'08  
Academic Director  
*Encuentro Dominicano* Program

with Haiti to learn about the two countries' relations.

Dubocq is in a good position to see the changes that have taken place in Creighton's Dominican programs, which have been experienced by some 4,300 Creighton students over the years.

"More programs have been added, and I have seen a greater commitment to enhancing the work of the ILAC Center and the quality of life of the people whom they serve," she says.

And she is excited for the future, looking for Creighton to continue to support local growth and empowerment.

"A lot of the passions I developed as a student, regarding learning about our privilege and how to cope with and react to that privilege, I now get to do for others. And to be able to do it while also serving my own country is really a privilege in itself."

**08 Emily A. Belden, BA**, South Haven, Michigan, has signed a two-book deal with Harlequin Books/HarperCollins Publishers for two of her novels. **Alicia M. Youngblood, BSBA**, Omaha, founded and serves as a human resources consultant at Establish Excellence. Youngblood is helping the next generation of women evolve, elevate and be excellent as leaders in their careers and workplaces.

**09 Andrew W. Brooks, BSBA**, Des Moines, Iowa, has been named the central Iowa neuro, spine, ENT representative for Stryker Medical in Des Moines.

**10 Adam J. Wachal, JD**, Omaha, was named a director at Gross & Welch Law Firm in Omaha.

**11 Allyson C. Dirksen, JD**, Anthon, Iowa, was named partner of Heidman Law Firm in Sioux City, Iowa, in January 2017. Dirksen practices in the areas of agricultural, employment, health care, municipal, real estate, estate planning and probate, and general business law.

**12 Margaret T. "Maggie" Rudersdorf, BSN**, Chicago, was named Pediatric Nurse of the Year for Excellence in Stem Cell Transplant and Oncology Nursing at the University of Chicago Medical Center, Comer Children's Hospital.

**13 Daniel I. Dittman, JD**, Omaha, was named shareholder at the law firm Erickson Sederstrom in Omaha. Dittman practices in the areas of estate planning, probate and trusts. He is also an adjunct professor at Creighton. **Theodore C. Graham, DDS**, Federal Way, Washington, was named an associate for ADC Kids Dentistry in Federal Way in 2016. **Thomas J. Gross, BA'10, JD**, Omaha, joined the law firm Sodoro, Daly, Shomaker & Selde in Omaha.

**14 Charles C. Thomas Jr., MS'09, EdD**, Flint, Michigan, published *Breakthrough: Stories of Resilience, Tragedy, and Triumph*.

**16 David M. Brooks, MD**, Omaha, was awarded the Outstanding Resident from the Creighton University Department of Pediatrics in May 2017. **Leslie K. Wyckoff, BS'14, MBA**, Houston, joined the Steier Group in Omaha as a campaign manager. **Rachel C. Meyer Moses, JD**, Omaha, joined the Omaha law firm McGrath North in the business and corporate practice group. Moses focuses her practice on commercial and corporate transactions and mergers and acquisitions.



Photo by Dave Weaver

Online Feature

## The Dog Listener

Just outside of Council Bluffs, Iowa, Kelley McAtee, BA'02, is helping dogs overcome behavioral issues by looking at more than just their behavior. After starting Dharma Dog Training, McAtee looks at common issues in dogs and new ways to approach training. **Read more about McAtee's training philosophies and how it all began during her undergraduate years at Creighton.**

## Weddings

**78** Karen Rose VanNatter and **Albert L. Schmeiser, JD**, Jan. 9, 2015, living in Gilbert, Arizona.

**11** Erin A. Senozan, MD, and **Murphy M. Steiner, MD**, May 12, 2017, living in Biloxi, Mississippi.

## Births

**97** Justin J. Iverson and **Wendy Zerzan Iverson, BSN**, Papillion, Nebraska, a son, Luke Nicholas, April 18, 2017.

**00** Matthew S. Davis and **Melissa Welters-Davis, BSOT**, Clearwater, Kansas, a son, Emmett Gregory, Sept. 26, 2016.

**02** William McCarty, BA, and Liuyang Gao McCarty, Downers Grove, Illinois, a daughter, Charlotte Victoria, Sept. 3, 2016. **James M. Pakiz, BSEvs'99, JD**, and **Elizabeth Lighthipe Pakiz, BA'03**, Omaha, a daughter, Elizabeth Lucille, Jan. 6, 2017. **Kris Saunders** and **Kimberly Reichert Saunders, DPT**, Sacramento, California, a son, Austin Alexander, Aug. 20, 2016.

