

SPRITUS

The Magazine
for University
of Detroit Mercy

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IT'S ALL IN THE NUMBERS

University of Detroit Mercy is reveling in good news from the national media that rank colleges and universities.

It's something we've said all along, but now we can put numbers behind it.

The Wall Street Journal/College Pulse ranked Detroit Mercy among the top colleges in the United States based on student outcomes, learning environment and diversity.

The University ranked **No. 52** in the country, which makes UDM:

- Michigan's **second highest-ranking** university on the list.
- **Fourth** among Catholic institutions nationally, behind only Georgetown University, Boston College and University of Notre Dame.
- The **third-highest** ranked Jesuit university and only Mercy institution ranked.

In addition, Detroit Mercy was ranked in the **top 10%** of colleges and universities nationwide for salary earned over the 40-year length of a career according to research published by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (2022).

Detroit Mercy graduates can expect to earn more than **\$1.2 million** in salary over their 40-year career compared with those who forgo a college education.

In addition to ranking among the **top 10%** of institutions nationwide for salary earned over a 40-year career, UDM ranked in the top 10.5% of all colleges for the 10-year salary rank. This means that younger graduates can expect to earn higher salaries than their counterparts who do not attend college.

The Georgetown study, titled *A First Try at ROI: Ranking 4,500 Colleges*, examines the net present value of a college or university by focusing on how much a sum of money in the future is valued today. This metric includes costs, future earnings and the length of time it would take to invest and earn a specific amount of money over a fixed length of time.

U.S. News & World Report's ranking also put Detroit Mercy among the top schools in the nation, ranking us at **No. 185** in the 2024 Best Colleges edition.

That ranking also included:

- Best Value Schools, National Universities – **No. 31** (up from 40 in 2023)
- Top Performers on Social Mobility – **No. 151** (up from No. 207 in 2023)
- Best Undergraduate Business Programs, Management – **No. 22**
- Best Undergraduate Business Programs, Entrepreneurship – **No. 31**
- Best Undergraduate Business Programs, Finance – **No. 50**
- Best Undergraduate Nursing Programs – **No. 183**
- Best Colleges for Veterans – **No. 129**

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEAR FRIENDS,

In my inauguration speech last March, I said this University was on the verge of becoming a major player in the Midwest. Some met this with enthusiasm and others with skepticism.

Seven months later, I realize I set too low a bar.

By now, you will have heard that *The Wall Street Journal/College Pulse* ranked UDM No. 52 in the nation, a recognition based on student outcomes and the achievements of our alumni. You can read about this ranking on Page 3, but what I hope you take away from this is that Detroit Mercy is becoming a destination university for students across the nation.

In addition, a study published by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce placed UDM in the top 10% of more than 4,500 universities nationwide in terms of return on investment.

These rankings were announced after we welcomed the second largest McNichols class in 15 years and have had a direct impact on applications for the 2024-25 academic year.

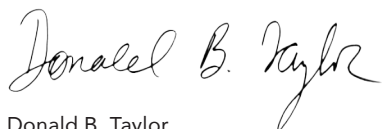
While I am extremely proud of everyone at the University for their help in these important achievements, we must look forward and strive for even greater things. To that end, we have welcomed nine new members to the Board of Trustees. They are leaders in many fields and are committed to using their expertise to take Detroit Mercy forward.

The University is making progress on all five points I outlined at my inauguration. We recently signed partnerships with Oakland Community College and Macomb Community College to increase transfer enrollment in our Engineering and Nursing programs, respectively, and are looking for other partnerships that will make finishing a four-year degree at Detroit Mercy more affordable to a larger population of students.

We are making progress in state and federal earmarks and investments, which will support the development of new academic programs and help us tap into the 39 million adult learners across the country who want to complete their college degree. We are making smart, meaningful investments on our campuses by upgrading, improving and, in some cases, removing facilities.

This is only the start of what we envision for our University. Please stay involved with your school. And for those who have not come back for a visit or participated in an alumni gathering, now is the best time for both. The inspired ideas and support from people like you keep us moving forward.

I wish you a blessed and happy holiday season!



Donald B. Taylor
President



SPIRITUS

The Magazine for University of Detroit Mercy

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COVER PHOTO

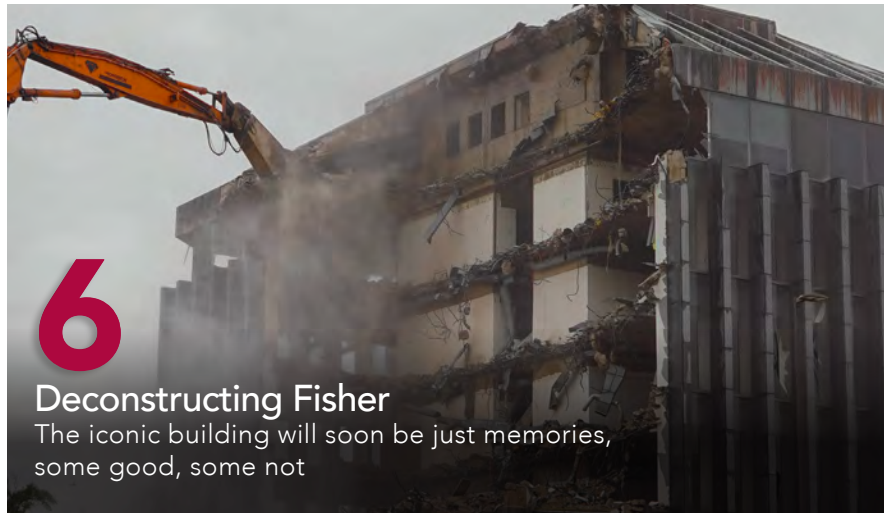
Taken by Mike Shuster at the University's annual Celebrate Spirit! Mass held at the beginning of each new school year.

BACK COVER PHOTO

Adam Bouton

The Marketing & Communications Department publishes **SPIRITUS** twice a year in conjunction with the Office of Alumni Affairs. You may view an electronic version of the magazine at udmercy.edu/spiritus.

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DETROIT MERCY MISSION STATEMENT

University of Detroit Mercy, a Catholic University in the Jesuit and Mercy traditions, exists to provide excellent student-centered undergraduate and graduate education in an urban context. A Detroit Mercy education seeks to integrate the intellectual, spiritual, ethical and social development of students.

Visit Detroit Mercy on the web: udmercy.edu.



LOVE IT OR HATE IT, THE **FISHER** **BUILDING** IS *HISTORY*

BY RON BERNAS



It's had many names over the years — the Radiator, the Toaster and the Death Star are a few — but its official name was the Fisher Administration Center and in August, the University announced it would be coming down. It had become too costly to maintain or repair the iconic building.

In the early 1960s, University of Detroit realized it was past time to centralize all administrative offices into one space. At the time, they were spread among seven separate buildings on the McNichols Campus.

The Fisher family of General Motors fame — Charles Sr., Alfred J. Sr., Edward F. and William A. — led the way with a gift of \$750,000 toward the goal of building an administration center. William A. Fisher said the family was “happy to play a part in promoting the success of this undertaking by helping the University operate more efficiently and more effectively fulfill its important role in the Detroit community.”



In March 1963 the school announced that the Birmingham, Mich., firm of Gunnar Birkerts and Co. had been contracted to design it. At the ceremonial groundbreaking of the five-story, 52,000-square-foot center on Dec. 13, University president Laurence Britt, S.J. said it would be “a true memorial to the Fisher brothers.”

The new center was dedicated Sept. 29, 1966, and the administrative offices slowly moved in afterward, freeing up more than 50,000 square feet in other buildings that could be used for classroom and lab spaces.

The building was much more modern than the Spanish Mission motif conceived for the campus in the 1920s and received some criticism. According to legend, the black slate on the outside of the building was selected to match the black exteriors of the older buildings on campus. In 1990, however, it was discovered that the older buildings were simply covered in years of soot from the smokestack inside the clock tower. Cleaning restored them to their sandstone color, and the Fisher Administration Center looked like an outlier, though it was a landmark on Livernois.

