

# KEANN

M A G I N E

Spring 2017



● MATT SENNA '07 HAS THE GOLDEN TOUCH



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Phil Colicchio '90



Cory Booker



Human Rights Conference



Honoring Veterans

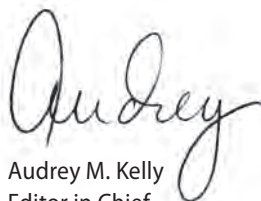
There are quite a few boys in my family and their obsession with sneakers baffled me for years. Birthdays, holidays, graduations—you name it—the gift of choice was always sneakers, and rather expensive Jordans in particular. So I confess to both excitement and relief after reading our cover story on Matt Senna '07 and his "Higher Learning" series of bronzed and gilded Nike Air Jordan sneakers. Clearly, my boys were just being boys.

Matt, however, is doing much more. His unique and compelling approach to art and expression, in every form, has captured the imagination of a generation and the attention of the some of world's most successful artists and athletes. His story defines what we mean by world-class at Kean University, and his eagerness to share his fame and insights with future generations of Kean artists and designers only underscores the strength of his character.

Senna is just one of a number of inspiring alumni stories in this edition of Kean Magazine. John Turner '92, '97 shares the story of how hard work and higher education helped shape his incredible success in the business world. Adele Kenny '70, meanwhile, stirs us with the beguiling voice of her creative writing and poetry. Kelly Rapkin '14 brings art to life, literally, in the garden-like gallery of Grounds for Sculpture located just outside of Princeton, NJ. Like Senna, all three remain connected to the Kean community, giving back through service on the Kean Foundation Board and the Global Business Advisory Board, inspiring future generations of Kean writers with poetry dedicated to her alma mater, and returning to the Kean Ocean classroom as a teacher to pay it forward.

One of the things I love most about reading alumni profiles is that it inspires me to think of what's next—to look around campus at the beautiful, diverse and determined faces of our current students and imagine what their success story will be. Kean is a special place. I hope you feel the same when you finish this edition.

Enjoy the read!



Audrey M. Kelly  
Editor in Chief

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# KEAN



For many years, more than a four-lane highway divided Liberty Hall Museum from the Kean University campus and its thriving academic community. But all of that changed about a decade ago when the Kean family and the University realized that both shared a vision for a future that integrated the historic treasure with the vibrant life of our higher education campus.

Through the combined efforts of Mr. John Kean and the Kean University Board of Trustees, we successfully joined forces and created a partnership that marries the beauty and history of Liberty Hall with the energy and forward-thinking nature of our campus community. In the years since the partnership began, we have celebrated historic discoveries in both the archives and on the grounds. Annual exhibits ranging from travel to fashion to newspapers have garnered national attention, and hundreds of thousands of visitors—including thousands of school children from around New Jersey—have enjoyed strolls through the exquisite gardens and real-life experiences of a time gone by.


This year, the partnership is poised to take another step forward with the creation of the new Liberty Hall Academic Center (see page 44). As envisioned, this new facility will provide opportunities for researchers and history buffs alike to explore the rich past of Liberty Hall that helped shape the creation of our state and our nation. The new academic facility will be located on the Liberty Hall campus, just outside the historic district that surrounds the Liberty Hall mansion, the Firehouse, the Carriage House and the “Blue House” welcome center.

In addition to classrooms, seminar space and a world-class research library, the academic center will include extensive, state-of-the-art gallery space to showcase, among other things, the treasures of Liberty Hall that to date have spent much of their years boxed away in attics and ice houses. This new academic facility also will be home to our thriving History Department, and serve as a resource for visiting teachers and their students.

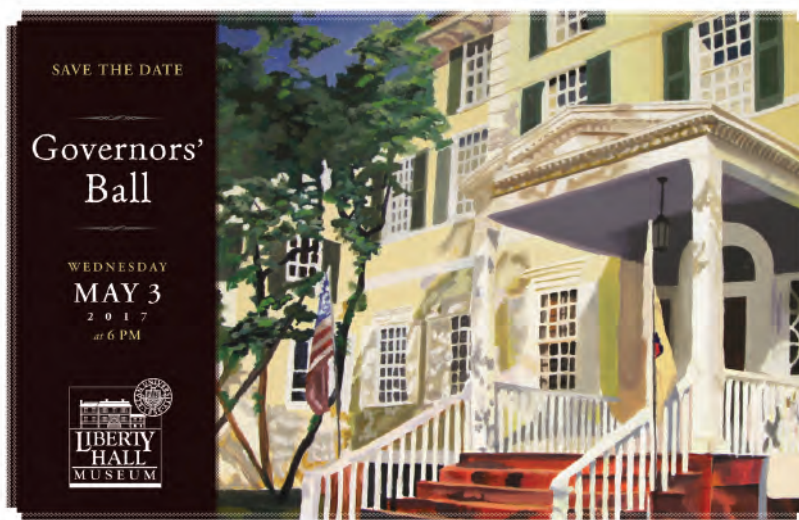
Once again, Mr. Kean and the University have worked together to successfully design an approach to learning and research that ensures the preservation of historic Liberty Hall, its fabulous gardens and its bucolic setting by creating a viable and steady stream of interest and resources for the Liberty Hall campus. Together, we also continue our outreach to the New Jersey community, seeking support for the future of this national treasure through events ranging from afternoon teas to Kentucky Derby parties, to the upcoming Governors’ Ball on Wednesday, May 3.

The Governors’ Ball is second to take place on the grounds of Liberty Hall, which is home to New Jersey’s first governor William Livingston. Hosted by all of New Jersey’s living governors, the event features an evening of dinner and dancing on the museum’s grounds, with all proceeds going to benefit the Museum. I hope you can join us for this truly spectacular event, which transports us all back to a simpler time and place—even if it’s just for a few hours.

I look forward to seeing you on campus!



Dawood Farahi, Ph.D.







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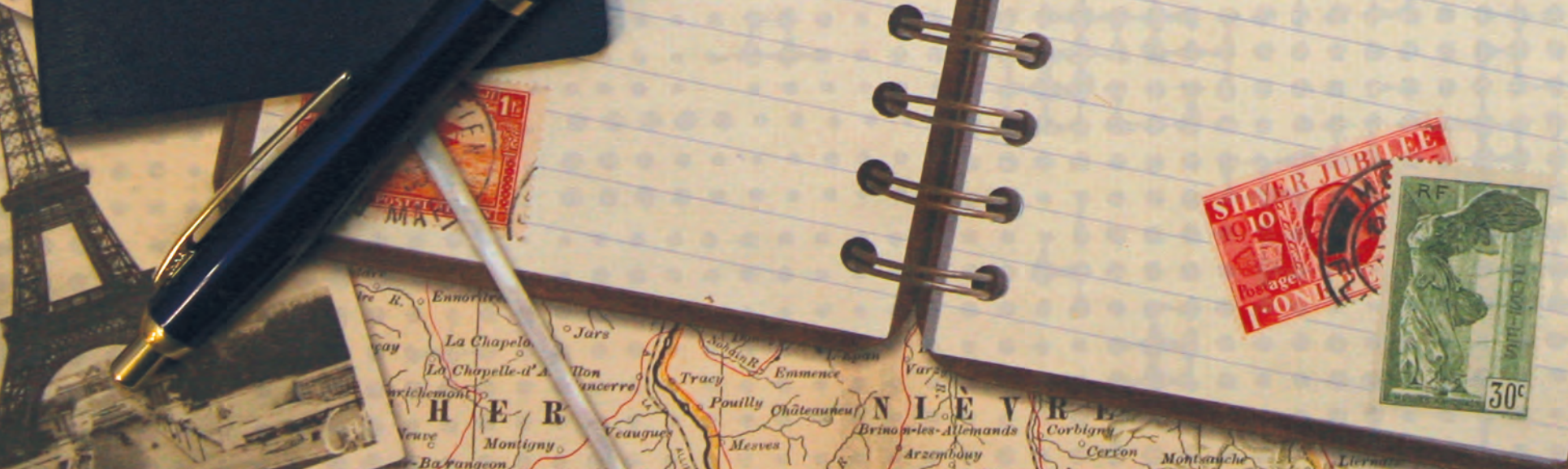
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TRAVEL LOG

Where  
in the  
World







## Sky High

Recent alum Katie DiCarlo '16, B.A. Elementary Education, sent us this photo of her skydiving adventure in Williamstown, N.J.

"This was my first, and last time skydiving! My high school friends and I wanted to do something crazy before we all went away for college. I was the first one to leave for school, so the day before I came to Kean for field hockey preseason my freshman year we went! It was an amazing experience I'll never forget!"

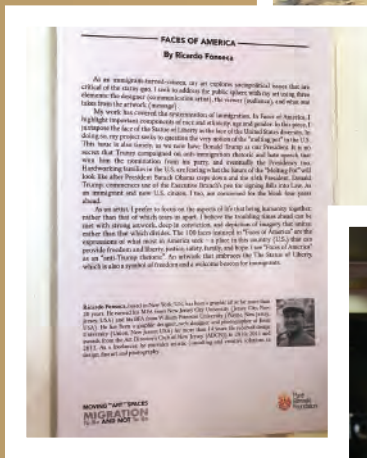
#ThrowbackThursday #Awesome #hashtagsdontworkinprint

## Featured Artist

Ricardo Fonseca, M.F.A, (far right) graphic designer for the Office of University Relations, had his artwork, titled *Faces of America*, showcased as part of the Pune Art Biennale 2017, which took place from January 5-29 in Pune, India. Fonseca was the only artist from the United States to be featured in the exclusive bi-annual art festival, a unique exhibition hung inside of a row of cargo containers lined in the center of the city.



*Faces of America* is a digital animation featuring portraits he took of a diverse selection of Kean students, faculty, staff and others stylized to appear as the "face" of the Statue of Liberty. An artistic statement about identity, diversity and immigration, each portrait morphs into the next, challenging the viewer's perception of what an American looks like.



Just as the single portraits transform into a collective piece, Fonseca's *Faces of America* has experienced its own evolution. The original artwork began as a two-dimensional mural created in 2008 for a class project. The following year, the portraits welcomed guests to the 2009 Kean Gala at Ellis Island, as well as visitors to the student lounge in Hutchinson Hall. Most recently, Fonseca collaborated with his longtime friend and multimedia production artist, Dimitry Liaros of LensView Films, to create the morphing effect for the *Faces of America* animation video that was featured in the Pune Art Biennial.



### Send Us Your Photos!

Do you have pictures of yourself rocking your Kean gear or sporting your Kean bag? Whether traveling abroad, or sitting in the yard... at work, at home, wherever! Send your photos to Joey Moran at [jmoran@kean.edu](mailto:jmoran@kean.edu) and you could be in the next issue of *Kean Magazine*.



## A Woodland Sanctuary for Sustainability Studies

### Kean's Highlands Campus Builds New Facility



A “living laboratory” located in New Jersey’s Passaic county, Kean Highlands spans 41-acres of pristine forest, providing immersive research and educational opportunities for students. Site work and renovation of the property’s existing 20,000-square-foot structure are now underway, part of a plan to develop the site into an environmental education center. New instructional spaces and an elevated tree canopy walkway through the surrounding forest are currently in the final design phases.

The new facility will house Kean’s School of Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (SESS). With programs in Union, Costa Rica and China, SESS prepares students to solve the environmental and sustainability problems facing the world today.

“The campus is a great resource not only for Kean’s students but also for the Highlands community due to its natural beauty as well as its preserved environmental setting,” said Feng Qi, Ph.D., SESS executive director. “We have been using it as an outdoor laboratory and classroom to teach students practical skills to analyze and better conserve the environment, and we hope it does the same for the local community.”

Kean Highlands began offering courses in environmental biology to undergraduate students in 2013 and launched a pre-college summer program in Earth and environmental science in 2014. The Kean Highlands pre-college summer program primarily serves students from urban school districts, where environmental blight has the most impact on communities. The camp provides high school students with valuable opportunities to explore local flora and fauna, while studying ecology, sustainability, conservation and the impact of climate change.

“The NY-NJ Highlands protects and promotes some of the region’s most remarkable natural and cultural resources,” said Kean University President Dr. Dawood Farahi. “Research and study undertaken in this outdoor education center will provide exceptional opportunities for Kean University students.”

A joint initiative between Kean and the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection, Kean Highlands will preserve many acres of forest and utilize the surrounding landscape as an instructional tool and inspiration for generations to come. Students and visitors alike will have access to facilities that include a large lake, an outdoor amphitheater, an observatory and an extensive network of hiking trails.







# Waxing Poetic

## Pulitzer Prize Winning Poet Speaks to Kean Students

Acclaimed poet, essayist, and author, Peter Balakian, gave a reading and lecture in the new North Avenue Academic Building on November 18th.

Balakian is the 2016 winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for *Ozone Journal*, and *The New York Times* best-selling author of *The Burning Tigris*, which explores the American response to the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923.

The crowd was made up of Kean University English, Poetry, and Holocaust & Genocide Studies students, as well as visiting high schoolers from Woodbridge and Asbury Park.

Introduced by his sister, Kean faculty member Jan Balakian, the author and self-proclaimed “Jersey guy” explored his creative process between excerpts from his books, expanding on his childhood as a student athlete in the Garden State, as well as his experience as a descendant of Armenian immigrants.

His writing was enriched by his background, he explained, because of the power of “place” in his work. “I’m really connected to Jersey as a place. I think ‘place’ is one of the most animating forces for the making of art. It’s not the only force, of course, but a deeply animating force in the making of literature, in the making of poetry.”

After the reading, Balakian was joined on stage by university students, high schoolers, and members of the Kean community for an interview, taking questions right from the audience. Speaking to the aspiring poets in the crowd, Balakian offered valuable, practical, insight into the creative process that could then be used to develop the next crop of New Jersey poets.

The importance of language in poetry, both written and read, was a key facet of Balakian’s message to his young audience. “Whatever meaning is embodied in my work is inseparable from language and the unique music that poems create. The message is always part of language and part of the discovery of rich layered and challenging language.”

Balakian has taught at Colgate University since 1980, where he is currently the Director of Creative Writing, and the Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities in the Department of English.

The event was organized by Dr. Jeffrey Beck, Dean of the Nathan Weiss Graduate College, who is also an accomplished poet, having won the 2015 Norton Girault Prize for his poem, *How-to-Blind-Cyclops Instructions*.



*Peter Balakian, the 2016 winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry, spoke at Kean’s new North Avenue Academic Building.*



## #KeanStories

### Authentic Student Stories Drive Kean's Social Media

Historically speaking, when prospective students set out on their search for the right college or university, they are looking for environments that offer world-class programs, experienced faculty, and state-of-the-art facilities. However, just as importantly, they are also looking for a place to fit in; a place to call "home."

Fortunately for students today, this information is easily accessible; the ability to view and better understand Kean University's campus life, community accomplishments, and multitude of opportunities afforded from a Kean education is available to them 24/7, through the window provided by the University's social media accounts.

Prior to the May 2016 Undergraduate Commencement, Kean Social started a campaign called #KeanStories; a campus version of the "Humans Of New York" account created by the 2016 Undergraduate Commencement Speaker Brandon Stanton. Like its predecessor, #KeanStories creates a deeper sense of community by connecting and engaging current students, prospective students, their families, alumni, faculty, staff, and the local community.

This is achieved through the sharing of stories, in the words and images of the people who lived them. These stories encompass a myriad of relatable and inspiring topics; from life growing up within the foster care system, to winning the fight against overwhelming injury, disease, or financial hardship, to grieving the loss of a loved one. From professors working alongside students to spark a change in their community, and



New Jersey Senators standing behind the Kean mission, to coaches winning prestigious awards, and veterans helping one another transition into civilian life; these stories highlight and connect the diverse individuals that make up the Kean University community.