**03** Patrick D. Cole, BA, and **Catherine Havey Cole, BA**, Denver, a son, Leo Patrick, April 1, 2017.

**04** Doug Hall and **Alaina Stedillie Hall, BA**, Casper, Wyoming, a

daughter, Saoirse Ebba Michelle, March 28, 2017. **Daniel T. Harbeke, BSBA**, and **Jillian Hancock Harbeke, BSBA'05**, Fort Worth, Texas, a daughter, Emme Ann, May 6, 2017. **Adrian R. Rider, BA**, and **Sarah M. Rider, MA'10**, Omaha, a daughter, Genevieve Marie, Oct. 22, 2016. **Benjamin Wismont** and **Jennifer Graham Wismont, BSN**, Omaha, a daughter, Celeste Josephine, Jan. 11, 2017. **Tyler Yost** and **Renee Lamoureux Yost, BSBA**, Omaha, a son, Holden James, Aug. 11, 2016.

**06** John C. Boain, DDS, and **Jennifer Cornelius Boain, DDS**, Chesterfield, Missouri, a daughter, Lindley Angel, Nov. 2, 2016. **Weston Pease** and **Jill Frank Pease, BSN**, Chatfield, Minnesota, a daughter, Raelynn Brielle, March 7, 2017.

**08** Michael Kaipust Jr. and **Jennifer M. Kaipust, BA'07, MS**, Papillion, Nebraska, a daughter, Mara Renee, Oct. 24, 2016. **Kevin R. Phelps, BSAtS**, and **Christen Schulte Phelps, BSBA**, Davenport, Iowa, a son, Ford Walter, March 10, 2017. **John N. Schneider, JD**, and **Christen N. Carns, JD**, Phoenix, a daughter, Avery Caroline, March 20, 2017.

**09** Josh Birkel and **Stacy Lucht Birkel, BA'06, JD**, Elkhorn, Nebraska, a son, Hank Victor, Jan. 8, 2017. **Dr. Aaron M. Burgess** and **Courtney Dobleman Burgess, MD**, Orlando, Florida, a daughter, Alaina Marie, March 22, 2017.

**15** Brett A. Pietig, BSChm'09, PharmD, and **Anna Halbur Pietig, BA'09, PharmD'13**, Carroll, Iowa, a son, Miles Allen, Feb. 5, 2017.

## Deaths

**36** Paul W. Naprstek, BUSADM, Creighton, Nebraska, May 21, 2017.

**41** Mary Kaiser LeBlanc, SJN, New Orleans, April 13, 2017.

**43** C. Elaine Benedict Fee, BUSADM, Saratoga, California, Jan. 22, 2017.

**44** Rosalie Baxter Schluckebier, MLN, Jackson, Michigan, March 20, 2017.

**45** Harold E. Bernstein, BUSADM, Omaha, May 12, 2017. **Irene C. Lord, MLN**, Sun City, California, June 3, 2016.

**46** Angela Uhing Stander, SJN, Omaha, Feb. 26, 2017.

**47** Donald W. Bruhn, BA'41, JD, Omaha, March 12, 2017.

**48** Dolores Hinners Darveaux, SJN, Pipestone, Minnesota, Feb. 18, 2017. **Eugene B. Hebert, BS**, Naperville, Illinois, Feb. 12, 2017. **Louis L. Maher, MD**, Des Moines, Iowa, April 27, 2017. **Alberta J. Pope, MLN**, Red Cloud, Nebraska, Nov. 18, 2016. **Marilyn Bogus Schuckman, SJN**, Broken Bow, Nebraska, Feb. 5, 2017. **Mary Courtney Wurtz, BS**, Omaha, Feb. 27, 2017.



Nick Stukel, BS'12, is trying to run a marathon on each of the seven continents. He recently completed his fifth marathon in Antarctica.

## The Marathon Runner By Emily Rust

It's March, and Nick Stukel, BS'12, is getting ready to embark on his fifth marathon — this one in Antarctica. It's all part of his global pilgrimage to run a marathon on all of the seven continents.

Donning warm clothes and surrounded by some of nature's most mesmerizing features, Stukel begins his race. Surprisingly, it's a little warm (well, relatively speaking for this region), so some of the course is covered in mud. Stukel carries on, completing the 26.2 miles in three hours and 48 minutes, alongside runners from around the world. Five continents down, two to go.