Gunnar Birkerts and Co. received an Award of Merit from the Michigan Society of Architects in 1967 and a similar award from the Detroit Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In 2003, the Michigan Chapter of the American



#FISHER

The Fisher Administration Center evoked many emotions in alumni and others on campus. Here's what some followers had to say when we posted this news on social media.

“Always thought it looked like an air conditioning unit.”

“I had many loans deferred in this building back in the day! LOL”

“I never thought it fit the campus aesthetic of old-world stately buildings.”

“Someone read 1984 during the design phase and it showed.”

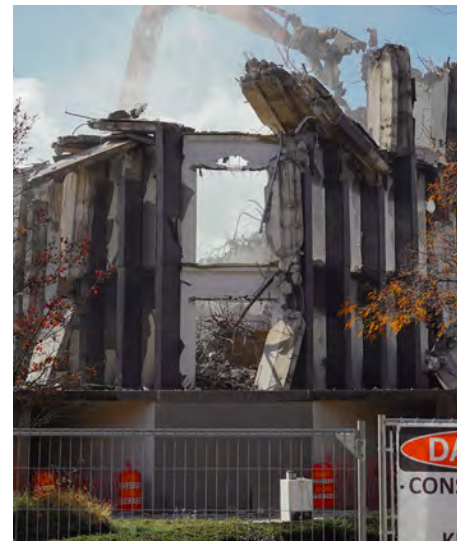
“My memories are going back and forth between the Registrar's Office and the Bursar's Office trying to register and make sure I didn't have an outstanding balance.”

“We had some fun times in that building! The floors and walls were paper thin and Sister Maureen Fay would remind us of that! LOL!”

“As a student there, going to the administration building was always an unpleasant experience.”

“I will miss the Death Star. The building had issues but had its own character.”

“As an elementary school student at Gesu in the '80s, that building was an inspiration to me. Although I didn't attend classes there it stood as a symbol in the community of what us neighborhood kids could be. It will be missed.”



DEMO DEETS

The Fisher demolition was not completed at the time *Spiritus* went to the printer. But we thought you would want to know:

- The cost to make necessary updates to the building was estimated at \$20 million.
- Most of the metal from the building's contents has been recycled.
- All the non-ferrous metals will be recycled.
- All the steel reinforcement for the concrete will be recycled.
- Approximately 80% of the concrete structure will be recycled.
- The 105-foot-long reach excavator (the counterweight for this alone was 14 tons) completed its portion of the work in early November. The remainder of the demolition will be completed by three smaller machines.
- The project was expected to be finished at the end of November.

Watch a timelapse video of the demolition at udmercy.edu/admissions/renovations.

Institute of Architects honored the iconic building with an award recognizing its “architectural design of enduring significance...that has stood the test of time for at least 25 years.”

In recent years, however, the building has proved to be less than enduring.

The balky elevator would occasionally trap students and employees between floors. A design quirk put the restrooms in the stairwells, meaning employees had to walk up or down a flight of stairs to use them; those who couldn't use stairs needed to take the elevator to the restrooms in the basement. Single-pane windows shuddered with the wind, one even blowing out during a particularly windy day. Erratic heating and cooling meant offices would be chilly in the morning and hit temperatures in the 80s during the afternoon. Harsh storms would flood the lower levels.

“Fisher is obsolete,” said Tamara Batcheller, associate vice president for Facilities Management. “The costs to fix it are far higher than it would be to tear it down. It makes no sense to try to renovate.”

The expected cost of renovations to the Fisher Administration Center was part of the impetus behind the renovation



and expansion of the McNichols Campus Student Union. Most of the administrative offices moved to the Student Union in July 2022 after construction was complete, creating a one-stop shop for most student-facing services and a more vibrant center of campus.

In the year since the building was closed to the public, Batcheller said the University has realized substantial operational savings. It was not fully idle, though. The University allowed police departments to use Fisher for training to build relationships with federal, state and local agencies. In some cases, University officers participated in training at no cost.

The site will remain greenspace until the University decides the best use for the area.

RESEARCH MAY LEAD TO NEW CHOLERA TREATMENTS

BY MADELINE BYRNE



Understanding the molecular mechanism that triggers a disease is essential for identifying new treatments. Cholera is no exception.

Recently, an international team of researchers led by Eric Krukonis of the Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry revealed for the first time the atomic structure of ToxR, a protein bound to the DNA of two promoters of the genes that control the virulence of *Vibrio cholerae*, the bacterium that causes cholera.

"The key *Vibrio cholerae* virulence gene activator ToxR has been studied for years by various laboratories, but how exactly it engages DNA has been a bit of a mystery," Krukonis said.

Scientists used X-ray diffraction techniques, synchrotron radiation, artificial intelligence and molecular biology to test structurally based DNA-binding hypotheses.

He added that this study demonstrated that the ToxR protein recognizes DNA structure more than it does specific DNA sequences. That information provides some explanation for its "somewhat promiscuous" binding to DNA and provides insights into its role in removing repressor proteins – proteins that turn off or reduce gene expression – from genes required for expression of cholera toxin and other disease-contributing factors until the bacterium enters the host, explained Krukonis, who initiated the research collaboration.

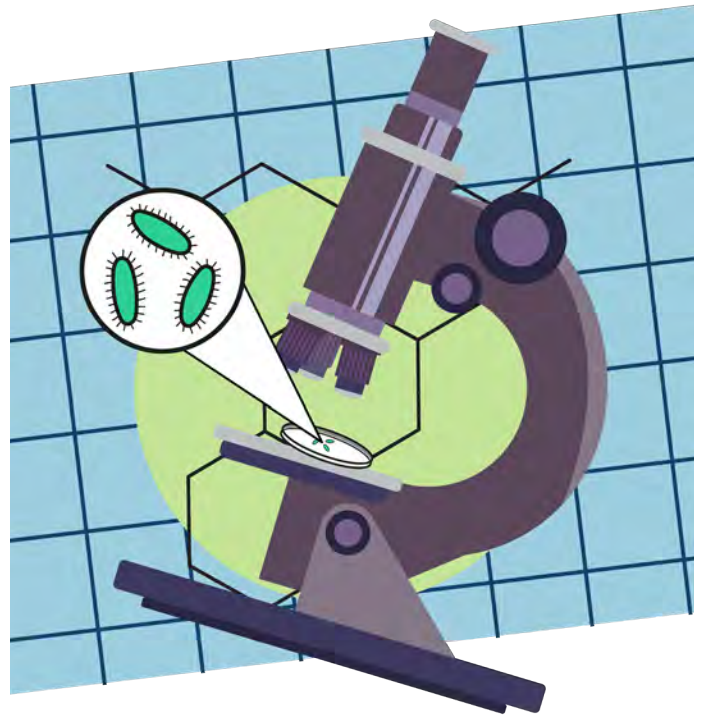
The Detroit Mercy team included ReBUILDDetroit scholar Nour El Yaman '20, Associate Professor Joshua Thomson and Senior Research Laboratory Technician Sarah Plecha. It was funded, in part, through the School of Dentistry's Faculty Research Grant Program.

They collaborated with researchers led by Miquel Coll at the Institute of Research in Biomedicine (IRB Barcelona) and the Institute of Molecular Biology Barcelona (IBMB-CSIC) in Spain.

"ToxR is a transcription factor, meaning it binds genes and controls their expression," Coll said. "ToxR activates the *toxT* and *ompU* genes causing, among other effects, the production of the cholera toxin. This toxin causes severe diarrhea and consequent dehydration, which can be fatal in a few days if left untreated."

This study has revealed that ToxR binds to multiple regulatory sequences in bacterial DNA, in tandem or inverted, in turn recruiting RNA polymerase, the molecular machine that transcribes genes.

"What we know is that this transmembrane transcription factor (where part of ToxR is outside the cell and part is inside the cell), receives a signal outside the cell when the bacterium reaches the



CHOLERA CONTINUES TO BE A THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH IN COUNTRIES WITH POOR SANITARY CONDITIONS. IT IS OFTEN AN INDICATOR OF INEQUALITY AND LACK OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

human intestine, as it detects bile salts," said Albert Canals, first author of the research. "The signal is transmitted inside the cell until it reaches the DNA, thereby triggering expression of virulence genes."