Kean Social has also taken a new approach to connecting alumni, current, and prospective students. By collecting advice from Kean Alumni on LinkedIn, the "Tuesday Tips" campaign uses student photos of campus, paired with the alumni advice, to create a dialogue between the past and present Kean community, inviting everyone to join the conversation. Even the professors chimed in, praising their past students for their commendable advice to the younger generation headed to college. The campaign helps to create an authentic timeline, showing growth from current Kean student to well beyond graduation, while simultaneously encouraging new and prospective students to get involved at Kean and share in the journey.

Since its creation, Kean Social has implemented campaigns to increase the University's ability to respond to, and engage with, members of the entire Kean community. Their work exemplifies Kean Pride, by creating a sense of unity through the sharing of personal stories, advice, YouTube videos, and news highlighting the accomplishments of students, faculty and alumni. In this way, Kean Social manages to showcase the very cornerstone of the University Mission; celebrating the diversity of individuals, while simultaneously connecting them with the thread of commonality.





# Scientists on Call

## Connecting Science with Human Rights

Kean University Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Jeffrey H. Toney, Ph.D., is at the forefront of a new field of study – Science and Human Rights. In 2009, inspired by Kean’s annual Human Rights Conference, Toney joined the newly formed Science and Human Rights Coalition, through the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). The Coalition is comprised of a group of scientists and engineers who dedicate their training, experience, and methods to help solve human rights issues around the world.

“My background was as a professional scientist,” said Toney, who is a chemist. “At the time, I really knew nothing about human rights as an area of study that someone with my background could get involved in.”

As a member of the Coalition’s steering committee, Toney now helps guide the organization’s future, and he is deeply involved on the education side of its efforts. He worked on a committee that created an extensive bibliography of the literature that connects science and engineering with human rights.

“Basically, we are curating research about what is now an emerging field of research. Ten years ago, this didn’t even exist,” said Toney.

A wide range of course syllabi has been developed to teach science and engineering through the lens of human rights, using case studies and real-world situations. These syllabi have been used in classrooms at Kean and elsewhere.

Another of Toney’s initiatives is an annual student essay and poster competition in Washington, D.C. Kean alumna Lina Caswell, M.A.’16, of Boonton attended one of the conferences and took third place in the poster contest.

“It was a great opportunity for students like me. They had amazing, amazing speakers,” said Caswell. “I also had the opportunity to present my ideas and hear from other students across the country.”

With the backing of the AAAS – the largest professional science organization in the world – the Science and Human Rights Coalition has grown. Today, there are more than a half-million members from approximately 23 professional organizations taking part.

“I think of the resource, having this network at our fingertips, particularly with internship opportunities at these professional organizations,” said Toney. “It really sparks a fire. I think about students. How can I get them involved?”

In a related effort, AAAS has formed On-Call Scientists, who volunteer in human rights hotspots around the world. While Toney’s work at Kean keeps him rooted to campus, his involvement with the Science and Human Rights Coalition continues to grow and inspire.



*Kean alumna Lina Caswell, M.A.'16, took third place in the poster contest at the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition Meeting in Washington, D.C.*



# Celebrating Black History Month



(l to r) Dr. James Conyers, director of the Office of Africana Studies, speaks to Kean students and faculty at a flag raising ceremony in front of the Miron Student Center (MSC). Jazz musicians perform in the MSC Little Theatre. Kean students with a poster of Mahalia Jackson, an influential African American gospel singer, during the Black History Month Kickoff event in the Maxine and Jack Lane Center for Academic Success.

Kean University is a vibrant and diverse community that celebrates the cultural richness of our varied histories. Each February, Kean students, faculty, and staff gather along with our neighbors to celebrate Black History Month and the tremendous contributions people of African descent have made to this nation and the world.

Black History Month festivities at Kean began with a flag raising outside of the Miron Student Center on February 1.

For the third consecutive year, Kean's Pan-African Student Union presented an educational play, entitled *Black Wall Street: A True Reflection of the Sun People*, performed by the United Youth of New Jersey.

From February 1st through March 3rd, Kean University hosted *Wandering Spirit: African Wax Prints* at the Karl and Helen Burger Gallery.

"The *Wandering Spirit* exhibition is a great opportunity for visitors of the Burger Gallery to consider the cultural dynamic that drives tastes and trends in clothing and fashion," said Neil Tetkowsky, Director of Kean University Galleries.

The works in *Wandering Spirit* trace the history of the African wax print, showing how these fabrics reflect the stories, dreams, and personalities of the people who wear them. *Wandering Spirit: African Wax Prints* was curated by Dr. Gifty Benson and organized by Exhibits USA/Mid-America Arts Alliance, Kansas City, Mo.

Mr. De Lacy D. Davis presented *The Hunt for Black and Brown Bodies in the US: Police Brutality - Don't get Trumped Up!* and Tyrone Powers, Ph.D., developed the theme *The Challenge and the Dilemma: Crime, Violence, and Justice*, both lectures and discussions were open to the Kean Community in the Miron Student Center's Little Theatre.

Celebrating its 25th Anniversary, the renowned dance troupe Rennie Harris PUREMOVEMENT brought African-American traditions of the past, and the voices of a new generation, to the Wilkins Theatre. PUREMOVEMENT is dedicated to preserving and disseminating hip hop culture through workshops, classes, lectures, long term residencies, mentoring programs, and public performances.

Reverend Marsha Lee-Watson delivered a lecture entitled *A View from the Inside out: Incarceration of African American Women and Girls; A forgotten population that continues to grow!* Later that same day, Rene McLean & JMC Dynasty presented a concert honoring the life and legacy of the late jazz great Jackie McLean.

Kean University offers a variety of theatre, dance, art, lectures, and other cultural programming year-round. Visit our beautiful campus to see more of what Kean has to offer.





# Community Service

## Kean Students Earn Recognition on President Obama's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll



*Kean students have volunteered for a variety of projects all over the state.*

Kean University is committed to creating and nurturing a culture of service. Kean students are engaged with their communities and with contemporary social problems; engineering novel solutions to present day challenges in the classroom and beyond. Kean's exemplary community service programs and ongoing commitment to civic engagement have been recognized by the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS), which recently named Kean to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for the sixth consecutive time. Kean students earned this prestigious designation by logging 49,500 hours of community service in a 12-month period.

"Six straight years on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll is a point of pride for all of us at Kean," said Kean University President Dawood Farahi, Ph.D. "Community service is part of Kean's curriculum and its culture. Our community has answered the call to service with an exemplary commitment to making meaningful improvements in the communities around us."

Kean's Center for Leadership and Service (CLS) oversees and coordinates a number of community service projects throughout the year including: the 9/11 and MLK National Days of Service, National Volunteer Week, regular blood drives, environmental cleanups, Hurricane Sandy relief projects, and multiple charitable fundraising and collection efforts.

In 2015, Kean was one of the top fundraising teams for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk of Edison, NJ, raising nearly \$6,000 for cancer research. The annual Kean Dance Marathon (KDM) raises funds for the Children's Miracle Network. Over the past few years Kean

students have raised over \$75,000 for the Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside, N.J. The event organizers hope to raise \$40,000 at this year's KDM, scheduled for Friday, April 7.

"Our students want to contribute to a better world, and we offer them opportunities to do that, as a cornerstone to their world-class Kean University experience," said Janice Murray-Laury, Kean's vice president for student affairs. "But make no mistake about it, they are the ones who do the work, and who are eager to make a difference. It is great to see them get the recognition that they so richly deserve."

"Everyone on campus shares this honor," said Scott Snowden, CLS director. "Working through groups like the Student Organization, Greek Life, the Center for Leadership and Service, athletics, health sciences, Be the Change, JumpStart, and others, students with a passion for making a difference in the lives of others are having an impact through service projects addressing hunger and homelessness, early childhood education, the environment, cancer research, and so much more."

CNCS, the federal agency for volunteering and service, has administered the President's Community Service Honor Roll since 2006, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the American Council on Education, Campus Compact, and the Interfaith Youth Core.

For more information about Kean University's community service opportunities, visit [www.kean.edu/offices/cls](http://www.kean.edu/offices/cls). The full list of Honor Roll awardees can be found at [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov).

# One Good Turn



Kean's Be the Change Group Helps Out Local Hero



(above) Members of Be the Change are pictured giving a shirt and other items to Lee Parker, who discovered pipe bombs in an abandoned backpack. (right) The next day a photo of Lee Parker, wearing his Be the Change shirt, and his friend Ivan White appeared in *The New York Times*. (photo by Bryan Anselm for *The New York Times*)

**H**ow do you properly honor a man whose courage and quick thinking may have saved lives?

If you are members of Kean University's Be The Change organization, you take him out to dinner. You help him find permanent housing. You provide items to help furnish his apartment.

You do anything you can do, to help.

That is exactly what Be The Change members did when they tracked down Lee Parker, the man who found a backpack full of explosives near the Elizabeth train station on September 18, 2016. The discovery was connected to a series of bombs also left in Manhattan and Seaside Park that captivated the nation. Parker and a friend, Navy veteran Ivan White, found the backpack and bravely moved it to a less-populated area before notifying the Elizabeth Police Department.

Be The Change is a community service and activism group founded by Dr. Norma Bowe at Kean in 2008. The group has attracted attention from the national media and was selected by the Clinton Global Initiative University as an exhibitor at their 2015 annual meeting. Be The Change now boasts almost 1,000 members and has extended beyond the Kean campus.

Bowe, who as part of her tireless work in the area has amassed a network of connections in the communities surrounding Kean, was able to track down Parker and White before any of the major media outlets were able to locate the heroic duo.

That's when Be The Change got to work.

Members of the group were moved by Parker's struggles after Hurricane Sandy, which left him unemployed and eventually homeless. As Parker told Kean's student newspaper *The Tower*, "We're all just one paycheck away. When the storm hit, one thing led to another. I was unemployed for a while and exhausted the unemployment benefits and found myself here."

Be The Change members took Parker to dinner at Algarve, a local Portuguese restaurant and favorite of the Kean community. Jessica Fernandez, a member of Be the Change and Dr. Bowe's graduate assistant, described Parker as "a very humble, sweet man."

The help did not end with just a steak dinner. Be The Change also put Parker up at a hotel until he could find permanent housing and a job as a forklift operator at a local supermarket. To assist with the commute to work, the group also provided Parker with a bicycle, which he refers to now as his "whip."

At an Elizabeth City Hall ceremony on September 27, Parker and White were given the keys to the city by Mayor Chris Bollwage. Bollwage also took time to thank Be The Change "who stepped forward to help".



Elizabeth Mayor Chris Bollwage '81, '89, H'02 speaks at a press conference along side U.S. Senators Cory Booker and Bob Menendez.



# Camp Premiere

Mā^i ^k^m nf f ^ki kh` kzf □\_hkZl i btoj` □ra^Zrk^Zkrb rh'

**Theatremakers: July 10-21**

*(for students entering Grades 6-8)*

**Actors Studio: July 24-August 4**

*(for students entering Grades 9-12)*

**Tuition is \$295. Limited full and partial scholarships are available.**

**Register now at: [bit.ly/CampPremiere](https://bit.ly/CampPremiere)**





# Homegrown THEATRE

For the first time in its thirteen-year history, Premiere Stages will simultaneously commission three New Jersey-based playwrights to create works inspired by – and taking place in – real-life Garden State communities.

## PREMIERE COMMISSIONS SECOND ACT OF MY LORD, WHAT A NIGHT

Following a sold-out run at Liberty Hall Museum in October 2016, Premiere Stages has commissioned North Bergen playwright Deborah Brevoort to expand her wildly successful one-act play, *My Lord, What a Night*, into a full-length play. Based on actual events, *My Lord, What a Night* dramatizes the night legendary African American singer Marian Anderson gave a concert in Princeton and was later refused a room at the Nassau Inn. She was subsequently invited to stay at the home of Albert Einstein, an ardent civil rights supporter, setting in motion a lasting - and fascinating - friendship. Ms. Brevoort's proposed second act will jump ahead two years to 1939, shortly after Ms. Anderson has been denied a concert at the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Constitution Hall, and just before her celebrated performance at the Lincoln Memorial.

"This event, which established the National Mall and the Lincoln Memorial as the seat and symbol of civil rights protest in the United States, was a direct outgrowth of what began two years earlier in Princeton," stated Ms. Brevoort. "The symbolic value of Anderson's concert at the Lincoln Memorial was later invoked by the organizers of the March on Washington, who understood the significance of the location. In fact, Marian Anderson stood on the podium next to Martin Luther King, Jr. as he delivered his 'I Have a Dream' speech, sealing forever the symbolic importance of the Lincoln Memorial to the civil rights movement and to American culture at large."

This commission marks the first time Premiere has further developed a Liberty Live Commission into a full-length play. A unique partnership between Premiere Stages and Liberty Hall Museum, the biannual Liberty Live project commissions a New Jersey playwright to create a new one-act play about an event that helped to shape history in the Garden State. The project celebrates New Jersey history with professional theatrical productions, museum tours, interactive displays, workshops for children, and talk-backs with local historians.

Joel Leffert as Albert Einstein, Mitch Greenberg as Abraham Flexner, Erika LaVonn as Marian Anderson, and Lizan Mitchell as Mary Church Terrell in Deborah Brevoort's *My Lord, What a Night*, directed by Kel Haney. Photo by Mike Peters.





### 2017 NJPAC STAGE EXCHANGE IN THE WORKS

Premiere is also one of three professional theatres in the state to be selected by the New Jersey Theatre Alliance for participation in the **2017 NJPAC Stage Exchange**, an annual new play development initiative funded by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC). Premiere Stages has commissioned New Jersey native Nicole Pandolfo to write a full-length play exploring issues relevant to the Garden State. In tandem with the commission, Ms. Pandolfo will also lead a 6-8 week playwriting residency in the Newark public school where her play takes place.

In Ms. Pandolfo's *Brick City*, set at Malcolm X High School in Newark, the paint is peeling, lead-poisoned water pours from the faucets, Mark Zuckerberg's much publicized funding has gone disastrously wrong, and racial tensions are at an all-time high. When a troubled student in a wheelchair and a student-athlete with a big scholarship on the line find themselves together in detention during the most important week of their lives, both teenagers learn that things aren't always as easy for others as they may seem.

*Brick City* will have a free staged reading at NJPAC on May 5. Premiere Stages will continue to develop the play with a staged reading in Kean's Miron Student Center Little Theatre **October 20 – 22, 2017**, and a full production in 2018 as part of Premiere Stages' mainstage season.

### BLACK TOM ISLAND

Premiere Stages has selected Martin Casella's **Black Tom Island** as the winner of the 2017/2018 Liberty Live Commission. Based on a real incident that took place in Jersey City in 1916, *Black Tom Island* explores the first documented terrorist attack on American soil through the lens of a fictionalized Slovak immigrant and his wife who may or may not be involved in the attack.

"I learned about the Black Tom terrorist attack while attending the Catholic Church of Our Lady of Czestochowa, in the Paulus Hook neighborhood," said Mr. Casella. "Inside the church there is a beautiful stained glass window dedicated to the victims of the attack. In the front area of the church, there is a lovely marble baptismal font, which is inscribed with a prayer for the explosion's survivors, written in Polish. Interested in both of these items, I asked our parish priest about the story behind them. He was the first person to tell me about the Black Tom Island attack, and that the island is now incorporated into Jersey City's Liberty State Park. That this area was only a mile or so from my apartment only intrigued me even more."

Premiere will present a staged reading of *Black Tom Island* **November 17 – 19** in the Miron Student Center Little Theatre. This developmental reading will be free, and will represent the first time Mr. Casella has heard a draft of his play read aloud by professional actors in front of a live audience. Premiere Stages will present a full production of the play at Liberty Hall Museum in October 2018.