At this point, with races planned for July 2 in Australia and Oct. 22 in the United States, he says he's trying to be the first medical student to run a marathon on each continent, according to records kept by the Seven Continents Club. Stukel is also in his fourth year of medical school at Georgetown University, where he is concurrently earning his MBA.

"It's a tricky balance," Stukel says. "One thing Creighton taught me: If you're passionate about something, you can make it work."

The fact that Stukel is running marathons may shock some people from his small hometown of Gregory, South Dakota (population 1,295). When Stukel was in high school, he quit track in the middle of a meet. He didn't run again until college, when some

friends talked him into running a half-marathon in Chicago.

Now hooked, Stukel wanted to do more than just run marathons, he wanted to combine his newfound passion for running with his passions for music and health care. Partnering with Musicians on Call, a nonprofit that brings music to the bedsides of patients in health care facilities, Stukel started his own nonprofit, Strums & Strides. The website chronicles his marathon journey while raising funds for hospital music programs.

From June 2014 to this March, he had run marathons in Thailand, Tanzania, Germany, Argentina and Antarctica. (The Gold Coast Marathon in Australia came after the *Creighton University Magazine* deadline.) He hopes to complete his global quest with the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 22. Twenty-five friends are planning to run alongside Stukel.

After graduating from Creighton, Stukel lived in Guatemala for a year as part of a health care immersion program. He plans to return there for a medical school rotation next spring.

**49 Adeline Walega Snyder, SJN'47, BSN**, Peoria, Illinois, March 19, 2017.

**50 Thomas L. Houlton Jr., BSC**, Omaha, March 16, 2017. **Helen Condon Jenkins, SJN**, Omaha, Feb. 13, 2017. **James C. Reneau, BS**, Independence, Missouri, April 2, 2017.

**51 Mary Bradley Wolters, SCN**, Estherville, Iowa, April 4, 2017.

**52 Walter G. Nelson, JD**, Bloomington, Indiana, Jan. 6, 2017. **Joseph E. Torres, DDS**, El Paso, Texas, Feb. 5, 2017.

**53 J. Robert Bohacek, BS'49, DDS**, Omaha, April 1, 2017. **Charles L. Kapsner, BSPH**, Minneapolis, Dec. 27, 2016. **Rita Kucirek Kessler, BSMT**, Omaha, Feb. 1, 2017. **John N. Manhart, ARTS**, Papillion, Nebraska, May 13, 2017. **Richard J. O'Brien Jr., BA'49, JD**, Omaha, May 10, 2017.

**54 Catherine Williams Bloom, BS**, Grand Rapids, Michigan, April 7, 2017. **Robert F. Fretz, BSC**, Denver, Feb. 2, 2017. **Joseph A. Grasso, DDS**, Fairfield, California, Feb. 24, 2017. **George E. McCarthy, BUSADM**, Columbus, Nebraska, April 8, 2017. **Hon. James M. Murphy, BS'52, JD**, Omaha, May 3, 2017. **Sr. Bernetta Sigg, ASC, MSEdu**, Wichita, Kansas, Nov. 25, 2015.

**55 Colman L. Dell, DDS**, Lakewood, Colorado, Feb. 25, 2017. **Evelyn White Pinner, SJN**, Lake Wales, Florida, Feb. 25, 2017. **Earl L. Ryan Jr., MD**, Grand Junction, Colorado, Jan. 12, 2017.

**56 Sr. Ann T. Collins, CHM, MSEdu**, Davenport, Iowa, Feb. 26, 2017. **Richard V. Rozman, BSC**, Olathe, Kansas, Feb. 19, 2017. **Robert E. Stejskal, MD**, Phoenix, Nov. 5, 2016.

**57 George F. Daley, BSBA**, Sun City West, Arizona, April 3, 2017. **John J. Higgins Jr., JD**, Omaha, Feb. 15, 2017. **Stephen J. Sulentic, BSBA**, Omaha, Feb. 14, 2017. **L. Richard Wild, BSBA**, Lafayette, Louisiana, March 26, 2017.

**58 David J. Torczon, BSBA**, Omaha, June 1, 2016. **Mary Barfell White, ARTS**, Omaha, April 26, 2017. **Hon. Edward E. Hannon, JD**, Lincoln, Nebraska, March 16, 2017.

**59 John T. Noonan, DDS**, Bigfork, Montana, April 13, 2017. **Bernard J. "Jim" Poletti, MD**, Fullerton, California, March 7, 2017. **Donald E. Tawzer, BSBA**, Lincoln, Nebraska, Feb. 19, 2017.