Cholera is caused by the ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacillus *Vibrio cholerae*. Although largely eradicated in developed countries, cholera continues to be a threat to public health in countries with poor sanitary conditions. It is often an indicator of inequality and lack of social development.

In 2022, 29 countries reported cholera cases, among these Haiti, Malawi, Yemen and Syria, which reported large epidemic outbreaks. The increase in cases worldwide has grown in recent years, becoming more widespread and serious due to floods, droughts and massive migration caused by climate change. Armed conflicts and natural catastrophes also limit clean drinking water and facilitate the spread of disease. In 2023, the global resurgence of cholera has sounded the alarm in the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Krukonis saw the effect of cholera on a community when he visited Kolkata, India, in 2008 during the fall monsoon and flooding season as part of a National Institutes of Health-organized First Training Mission in Cholera Collaborative Research and Case Management.

"There were so many people coming into hospitals with severe dehydration. That's when I really started looking into the structure of regulators of cholera toxin expression with the hope of designing targeted therapeutics in the future," he said.

EXHIBIT LINKS MAN'S PAST TO DETROIT MERCY

A Grosse Pointe man's discovery of a 100-year-old *Detroit Free Press* article led to an art exhibit on at the McNichols Campus Library and may have a unique family connection.

The exhibit, titled "1923 Art Exhibit Fundraiser at the University of Detroit," features more than a dozen paintings by late Detroit artist Pauline Locher. She was one of 39 artists who participated in a fundraising art exhibit at University of Detroit 100 years ago to raise money for scholarships.

The fundraiser was held around the same time that Owen's grandfather, Rocco A. Barzone, attended U-D. Owen, 48, believes his grandfather benefitted from one of the \$135 scholarships funded by the exhibit.

"Somebody contributed to these scholarships for the University of Detroit. My grandfather was an Italian immigrant, and there's no way his parents would've been able to afford full tuition," Owen said.

Owen's parents purchased Locher's Detroit home in the late 1970s and later discovered several of her paintings inside its attic. They've remained in Owen's family for the 50 years since, moving from house to house.

A deeper family connection to the paintings was discovered earlier this year as Owen attempted to learn more about his grandfather.

"I got a free subscription to newspapers.com when I signed up for my Ancestry account, and I started taking advantage of it," said Owen, who works as a real estate developer and investor in Detroit. "One day, I looked up Pauline Locher, and I came across that article from the *Free Press* in 1923 that tied the paintings to the University of Detroit."

According to that *Detroit Free Press* article from May 1, 1923, more than 400 paintings and etchings were displayed in the fundraising art exhibit at U-D's former Jefferson Avenue campus.



WATERCOLORS FOUND BY BRIAN OWEN'S FAMILY MAY HAVE A UNIQUE CONNECTION TO DETROIT MERCY.

Owen felt compelled to share Locher's paintings with Detroit Mercy because "they have significance in this neighborhood." He also views them as a symbol of the community that helped his grandfather and other students with their education.

Owen contacted Detroit Mercy's Marketing & Communications department about the paintings and the exhibit from 100 years ago and was put in touch with Archives and Special Collections Librarian Pat Higo. She worked with Owen to put together an exhibit of Locher's paintings for the McNichols Campus Library, which was on display in October and November.

"The University connection to an art exhibit for scholarships and Brian's personal connection to the University, plus the 100th anniversary of the exhibit, it just all seemed to come together," Higo said.

Owen has fond memories of his grandfather, who he says worked as an usher at Calihan Hall in the 1960s and 1970s and was close friends with Titan Hall of Famer and former Athletic Director Lloyd Brazil. Barzone passed away when Owen was 12.

"He was my favorite human," Owen said. "My one wish would be to have an adult interaction with Rocco Barzone, so I feel

like this is probably as close as I'll ever get to that. I'd love to tell him about this. 'Hey grandpa, look what I'm doing at your school.' He would be proud."

In October, Owen visited the McNichols Campus Library. Seeing Locher's paintings displayed for the first time stirred a lot of emotions in Owen.

Owen describes the entire experience as "serendipitous."

"You hang onto something because you know they're important in some way. My family, we all just agreed that it was our duty to save them or store them somewhere," Owen said. "They've never been displayed, they've never seen the light of day, but we all saw the value and beauty of them enough to know we'll figure out something to do with them one day."

"This was the result of just hanging onto them because we knew that they served a greater purpose. This just came out of that."

TRAVELING CLINIC TAKES ITS WORK ON THE ROAD

Seven students and three professors representing Detroit Mercy Law served nearly 200 people from across Michigan when they took Detroit Mercy's expungement clinic to Saginaw, Sault Ste. Marie and Marquette earlier this year.

Detroit Mercy Law first offered traveling expungement clinics in 2019 to help Michigan residents with the process of removing criminal convictions from their records.

Through the clinic, law students and supervising attorneys review clients' Michigan criminal records and advise them on their eligibility for expungement. If eligible, they receive assistance preparing the application to begin the process and directions for filing and next steps.

"The legislature made significant changes to the expungement statute over the last few years," said Rebecca Simkins Nowak, director of Clinical Operations and Outreach. "One of which is increasing the number of convictions that a person may

have and still be eligible for expungement. Another is that a first DUI is eligible for expungement."

Simkins Nowak supervised the students' work with Associate Dean of Experiential Education and Associate Professor of Law Nicholas Schroeck and Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Michelle Rick '91. The three received the 2020 State Bar of Michigan Kimberly M. Cahill Leadership Award for their work in organizing the original traveling clinic. All students were part of the Access to Justice Practicum, taught by Rick.

"There is quite a difference between reading how to do expungements or seeing a lecture on how to do expungement compared to actually going through the process with real clients," said participating student Zahara Madahah. Over the course of the week, Madahah assisted in helping expunge records for two felonies and 12 misdemeanors.

Detroit Mercy Law will continue to offer similar clinics across the state and process

applications for expungements through the fall. Expungements can take up to eight months to be processed by the attorney general. The goal is for students to eventually be able to appear in court in front of judges in support of the expungement applications they file.

"This clinic is important to the clients it serves, and expungement is a vital piece of our criminal justice system," said student participant Steven Meerschaert. "Everyone deserves a second chance, and we should honor those who turn their lives around. The fact that the clients have a criminal record does not encapsulate who they are, and expunging their record gives them a chance to be treated like who they are today, rather than who they once were."

- By Grace Henning

CLAE TO GET A NEW NAME

When the next academic year starts in fall 2024, the College of Liberal Arts & Education will have a new name.

The name — the College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences or CHASS — was chosen after a year-long process that included faculty, staff, student and alumni input.

CLAE Dean Jocelyn Boryczka said the new name is more aligned with the goals of the college.

"We wanted to have a name that matches where we are," Boryczka said. "This gives us a new vision and a new mission and will create energy and excitement for how we want to move forward."

What won't change will be the College's commitment to Detroit Mercy students.

"We remain very committed to the tradition of a liberal arts education," she said. "Our college, the original college for the University, established in 1877, upholds this tradition as we shape future generations of leaders, thinkers and visionaries. ... Our new name ... signals the path-breaking road ahead for the college."

For more information, visit liberalarts.udmercy.edu/chass.



THE ETHICS BOWL, during which student teams debate ethical issues before a panel of judges, is a popular College of Liberal Arts & Education event on the McNichols Campus. It returned this October after a brief hiatus.

NEW MISSION LEADER HAS MERCY AND JESUIT TIES

Detroit Mercy has named the Rev. Charles O. Oduke as its new vice president for Mission Integration. He began his tenure at the University on Aug. 1.

"I am thrilled to be invited to lead UDM in integrating, cultivating, expressing and celebrating its unique Mercy and Jesuit Mission," said Fr. Oduke.

"His experience and leadership will help raise the everyday profile of our Jesuit and Mercy mission that calls us to integrate the intellectual, spiritual, ethical and social development of our students," said University President Donald B. Taylor.

Fr. Oduke is a dual citizen of the United States and Kenya. As a child growing up in Kenya, Fr. Oduke's earliest education was by the Irish Sisters of Mercy. After college and before entering the Jesuits, he worked at the Mater Misericordiae (Mother of Mercy) Hospital in Nairobi. He is a Catholic priest who was a Jesuit for over two decades and is incardinated in the Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York.