Erika LaVonn as Marian Anderson and Joel Leffert as Albert Einstein in Deborah Brevoort's *My Lord, What a Night*, directed by Kel Haney. Photo by Mike Peters.

The play will be produced in partnership with Liberty Hall's next ongoing exhibit, **Brothers in Arms: Memories of the Great War (April 2017 – October 2018)**, which commemorates the 100th anniversary of the United States entering World War I. Using firsthand accounts from letters and postcards, photographs and personal objects, visitors will follow in the footsteps of Captain John Kean from his training to fighting on the battlefield as a World War I soldier.

"We are excited to commission and develop three new plays that promise to be as educational as they are entertaining," said John J. Wooten, director of arts programming and Premiere's producing artistic director. "In addition to forging unique collaborations to expand the impact of these New Jersey-focused works, we would also like to thank the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, NJPAC and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance for their special assistance in helping to bring these three remarkable shows to life."

Please call 908-737-SHOW (7469), email [ticket@kean.edu](mailto:ticket@kean.edu), or visit [www.kean.edu/premierestages](http://www.kean.edu/premierestages) for tickets and information.



# World-Class Entertainment This Side of the Bridge

Why make the trip to New York when Kean Stage invites you to enjoy a world-class lineup of Grammy® and Tony Award-winning artists, dedicated family acts, dynamic dance companies and multicultural music, films and shows right here in your own backyard?



Billy Porter

## BROADWAY SERIES

Kean Stage's inaugural Broadway Series at the Gene & Shelley Enlow Recital Hall concludes with Grammy® and Tony Award winner **Billy Porter, April 22**. Best known for his critically acclaimed turn as Lola in the Harvey Fierstein-Cyndi Lauper musical *Kinky Boots*, Mr. Porter will present an intimate evening of songs and stories from the Great White Way. In collaboration with longtime musical director James Sampliner, Mr. Porter will translate some of the most iconic Broadway music of the past eight decades into African-American idioms, including soul, gospel, hip-hop, funk, and R&B.

## MUSIC

Just in time for St. Patrick's Day, **The Five Irish Tenors** graced Enlow's stage on **March 12**. World-renowned vocalists David Martin, Morgan Crowley, Ciarán Kelly, Alan Leech, and George Hutton presented a sensational program of the most famously beloved Irish songs, including classics *Toora-Loora-Looral*, *My Wild Irish Rose*, *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling*, *As She Moved Through The Fair* and *Danny Boy*. Fusing Irish wit and boisterous charm with lyricism, dramatic flair, and operatic style, the concert featured a combination of tenor solos, duets, trios, quartets, quintets, and tutti.

## THEATRE

Premiere Stages kicked off its 2017 Season as the professional Equity theatre in residence at Kean with its popular **Spring Reading Series March 9 - 12**, featuring free readings of this year's finalists for the Premiere Stages Play Festival, as performed by professional actors. Now in its 13th year, the Play Festival is an annual competition for unproduced scripts that offers developmental opportunities to playwrights affiliated with the greater metropolitan area (New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania). Four finalist plays are selected from approximately 400 submissions for these professional readings, with two of the four scripts eventually going on to expanded development later this season.





*Erth's Dinosaur Zoo Live*

### FAMILY PROGRAMMING

Kean Stage welcomed **Erth's Dinosaur Zoo Live** to Wilkins Theatre on **March 19**. Created by Erth Visual & Physical of Sydney, Dinosaur Zoo Live takes audiences on a breathtaking tour of prehistoric Australia. Children meet and interact with an eye-popping collection of life-like dinosaur puppets presented in an entertaining and educational live theatrical performance.

On the heels of its sold-out **Frozen Sing-a-Long** this winter, Kean Stage will present a **Grease Sing-a-Long** on **April 7** in Wilkins. Audience members are invited to dress up as their favorite Pink Lady or T-Bird and join Sandy, Danny, and the gang.

The 2016-2017 Season concludes with the high tech wizardry of **ArcAttack** on **April 30** in Wilkins Theatre. Part rock concert and part science experiment, ArcAttack invites audiences of all ages to explore concepts such as electricity, voltage and current, magnetism, robotics, and lightning through a show that's both entertaining and interactive.

### INTERNATIONAL FILM SERIES

Kean Stage's International Film Series at the STEM Building Auditorium continued with **English Vinglish** on **March 18**. Directed by Gauri Shinde and starring Sridevi, once hailed as the "Meryl Streep of India," this Indian comedy-drama follows the trials and tribulations of a put-upon housewife whose decision to enroll in an English-speaking course sets her on a course to empowerment and self-discovery.

In the Swedish black comedy, **Force Majeure**, **April 23**, a family ski trip to the Alps takes an irrevocable turn when a sudden avalanche propels the patriarch to make an astonishing choice that will continue to reverberate. Directed by Ruben Östlund, the film won the coveted Jury Prize at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated as Best Foreign Language Film at the 72nd Golden Globe Awards.



*The Five Irish Tenors*



*Premiere Stages Spring Reading Series*

### KEAN STUDENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Theatre Conservatory will cap off its season of modern classics with the much-anticipated **An Alternate Approach: An Experiment in Perspective**, **March 31 – April 8**, Vaughn Eames Hall, coordinated by theatre professor and resident costume designer Karen Lee Hart. In this innovative, site-specific, collaboration, teams of student performers, designers, choreographers, and directors will turn the typical production process upside down and inside out as they approach Charlotte Perkins Gilman's acclaimed short story, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, from unique points of view. Performances will begin in the Zella Fry Theatre, however the audience may be asked to follow the actors to an unknown location and conclusion. Patrons are encouraged to come with an open mind and a critical eye.

The semester concludes with an exciting lineup of free concerts by Kean's talented Music Conservatory students. **The Concert Choir & Chorale**, under the direction of Dr. Mark Terenzi, can be seen **April 9** at 3 p.m., while the **Wind Ensemble**, under the direction of Dr. Thomas Connors, performs **April 20** at 8 p.m.; both concerts will take place in Enlow Hall. Wilkins Theatre welcomes the **Percussion Ensemble**, under the direction of James Musto, on **April 17** at 7:30 p.m., while Kean's **Jazz Ensemble**, under the direction of jazz bassist Andy Eulau, will perform **April 27** at 7:30 p.m.

*Tickets are now on sale for all Kean Stage events. Please visit our box office (located in Wilkins Theatre at 1000 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ), call 908-737-SHOW (7469), email [ticket@kean.edu](mailto:ticket@kean.edu), or visit [www.keanstage.com](http://www.keanstage.com) for more information.*

**Use discount code CULTURE17 for 17% off tickets for Billy Porter and ArcAttack!**



# Kean Galleries

**Grids. Ceiling. Floor. Air. Play.  
What is Active and Occurring**  
Irina Pejovic

**CURRENT & UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS:**

**I Learn America: Follow Model of Artistic Impressions of  
Holocaust Liberation**

Janice Kroposky & Dr. Joseph Amorino,  
Kean University Diversity Council  
Human Rights Institute Gallery (Nancy Thompson Library)  
January 31 – May 12

–  
*Novice and accomplished artists alike explore their personal narrative through artwork created to express powerful, individual, stories as they relate to all of humanity.*

**Pastels/Photography  
Nancy Staub Laughlin**

Nancy Dryfoos Gallery (Nancy Thompson Library)  
March 2 – April 27

–  
*Ms. Laughlin's reinterpreted "still lifes" work with pastels on paper and photography, utilizing photographic "stills" as a reference to complete pastel drawings. Her newest series of dynamic, layered, assemblages actually incorporates the photograph into the pastel, allowing the viewer to enter her world of color, light, dimension, and beauty from a different perspective.*

**Grids. Ceiling. Floor. Air. Play. What is Active and Occurring  
Irina Pejovic**

Nancy Dryfoos Gallery (Nancy Thompson Library)  
May 4 – July 27





# I LEARN AMERICA

EXPLORATIONS INTO DIVERSITY,  
IDENTITY AND INCLUSION



### Abbott Miller

Karl & Helen Burger Gallery  
(Maxine & Jack Lane Center for Academic Success)  
March 20 – May 12

–  
*Mr. Abbott's projects are often concerned with the cultural role of design and the public life of the written word. A partner at Pentagram, the world's largest independent design consultancy, since 1999, Mr. Abbott leads a team creating editorial projects and designing books, magazines, catalogs, identities, and exhibitions.*

### Christa Pieper, BFA Exhibition

Student Gallery (Vaughn Eames Hall)  
March 29 – April 7

### Masters Thesis Exhibition

James Howe Gallery (Vaughn Eames Hall)  
April 8 – May 19

–  
*This exhibition features thesis work by students graduating from Kean's Master of Fine Arts program.*

### Vincent Musetti, BFA Exhibition

Student Gallery (Vaughn Eames Hall)  
April 12 – April 21

### Maite Trabadelo, BFA Exhibition

Student Gallery (Vaughn Eames Hall)  
April 26 – May 5

For gallery hours and additional information on upcoming events, please visit Kean Galleries online at [www.kean.edu/~gallery](http://www.kean.edu/~gallery) or call 908-737-0392. Admission to all exhibitions is free.



arts

# Broadway Babies

Kean Music & Theatre Students  
Share the Stage with Stars



*Patti LuPone kicked off the 2016-2017 season at Enlow Recital Hall.*



Just a few short weeks into the fall semester, 24 of Kean's most promising music and theatre majors were given the opportunity of a lifetime when they were invited to perform alongside Broadway legend and two-time Grammy and Tony Award winner Patti LuPone, in the Kean Stage season opener, *Don't Monkey with Broadway*, at the Gene & Shelley Enlow Recital Hall.

"Going to college is all about learning, so the real-life experiences we get while we are here are really important," said Connor McKenna, a sophomore Theatre Performance major from Hillsborough, NJ. "Learning from the best of the best is awesome, especially when you're studying performing arts. Patti LuPone was inspiring, and it was incredible to get the chance to explore what we want to become with someone who is already there."

The Kean University "Broadway Babies," as the choir was called, worked tirelessly in preparation for the concert, under the direction of Holly Logue, director of the Theatre Conservatory, and Joy Hermalyn, an adjunct professor of music who understudied Ms. LuPone in the Chicago production of *War Paint*. The choir's final rehearsal, held the afternoon of the show, was led by Ms. LuPone's musical director, Joseph Thalken. "Halfway through the rehearsal, the theatre doors opened, and in walked Broadway megastar Patti LuPone," said Ms. Logue. "The students' reactions were priceless. There was a moment of sheer silence and utter excitement before everyone in the room broke out in applause."

For the next hour, the rehearsal became an intense master class for the students studying music and theatre performance. Ms. LuPone gave the choir members advice on how to improve their singing and emphasized the importance of maintaining one's individuality as a character in a musical.

"It is a brutal business," she told the aspiring performers. "One needs patience and discipline, and to be able to accept the sacrifices that the business demands."

That evening, Ms. LuPone and the Broadway Babies ushered in Kean Stage's 2016-2017 season when they met again in front of a full-capacity audience in Enlow Hall. The backup choir accompanied her on several favorites from the Great White Way, including; "Trouble in River City" from *The Music Man*, "Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat" from *Guys and Dolls*, "Blow, Gabriel, Blow" from *Anything Goes*, "Sleepy Man" from *The Robber Bridegroom*, and "Some Other Time" from *On the Town*.



*Patti LuPone (center) spent time with Kean's aspiring music and theatre students*

"Some of the greatest lessons are not found in books. It's important to learn how to connect with the audience and oneself on a professional level, and being part of this concert definitely helped us learn more about how to go about doing just that," said Kevin DeCastro, a junior Theatre major from Elizabeth. "Having had the chance to learn directly from a legend in music and acting is both humbling and exciting. I see this experience as an incredible stepping stone to achieving my dreams of becoming an actor."

Steve Cochran, manager of Kean Stage, agreed. "Patti LuPone graciously gave of her time and expertise to give our students practical advice and a chance to showcase their talents on stage. Her unique gifts have undoubtedly left an indelible mark on these aspiring actors and musicians, and given them hope for what's to come if they continue to reach for the stars."

The Broadway Babies' unprecedented partnership with Ms. LuPone was the first of several professional development collaborations forged specifically to benefit Kean students. In October, Theatre Conservatory students were given a crash course in the art of improvisational acting by the Reduced Shakespeare Company, while Dr. Thomas Connors' music students were treated to a lecture and demonstration by the famed Turtle Island Quartet in November. The fall semester ended with a special appearance by the Kean University Chorale, under the musical direction of Dr. Mark Terenzi, who accompanied legendary folk singer Judy Collins on her sold-out *Holidays and Hits* concert on December 18.



*The Kean University Chorale perform with Judy Collins at her Holidays and Hits concert at Enlow Hall*





THIS IS



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# NJAC PLAYER of the YEAR

A Kean University Cougar does it again! Women's volleyball shining star, Jesse Larkin, of Redwood City, California, was awarded the 2016 New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Rookie of the Year after a standout freshman season. Larkin is second in the league with a .334 hitting percentage and third in blocks, averaging 1.03 per set. Both marks are tops among all NJAC rookies.

Although she was met with the expected challenges and tough opponents as she made her first appearances on the court, Larkin managed to hit .650 and .550 in her first two matches of the season and, from then on, was on everyone's radar.

"Jesse is smart and a steady player and we couldn't be more excited to have her on the team for the next few years," said Head Women's Volleyball Coach Don Perkins. "Other teams had to pay attention to her and she came out on top on most nights," he added, noting that she outperformed a senior competitor who had long been considered the best middle in the conference.

This marks the second-straight year a Cougar has taken home the NJAC Rookie of the Year award. Last season, current Kean sophomore Brett Harper earned the honor.

Larkin, a Redwood City, California, native, made a big first impression in her collegiate debut with 13 kills and a career-best 21 points against Mount Saint Vincent in the first match of the year on September 1. She eclipsed the kill total in NJAC action with 14 at Rowan University on September 27. Larkin's regular season totals this year included 174 kills, 85 blocks - including 14 solos - 57 digs and 27 aces. Larkin hit better than .500 in eight matches this season, including a .700 mark against Hunter College on October 25.

Being part of the Cougar's women's volleyball team has proven the value of the motto Larkin lives by: "Play for the team and not for oneself." She draws much of her inspiration from her teammates, peers and parents, and said, "my best training has been to communicate with my team to make the best chemistry on the court." Larkin also emphasized that school is her first priority. "I make sure to finish my homework before practice and games, and then skip off to play," she said. "Volleyball is a kind of getaway for me."

The Cougars finished the 2016 season with a 21-12 record, a fourth-place finish in the NJAC regular season standings and an appearance in the NJAC semifinals.





## Men's Lacrosse

Though there will be many new faces around the Kean University men's lacrosse program this spring, 14-year head coach Shelley Sheiner anticipates continuing the program's run of success in 2017.

"With the graduation of 16 seniors from last year's team, many would think we are rebuilding," said Sheiner. "I think we are fully reloaded and ready to compete for a conference championship." Last year's team outscored its opponents 190-52, and boasted seven all-conference selections.

The 2016 team was the 11th in a row to earn both a postseason appearance and a winning record for the men's lacrosse program. Sheiner believes that seniors Matt Brodley, Lucas Kiernan, and Tyler Randolph are ready to lead the team. Transfer students James Stavrakis and Tyler Roberto have the ability to make an immediate impact, and freshmen Mike Dobrowolski, Cole Blackley, Jack Bushey, and Ray Amsden will be competing for playing time right away when the season kicks off on February 25.



## Women's Lacrosse

The Kean University women's lacrosse team will look to build on its string of dominant performances and narrow losses last season as head coach Jordan Trautman enters her fifth year on the sidelines in 2017.