**60 Earl W. Bunkers, BSBA**, Franklin, Wisconsin, Jan. 3, 2017. **Chris K. Fotopoulos, BS'54, MD**, Overland Park, Kansas, May 12, 2017.

# Recent Alumnus Embraces Reasons to Give



"I am thankful for what Creighton has given me. As a recent alumnus, I have realized the connections and influences from my academic career did not end upon leaving campus. Because of the countless memories, invaluable skills and lifelong friends, I support my alma mater."

—Matthew Novotny, BSBA'13  
Omaha Recent Alumni Advisory Board

Join Matthew in supporting Creighton University and investing in the future of current students.

Visit [alumni.creighton.edu](http://alumni.creighton.edu) to find your reasons to give.

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**61** Richard J. O'Neil, SJN, Omaha, April 21, 2017.

**62** Martin D. Haykin, MD, Seattle, Feb. 14, 2017. Robert L. Riley, JD, Clarion, Iowa, April 1, 2017. Sr. Sylvana Schulte, ASC, MSEdu, Wichita, Kansas, Aug. 28, 2016. Edward J. Schultz, DDS, Cincinnati, May 7, 2017. Sr. M. Floriana Voegeli, BSPha, Wichita, Kansas, Feb. 2, 2015.

**63** Bernard R. Buchta, BSBA, Vero Beach, Florida, Jan. 26, 2017. Patrick A. Toohey, BSBA, Lake Oswego, Oregon, Feb. 8, 2017.

**65** Frederick C. Kappus, BSBA, King George, Virginia, May 1, 2017. Sr. Lorene Orth, ASC, MSEdu, Wichita, Kansas, April 28, 2015.

**66** Susan Corcoran Liebhardt, ARTS, Stoughton, Wisconsin, Feb. 18, 2017.

**67** Sr. Mary Hawkins, OSB, MA, Canyon, Texas, March 15, 2017. Dr. Charles E. Keenan Jr., ARTS, Le Mars, Iowa, Feb. 23, 2017.

**68** Bill M. Anderson, MSEdu, Tekamah, Nebraska, Feb. 18, 2017. Mary A. Rosenberger, MLN, Lincoln, Nebraska, June 21, 2016.

**69** Todd J. Bruett, MSGuid, Omaha, April 29, 2017. Frances A. Howard, MSGuid, Salem,

Oregon, March 29, 2017. Edward G. Warin, BS, Omaha, May 20, 2017.

**70** Theodore R. Boecke, BA, Clive, Iowa, Jan. 30, 2017. G. Kevin Garretty, BSPha, Santa Cruz, California, Jan. 28, 2017. Richard D. McCallan, ARTS, Omaha, May 8, 2017.

**71** Duane L. Thelen, BSC'56, MBA, Omaha, Feb. 23, 2017.

**72** Ann Waegner Atkins, ARTS, Grand Island, Nebraska, Jan. 26, 2017. Frank S. Leone, MD, Chico, California, March 16, 2017. Fr. Raymond Roh, OSB, MAREd, San Luis Obispo, California, Feb. 8, 2017.

**74** Eleanor B. Dixon, BS, Omaha, March 8, 2017. Herbert M. Patten, BA'66, MA, Omaha, April 13, 2017. Hon. Maurice S. Redmond, JD, South Sioux City, Nebraska, Nov. 28, 2016.

**75** Stephen C. Hansen, JD, Columbus, Nebraska, May 2, 2017.

**76** Joseph J. Beninato Jr., JD, Omaha, March 20, 2017. Bonnie R. Dawson, JD, Omaha, March 31, 2017. Joyce J. Schultz, MLN, Grand Island, Nebraska, Feb. 20, 2017.

**77** Terrill K. Kendrick, ARTS, Omaha, March 10, 2017.

**78** Julie A. Fillenwarth, JD, Arnolds Park, Iowa, April 14, 2017. Kathleen Moore Platter, MSGuid, Tualatin, Oregon, Nov. 24, 2016. David J. Pokorny, MD, Portland, Oregon, Jan. 31, 2017.

**81** Rosemarie Bucchino Lee, BSBA'79, JD, Omaha, March 13, 2017. Kevin M. McNulty, BA, Omaha, March 1, 2017.

**82** William J. Reh Jr., MA, Omaha, March 9, 2017.

**84** Barbara Edwards Eckel, BS, Bellevue, Nebraska, Feb. 20, 2017. Karl V. Reed, BSBA, Marksville, Louisiana, March 1, 2017.