His career in Jesuit higher education dates back to 1994, when he served as a missionary in war-torn Sudan alongside Jesuits from what was then the Detroit Province. He was part of the team that co-founded Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST), a public tier-one research university in



western Kenya, where he served as dean of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences and in several academic leadership positions.

Fr. Oduke earned his doctoral degree in Philosophy at Boston College. He was also on the faculty there and taught Lonergan studies, social justice, philosophy and African Diaspora studies. He comes to Detroit Mercy from Le Moyne College in Syracuse, N.Y., where he served as director of the Office of Inclusive Excellence and Global Education; vice president for Mission Integration & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; and most recently as vice president for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

"I plan to collaborate with various constituents of UDM to bring the Mercy and Jesuit values to bear on the academic curriculum, community engagement, University culture, and on the personal lives of our students, staff and faculty," Fr. Oduke said. "I was attracted to UDM because its history is uniquely intertwined with that of the city of Detroit. UDM has been part of Detroit's enduring symbol of resilience, innovation and creativity. I want to collaborate with all Titans in continuing the good work of revitalization of this city which is now my new home."

JESUIT TAPPED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR SPECIAL UNIVERSITY PROJECTS

The University has named Patrick Dorsey, S.J., to the position of director of development for University Special Projects.

Dennis Carlesso, interim vice president for University Advancement, said those special projects will include University priorities that do not have a primarily academic focus, including University Ministry, the Institute for Leadership & Service and other mission-based programming.

Since his ordination in 1996, Fr. Dorsey has worked at Marquette University, Loyola University of Chicago, and the University of San Francisco in campus ministry and advancement. He also provides a strong pastoral presence for those on campus as well as alumni.

While at Marquette, he worked in campus ministry and started chaplaincy programs in several schools, ROTC programs, Women's basketball, and a residence hall. He moved to Loyola University Chicago, where he was director of Madonna Della Strada Chapel before moving into university advancement. His work at the



University of San Francisco was primarily with the major gift team in the Office of Advancement.

"Since I began working at University of Detroit Mercy, I have found the students, faculty, staff and alumni to be generously welcoming and supportive," Fr. Dorsey said. "In light of these budding relationships, I have a better understanding of the 'can do' attitude embodied in the people I have met at this University."

“SO THEY SAID”

A COLLECTION OF QUOTES HEARD AT AND AROUND DETROIT MERCY

“For many of the students, the GM Student Corps experience is their first real job, with a real paycheck. It may also be their first exposure to certain life skills, finance, college, leadership opportunities, public speaking and many more elements of the program. It provides an opportunity for students to see beyond their circle of friends and experience the feeling of giving back to their community and school.”

MIKE DIGIOVANNI '70, '72, who helped host nearly 100 students from 14 high schools in southeast Michigan this summer who participated in the GM Student Corps/UDM College Experience. The Student Corps offers life skills, community engagement and mentors to guide participants.

“The more I learned about Catherine and reflected upon her life, I have no doubt that had she been born and raised in Michigan, Catherine’s ministry would have rooted her firmly in Detroit, and it is this legacy that UDM has the unique position to carry forward into the future.”

CARRIE NANTAIS '17 served as interim vice president for Mission Integration in 2022-23. She is a fully licensed clinical psychologist in private practice. She was part of a delegation from the College of Health Professions that traveled to Ireland to study the roots of the Sisters of Mercy.



“Being a professor during my year (in Belize) sounds pretty interesting. Maybe I could help and teach other people with the talents and interests that I have. Maybe that’s the best way to help others.”

PAUL MANUSZAK '22, who left his engineering job in the defense industry to work with the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity in Benque Viejo Del Carmen, Belize, for a year. Part of his work includes teaching at the John Paul II Junior College.

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To read the full stories and others, visit sites.udmercy.edu/alumni and udmercy.edu.



MARK DIETRICK, LEFT, AND WLADEK FUCHS

UDM HAS ITS FINGER ON THE PULSE OF ARCHITECTURE'S FUTURE

BY RON BERNAS

About six years ago, Mark Dietrick '84 and his firm, Case Technologies, started a project to digitally preserve architectural sites in Volterra, Italy, an ancient city where the School of Architecture & Community Development's Volterra-Detroit Foundation runs a study abroad experience.

The Volterra Reality Capture Workshop, as the project was called, also captured the attention of historians and was featured in the National Geographic documentary series, "Lost Treasures of Rome." It received the American Institute of Architects Innovation People's Choice Award in 2017.

Dietrick worked with Professor of Architecture & Community Development Wladek Fuchs to develop the project. The two met in college during an exchange program with the Technical University of Warsaw in Poland. They have stayed in touch, united by their love of technology and their vision of how it could be used.

Fuchs, for his part, said the digital preservation technology has been a "revelation" for him in his research and his teaching.

And for Dietrick?

"It's been lifechanging."

From the central site of Volterra, Dietrick and Fuchs offered workshops to historians and architects from around the world through Case Technologies, Dietrick's Pittsburgh-based consulting firm. The excitement over the technology spread quickly and soon Dietrick was working with Autodesk, which makes software products and services for the architecture, engineering, construction, manufacturing, education and entertainment industries.

With digital preservation, three-dimensional scanners, drones and lasers are used to record buildings in the area and stored as digital data. This information can be used to monitor changes in structures

over time or serve as a guide for excavation or reconstruction.

Today, the technology is being used to not only guide redevelopment of distressed areas, but also to teach young people about the possibilities of architecture.

Autodesk Revit is the software product used most extensively in the field and its 2024 version includes a sample project drawn from a community redevelopment effort Dietrick worked on in Brownsville, Penn. Several people associated with Detroit Mercy have been part of the project.

"Brownsville is a steel town but it was completely decimated and very blighted after the mills closed down," Dietrick said. "It had a lot of historic structures that were abandoned, and in sad state of repair."

Though possible restoration or reuse of certain areas were the goals of the project, digital scanning was an important part as well, because shortly after the scanning began, at least one building had to be taken down since it was falling into the street.

"But because we were able to scan them before they were destroyed, we now have what we call a digital twin of what they once were," Dietrick, who is also an adjunct SACD faculty member, said.

The city of Brownsville is now building a park on the site of that demolished building.

In making the updated Revit software package, Autodesk chose this Brownsville project as the sample users could explore as they learned the ins and outs of the software. Dietrick said the first person he approached to design that digital project was former Dean of Architecture Stephen Vogel '70, '75, who has a lot of experience in adaptive reuse projects.

"Because of Revit's reach, millions of people will see this project," Dietrick said.

"I've never used Revit," Vogel said. "But what they wanted was a design for a project based on the scanning they had done in Brownsville that combined historical buildings with new architecture."

His design included loft apartments, commercial spaces and a new building incorporated behind the façade of historic buildings. It also needed to have energy-efficient features.

"It was a fascinating project," Vogel said. He would know — for 12 years he was chair of the Detroit Historical District Commission and has written extensively about these types of projects.

Following the Brownsville project, Autodesk made Revit available to high school students in Brownsville and the surrounding area. Using videogame-like tools, students can manipulate the data to create their own projects and some have developed an interest in architecture.

They also could see what their city once looked like and many have found a new pride in their hometown.

"These projects are not only about the past," Dietrick said. "They become, maybe, the hope of what things could be."

SACD STUDENTS AMONG TOP IN INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION

BY RICKY LINDSAY

Three University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture & Community Development students were among the winners of this year's American Institute of Architects Committee on the Environment Top Ten for Students Competition.

Held in partnership with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), the competition recognized 10 student design studio projects that were environmentally sustainable. Winning projects received a cash prize of \$1,350. More than 1,100 projects were submitted for this year's competition.

The project by Dolin Diaz '23, Farah Ossaimee '21, '23 and Marcus Puste '23 was a proposal for a 100,000-square-foot mixed-use building in Detroit's Rivertown District called Timber Integrative Means + Biophilic Resilience (TIMBR). Timber construction products were used in both the interior and exterior of the five-story building to achieve net zero emissions while being a good neighbor along the Detroit River.