"(We're looking) to explode into the 2017 season with a highly skilled veteran unit and an extraordinary group of freshman," said Trautman. "Having lost only two starters from the 2016 season, Kean women's lacrosse hopes build on the lessons of last season and blaze a path of new successes in 2017."

Last year's group started the year 11-1 and won eight different games by 10 or more goals. Also included in last season's results were two narrow losses to NJAC rivals Montclair State University and Rowan University - both perennial powers on the national level. The Cougars will be looking to flip those results into wins and reach unprecedented heights for the program in 2017.



## Softball

Margie Acker returns for her 18th season at the head of the Kean University softball program in 2017. Two All-Americans will also return to the Kean lineup: seniors Emily Sabo and Dana Knapp. Both players will be looking to rewrite the Cougar record book in 2017.

Most notably, Knapp set the Kean single-season homerun record with 10 dingers last season, and may challenge the school's career record of 17 despite only playing two seasons in a Kean uniform. Sabo is looking to become the first Cougar in history to bat over .400 in her career - she'll enter her senior season with a head start thanks to her career .440 average.

"We are very excited about the season," said Acker. "We have a great combination of both power and speed offensively, with Emily Sabo and Dana Knapp leading the way. Defensively, we have a strong core of returners on the field, especially with the return of shortstop Cayleen Rizo (from injury)."

Only two seniors graduated from last year's team, which won 20 games, so the Cougars should be primed for another successful season when play begins in Florida over Spring Break.

## Baseball

The Kean University baseball team captured another NJAC Championship in 2016, marking the ninth time in 10 years that the program has captured the league's regular season or tournament crown. In addition, Kean advanced to the NCAA Regional Tournament for the 11th consecutive season. The Cougars are ready to defend their title and eager to make waves again on the national scene.

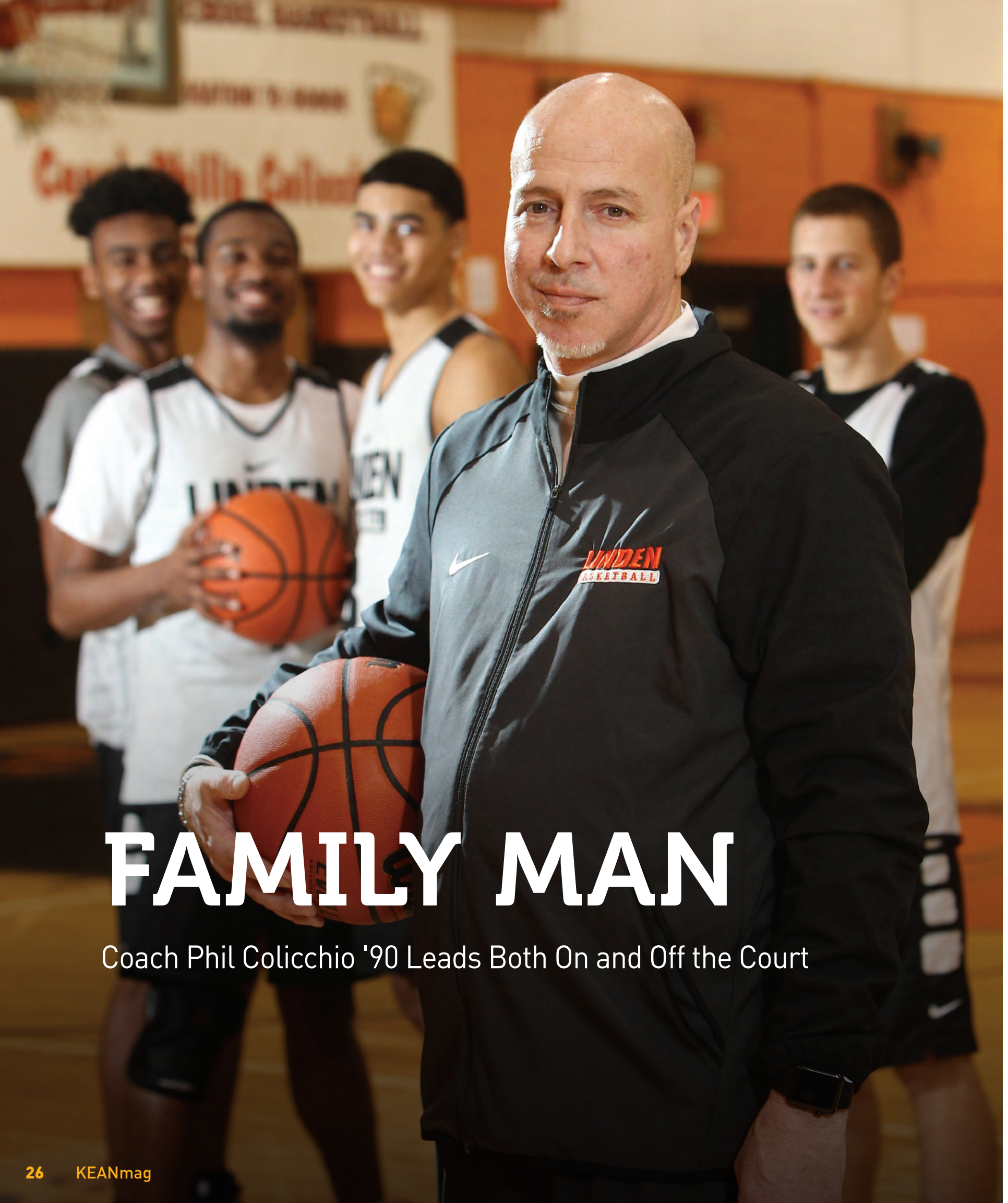
"(This year's) team has a lot of pitching depth, which should give us a chance to keep the score down consistently," said head coach Neil Ioviero. "Our defense is solid, with good arms in the field and speed in the gaps. We are excited to get to work with both our new players and our returning ones. We feel this is a hardworking and dedicated group, that will do some great things if we focus and stay humble."

Ioviero, who is in his 20th season in the Kean dugout, led the program to the 2007 NCAA National Championship, and was named the NJAC Coach of the Year for the fifth time in 2016. Kean went 30-18 last season, including a 13-5 mark in the NJAC to win the regular season conference title.

Kean was ranked 15th nationally in the preseason Collegiate Baseball National Division III poll, and returns national Gold Glove award-winning first baseman Matt Krupa, as well as All-NJAC selections Richie Ferguson and Brian Cole.







# FAMILY MAN

Coach Phil Colicchio '90 Leads Both On and Off the Court





How does a successful high school basketball coach go from good to great? For Phil Colicchio '90, head coach of the Linden High School boys basketball team, it happened when he became a father.

"Parenthood has made me a much better coach," Colicchio explains. "I know I am still feisty. But I know what parents expect of me as a coach and mentor. Being a father has made it easier to connect to my players."

After 20 years of working with Colicchio, Linden Schools Superintendent Danny Robertozzi has experienced first hand the influence the veteran coach has on the lives of inner-city players, especially those who may lack family support.

"Coach has had students on his team who are homeless," Robertozzi said. "You have kids who come from extreme poverty. The best meal (some) get all day is the school lunch. Some are growing up in households with their grandparents or their guardians. For some of these kids, Phil is the only disciplinarian they've had in their lives, but they respond to him. He's been doing it for so long now, for so many different types of kids, and he's reached so many. He's made a major difference in the lives of hundreds of students."

For some team members, basketball is their only motivation to come to school every morning. The relationship's Colicchio has formed with his players has created an impact not just on his team, but on the community as a whole. In a state known for its basketball royalty, Colicchio belongs on any short list of the best high school coaches in New Jersey. Under his command, Linden High School has won five Group IV state championships, eight sectional titles, and three county championships. The Tigers have also knocked off the number one ranked team in the nation on three separate occasions.

Colicchio, born and raised in Elizabeth, enrolled at Kean and played on the men's basketball team during his freshman year. While he excelled on the court, he admittedly did not fare as well in the classroom. Phil was academically ineligible to play basketball as a sophomore, but in a twist of fate, it was during this time that he gained his first experience in coaching.

Colicchio was invited by his former coach, Ben Candelino, to be a volunteer assistant coach at Elizabeth High School. It was there that the coaching bug first bit him and he knew he found his calling.

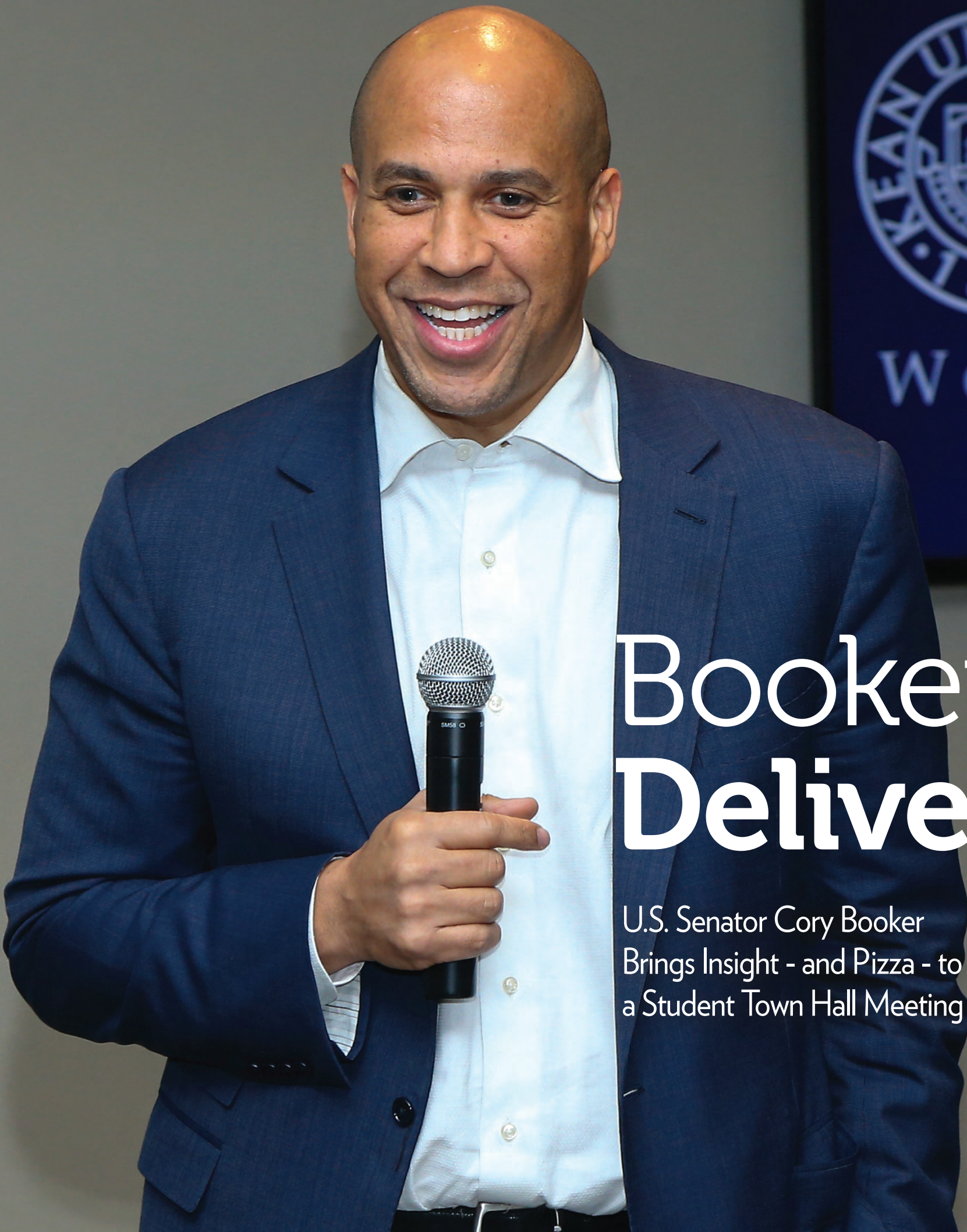
Colicchio rededicated himself to his studies and with the help of professors Dolores Shiposh and Richard Bakker, Colicchio was able to get his academic affairs in order at Kean. The two were, according to Phil, "extremely patient with me and always willing to lend a helping hand."

If the support of his dedicated professors wasn't enough to keep him on track, Phil also had the unconditional love of his high school sweetheart Laila, who was also enrolled at Kean. Thirty years later, Laila, now Dr. Laila Colicchio '89, is the foundation for Phil's belief that his success in parenting and coaching is intertwined.

Phil and Laila are the proud parents of three children: Tommy, Alissa, and Gia. In fact, it was a young Tommy that led to Colicchio's first meeting Kean University President Dawood Farahi, who is known for his dedication to keeping the campus beautiful and accessible for his students. "Tommy was outside playing by the flowers when this man approached us and welcomed us to the campus. He kept checking on the flowers; he seemed very protective of his flowers," Colicchio laughed.

Now when his team plays in Harwood Arena (Kean hosts two or three Linden basketball games each year), two things are certain: first, whether they win or lose, the Tigers are a family, and second, everyone is careful around the flowers.





# Booker Delivers

U.S. Senator Cory Booker  
Brings Insight - and Pizza - to  
a Student Town Hall Meeting





U.S. Senator Cory Booker met with approximately 150 Kean University students at a Town Hall meeting at the Green Lane Building (GLAB) on Friday, February 3, in a session that lived up to his promise of a “very honest dialogue” to learn what is on the minds of the millennial generation. Throughout the more than 90-minute session, the New Jersey democrat also challenged the students to “think about how you can be better agents of change, of justice and truth in our country.”

At the “Pizza with Cory” Town Hall – so named because the senator bought pizza for those who attended the 5:30 p.m. session – Booker fielded questions about his votes on President Trump’s cabinet nominees, the Democratic Party’s strategy in the 2016 presidential campaign, the president’s recent executive order banning travel from seven primarily Muslim nations, potential threats to federal LGBTQ policies, and campaign finance reform, among other issues.

A Palestinian-born student from Clifton expressed concern about her personal safety in the current climate in the United States and wondered if she should carry her American passport at all times to prove her citizenship. Booker urged anyone who is harassed to contact his office.

“There is so much of an urgency in fighting on these issues,” Booker said. “The mistake we make is not understanding that in America, always, the power of the people is greater than the people in power.”

The senator requested the meeting with Kean’s students and said that

he was “super impressed” and inspired by the group of “very aware people” who attended. He urged the students to develop their own strategies and tactics to advance their causes, and encouraged them to vote in big numbers in every election, not just presidential elections.

“If you just turned out at presidential election levels – I am not exaggerating this – you would change control of Congress,” he said, echoing a speech last year at Howard University by President Obama. “You don’t have to occupy anything. Just vote.”

The Town Hall marked the third time in the last six months that Booker has visited Kean’s Union campus. Last year, he conducted a roundtable discussion on juvenile justice reform at GLAB in August and held a veteran small business forum at the North Avenue Academic Building in November.

In this latest visit to campus, Booker offered some required reading for Kean students interested in social justice – *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander; *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson; and *Why the Innocent Plead Guilty and the Guilty Go Free* by Michael Leon Cook. He ended the meeting with an inspirational message for Kean’s students.

“One of the biggest things that we can do in any day are small acts of kindness, decency and love,” he said. “Politics is the urgency not just to fight the bigger battles, but to try to live your values every single day.”



A man with short brown hair and a light beard is shown from the chest up, wearing a white button-down shirt. He is looking slightly to his left. In the bottom right corner, he is holding a gold-colored sneaker with a prominent Nike swoosh. The background is a bright, slightly out-of-focus white surface with shadows cast across it.

# CROSSOVER SUCCESS

Matt Senna '07 is Making His Mark  
in Art and Pop Culture





Senna's bronze Air Jordan's on display outside the Pavelló Olímpic de Badalona, the arena in Barcelona, Spain, where the "Dream Team" won Olympic gold.