**88** Rev. David J. Paul, SM, MSEdu'75, JD, St. Louis, Feb. 22, 2017. Thomas C. Reed, BSBA, Stone Mountain, Georgia, Feb. 13, 2017.

**90** Darcy L. Moeller, BSBA, Indianola, Iowa, Dec. 10, 2015.

**91** Thomas A. Rainbolt, DDS, Lawrence, Kansas, April 29, 2017.

**02** Katherine Leech Gordon, DDS, Toledo, Oregon, March 8, 2017.

**04** Ryan S. Albritton, BSBA, Omaha, Feb. 18, 2017.

**16** Shane C. Broderick, BSBA, Omaha, Feb. 5, 2017.

## In Remembrance

We remember Creighton University faculty and Jesuits who have recently died. \*

- > **Richard Warren Hungerford Sr., DDS, Col., (retired USAF)**, former associate professor and chair of the Department of Oral Surgery; Feb. 18, 2017
- > **H. Kevin Happe, PhD**, associate professor of psychiatry and associate professor of biomedical sciences; Feb. 26, 2017
- > **Jim Ault**, associate professor of sociology in the Department of Cultural and Social Studies; April 26, 2017

\* Faculty and Jesuits who are Creighton alumni are listed in the Alumni Deaths section of *Creighton University Magazine*.

# Global Reach

## Partnerships Expand Creighton's International Presence in the Health Sciences

Did you know that Creighton University's health sciences programs have international partnerships with 10 universities or hospitals in China, two in Japan, one in Korea, one in Chile, one in England, two pending in Denmark and more developing in the Middle East?

Through these partnerships, Creighton faculty and students in dentistry, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy and physical therapy have opportunities to travel abroad and learn about various health care systems and cultures. Creighton also hosts visiting international scholars and students

in the health sciences, with a focus on global collaboration.

In addition, Creighton health sciences students have been traveling to the Dominican Republic through the Institute for Latin American Concern for the past 40 years, providing care to the poor and underserved. Other opportunities for health-related global



service-learning include student organizations such as Project CURA in the School of Medicine, through which students have volunteered in Ghana, Guatemala, Ecuador, Romania, Peru, Uganda, Southeast Asia and India.

"These partnerships bring Creighton to the world and the world to Creighton," said Keli Mu, PhD, director of the International Office for Health Sciences and chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy at Creighton.

"They provide our health sciences students with unique opportunities to gain a global perspective on health and health care, which will make them more well-rounded dentists, nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, physical therapists and physicians.

"We look forward to continuing to nourish and grow these international partnerships."

Mu, who was born and raised in China, has led efforts and established programs at Creighton to enhance international exchange and collaboration.

In May, he traveled to China with Chris Bradberry, PharmD, dean of the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, and Creighton President the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, to secure the latest partnership with Xian-Jiong Medical University and Hospital.

The American Occupational Therapy Association honored Mu with its International Service Award in April.



From left, Keli Mu, PhD, the Rev. Daniel Hendrickson, SJ, and Chris Bradberry, PharmD, traveled to China in May to secure the University's most recent partnership.



Where it all began ...

# Come home to your Creighton roots.

Homecoming 2017 | September 14-17

One of our greatest annual traditions, Homecoming is an ideal time for you to reunite with friends and reconnect with your Creighton roots.

This September, come home to Creighton for a family-friendly weekend of festivities. From the President's Alumni Dinner to a Homecoming game, a service project and much more, Homecoming has events for all to enjoy.

• Stay up to date at: [creighton.edu/homecoming](http://creighton.edu/homecoming)

 CreightonUniversityAlumni

 @CreightonAlumni #CreightonWeek

creighton**alumni**

# Nationally Recognized



Top-ranked for 14 consecutive years, Creighton University delivers a tradition of academic excellence. We are named one of the most innovative schools in the Midwest. And nationally, Creighton is the only Catholic university among the 36 universities recognized for an extraordinary commitment to undergraduate research.



Our Heider College of Business also holds many high points of distinction, including a top 100 ranking among business programs in the United States.

Guided by a Jesuit tradition, Creighton students pursue big ideas and discover ways to make the world a better place.

**With a 99% success rate after graduation, it is no surprise our recent graduates are ready to lead rewarding lives and careers.**

.....• See more at [creighton.edu](http://creighton.edu)

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