"We started this whole project with just a little L shape that was extruded," said Ossaimee. "But as the project went along, we added little details and the climate constraints, working with those details to attest for glare issues, day lighting and making sure that we've got the view in and keeping an eye on the Dequindre Cut.

"It came out to be a beautiful project."

"TIMBR was our response to the challenge of creating a high-performance building that addresses energy use and sustainability of mass timber construction," added Puste, a graduate student at UDM.

TIMBR was initially designed as the semester-long project for UDM's Integrated Design Studio course, taught by Associate Professor Kristin Nelson and Assistant Professor James Leach. The course is one of two capstone courses that Architecture students take during their senior year.

The Integrated Design Studio's project aligns well with the AIA COTE Top Ten Competition but doesn't cover all 10 of its measures, Nelson said. To enter the competition, students need to continue working on their projects beyond the course.

Positive feedback garnered from both inside and outside of the studio classroom — TIMBR received two awards in the School of Architecture & Community Development's design competition — led Diaz, Ossaimee and Puste to take their project a step further.

Seeing their project recognized among projects representing institutions from the United States and Canada to Puerto Rico, Bolivia and the United Arab Emirates is something the UDM group still talks about today.

"I think my group and I were surprised we were awarded as finalists for the competition. We still text each other about how surreal this



has been," said Diaz, who is finishing her master's degree at UDM. "It amazed us on how we stood out, considering that we come from a smaller educational institution."

According to Nelson and Leach, Diaz, Ossaimee and Puste are planning to share their experience and advice with the students in this year's Integrated Design Studio.

"I think it should give them some confidence to see that it's possible with the work that they do in school," Leach said.

Nelson believes that opportunities like the AIA COTE Top Ten Competition can be quite empowering for students, who can see their work recognized on an international stage.

"It gives them that additional vote of confidence that it's not just here that people think what they're doing is very good, it's in this broader context of all of academic architecture," she said.

The project and competition were a learning experience for Diaz, Ossaimee and Puste.

Ossaimee said she learned about sustainability and simplicity in architecture, whereas Puste learned the value of collaboration.

"When I design my work for my portfolio, I like to go a little bit out of the box and go extravagant," said Ossaimee, who is pursuing a Master of Architecture at the University of Michigan. "But this project, and even working with Marcus and Dolin, they helped me tone it down and appreciate simplicity, and how simplicity can take you a long way."

The experience taught Diaz to never be afraid to take a leap of faith.

"I learned that no matter how big and intimidating a competition, conference or interview may appear, it's always worth taking the chance," she said. "At the end of the day, it's better to be recognized than to remain unnoticed. I am very grateful for my professors' support at University of Detroit Mercy. I'm confident they are cheering me on and ready to provide their support."

udmercy_travelingramen



BIG NOODLE ON CAMPUS

A new Instagram account, **@udmercy_travelingramen**, surfaced near the start of the 2023-24 school year, offering a fun and unique perspective on Detroit Mercy through the travels of a ramen noodles packet.

Mercy Ramen has produced 55 posts so far, showcasing nooks, buildings, campus

and Detroit and providing witty musings and captions like: "Read a book. It'll do you good" and "Self-reflection is an important part of my everyday life."

Detroit Mercy's Marketing & Communications staff reached out to the account to learn more about the creative madness behind the noodles. Mercy Ramen is run by a freshman theatre major.

Q: What inspired you to create the account?

A: Honestly, the account started as a joke between me and my friends. We were all just chatting during dinner getting to know each other during PTV (Prologues, Transitions and Viewpoints) and mid-conversation we talked about how funny it would be to get a packet of ramen blessed and having a holy ramen.

With this conversation in my head, I went back to my dorm and saw that out of all of the orange chicken ramen packets, there was one red and blue beef ramen packet.

I took this as a sign that this ramen was special, this ramen was the holy ramen. That day I decided to make that packet Mercy ramen and thought it would be fun to explore the campus by taking pictures with it. This helped me to learn the campus better as well as have the opportunity to just express my creative side. That joke slowly turned into what the account is now.

Q: Any favorite moments during your first semester?

A: Connecting with random people by asking them to take pictures with ramen was a great way to humorously break the ice. It causes an immediate calm (because) of the humor of the situation. That then opens up conversations that I might have never had otherwise. Overall though, the memories that I've created with my friends have been the best part of my semester here at Detroit Mercy.

udmsquirrels



studiosleeps



MORE SOCIAL FUN

A traveling ramen is just one of many Instagram accounts that document the life of Detroit Mercy students. Here are two more just as quirky as a peripatetic package of noodles.

@udmsquirrels features the antics of the furry little friends that share the McNichols Campus with humans. The account accepts videos and photos from anyone, as long as it was taken on campus.

Students in the Architecture program have to put in long, hard hours in the studio working on projects. **@studiosleeps** posts feature, well, students sleeping in chairs, on couches, the floor, makeshift beds, anyplace really in the Loranger Building.

And don't forget to check out our Titan Taxi videos on YouTube. Guest drivers tool around campus in a golf cart offering students' rides to their next class, back to the dorm or wherever they want to go. Along the way we ask them trivia about the school, hear what's on their minds and give them a doughnut.

Sometimes it's the simplest things that make people happy.

KENDELL ON THE CHASE TO REPRESENT TEAM USA

BY P.J. GRADOWSKI

Ten years ago, the possibility of earning a spot on the U.S. Olympics team wasn't even on Ben Kendell's '18, '19 mind.

And why would it be. He was a 17-year-old junior at the International School of Turin in Italy, finishing high school abroad due to his father's job.

Fast forward to Dec. 2, 2022, when the Detroit Mercy alumnus put himself in position to represent his country. Kendell took 17th in the California International Marathon with a time of 2:15:49 to qualify for the United States Olympic Marathon trials, which are set for Feb. 3, 2024, in Orlando, Fla.

"You think of the Olympics and say, 'That would be cool,' but it was just a lofty aspiration and never really tangible," said Kendell. "It is crazy to think that nearly 10 years ago, I was coming in as a freshman. The goal was to contribute, have a good season and adapt to college. I never thought about the Olympics."

In the history of the track and field and cross country programs, four Titans —



William Daly '36 (1936), Wally Gruber '49 (1948), current Director of Cross Country & Track and Field Guy Murray '89 (2000) and Colin Cashner '15 (2016) — have participated in the U.S. Olympic Trials.

"I am very excited. We had two final races in October and I set another PR. Now, the main training block for the trials starts, so it is about getting in that mindset and getting ready for it all," said Kendell.

His trek to Detroit Mercy might have been predictable, if unconventional.

His mother, Michelle (Vogt) Kendell '88, was a member of the University's first-ever women's cross country team in 1984 and MCC championship squads in 1986 and 1987. She graduated with a Business degree.

His father, William Kendell '89, '98, lettered in fencing and earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in Engineering. Today, he is the senior vice president of North America customer experience at Stellantis.

But in 2014, he was head of quality at Maserati, which took the family to Italy.

"For me, college was about looking for my education and engineering," Kendell said. "Even with the ties my parents had there, the running aspect wasn't really big for me; it was about finding the right fit academically. Don't get me wrong, I wanted to run, but that was really secondary.

"When the opportunity to come to Detroit Mercy arose, with the engineering program and the ability to run, it was all there for me."

His college career was nothing short of remarkable, in competition and in the classroom.

In cross country, he was All-Horizon League First Team all four years, winning the individual conference title in 2018 as a senior while finishing runner-up twice and fifth as a freshman. That fifth-place finish helped the Titans win the Horizon League Champion.



He ended his cross country career in style, taking silver at the 2018 NCAA Great Lakes Regional Championship — the highest place in a regional run by a Titan in school history and the best league finish since 2008 — and placing 95th at the NCAA DI National Championship with a school 10K record.

Kendell's name is all over Detroit Mercy's record books, as he owns the school mark in the 4-mile (19:39), 8K (23:54) and 10K (30:35) with six career wins and five runner-up performances.