## QMa^aZk\ N mi Zkmp Zl \ hf f lortj` ê

Three years ago, Matt Senna '07 was a professional graphic designer, grinding out projects from 9 to 5 at a big agency, while sneaking in time on the side for his own art, in an effort to keep his work fresh and honest. When he chose to leave the security of that industry job to focus on his fine art independently, he knew it would be a difficult move; one that might be met with rejection, or even worse for an artist, with silence.

Last February, however, when hip-hop legend Common gave Senna's work a shout-out on national television, any fear of rejection or silence was immediately quelled.

Senna had just returned home to Los Angeles from a business trip, when a video message came in from a friend. The clip was from the previous night's broadcast of Jimmy Kimmel Live!, during the host's post-Oscars interview with Common, the hip-hop luminary and winner of the 2015 Academy Award for Best Original Song. During that interview, Kimmel showed a photo of the rapper holding up a gleaming sneaker, and grinning ear-to-ear. It was a solid gold Air Jordan I, and had been gifted to him the night before the Oscars.

"That's a gold Jordan." Common explained to Kimmel, "It's a piece of art. It was a gift from my manager... and the artist's name is Matt Senna." Kimmel chuckled. "Is that a wearable shoe, or no?" "No," he replied. "It's for the art's sake."

In that moment, Senna transformed from corporate advertising professional to celebrity pop artist; and he never looked back.

Senna's grandfather, Charles, was a major influence in his life throughout childhood; teaching him to play baseball, and instilling an appreciation of character and connection with others. After Charles passed away, a pair of his well-worn Converse sneakers stayed with Senna; a special keepsake, and a gentle reminder of the times he shared with his grandfather.

As he developed as an artist, Senna began to see his grandfather's sneakers as more than just a memento - they became an inspiration. "Something as simple as a shoe can have so much meaning, and represent something so much bigger. They sparked the idea to use sneakers as a means of representation and communication."

Those specific sneakers, Converse Chuck Taylor All-Stars, are a universal symbol of the time period when fashion and athletics first coalesced into "cool." It was at that juncture - where art, style, and sport converged - that Senna found the inspiration for "Higher Learning," his series of bronzed and gilded Nike "Air Jordan" sneakers, which has since become one of the most coveted collections of pop art in the world. For both "sneakerheads" and hip-hop aficionados, the series is a tribute to one of the most iconic brands in modern history. And for the star athletes and music superstars that have added the sneakers to their personal collections, they are a status symbol; a mark of success, glory, wealth, and as Senna puts it, "greatness."





*(left) Common shows off his Senna-made, solid gold Jordan's on Jimmy Kimmel Live, soon after receiving his Academy Award for Best Original Song; (center) Matt Senna '07 speaking at Kean's Thinking Creatively Conference; (right) Senna pictured with award-winning R&B star Usher.*

The Higher Learning series is the latest in a long line of fashion-related art that Senna has produced since high school. As a young student in North Plainfield, his art teacher, Marylou Weingarten, first introduced Senna to the work of Andy Warhol, Keith Herring, and graffiti artist Futura 2000. Their disparate brands of pop, modern, and street art would all contribute to the development of Senna's unique style; a style which first manifested itself in the custom t-shirt business he started at age 13, and carried over into his designs for the independent brands, pop-up stores, and gallery installations he would partner with during his time at Kean.

Senna's drive and talent for creative work intertwined well with the modern design program at Kean's Robert Busch School of Design (RBSD), and immediately set him apart as a standout student, as the depth and breadth of his work consistently impressed his instructors.

"From designing retail interiors for Toms® Shoes and producing his own fashion brand while still in college, to designing the Duane Reade "balance rewards" logo and bronzing Air Jordans, Matthew is a well-versed creative," said Robin Landa, distinguished professor at RBSD. "Matthew's works are created with the intention of sparking thought, raising awareness of cultural issues, and inspiring personal growth."

Senna also made an distinct impression with his independent spirit and creative approach to project design. His senior portfolio - a leather-bound autobiography - is still on display in the offices of RBSD. "Matt followed his heart and experimented at every opportunity. His solutions to course assignments were never conventional, and always came with an emotional and thoughtful rationale as to why he must break the rules. Matt was, and is, always ahead of the curve," said Rose Gonnella, Associate Dean of Michael Graves College, the home of RBSD.

After graduation from Kean, Senna headed west to California, where he set up shop, first as a freelancer and later as a full-time designer at a large firm with many clients. At first, the structure and routine were

comforting in their security, but eventually, he says, those same qualities began to make him feel claustrophobic. The "daily grind" demanded all of his energy, leaving none leftover to keep his independent projects going. The lack of a personal creative outlet took its toll; those days, he says, were the "darkest times," and were what fueled his decision to take the risk and break out on his own.

"I had stopped connecting with the process," Senna says, "I was dealing with CMOs and executives who would make decisions based on what their niece liked or how fearful they were of losing their jobs. There was no passion...There was no fulfillment."

The stress of the situation kept him up at night. Although he doesn't describe himself as a religious person, found himself reaching out for spiritual guidance. One night, in desperation, he asked for someone to send him a sign; "Everything went silent, and all I heard was 'let go.'"

So he did. Senna quit his steady, secure, and comfortable design firm, and leased a small studio space in the same day. "The hardest part was committing," he says, "It took me 30 years to trust myself."

Despite no longer having a tangible "safety net," Senna finally felt free to pursue his vision; though it was, by no means, easy. "It was a real struggle... You have to learn to have a thick skin. Trust in yourself to create." Thoughts of his grandfather were at the forefront of his mind during this time, helping to maintain his motivation, his vision, and his belief in himself.

Senna kicked off what would become his distinctive "Higher Learning" series with his own worn pair of Air Jordan XIs. He now uses a variety of processes in his work for the series, but the first iterations (which he calls his "studies") were bronzed canvas and leather sneakers.

After his first bronze XIs were complete, he shared his work on social media, via his instagram account (@msenna), and it wasn't long before





Air Jordan, the seminal footwear and clothing brand was produced by Nike and created for the legendary Chicago Bulls superstar Michael Jordan. Since its launch in 1984, the multi-billion dollar line has grown beyond basketball into other sports and lifestyle markets. Besides “His Airness,” signature faces of the brand have included Yankees captain Derek Jeter, football great Randy Moss and hip-hop star Drake.

The brand’s values were encapsulated in the iconic Jumpman logo. The airborne slam dunk silhouette became synonymous with achievement, triumph, flair, ego and victory and continues to inspire kids to play harder and run faster (as well as to run out and get the next pair as soon as they are on the market).

people began to take notice. A feature article was written about his work in *SLAM* magazine, and multi-industry interest began to spark as top leaders in hip-hop, fashion, and sports began obsessing over “the artist with the gold Jordans.” Senna continued the series, publishing the photos on his website, installing pieces at studio exhibitions in Los Angeles, and taking commissions for artists like R&B mogul Usher and rap legend Jadakiss.

The Jordan brand has played a significant role in the globalization of American culture, particularly after Michael Jordan led Team USA’s “Dream Team” to gold at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, effectively forging a name for basketball as a world-wide sport. To emphasize this pivotal milestone, Senna installed a pair of bronze Jordan VII’s outside of Barcelona’s Pavelló Olímpic de Badalona, the scene of the Dream Team’s Olympic victory.

Shortly after, Senna made the leap from gold medal to golden statue, with his gold Jordan sneaker serving as an emotional surprise for songwriter and performer Common after his Oscar win last February. The former Chicago Bulls ballboy was so thrilled with the gift that he posted a photo on Instagram and shouted Senna’s name for the world to hear on national television; a career- and life- changing event, to put it mildly.

After such incredible mainstream exposure, the traffic on Senna’s website skyrocketed, leading to a global tour with installations in Hong Kong and Tokyo, and a special commission for hip-hop superstar (and current Jordan brand rep), Drake, rendered in 24K gold and making headlines for their 100-pound weight and reported \$1.9 million dollar price tag.

Today, his travels have brought him home to Kean University; first as an alumni success story in the “World-Class Education” campaign, and most recently, as the keynote speaker of “Thinking Creatively,” RBSD’s annual design conference. After sharing his wisdom and experience with students at the Union campus, Senna will take his show on the road, delivering the keynote address later this spring at the first Thinking Creatively conference at the Wenzhou Kean campus in Wenzhou, China.



Senna strives to continually broaden his horizons and expand his work. Inspired by the impromptu “knowledge classes” local artists would conduct in his pop-up store during college, Senna’s next project, “Goodfolk,” was developed alongside his girlfriend Anny, and is comprised of a social media video series where he interviews the many talented artists, musicians, and craftspeople he encounters. Senna hopes these pieces of wisdom and expertise will help young artists grow into their own, much as he was encouraged to do during his time at Kean. The series can be found on Instagram at @hellogoodfolk.

Senna also plans to grow his experience organically into new art forms, such as film. Through the hundreds of hours of video footage he has amassed during his worldwide adventures, Senna is developing a documentary about his “Higher Learning” experience, with Common on board as executive producer. “Good design tells a story,” Senna says, “Good art tells a story. That’s the bloodline for me; storytelling. And I see film as the ultimate storytelling platform.”

Whatever the medium for his art, Senna maintains a clear focus for his work; “The ultimate goal is to create pieces and experiences that create an emotion in the viewer,” he says. And there can be no question that, time and again, he has succeeded in doing exactly that.



# ...and not a drop to drink

## Kean Covers Global Water Crisis at 10th Annual Human Rights Conference

On Friday, March 24, 2017 Kean hosts *Half Empty - The Depths of the Global Water Crisis* in the Wilkins Theater. The event marks the 10th anniversary of the Conference on Human Rights at the University, and continues President Dawood Farahi's mission of addressing social justice issues through the Human Rights Institute at Kean.

Farahi explains his simple, yet powerful, motivation behind the Conference on Human Rights; "We created the conference with two goals in mind: first, to bring human rights issues to the attention of students and educators throughout New Jersey, and second, and perhaps even more important, to help them find ways to get involved in helping address these issues and to take action."

Half Empty will look to address water scarcity and contamination on the local, national, and global levels. For many years, access to clean water seemed to be an issue relegated to underdeveloped nations overseas; however, the ongoing water contamination problems in Flint, Mich., and also in Newark, N.J., have taught us otherwise.

"We now realize that we are not immune to this important human rights issue, it is now in our backyard," said Janice Kroposky, Director of the Holocaust Resource Center and Diversity Council at Kean. "Everyone needs clean water - everyone can relate to this topic."

Kroposky explains that conference planners will usually choose the topic for the event by taking a cue from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, where access to clean water ranks high on the list. In fact, *Half Empty - The Depths of the Global Water Crisis* takes place two days after the United Nations' World Water Day. According to the United Nations, "by 2025, approximately two-thirds of the world population could be under stress conditions when it comes to water scarcity."

The half-day conference features expert speakers and panels to discuss the vexing challenges presented by water scarcity and contamination.

Remaining true to the mission of inspiring action, teachers will be given an accompanying curriculum guide to bring back to their schools. The guides will offer ideas on how to incorporate the issues of water scarcity into teachers' lesson plans and ways in which their students can get involved to effectuate change.

A recent addition to the conference has been the inclusion of an experiential learning component. Last year's conference, "Locked Up in America - the Business of Incarceration" included a replica prison cell that was housed in the Miron Student Center, offering students an opportunity to experience solitary confinement for themselves. The addition was met with widespread praise and was one of the more popular pieces of the 2016 conference.

This year's experiential learning component takes advantage of the advancements in virtual reality technology, featuring a film that captures the human side of the issue.

Kroposky enjoys what this piece does for students who participate. "We are excited to be able to give students an authentic experience, immersing them in an area of the world where water scarcity is a life and death matter." The video will be available to visitors to the Miron Student Center beginning on Monday, March 20 and will continue through the conference.

The Conference on Human Rights annually draws a "standing room only" crowd, with 1,000 attendees representing over 30 school districts, as well as a dozen colleges and universities, in the area.

Attendees also have the opportunity to learn more about the topics of the nine previous Conferences on Human Rights. Stations will be set up in the Wilkins Theater lobby to disseminate information on the current state of affairs for issues like Darfur and slavery in the 21st century, among others.



10th ANNUAL CONFERENCE on HUMAN RIGHTS at KEAN UNIVERSITY



# WALLS EMPTY

THE DEPTHS OF THE GLOBAL WATER CRISIS

HUMAN RIGHTS  
INSTITUTE





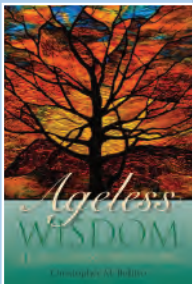


**Robin Landa**

**Advertising By Design, 3rd edition**

John Wiley & Sons, 2016

*Advertising by Design* is the most comprehensive, up-to-date guide to concept generation and design for advertising. This new edition has been thoroughly updated to reflect the industry's shift from print and TV ads to fully integrated trans-media campaigns, offering invaluable insight into a broad range of media channels. New concepts and strategies for social media, digital media, pull marketing, creative content, and more are discussed in depth to help readers tell an engaging story using every tool at their disposal. Interviews with leading creative directors and case studies provide glimpses into practitioners' idea generation process.

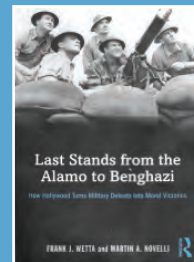


**Christopher M. Bellitto**

**Ageless Wisdom - Lifetime Lessons from the Bible**

Paulist Press, 2016

The wise elders of the Bible impart great wisdom for those on the spiritual journey. As Pope Francis said recently, "It's good for the elderly to communicate their wisdom to the young; and it is good for young people to gather this wealth of experience and wisdom, and to carry it forward." Using insights from some famous and some unknown tales, myths, legends, allegories, chronicles, and proverbs, the author places them in the context of the ancient biblical world in which they were written. The Bible is a living text offering all of us-Jews, Christians, and Muslims (as well as the occasional nonbeliever)-a roadmap to gain wisdom. Drawing not only on the Bible itself, but on medieval and modern Jewish commentaries (midrashim), Christian sermons, and Muslim explanations (such as Tales of the Prophets), *Ageless Wisdom* offers examples of how past generations of men and women have made the Bible's lessons about wisdom their own.

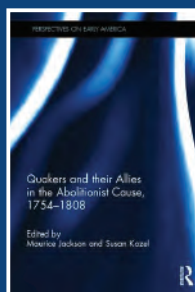


**Frank J. Wetta and Martin A. Novelli**

**Last Stands From the Alamo to Benghazi: How Hollywood Turns Military Defeats into Moral Victories**

New York and London: Routledge Press, 2016

*LAST STANDS* reviews certain military defeats in American history (the Alamo, the Little Big Horn, Wake Island, Bataan, Pork Chop Hill, Mogadishu, Benghazi and others) and analyzes how Hollywood films attempt to preserve honor in defeat by portraying them as "moral" victories, often by selective manipulation and revision of the actual events. The book also considers how even "moral" victories have become suspect and much harder to claim, starting with the consequences of the Vietnam War.



**Susan Kozel (co-editor)**

**Quakers and their Allies in the Abolitionist Cause, 1754-1808**

Routledge Oxford and NY, 2016

This volume explores the significant connections between the Quaker community and the abolitionist cause in America. The case studies that make up the collection mainly focus on the greater greater-Philadelphia area (Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Delaware), a hotbed of the abolitionist movement and the location of the first American abolition society founded in 1775. Despite the importance of Quakers to the abolitionist movement, their significance has been largely overlooked in the existing historiography. These studies will be of interest to scholars of slavery and abolition, religious history, Atlantic studies and American social and political history.

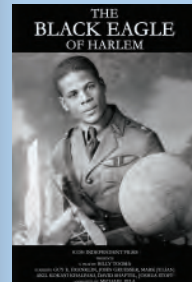




**Jennifer Chen**

**Connecting Right from the Start:  
Fostering Effective Communication  
with Dual Language Learners**  
Gryphon House, 2016

Educating the nation's rapidly rising population of dual language learners (DLLs) is as much a challenge as it is an opportunity for improving our practice with them. Many English-speaking young children struggle with learning to communicate effectively. DLLs face a double challenge of learning not only academic skills, but also the social imperatives associated with communication. To be successful in school, they must navigate the cultural, linguistic, academic, and social terrains. This book offers a wide variety of strategies for fostering effective communication skills in DLLs that are needed to succeed academically and socially now and in the future.



**C. Brid Nicholson (Associate Producer)**

**The Black Eagle of Harlem  
(documentary film)**

Icon Independent Films, 2017

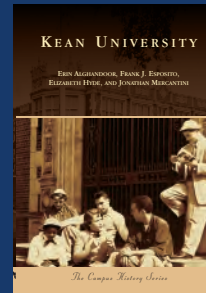
The Black Eagle of Harlem was the nick name given to Herbert Julian, an African- American aviator who attempted to cross the Atlantic, in 1924, years before Charles Lindbergh. Herbert failed on that occasion, though he was to succeed in 1929. Born in Trinidad, in 1897, Herbert was known for his flying feats and daredevil stunts in the U.S., flying with the Five Blackbirds the first African American precision flying troupe. He was a larger than life character who spent time in Ethiopia, Finland, and the Congo. Julian died in the Bronx, in February 1983.



**Dr. Cathleen Londino**

**The Today Show:  
Transforming Morning Television**  
Roman & Littlefield, 2016

*The Today Show: Transforming Morning Television* provides an entertaining and informative look at the first twenty-five years of NBC's innovative program, from 1952 through 1977. Focusing on Today's broadcast history, the personalities instrumental to the show's success, and the show's contributions to the entertainment industry, this account illustrates how the evolution of Today closely paralleled the development of the broadcast industry and rise of the major networks. In addition to chronicling the show's history, the author profiles some of the key players both behind and in front of the camera, including Dave Garroway, Barbara Walters, Tom Brokaw, and Jane Pauley. *The Today Show: Transforming Morning Television* is a fascinating account of the unprecedented success of this influential program and will appeal to anyone interested in television history.

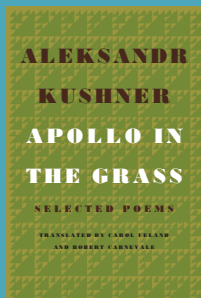


**Erin Alghandoor, Frank J. Esposito,  
Elizabeth Hyde, and Jonathan  
Mercantini**

**Kean University -- The Campus  
History Series**

Arcadia Press, May 2017

This pictorial history of Kean University documents its transformation from a normal school training primary school teachers in Newark in the 1800s to the global university the institution, anchored in Union, has become today. The photographs collected in this book tell the intellectual and social history of Kean as the institution has grown and changed along with America and American higher education over the past 162 years.



**Robert Carnevale (co-translator)**

**Apollo in the Grass: selected poems of Aleksandr Kushner**  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2015

*Apollo in the Grass* is the first collection in English translation of Kushner's post-Soviet poems, and also includes certain earlier ones that could not be published during the Soviet era. Kushner speaks to us from a place where the mythic and the historic coexist with the everyday, where Odysseus is one of us, and the "stern voice" of history can transform any public square into a harrowing schoolroom. This layering of times and events is also embodied in Kushner's distinctive poetic voice. Echoes of earlier Russian poets and styles enrich and complicate an idiom that is utterly natural and contemporary. Now, as in the Soviet era, Kushner's work is especially cherished for its exemplary stoic integrity. But these lyrical poems are also pieces of exquisite chamber music, songs where poetry dazzles but "greatness is . . . sooner scaled to the heart / Than to anything very enormous."





## ED JOHNSTON: FINDING MEANING ONE DESIGN AT A TIME

Assistant Professor Ed Johnston, in the Michael Graves College of Design & Architecture at Kean University, extends the boundaries of his thinking and imagination every day with passion, enthusiasm, and a tireless sense of curiosity. Visualizing the unseen has been the motivation for most of the things he does. As a multimedia designer, artist, and educator working in a variety of contexts involving interactive design and three-dimensional digital technologies, Johnston searches for meaning every step of the way.

"I'm intrigued by things I can't see. We're all searching for meaning. I'm always asking myself, 'what kind of meaning am I willing to create and where do I fit into society?'" said Johnston who has been teaching at Kean since 2011.

To that end, Johnston brings the education of his students outside the walls of the classroom. At Kean's Liberty Hall Museum, a place whose history dates back to 1772, Johnston is collaborating with a group of student researchers to preserve the unseen through his "Room of Echoes" project. The project captures the evolution of history over the last four centuries, by creating four versions of the same room using interactive 3D media. The result will be a meaningful, approachable, and useful way to view a piece of history, no matter where the viewer is.

"As a designer, you have the opportunity to create impactful moments. The different fields of design are uniquely positioned to facilitate that," said Johnston.

At Liberty Hall, Johnston is working to preserve the wedding of John Jay, one of the Founding Fathers and the first chief justice of the United States, to Sarah Livingston, the governor's daughter.

The project, known as Liberty Hall 360, involves the reenactment of this wedding, an important historical artifact, through the use of 360-degree video. Expected to be complete in late spring, the reenactment will be easily accessible online and on mobile devices. With the use of Virtual Reality glasses, the viewer will be fully immersed in the space and experience it as a guest in the wedding.

But before Liberty Hall 360, Johnston was creating a bridge between history and the public in the small Jersey Shore town of Asbury Park. A collaboration with Professors Mike Richison and Marina Vujnovic, Augmented Asbury Park involves the digital reconstruction of key historic landmarks on the Asbury Park boardwalk in augmented reality. From the Morro Castle, a doomed passenger liner that caught fire off the coast and beached itself in Asbury Park, to the famed Asbury Park carousel, visitors to the boardwalk are treated to a 3-D history lesson by using their cell phone and an "Augment" app.

Johnston continues to develop innovative ways to reach one person, with the capacity to help many others. Throughout this ongoing quest to provide meaning through design, Johnston has received numerous awards and grants. His works have been exhibited nationally and internationally, including the Lumen Prize Exhibition in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and the United Kingdom, as well the Tank Space for Performing and Visual Arts in Manhattan.





# VEYSEL YUCETEPE: EMBRACING THE GLOBAL FOCUS

Veysel Yucetepe, director of the MBA Program for the Kean University Global Business School, is grateful for every opportunity he has had since growing up in the Turkish city of Bursa with his four siblings.

“My parents always supported me. They didn’t have education but they valued it,” said Yucetepe who was encouraged at an early age, along with his siblings, to devote all of his time to education.

Seizing an opportunity to study in the United States after being ranked the number one student in the area of business by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education, Yucetepe emigrated to the U.S. in 1990 and later attained an MBA from the Illinois Institute of Technology, and a Ph.D. in Marketing from the University of Illinois-Chicago.

It is this strong commitment to education and to his students, along with an unwavering willingness to listen and offer his help, that Yucetepe demonstrates in his classroom every day.

“I like making a difference in my students’ lives, and helping them achieve the American Dream,” says Yucetepe, who has been at Kean since January 2003. “Whatever I do for my kids, I want to do for my students.”

The father of three also serves as the Director of the MS in Accounting program, the Executive Director of the undergraduate Accounting and Finance program, and was an integral part of getting the

“I like making a difference in my students’ lives, and helping them achieve the American Dream.”

MBA program accredited. In each role, Yucetepe embraces the responsibility and instills in his students the importance of being aware of the business environment on a global scale.

Echoing the philosophy of the College of Business & Public Management (CBPM), Yucetepe said, “We live in a global environment. I emphasize to them that they need to be proactive, not reactive. I don’t know everything, but I try to teach them everything I do know.”

With the opportunities at the CBPM continuing to grow, spanning from the campus in Union to the fully English-speaking campus in Wenzhou, China, it is clear to see that the faculty is supportive of the changes, and committed to fostering a student body of global citizens, equipped with the right tools and confidence to succeed in the world of business.



# NEWARK STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE GOES TO WAR

Nancy Thompson's Letters on Display in her Eponymous Library

For the Kean University community, the Nancy Thompson World War II letters are the gift that keeps on giving. Discovered in the University Archives in 2013, the correspondence between the librarian at Kean's predecessor, Newark State Teachers College, and 185 students serving in the war, has been a rich source of historical information about WWII, New Jersey, and Kean University. Most recently, the letters inspired a student-curated exhibition, Newark State Teachers College Goes to War, at the Nancy Dryfoos Gallery.

"The exhibit communicated the breadth of cultural and social change as experienced on a college campus during the war," said Associate Professor Elizabeth Hyde, Ph.D. "It was also a way to explore the role of women. By the time you get to 1943 and '44, there are virtually no male students on campus. Women are thrust into new roles on campus and in aiding the military effort."

Working with the Thompson letters, history honors students have presented in the highly selective "Posters on the Hill" in Washington, D.C. and at regional honors conferences, as well as developed curricula for high school and middle school students. In collaboration with Kean students and faculty in the Computer Science and Design Programs, they are also developing a digital, interactive, map that will track the movements of the servicemen and servicewomen during the war.

"We are aware that outcomes do matter, so we see opportunities like these as tremendous training for graduate study and law school, but also the job market," said Associate Professor Jonathan Mercantini, Ph.D.

While working on the project, these current students found themselves connecting with an earlier generation of Kean University students.





"The documents brought history alive," said Laura Hurley, a senior from East Brunswick who was a student co-director of the exhibition. "You see a window into what life was like, and how men and women our age dealt with the war."

For senior Jessica DiFranco of North Brunswick, also a student co-director of the exhibition, the experience motivated her to pursue a doctorate in history.

"I was just going to basically propel myself through, get my signatures and graduate, but my experience at Kean has gone so much beyond that, because of the history department," she said.

As it revolutionizes the ways that archival materials can be incorporated into curriculum, the History Department is hoping to inspire more students. In collaboration with University Archivist Erin Alghandoor, history students are now also studying the papers of Congresswoman Florence Dwyer and Congressman Robert Winthrop Kean, both of which are held in the University Archives.

"One of the department's new tag lines is, 'Make history @ Kean.' With these historical documents, we can do just that," said Hyde.

The Nancy Thompson Scrapbook Collection is now available for public viewing at the Kean University Archives.

## Special Connection

World War II history became family history for Tara Murray, an English major from Madison who will graduate from Kean University this May. Last fall, in her World War II History class with Associate Professor Elizabeth Hyde, Ph.D., she discovered that her step-grandfather was one of the soldiers who wrote home to former librarian Nancy Thompson.



William D. Russo, an alumnus of Kean's predecessor Newark State Teachers College, was a navigator on B-17s, stationed in London in WWII, when he corresponded with Thompson.

"Since my short stay here, I've seen action on several raids over Germany. Yes, they do scare the hell out of a man, even me. That may be the wrong thing to say, but it is the way we all feel on a raid," Russo wrote on October 14, 1944.

Murray and the Russo family never knew about the letters until 72 years later.

"I knew that he was in the war, but he didn't talk about it," she said. "His letters made it more personal and made me feel more connected to him."

After the war, Russo became a teacher and served as the vice principal at Bergen Street School in Newark for more than 20 years. His step-granddaughter says knowing how it all turned out for him made it easier to read his letters.

"I know that he made it out, but reading the letters was scary. You see all that he went through," she said.

The Russo family now has copies of the letters to add to the memories of their patriarch. The family also gave a copy of Russo's self-published autobiography – which contains more details about his time at Newark State and in the war – to the University. It is available for review through the University Archives and Special Collections.





# Service & Sacrifice

## Kean Honors Veterans

Kean University underscored its commitment to student-veterans on Veterans Day, with the opening of the Veterans Services Lounge in Willis Hall. The grand opening came on the heels of a Veteran Small Business Forum, conducted by U.S. Senator Cory Booker, at the North Avenue Academic Building (NAAB). All in all, November was a good month for the more than 300 veterans at Kean, as the University laid the groundwork for continued support of veterans in their academic, social, and post-military service pursuits.

“The Lounge is a good example of how student leaders can impact the services that we provide,” said Jeffrey H. Toney, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. “The president of the student veterans group, and some of her fellow student-veterans, approached us and said, ‘We want a space on campus that is just for us.’ We worked with them to create the Veterans Services Lounge.”

That student was Kimmarah Casey, who heads the University’s Military and Veterans Club. She envisioned a place where Kean’s former servicemen and servicewomen could relax, study, and bond over their shared experiences.

“The objective of the Veterans Lounge is to help people transition from military to civilian life. It’s also there to help us succeed academically,” said Casey. “You don’t know the person who’s sitting in the corner? You could just start up a conversation, because as a military member to another military member, you always share that camaraderie. It’s a connection we all have.”

With computers and a television, the Lounge is a perfect place to hang out, study, and socialize. Staffed part-time by Academic Specialist Daniel Colangelo ‘16, a United States Air Force veteran and Kean alumnus, the Veterans Services Lounge is also where student-veterans can receive tutoring, attend workshops, and obtain assistance in working with veterans services offices on campus, as well as at the state and federal levels.

Colangelo, who fought his way back from a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder diagnosis after being injured in the 1996 terrorist attack at Prince Abdul Aziz Air Base in Saudi Arabia, graduated from Kean with a Bachelor of Science in Analytical Chemistry. Of his time at Kean, Colangelo says, “It truly takes a village to raise a man,” and he savors the chance to be part of the supportive Kean community that helped to “raise” him, by assisting the University’s current student-veterans.

“Our goal is to let them know about all of the different resources that are available to them, and to try to make them as successful as possible,” he said. “At the end of the day, we want every single veteran to have the same opportunity – to come back to school and better their lives.”

Providing opportunity for veterans, and support for their civilian lives, was also the theme at Senator Booker’s “Veteran Small Business Forum.” Hundreds of veteran entrepreneurs and small-business owners, as well as veterans who hoped to start businesses of their own, came to NAAB on November 10, to learn about digital marketing strategies, capital, government agencies that support veteran entrepreneurship, supplier diversity programs, and military base contracting.



# Vito Zajda Hired as Director of Veterans' Affairs

Mr. Zajda possess a Bachelors of Science degree in Accounting from St. John's University, Bachelor of Science degree in Finance, and a Masters of Arts degree in Liberal Studies both from the College of Staten Island. Currently he is pursuing a PhD in Higher Education Administration from Capella University. He was the Deputy Registrar of Veterans Affairs and Information Technology at the College of Staten Island for the past fifteen years, and Adjunct Professor of History and English for the past eight years.

He developed new innovative programming and enhanced support services to assist student veterans in their transition to the campus environment. One of his biggest achievements was creating a Military Friendly College for the past six years, and developing a "One Stop" center to assist all Veterans and dependents from the admissions process to graduation. He worked closely with local and nationally elected officials, community organizations and the media to advocate for veterans and their families.



"Kean is truly one of the most remarkable institutions in the United States of America because it offers such fruitful pathways to success for all Americans, regardless of your background," said Booker. "When I think of the Kean mission, it really is about empowering the best of who we are. There is no better place than here to have a veterans' forum."

Booker told the veterans in the audience that they have "proven their grit and their strength," and are owed a debt from the nation. The goal of the forum was to help the veterans who have returned to civilian life, after their time in service, to develop their own opportunities to serve in new and fulfilling ways.

"We have a lot of resources to send our men and women overseas to serve, but when they come home, we don't do what we should be doing to empower them, and that is an American shame," Booker said.