In track, he was a four-time Horizon League champion, winning the indoor 3,000-meter in 2017 and 2018 and the outdoor 5,000-meter in 2019 and 10,000-meter in 2015. Kendell was chosen the Horizon League Male Outdoor Athlete of the Year in 2019 as he broke the league record in the 5,000-meter at 14:23.94. He qualified for the 10,000-meter at the NCAA East Preliminary Championship twice, taking 20th in 2018 and 21st in 2019 with a time of 30:06 in both years.

At the end of his career, Kendell received the Detroit Mercy President's Award, given to the top senior student-athlete, and the Horizon League's Coleman Medal of Honor, presented to the league's top student-athlete who best exemplifies the dignity and high purpose of the league and its membership.

"I was very happy to find my niche at Detroit Mercy. I know the bigger schools have more resources, but being able to achieve and push yourself with what you have definitely prepared me for this and my career," Kendell said.

"The people excelling in running post collegiately are not all big-school runners. It is people who stick with it and who know how to compete with that nose to the grindstone mentality."

In 2019, the idea of competing professionally started to gain more strength. Kendell joined the Hansons-Brooks Distance Project, which devotes itself to runners coming out of college who have demonstrated the ability and wish to continue running, but haven't quite advanced to the next level. The Olympics are its ultimate focus.



The training started right after college and has led him to take part in various professional races. Kendell's highlights include taking second (30:22) in the Detroit Turkey Trot 10K in 2019, third (49:12) in the Crim Festival of Races 10-mile in 2022, and fifth (1:03:44) in the Indianapolis Monumental half-marathon in October 2023.

The schedule is grueling and complex. On average, the workouts consist of 12-18 miles per day and 90-105 miles per week, hitting up to around 140 miles per week at times.

"I have a part-time engineering job that has been very flexible and great with me during my training," Kendell said. "It has been great to keep my engineering skills sharp and continue my professional resume while keeping all the training for me to pursue all of this."

Kendell is looking to become just the seventh member of the University community to represent their country on the highest stage.

Titan Hall of Famer Spencer Haywood '69 led the United States men's basketball team to a gold medal at the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City as a 19-year-old, scoring in double figures in seven out of the nine games.

In fencing, Hall-Of-Famers Tyrone Simmons '74 and Dan Cantillon '67 competed for Team USA. Simmons was in the team foil competition at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich as he became the second African American to compete in fencing. Cantillon was also at the 1968 Summer Games in the epee portion.

Softball's Kaleigh Rafter joined the Canadian national team in 2007 and played for her home country during the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.

While not a Titan student-athlete, Jeanne Stunyo won a silver medal in diving for the United States at the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne, Australia, while enrolled at U-D. Pat Costello '51, a U-D alumnus, was a two-time Olympian, competing in 1952 in Helsinki and earning a silver medal in rowing at the 1956 Summer Games.

Kendell relishes the opportunity to join them as Olympians as his training reaches its crescendo.

"I have to get my time down to around 2:10:00 or 2:12:00," Kendell said. "Training has been great in the last six months, and just getting into this final training mode and seeing where it goes. Obviously, top three is the ultimate goal, but just getting into that top 20 is a good intermediate goal."



MEN'S BASKETBALL MAKES HISTORY

The Detroit Mercy men's basketball team hired Jerica Williams as its first female assistant coach in school history. At the moment, she is the only female men's coach in NCAA DI who will be doing on-the-court instruction.

SHERMAN ENDS CROSS COUNTRY CAREER IN STYLE

Graduate senior Allison Sherman earned her fourth career All-Horizon League honor taking seventh place in a career-best 21:28 for First Team accolades at the Horizon League championships. She is just the third person in school history to net four All-HL honors, while her time was the third-best 6K in school history.



SOCCER TEAM IN POSTSEASON

A 2-1 win over Metro Series rival Oakland helped the Detroit Mercy women's soccer team qualify for the Horizon League Tournament for the first time since 2018.

The Titan men's soccer team also played their way into the HL Tournament, earning the No.4 seed with a 4-3-2 league record.



MEN'S LACROSSE TO JOIN NEC

The Detroit Mercy men's lacrosse program has accepted an invitation to join the Northeast Conference (NEC), starting with the 2025 season. The league will feature five full-time members in Le Moyne, LIU, Merrimack, Sacred Heart, and Wagner, along with affiliates Detroit Mercy and VMI. The conference winner will receive the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Championship.

PAIR OF TITANS ON HORIZON LEAGUE SAAC COMMITTEE

The Horizon League has announced the student-athletes who will participate on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) for the 2023-24 academic year. Women's cross country and track and field sophomore Ayva Schmalz and men's basketball sophomore Marcus Tankersley will represent the Titans. In addition, Schmalz will serve on the committee's Governance Cabinet.



CHANG CARDS LOW ROUND EN ROUTE TO FIRST CAREER WIN



Junior Ariel Chang tallied two birdies in the last four holes to earn her first collegiate win at Youngstown State's Roseann Schwartz Invitational, the first by a Titan since 2019. She posted a 1-under 71 in the final round to tie for first with a career-tying 144 (73-71), winning the event via tiebreaker.



MASCOT ORIGINS:

TITAN FANS WORKED TOGETHER TO HELP 'TOMMY' TAKE OFF

A reader's response to a feature on the new Tommy Titan in the Spring 2023 edition of Spiritus prompted a deeper dive into the origins of the beloved mascot.

BY ADAM BOUTON

The Titan men's basketball team was in the midst of a historic 1976-77 season — Dick Vitale's last as head coach — yet something was lacking that many top institutions in that era possessed: A school mascot.

The University, which changed its nickname from "Tigers" to "Titans" in 1924 in part to avoid confusion with the city's baseball team, had various St. Bernard puppies as mascots at U-D football games in the 1940s and 50s. But there hadn't been a physical or caricature mascot since.

Behind a call from the University and assistance from both a U-D alumnus and student, that would change in time for a thrilling finish to a historic basketball campaign.

Ken Thelen '72 and Tom Cieszkowski '80 didn't know each other beforehand, but both played vital roles in helping the first Titan mascot come to fruition early in 1977.

A couple of years earlier, in 1975, the *Varsity News* had begun to run advertisements for a student to fill the mascot role. On Feb. 1, 1977, the VN once again ran an ad from the Athletics Department.

As a student, Cieszkowski already brought a lot of energy to Titan basketball games and figured if nobody answered the advertisement after an issue or two, he would throw his name in the hat.

"It was divine providence," Cieszkowski said. "I was always jumping up and down in the seats. If I'm going to be excitable, I might as well be out there, being positive and bringing good energy."

But before "Tommy" could spark the Titan faithful, he needed a costume fit for a Titan.

That's where Thelen came in. A graduate from a few years prior who was enjoying the success of the Titan basketball team, Thelen wanted to help with the mascot project in any way he could.

The Titans had recently defeated rival Dayton on the road, were



BEFORE TOMMY, U-D'S MASCOT WAS A ST. BERNARD

stringing wins together and had entered the top-20 rankings nationally.

"I was under-employed at the time and I took the day off and went down to the Memorial Building (now Calihan Hall)," Thelen said. "I knew Vitale and had spoken to him a few times. I told him I wanted to try and go to Marygrove College, I knew they had theatrical armor, so Vitale wrote me a letter, reading, 'Please give Ken any help you can, Dick Vitale.'"

While Marygrove couldn't help Thelen with the armor he needed, they gave him an address to a place that could: Tobins Lake Studios, near Ann Arbor. There, Thelen found everything he needed.

He bought five sheets of Vacuform, thick-gauged armor for \$25, which was a considerable amount of money then. Thelen, however, knew someone in the Titan Club, who offered to cover the entire cost for the uniform.

After purchasing the sheets, the costume project turned into a family affair. Thelen's wife, Nancy, made a white tunic with red trim on it and his father, Ken Thelen '52, a skilled wood worker, crafted a spear for the Titan mascot.

Thelen cut out the sheets for Greek armor, a breast plate, back plate

and shin guards. He taped the edges and spray painted them black and then silver. He also created a helmet, which had a feather crest, red and white in alternating feathers.