Kean University, with the Veterans Services Lounge and opportunities like the Veteran Small Business Forum, is using its resources to promote and encourage veterans on campus, and in the community. In his welcoming remarks at the business forum, Kean President Dawood Farahi, noted that it is simply the right thing to do -- "Those who sacrifice their time, their limb, and their energy to protect us -- who put their lives on the line to protect our freedom -- whatever we do for them pales in comparison to what they do for us."







# Historic Undertaking

## New Academic Center Planned for Liberty Hall Campus

Kean University will soon begin construction on the Liberty Hall Academic Center, a 41,000 square foot facility that will house classrooms, exhibition space, and academic offices. The Center will also serve as home to Kean's History Department, integrating it with the historic Liberty Hall property. Partial funding of the Academic Center's construction is being financed by a three million dollar grant the University secured from the State of New Jersey.

Built in 1772, on the eve of the American Revolution, Liberty Hall has been a silent witness to more than 200 years of American history, serving as the home of New Jersey's first elected Governor and signer of the Constitution, William Livingston. The Kean Foundation acquired Liberty Hall in 2006 and the University now serves as a steward of the property, protecting a piece of American history that has brought Kean national attention over the last decade.

"Liberty Hall is a national treasure. The addition of the Academic Center will make it possible for future generations and thousands of annual visitors to experience its storied history for themselves," said Kean University President Dawood Farahi. "It also provides a home to one of our programs of distinction - our vaunted History Department. Every single Kean student will take a class in the Center and benefit from its construction."

The Center will feature a Gallery of Historical Artifacts; providing a space to display the Liberty Hall collection, as well as to host traveling exhibit shows, the Gallery will help to solidify Kean's growing reputation as a historical center in the region. Recent discoveries in the collection, including a letter written by George Washington in 1787 and the Last Will and Testament of Alexander Hamilton's half-brother, have resulted in national media attention and a surge in visitors to the Liberty Hall Museum.



# king



SCHEMATIC PLAN



The popularity and increase in the number of people requesting tours of Liberty Hall created a need for a facility that could help alleviate foot traffic and ease the stress placed on the 250-year old mansion. The Academic Center will do that, helping to preserve the integrity of the Liberty Hall property for generations to come.

“The foot traffic of more than 20,000 visitors annually places tremendous strain on the mansion and museum grounds,” Farahi explains. “The new facility, with its state-of-the-art gallery space, will help relieve some of that stress and provide opportunities for multiple exhibits over the course of a year.”

The Academic Center will also serve as a resource to visiting teachers and their students. Plans for an Historic Research Library within the Center include the ability for teachers to download premade lesson plans to

incorporate into their curriculum, offering an invaluable resource in teaching the history of New Jersey in their classrooms.

With 14 offices, six classrooms, and five seminar rooms, the Liberty Hall Academic Center will also help play a role in Kean’s mission of delivering a world-class education to its students. The Center will house the History Department, one of Kean’s programs of distinction that has received numerous accolades and awards over the years. All of the Department’s course offerings will be taught in the Center, meaning that every Kean student will spend at least one semester utilizing the facility classrooms and experiencing the Liberty Hall collection.



# TEACHING THE LEADERS OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

Teaching and learning is a symbiotic relationship that has the power to not only ignite the passion of individuals, but of entire nations. Teachers are unique in that they share an intent to make a difference in the lives of others, rather than accomplish a singular goal.

Educational pioneer and developer of the Reggio Emilia Approach, Loris Malaguzzi once said, "Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal, exchange, teaching can strengthen learning how to learn."

Kean University has been embracing this philosophy by grooming teachers to be leaders in their fields, while in turn, gleaned lessons from their students for more than a century; first, as the Newark Normal School in 1855, and then as the New Jersey State Teachers College in 1937.

Now 162 years since its inception, Kean is still producing more teachers in New Jersey than any other institution, many of whom have become champions in their field; garnering countless accolades and honors, including the Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Anthony Pittman, dean of the College of Education, attributes that success in large part to faculty who remain committed to the University's vision, as well as an excellent curriculum.



*Monica Goncalves '07, Union County  
Teacher of the Year for 2016-17*







(left) Kathy Assini '01, New Jersey's 2013-14 State Teacher of the Year, met with President Obama in the White House.  
 (above) Kean's booth at the NJEA Convention welcomes alumni from all over the state.

"Teaching is the foundation of every profession," says Pittman, who taught in the public school system for more than 10 years in South Carolina, Massachusetts, Kentucky and Connecticut. "No one has ever gotten anywhere without the power of influence of an educator. That tenet is something I hold dearly; it is my driving force."

The program, which was deemed absent of any need for improvement during the last accreditation process, clearly works. Three of the past four New Jersey State Teachers of the Year are graduates of Kean.

Most recently, Monica Goncalves '07 was named the Union County Teacher of the Year for 2016-17 by the New Jersey Education Association. The social studies teacher at Linden High School who inspires her students to achieve their best, is also the chairwoman of the Social Studies Department and the coordinator of the Bias & Prejudice Reduction program, a role that reflects Kean's goal of educating the whole student and to be responsible global citizens.

"Teaching is not a job, it is a calling," said Goncalves. "Only those who view teaching as a calling can truly succeed as a teacher."

Goncalves, who was also the recipient of the Union County Human Relations Commission's Unity Achievement Award in 2013, recalled hearing one of her favorite high school teachers saying that he hadn't had to work a day in his life. "Oddly enough, I was not perplexed by this comment. I knew I wanted to be a teacher when I had Mr. Figueiredo as my fourth-grade teacher. Mr. Figueiredo was the first teacher who looked at me as an individual and saw the potential. I had been hiding behind the insecure young child who had just learned to speak English a couple years before," said Goncalves, who is also involved in the National Honor Society, the Law Day and Mock Election, the Graduation Committee, Middle States committee, and the Special Coordination of Professional Enrichment Team.

"Education is not the filling of a pail. It is the lighting of a fire."

- Maya Angelou

Goncalves follows in the footsteps of several of her fellow alumni: Union County's Teacher of the Year (2015-2016) Janice Marsili '94M, the lead teacher of fine and performing arts at David Brearley High School in Kenilworth; New Jersey State Teacher of the Year (2014-15) Mark Mautone '02, a special education teacher leading his district's Applied Behavior Analysis Program in Hudson County; New Jersey State Teacher of the Year (2013-14) Kathleen Assini, an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Delsea Regional Middle and High School; New Jersey State Teacher of the Year (2012-13) Lauren Marrocco '09M, an Edward J. Patton Elementary School teacher; and Karen Ginty '78M, a former Monmouth Beach School kindergarten teacher who was the New Jersey State Teacher of the Year in 2007 and then named a Distinguished Alumna the following year.

Separately, Mark Friedrich '09 MA received the 2016 High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award from The New Jersey Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance for his work as the Health & Physical Education lead teacher at Millburn High School.

As for the future of the College, Dr. Pittman said he and his staff will continue to forge new partnerships with school districts and maintain positive relationships with existing schools. "The future for teaching is very bright. There will always be a need for great teachers, and that keeps me optimistic."



# Staying Grounded

**Kelly Rapkin** (Kean Ocean '14) actually began her quest for a career in art before she could read; drawing illustrations of the stories her older sister read to her from books in their Tom's River home. It took her a few decades to get from scribbles on notepaper, to using a digital stylus on the iPad Pro in her office at Grounds for Sculpture, a garden-like gallery, museum, and education center near Princeton, where she is the chief graphic designer. And that path was forged through Kean Ocean.

"I didn't grow up in the most affluent family," Rapkin says. "So when it got to college time, my parents told me, 'We can't pay for you to go. And we really don't recommend that you take out a lot of loans.' But there's this program in New Jersey called NJ Stars. If you're in the top ten or fifteen percent of your class in high school you can go to community college for free.

Rapkin enrolled in Ocean County Community College. She took fine arts classes in her five semesters there, but at times thought of switching to a more practical field. Because her grade-point average remained high, she got the chance to pursue a bachelor's degree tuition-free in the NJ Stars program. She moved on to Kean Ocean and continued with art studies. "I was able to take a bit of a risk," she says. "I never felt better than I did in my first semester of art classes at Kean."

One of her first teachers at Kean Ocean was Deborah Rivera, a 1996 graduate of Kean, who is a partner and creative director at Square Melon Communications, a Westfield-based agency that she co-founded.

"Oh my goodness, the drive that kid had," Rivera recalls of Rapkin. "She had to do better; she had to do more. Everything was always above and beyond what was asked for. And it was just natural with her. She didn't want extra recognition. She just had this drive inside her that you don't see in many students."

Courses in the practical aspects of commercial art showed Rapkin that it was important to build a portfolio of work that would be her calling card. With Rivera's help, she got her portfolio reviewed by top professionals at the Art Directors Club in Manhattan.

"Deb helped expose me to so many students who were the same age, and in the same place, but had just killer portfolios. And she would tell me, 'You could be doing that. There's no reason you can't compete with students from the top design schools.' And I realized that, even though I was going to a state college and living at home with my parents, there was no reason why I couldn't make my education a top design school education. Kean was very supportive of that."

One contact made during a portfolio review led to an entry level job at a New York advertising agency before she had even finished her classes to graduate. The long arduous commute and some family issues convinced Rapkin to give up the Manhattan job and find work closer to home.

After a two-year stint designing packaging for a chocolate company in Lakewood, the Grounds for Sculpture job came up. "I had always wanted to work at a museum," she says, "so I jumped for it." Rapkin now lives in Asbury Park, about three blocks from the sea. A lifelong beach lover, she says, "I don't want to live any further from the beach than I am now."

One night a week this spring, Rapkin will leave work in Princeton – where on the park-like property she regularly encounters peacocks when she steps out of her office for lunch – and drive to the Kean Ocean campus in her hometown to teach the next generation of designers.

"She just had this drive inside her that you don't see in many students."

- Deborah Rivera

"What really worked for me at Kean," she says, "is that there's a real sense of professor and student respect. A lot of the teachers are working in the field and coming to the classroom straight from work, like me. There's a transparency and a real lack of pretension. You're not on a high horse, and you realize you have to roll up your sleeves and work.

"I always see a little bit of myself in my students," adds Rapkin, who along with that older sister who read to her as a child, became the first in their family to graduate from college. "They always seem very appreciative of their education. I think that will always be a thread at Kean – that we acknowledge and appreciate our opportunities."

"I know I had a great experience here. I think I was a different person before I started going to Kean Ocean," she says. "Before, I was a college student through and through. When I got to Kean, I became a designer."





“I was one of those kids who, from first grade, said, 'When I grow up I'm going to be an artist.'”  
—Kelly Rapkin





# John Turner

For Kean alumnus **John Turner, '92, '97**, there is no substitute for hard work and education in the game of life. The combination changed the trajectory of his life, and much of the credit belongs to his alma mater.

"My dad instilled in us the importance of an education and hard work. He probably broke every child labor law," Turner said jokingly, as he fondly reminisced how his father encouraged him to accomplish a job as early as age seven. "And Kean gave me the foundation I needed."

The son of a lifelong nurse and Navy serviceman-turned-contractor, Turner transferred to Kean in 1990 and quickly climbed to captain of the school's football team. The New Jersey native graduated in 1992 with a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education Adult Fitness, becoming the first in his family to earn a college degree. He later went on to attain a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Kean in 1997.

Turner who, in 2005, attained an MBA from Regis University and a leadership certificate from the University of Pennsylvania - The Wharton School is also now halfway through his pursuit of an MS in Risk Management and Insurance from Florida State University.

For Turner, leading by example is a constant in his life. "Leadership is a participation sport. I would never ask anyone to do what I wouldn't do."

Leaders see in others what others cannot see in themselves. They are builders, makers, and motivators. Leaders meet challenges with enthusiasm and anticipation, not trepidation or expectation. Turner, CEO and president of Corporate Synergies Group since 2010, is no exception.

Turner exemplifies the determination, perseverance, and giving spirit that has become synonymous with many Kean graduates. These qualities also enabled him to overcome obstacles along the way.

Turner successfully leads his Mt. Laurel, NJ-based insurance and risk mitigation company by tapping into more than 20 years of experience, focusing on high-impact, service-driven strategies.

"Business is a team sport, not an individually contributing sport. The only way to achieve success is to develop people and their talents," said Turner whose passion to foster growth is apparent both on and off the field. "I like to put my employees in situations where they can grow and develop themselves. If you don't develop the right team, you don't get the right results."

With that philosophy in mind, he has recently instituted a leadership development program at his company, where people are given the experience and support needed to grow.

The hard work and commitment to a collaborative environment has obviously paid off. Turner's company has been recognized with two SmartCEO Circle of Excellence Awards, and two SmartCEO 100 Best Run Companies Awards.

Turner is passionate about everything he does, whether he's taking on the challenge of a 300-mile bicycle ride in Costa Rica, empowering his two daughters to make a difference by following their own paths, or supporting the efforts of Adventist University and Orlando, Inc. by serving on their boards.

He is also an ardent supporter of education, and his community here in Union, NJ. In June of 2016, he was appointed a Kean University Foundation Board Member, and also serves on the Board of Kean's College of Business and Public Management.

"Giving back is not just writing a check. It requires participation."





# Adele Kenny

**Adele Kenny '70** explores the many facets of her life through poetry, and in turn, the poetry and her unwavering belief in the human spirit guide her on life's journey. Inspiration may come from past experiences, a single image or the work of a painter like Edward Hopper or Pablo Picasso, but one constant is that she relishes each experience, seeing it as an opportunity to grow, connect and share.

Her passion for poetry blossomed at the age of four, when her mother taught her how to read and write while sick in bed with polio fever. Although her mother had no formal training in poetry, the lessons she learned in those early days stuck with her, serving as a strong foundation for years to come.

"The process of writing poetry goes way back," Kenny said. "It has always been a source of healing." Fast forward several decades, through battles with multiple sclerosis, breast cancer, and several life-shattering losses; after all of these challenges, Kenny is still pouring her soul into written words.

"I can't imagine life without writing. Even when I'm not actively writing, there's always a word or an image or a line in the process of being created. For me, writing is my backcloth, a sustainable 'place' that is both redemptive and holy," said Kenny who received the Kean University Distinguished Alumni Award in 2014. Most recently, she was named a 2016 Paterson Poetry prize finalist for her book, *A Lightness, a Thirst, or Nothing at All*.

Appointed in 2012 as the poet laureate of Fanwood, NJ, where she has lived since 1974, Kenny is not only prolific in the poetry she writes but also generous with her talent. She has written 24 books in total, earning praise, awards, and honors including poetry fellowships from the New Jersey State Arts Council, a Merton Poetry of the Sacred Award, first place Merit Book and Henderson Awards, a Writer's Digest Poetry Award and the 2012 International Book Award for Poetry. In 2011 she was honored with a Women of Excellence Award (Union County Commission on the Status of Women) for her achievements and volunteer work in the arts and humanities.

But when asked what she is most proud of, Kenny says that instead of being proud, she is grateful.

Throughout her career, which also included 20 years as public school teacher in Rahway, Kenny has remained committed to honing her talent and sharing what she learns with others. As the daughter of a police officer, Kenny taught report writing at the John H. Stampler Police Academy in Scotch Plains, NJ from 1999 to 2009. She has also spent time running poetry workshops at a local correctional facility, weekly poetry/writing therapy sessions for handicapped children and adults at Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside, NJ, and serving as a judge for numerous poetry competitions.

Kenny is a dichotomy of courage and untainted optimism, and so, when asked what scares her most, she struggled to find a definitive answer. Instead, her response focused less on the idea of fear, and more on how one reacts to it; "What matters is how we define and clarify our fears, and how we live with - or around - them."