Cieszkowski made his debut as the mascot on Feb. 12, 1977, at Calihan Hall against Wayne State, a triumph and win No. 19 in the team's win streak.

"I brought all of the stuff down there and we went into the locker room before the game and I showed him how it worked," Thelen said. "He was fearsome, he looked like a Fifth-Century B.C. warrior and that's kind of how we wanted to portray him as a Titan."

Cieszkowski shined as the first mascot for a pivotal stretch of Titan basketball. He even signed autographs as "Tommy Titan," playing off his first name. The moniker was born.

Two games later, with Tommy Titan in attendance, the Titans defeated eventual 1977 NCAA champion Marquette on the road, 64-63, marking the 21st consecutive win that season, still a school record. Later that year, in a memorable moment for Cieszkowski, he chased a man across the court at Loyola University Chicago to retrieve his helmet the man had snatched off his head.

He later made the trip to the NCAA Tournament with the Titans, who were led by future NBA players Dennis Boyd, Terry Duerod, John Long and Terry Tyler. He was in attendance for the Titans' first-ever NCAA Tournament win, a 93-76 triumph over Middle Tennessee State and then at Rupp Arena, where the Titans fell, 86-81, to Michigan, finishing the season 25-4.

"It was a thrill to be around the team and Dick Vitale," Cieszkowski said. "He could make you run through a brick wall. It gave me a great opportunity."

The first iteration of Tommy Titan lasted for a couple of seasons, with Cieszkowski passing off the role eventually to another student. He also transferred to Mercy College, where he finished his studies, becoming a true hybrid alumnus of UDM.

After that, the Athletics Department went from a real, physical Titan to a caricature form of Tommy, where the identity of the person inside is hidden, similar to the current Tommy that is visible at various events across the University's campuses.

But, even so, the loveable mascot was off and running permanently.

Thelen, who still brings his grandkids to games at Calihan Hall, takes pride in his role in helping the mascot come to life at the school he attended.

"It had been working in my mind for a couple of years," he said of the idea for the mascot. "I'd go on the road and they all had mascots. When we beat Dayton on the road that season, I was fired up, the alumni were fired up. It was the perfect storm, so I did it."

Cieszkowski, who embraced the spirit of U-D so much he painted a University logo on his car, was in the perfect position to portray the first "Tommy."

"I felt the best that I was enthusiastic at every game," he said. "I let the spirit flow through me. There was something guiding me and I enjoyed creating a little atmosphere, encouraging people when we were down or behind, or leading a cheer. I'd get out in the middle of the court when we were hoping to make a comeback. It was a fortuitous, fulfilling experience."

PUPPY POWER

ALUMNA WORKS WITH ANIMALS TO HELP LOCAL STUDENTS

BY RICKY LINDSAY

Animals have played an important role in shaping the life and work of Shakesha Alexander '19.

The Detroit Mercy Social Work alumna remembers playing with cows and horses during childhood summers on her family's Mississippi farms and growing up alongside household dogs.

Those moments sparked a love for animals, which Alexander now uses as director of animal-assisted interventions for the River Rouge School District. The program was launched in 2021 and utilizes a team of therapy dogs and a variety of handheld pets to support the mental health and well-being of local students and staff.

"Everything we do here is evidence-based programming," said Alexander. "We focus on creating psychological safe spaces for adults and children."

The animal-assisted interventions program operates out of the Pup Culture Lab, a renovated classroom at River Rouge's STEM Academy which Alexander calls "the happiest place in the district." The Pup Culture Lab is decorated with sofas, pillows and colorful art of cartoon dogs to create a relaxing environment for visitors.

Six dogs are in River Rouge's program, including cavalier King Charles spaniels Rumi and Sir Bentley, who is Alexander's personal dog; labradoodles Lola and Bailey; a schnauzer and shih tzu mix named Frankie; and Kodi, a goldendoodle. Alexander said the dogs have multiple AKC certifications and will start training to become service-trained facility dogs.

"Not only does it help with stress and the brain's ability to learn and remember certain things, but having programs like this in the schools helps to improve students'





GREATNESS

PUP CULTURE PACK
STE



communication abilities," Alexander said. "Animals are vehicles for conversations."

The Pup Culture Lab is also where the program's "Series of Fortunate Events" takes place. These "special relationship-building events" were designed by Alexander to help the program's therapy dogs socialize while impacting River Rouge students in different ways.

Reading with Rumi allows students to practice and improve their reading ability in a safe space. Bonding with Bailey introduces students to dog training techniques and helps them develop leadership skills. Coloring with Kodi lets students work on arts and crafts.

Students work on class and homework assignments during Learning with Lola. Quiet study time is the focus of Studying with Sir Bentley. Fridays with Frankie is an event where an entire classroom spends time watching cartoons or movies with Frankie.

"The Series of Fortunate Events just promotes social and emotional learning to improve academic outcomes," Alexander said. "We use these tools to prepare the students to be more effective in their learning and we get a lot of support from the teachers and staff."

Alexander, who is married to former Titan student-athlete and men's basketball coach Bacari Alexander '99, came to Detroit Mercy to further her education as a non-traditional student. Alexander said she learned of the University's Social Work program after Assistant Professor of Social Work and Department Chair Janet Joiner spoke to the Detroit Mercy men's basketball team about it. That led to a conversation with Joiner about Alexander's future.

"I sat down and talked with Dr. Joiner and when we had that conversation about how I could still work with animals as a social

worker, I was just hooked," Alexander said. "There was nothing else that I wanted to do."

Wanting to become a veterinary social worker, Alexander went through University of Tennessee's Master of Social Work and Veterinary Social Work Certificate programs after graduating from UDM in 2019.

As she began her career search, River Rouge started developing its animal-assisted interventions program to help students with mental health and other issues that were amplified by the pandemic.

"It all fell into place," she said.

River Rouge's animal-assisted interventions program features more than just dogs. Its Teacher's Pet program lets students interact with handheld animals in the classroom, from guinea pigs and rats to chinchillas and tortoises.

It's opened new windows for the students while also helping them feel more comfortable around animals.

"These are great learning opportunities, and the program helps students interact with staff and teachers and learn more about animals," she said. "Some students are used to seeing dogs in a negative light, so we're able to introduce them in a brighter light. They're interacting with these dogs knowing that they're safe."

Watching students interact with the animals in River Rouge's animal-assisted interventions program is something that Alexander enjoys.

"Seeing the kids sit down, reading to the dogs and playing fetch, it's just a sight to see, because a lot of them have never done this," she said.



INTRODUCING THE 2023 ALUMNI SPIRIT AWARD WINNERS

Each year the University honors an alumnus from each of its schools and colleges with Detroit Mercy’s Spirit Award. The chosen alumni are people who have excelled not only in their professions, but also in their service to the larger community. They were celebrated at a dinner on Sept. 29 hosted by University President Donald B. Taylor (above left). An excerpt of each honoree’s speech is below, in order of how they appear in the photo above (from left to right).

“This is a very humbling experience for a kid that grew up on a farm in the eastern part of Nigeria. ... The reason I’m here is the grace of God. If not that, nothing happens.”

MICHAEL OKOROAFOR '82, Chief Sustainability Officer, McCormick & Company, College of Engineering & Science

“I chose University of Detroit because it had something called an Urban Law Clinic. That was a novel enterprise back in the late 60s and I thought if I went to the Urban Law Clinic, I might learn how to represent clients. And guess what? I did. At the law school I found that the dream of becoming a lawyer was a dream worth pursuing.”

MAURA D. CORRIGAN '73, former chief justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, Detroit Mercy Law

“As an immigrant, this is one of the first places I came in this country. The first place I learned about what America was like, how it was to live here. I learned about jazz, I learned how to drive... But in addition to those, I really learned about community because Detroit for me felt like this incredible microcosm of so many different communities with so much richness that was such a sort of a plan as to how we could bridge differences.”

SUCHITRA V. REDDY '91, Founder/Architect, Reddymade Architecture PLLC, School of Architecture & Community Development

“Recently a former student...reminded me of his feelings toward University of Detroit Mercy and I use his words here: There is nothing I would do over with my career and with obtaining my education where I did obtain it.”