Kenny has embraced each hardship in her life with grace and compassion, gleaned what she could from each experience with anticipation instead of expectation. It is perhaps this persona which led fellow writer, and former Kean professor, Dr. Charles DeFanti to describe Kenny's poetry as a reflection of the author - "luminous" and a blend of "joy, wit and affirmation."

*"...— something of each of us always  
here, our voices almost heard though all the scattered  
distances we make. Remember, remember ... all that  
was given and what we took away: how it felt to be  
that young, that unaware of what life is or where it  
goes, to be that safe—here—where becoming begins."*

- excerpt from *It Was Here*, a poem Kenny wrote for Kean when she accepted her Distinguished Alumni Award in 2014



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE... LEAVING A LEGACY



Ina Giardina '63 '67 M.A. is a Kean University supporter who has a passion for education and the arts. Her many visits to house museums over the years instilled in her a love of old things. Following a 17-year career as a teacher of advanced and remedial reading in Newark, Ina turned her side job of buying and selling antiques into a business. The layers of history and the stories attached unfold at every turn at her shop in Summit where she sells “beautiful things” and orchestrates estate liquidations. Ina, also a member of the Kean Arts Council and a regular at on-campus arts events, is grateful for the experience and the affordable education she received at Kean, and is now looking forward to giving back and creating her own legacy.

*“I owe Kean a great debt. I really wanted to facilitate someone’s education in a small way and enable a student to have the opportunities that were afforded to me.”*

For further information on how you can make a legacy gift to Kean University and become a member of the Medallion Society, please contact the Kean University Office of Institutional Advancement at 908-737-3460 or James Gurland at [jgurland@kean.edu](mailto:jgurland@kean.edu). If you have already provided for Kean in your future plans, please let us know so we may express our gratitude and welcome you as a member of the Medallion Society.

*The Medallion Society recognizes those individuals and families who have made a bequest provision, beneficiary designation or life income gift to Kean University.*

INA GIARDINA '63 '67 M.A.



KEAN UNIVERSITY  
MEDALLION  
SOCIETY



# Message From The Alumni President



Ed Esposito '69 '72 M.A.

Here we are nearing the middle of the 2017 spring semester, wondering where the time goes. The spring flowers are coming into bloom and the campus is alive; bursting with student energy, hopes and dreams. It is certainly a wonderful time to be here on the beautiful Kean University campus, and I invite you to visit and see for yourself the enthusiasm demonstrated by our students, faculty and staff. The excitement and beauty found on each of the Kean campuses reflect all of the wonderful things going on here.

Speaking of things going on, the Alumni Association recently held its annual 100 Days Until Graduation celebration with our graduating seniors, and hosted a dinner meeting with the college deans at Kean. These events are enriching and informative for the students, the deans, and our Board members. They give the alumni board an opportunity to interact with current students, and help to prepare them for life as Kean alumni. They are also wonderful opportunities for us to learn about all the new and innovative programs taking place, as well as offer our help to ensure a successful academic year.

It is once again my pleasure to announce this year's Distinguished Alumni Award recipients. This spring event is a major celebration that allows us to identify and recognize some of our most accomplished alumni. The awards committee, led by Maria Luciano '72, has worked hard in selecting the nominations from a long list of potential candidates. This year's list of Distinguished Alumni includes: George Gilcrest '70, a former star basketball player for Newark State and executive security agent; Caroline Jolly '70 '93 MPA, an art educator who also served as Director of Alumni Affairs at Kean for over 30 years; Geraldine Ponto '76, a partner at the law firm of BakerHostetler, and the lead attorney for the liquidation of the Bernard Madoff investments; Scott Schober '92, president and CEO of Berkeley Varitronics Systems, a leading provider of advanced solutions for the wireless community; and M. Ann Walko '60, a professor and leader in higher education programs, and only the second female president of UNICO National in its 93-year history. Please join us on Sunday, April 23 to celebrate these distinguished alumni. Learn more about the event and honorees at <http://www.keanalumni.org/daa2016>.

The following pages share valuable information about upcoming events, including an Athletic Alumni Reunion, the 50+ Reunion (one of my favorites!), the Recent Alumni Reunion for our newest grads, and so much more!

There are several other reunions in the planning stages for this spring, so if you have any ideas or want to help, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations. Our mentoring program is in full swing, and has proven to be a mutual benefit to both our alumni and current students. If you are interested in participating in next fall's program, please let us know. We welcome your involvement!

Before you know it, commencement will be here, and we will have the pleasure of welcoming new alumni to our ranks. Once again, I thank you for your continued support and hope to see you around campus soon!



# NJEA Convention & Alumni Reception



The Kean University Alumni Association was well represented at the 2016 NJEA Convention, held in the Atlantic City Convention Center from November 9-11. Kean's banners and booths were welcoming sights for the proud alumni in attendance. The alumni booth was staffed by several members of the Alumni Board, including some current education professionals. Additionally, over 500 alumni updated their records and received the much sought after Kean NJEA bag and pocket calendar gifts. Alumni who were interested in finding out admissions information for their own children, or who were considering coming back to Kean for graduate school, also had the opportunity to stop by the Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions booths.

On the evening of November 9, the Alumni Association hosted its annual Alumni Reception at Caesars Palladium Ballroom, welcoming back approximately 250 alumni who mingled over hors d'oeuvres while hearing the latest news about the College of Education from Dean Anthony Pittman. On Friday, November 11, Veterans Day, Kean concluded the festivities by handing out (and tossing around) Veterans Day stress balls to attendees, and making its first ever #MannequinChallenge video.



# Alumni-Student Networking “Night of Stars”

On November 3, the Office of Alumni Relations hosted an alumni and student networking event, “Night of Stars.” The group of over 120 alumni and students were first addressed by two alumni professionals, Shahriar Choudhury '08 and Maria Vargas-Pion '10, who spoke about their Kean experience and life after Kean. Vargas-Pion, a news reporter for Univision, discussed how her willingness to join clubs and attend activities at Kean, work with the school newspaper, and forge strong connections with both faculty and peers helped prepare her to take on the unique challenges of a career in journalism. Choudhury, who leads the technical talent acquisition team at Morgan Stanley, gave advice on networking both to gain and share wealth. He also challenged the room to “disrupt [their] bad habits starting tomorrow.”

Students were then invited to network with alumni professionals throughout the room, rotating in 10-minute intervals at tables that were categorized by industry. Outside of industry questions, students had the opportunity to ask alumni about their own challenges in the workforce, job search strategies, and skills learned outside of the classroom.

Following the “speed networking session,” Latifah Olivier '07 '09 MPA spoke about the important lessons she learned while a student at Kean - persistence, perseverance, and consistent follow-up - and how these lessons helped her successfully land her dream job as an investigator for the U.S. Department of Labor. The program concluded with acknowledgements from Stella Maher, the Director of Alumni Relations.



# Alumni-Student Mentoring Program

Now in its second year, the Kean University Alumni Association’s mentoring program has paired approximately 40 senior students with alumni to focus on career readiness as they prepare for graduation and their next steps. The pairs are working together from October through April with monthly face-to-face meetings and online dialogue for the days in between.

Support for the program and its benefits have been clear, from both mentors and mentees. A mentee from last spring’s pilot program remarked, “My goals going in were not very specific, so my mentor provided me with great

information and helpful resources.” An alumni mentor shared “I enjoyed the overall process. I feel we both learned a lot from each other. My mentee was a highly motivated and driven young woman. We had great conversations with a lot of brainstorming.”

The Alumni Office is actively recruiting alumni mentors for this spring at Kean Ocean and for next fall on both campuses. If you would be interested in learning more or participating, please contact Alumni Relations at 908-737-ALUM or alumni@kean.edu.





# SPRING preview

**APRIL 4, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Kean Connect Seminar**  
[www.keanalumni.org/keanconnectspring17](http://www.keanalumni.org/keanconnectspring17)

**APRIL 22**  
**3rd Annual "Cougars That Care" Day of Service**  
[www.keanalumni.org/cougars\\_that\\_care2017](http://www.keanalumni.org/cougars_that_care2017)



**MARCH 28, 6 p.m.**  
**"When Women Lead"**  
**alumnae networking event**  
[www.keanalumni.org/womennetwork](http://www.keanalumni.org/womennetwork)

Over 60 percent of Kean's graduates at the undergraduate level, 75 percent at the graduate level, and 60 percent of currently enrolled students are women. This March, in recognition of Women's History Month, Kean's Alumni Association will host a panel and networking event designed to celebrate successful alumnae, and help them share their stories with our students.

**APRIL 23, NOON**  
**Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony**  
[www.keanalumni.org/DAA2017](http://www.keanalumni.org/DAA2017)



**MAY 9, 11:30 a.m.**  
**50 Plus Reunion**  
**(for classes 1966 and earlier)**  
[www.keanalumni.org/50plusreunion2017](http://www.keanalumni.org/50plusreunion2017)



**JUNE 9, 8 p.m.**  
**Recent Alumni Reunion**  
**(for classes 2007-2017)**  
[www.keanalumni.org/recentgraduates17](http://www.keanalumni.org/recentgraduates17)



## MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

## MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
		6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



# ATHLETIC ALUMNI REUNIONS

Kean athletic teams invited their alumni to play against current students.





## 1970s

**Sherri Ginsberg '79** the librarian for HillSides, a Los Angeles County foster care charity in Pasadena, has been named one of the top 10 librarians in the country by the American Library Association, and received the 2016 "I Love My Librarian" Award.



## 1990s

**Jeralyn Lawrence '92**, a member of the Bridgewater-based law firm Norris, McLaughlin, & Marcus, P.A., spoke on October 13 at Hot Tips in Family Law, the annual program sponsored by the New Jersey State Bar Association's Family Law Section, in association with the New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education.

**Scott Schober '92** appeared live on The World Today to discuss "Why is U.S. Copying China WePay & WeChat Mobile Payments?"

**Susie Bartolome Peterson '96 '98 MA** attained a Doctor of Clinical Science in Speech-Language Pathology from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. She was also awarded the 2016 Student Scholar Award, based on the high level of scholarship, research, and writing demonstrated for her doctoral research project.

## 2000s

**Eyal Bino '02** cofounded ICONYC Labs in Manhattan to accelerate early-stage Israeli tech startups. He is also a regular contributor to *Forbes magazine*.



**Peter Jacob '07** ran for the New Jersey U.S. House of Representatives seat as the 2016 Democratic Party candidate in New Jersey's 7th congressional district, and was endorsed by Bernie Sanders. Jacob, who received a Master of Social Work from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at the Washington University in St. Louis, is a licensed social worker.

## 2010s

**Dauida Lindsay-Harewood, '10 MA** defended her dissertation to complete her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Seton Hall University.

**Roberto Carlos Garcia '10**, a native New Yorker, published his first collection of poetry, *Melancolia*

**Linda Baron Cortes '10 '11 MA** received a 2016 "Mujer Legendaria" (Legendary Woman) award from the Ford Motor Company, in recognition of her community activism. Cortes is the founder and executive director of Bright Futures Club, Inc, a non-profit organization serving children with special needs.



**Richard Brandt Jr. '11**, of the Stephen Gould Corporation, was appointed to the board of trustees for Red Bank-based Lunch Break, making him both the newest and youngest member of the board. He will be involved with several of their committees.

**Klaudia Piotrowicz '11** joined J.J. Elek Realty as an agent in Woodbridge.

**Lisa Chenofsky Singer '11 MA**, a renowned certified executive coach and leadership advisor, will be speaking at the Business Building Network of Livingston and presenting a talk on "How To Give An Elevator Speech" to area business owners and professionals.

**James Manolio '11 and Joseph Baldasare '11** were sworn in as officers to the Toms River Police Department by Mayor Thomas F. Kelaheer.

## SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Kean University welcomes any and all news about your career, education, family, and reconnecting with other Alumni.

Submit your news via email to: [alumni@kean.edu](mailto:alumni@kean.edu)

Or directly to:  
 Alumni Relations  
 KEAN UNIVERSITY  
 1000 Morris Ave  
 Union, NJ 07083





# Remembering MARIO A. MESI

The Kean University community mourns the loss of philanthropist and longtime supporter, Mario A. Mesi, who died on November 29 at the age of 77.

Following a career as a school teacher, Mesi continued to support education by establishing scholarships at Kean University. Though not an alumnus of Kean, he connected with the University and its mission. He embraced the value of education through the Ratta Nursing Scholarship and the New Horizons Scholarship, the latter having provided assistance for Kean’s LGBT students.

All the while, he loved to track the progress of his scholarship recipients by receiving letters and attending the annual scholarship reception.

His commitment to others could be seen in many facets of his life. From 1988 to 2015 he volunteered as a classical music host on Sundays at WMNR Radio in Monroe, Conn.

One colleague at the radio station said, “He was always kind and soft spoken but made his words count. He loved music, which is always an excellent calling card, and he had high hopes for WMNR to evolve into a great radio station. It’s people like him that remind us of what’s good in humanity. He has been missed, and I will continue to miss him.”

Mesi also worked as an usher at Munson-Lovetere Funeral Homes for over 10 years in Woodbury, Conn. where he excelled because of his warm nature and generous spirit.

The New York City native was a longtime volunteer at the Southbury Training School Thrift Shop and at the Counseling Center at New York’s St. Vincent Hospital. He also served on the Connecticut Choral Society Scholarship Committee and was an enthusiastic volunteer for the choral group.

Mesi was predeceased by his partner Joel Kannengeiser, his sisters Millicent Ratta and Janice Ratta Byrnes, and his niece Janice Binnes. He is remembered by many longtime friends for his kind and gentle nature, as well as for his love of gardening and birding at The Hearth, the assisted living facility in Southbury, Conn., where he was the ‘go-to person’ for residents needing advice on their plants.



## Deceased

### ALUMNI BY CLASS YEAR:

- |                                    |                             |                           |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Henry Yam '35                      | Barbara Ann Zach '60 '64 MA | Thomas Ainsworth '76      | Betty Littlejohn Wheeler '88        |
| Joanna M. Mead '41                 | Helaine Hess '66            | Arlene Keller '76         | Clifford J. Albertson '89           |
| Edith Horowitz Cohen '45           | Charlene Batt '67 '70 MA    | Gloria Ziegler Childs '77 | Laura Price '90                     |
| Alice Mazzucco Maluso '48          | John H. Rippetoe '69 '73 MA | Mariette Von Roesgen '79  | Matthew B. Linda '01                |
| Russell S. DeLuca '49              | Dorothy Latyn '70           | Jean Palmer Edler '81     | Pamela Lynn Buttery '03             |
| Margaret J. Smith '51              | Gilda Cherensky '71 '81 MA  | Fred Rappaport '81        | Michelle G. White-Yates '06 '10 MSW |
| Marlene Koenig Placzek '56         | Loretta A Long '72          | Joseph Knoth '82          | .....                               |
| Barbara Varona Jacobsen '58 '62 MA | Essie Kirkland Hendley '74  | Joan Hornstein '87 '92 MA | <b>FACULTY:</b>                     |
|                                    | Robert Szeles '75           | Stephen G. Mroz '87       | Dr. Jon Erickson                    |
|                                    |                             |                           | Professor Dennis Santomauro         |





# KEAN

# 18<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

## COUGAR CUP

# GOLF

## CLASSIC

SEPTEMBER 18, 2017

Essex County Country Club  
*West Orange, N.J.*

KEAN UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

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parting shot

***Getting the Shot - Behind the Scenes***

Ah, the things we do for art... balancing on a precarious perch, reflector in hand, trying to catch the sun at just the right angle in order to capture the ideal photo (see page 30 for the final product, definitely worth it). Special thanks to photographer Tom Medvedich for inviting us to his studio. - Joey





# KEAN

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*Thursday, June 15, 2017*

*Set sail under the stars at this year's Kean Gala.*

[keanfoundation.org/gala2017](http://keanfoundation.org/gala2017)