AGNES BONGERO '63, Senior Resource Specialist (Ret.), Henry Ford Hospital, College of Health Professions & McAuley School of Nursing

“While I am deeply appreciative for this acknowledgement of my accomplishments, I am equally proud, and probably much more so, of the role that service to community has played throughout my career, a career where the quality of my post-secondary education has played an important role.”

FAYE A. NELSON '75, '80, Michigan director, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, College of Liberal Arts & Education

“University of Detroit Mercy provided me with the knowledge, the experiences and, importantly, the moral compass to achieve a successful and satisfying career.”

WILLIAM C. BOUSQUETE '58, '62, SVP & CEO (Ret.), Texaco Inc., College of Business Administration

“The faculty and staff have brought University of Detroit Mercy to be recognized not only nationally, but also internationally, as one of the top dental schools that you can find anywhere and I am proud to be a graduate of University of Detroit Mercy.”

RICHARD NYKIEL '78, Dentist, Nykiel Dentistry, Detroit Mercy Dental

FALLING INTO FUN!

Another Homecoming is in the books and this was one of the best attended that UDM has had in years. Hundreds of alumni, students, family and friends joined staff and faculty for a fall festival of games, reunions, awards, a marching band demonstration, Mass and fun family time.





**DETROIT
MERCY** Homecoming 2023



IN MEMORIAM

WE REMEMBER ALUMNI AND FRIENDS WHO HAVE PASSED ON TO ETERNAL LIFE

1940s

Leonard L. Baker '47
John A. De Rose '49
Joanne (Jones) Hogan '46
James J. Kennedy II '45
Jeanne S. Latcham '48
Ian M. Smith, D.D.S. '48, '52, '55

1950s

Gen. Richard F. Abel '56
Robert S. Adamczyk '54
Michael J. Banich '52
Joan (Slowey) Bauer '53
Annetta (Sullivan) Bernadett '53
Kenneth W. Blizzard '54
Walter C. Broderdorf '58
Edward W. Budde '52
Mary (Leonard) Bujold '54
James E. Burke, D.D.S. '58
Constance (Molitor) Cadarette '54
Doris (Weber) Calcut '55
Donald J. Carlson '54
Patricia (Morrissey) Damore '59
Carolyn (Haas) Kluck '58
Walter C. Demattia, D.D.S. '59
Francis G. Doherty '55
Michael E. Dvornak Sr. '59
Paul T. Dwyer '58
Lawrence D. Egan '51
Lawrence P. Eschrich '58
Frank J. Esser Sr. '51
Ronald A. Fasse '57, '65
Angelo Fracassa '51
Lester N. Garripee '59
Ralph R. Genter Jr. '55
Joseph B. Gingras '57
Sally (Brennan) Giraud '56, '69
Richard J. Good, D.D.S. '57
Joseph G. Gough, M.D. '57
Martha T. Gunderson '55
Joseph A. Gutowski '51
Theodore E. Heiman '58
Catherine (O'Donnell) Hepp '59
John D. Hitchens '57
Patricia A. Hoban '53
Lloyd C. Irving Jr. '52
Bertrand Jacobs, D.D.S. '55
Margaret (Tighe) Keating '51
Leo J. Klaes '55
Ann (Charbonneau) Kolito '56
Betty (King) Korol '51
Alphonse J. Kumor '58
Frederick F. LaLonde '55
Mildred (Gough) Larson '50
Rosemary (Lahey) Ledwidge '56
Frank L. Lewandowski '51
Henry B. Linne '58

Terrence F. Martin '56
Harold L. Matyn '54
Joan (Lingeman) McCullough '57
Harold J. McGill '63
John P. McSherry '55
Roy A. Moxley Jr. '58
Walter J. Micallef '57
Loretta (Derbin) Nolta '51
Francis B. O'Connor '57
Raymond A. Olthouse '53
Helen (Folkers) O'Rourke '52
Frank B. Pardo '58
Rudolph J. Persico '57
Jacob J. Rehmann '52
Arthur H. Rexin '59
Michael E. Riggs '59
Ernest Riopelle '58, '63
Louis S. Romano '58
Lesley Rose '53
Larry H. Schabath '55
Edward E. Shea '56
Harry A. Sherwin '59
James S. Skelcey '56
Richard E. Steffy '54
Reginald G. Studenski '59
Ellen (Reardon) Swabon '57
Jack E. Thomas '52
Barbara (Evans) Tierney '54
Robert P. Tremp Sr. '57, '59
Stephen W. Turansky, D.D.S. '56
Robert J. Turck, D.D.S. '59
John P. Vander Linden '58
David V. Van Howe '51
Kathy (Jensen) Van Steenbergen '54
Katherine A. Walsh '55
John F. Ward Sr. '53
Sanford J. Wiatrak, D.D.S. '58
Helen (Curran) Williams '53
Albert D. Wittman '55
Barbara (Nikrant) Woods '51
Martin W. Wyrod '54, '57
Norma (Pascoe) Zemke '57

1960s

Linda (Freeman) Albers '66
Charles L. Ammon '66
Frank C. Attwood '60
John N. Balthasar '65
John M. Barbay '63
Donald R. Berschback '64
David F. Betz '63
Mary (Paris) Bladecki '61
George J. Brixie '64
Patricia (Ward) Brodeur '62
Walter Bryzik '68, '76
Sr. Annette Boyle, IHM '66
Thomas J. Boyle '62

Gerald E. Carnevale '61
Dennis D. Carrigan '66
Thomas E. Cook '60
Andrew F. Corej '64
William J. Cubley '69
Marvin B. Defauw '60
Diane (Wheeler) Di Cicco '62
Joann M. Donohoe '65
James R. Douglas '60
Michael Dundorf '65
William E. Dunne '60
Lynn (Austin) Ehresman '68
John W. Ennest '64
Maureen (Schaffner) Ferega '68
Dennis J. Flynn '61
Nancy (O'Connor) Frankila '61
Richard J. Giera '66
Edward M. Gormley '62
Edward J. Grabowski '68
Michael Groch, D.D.S. '68
Nels A. Hackert '65
William H. Harvey '66
Robert T. Hayduk '63
Fr. Thomas M. Heier '64, '66
Sr. Mary C. Hess '65
Gary G. Hosbein '68
Mary (Markowicz) Hurren '67
John P. Jacobs '67, '70
JoAnne (Jackson) Jager '64
Dorothy Jerneycic '60
Robert L. Jungwirth '60
Gintaras Juska '67
David F. Karibo '60
Fred F. Kellermeier '62
Michael D. Khami '66
Gerard E. Kinane '67
Leo B. Kozioł '67
Joseph H. Lang '68
Mary (McCarthy) LeBlanc '61
Patricia Littlefield '62
Phillip P. Macunovich, D.D.S. '60
Walter A. Magreta '63
Martin S. Markowicz '60
Robert S. McCliment '67, '73
John M. McEuen '61
William J. Moore '65
Edward S. Musial '65
Gloria (Trojan) Novak '65
Thomas A. O'Leary '60
Br. Ernest R. Paquet '68
Sue A. Parkinson '60
Jerome G. Pavlov '60
Sandra (Rosenberg) Petterson '67
John R. Pfeiffer '61
Peter J. Polidori, D.D.S. '63, '66
Marc A. Primo '62
Carolyn (Caretti) Pump '67

Ronald C. Read '66
Robert J. Rennell '64
Terrence E. Reynolds '61, '66
James J. Rivard '65
Craig E. Rooney '61
Jonathan I. Rose '69
Joseph H. Scanlon '62
Paul T. Scheel '61
Joseph M. Scherer '61
William J. Schild '63
Conrad J. Schmitt '60
Richard T. Slavinski '65
Lysle R. Smith '66
Therman E. Smith '67
Rose Marie (Michalski) Sosnowski '66
Barbara J. Stanish '69
Gordon J. Steuck, D.D.S. '67
Anna Marie (DeMarco) Sullivan '64
Mary A. Sullivan '65
Fred M. Tuffile '63
John J. Uicker Jr. '61
Charles Van Slambrook '67
Robert T. Van Slambrook '64
Joseph J. Wojtkowiak '62
Robert A. Zielke '66

1970s

James H. Allen, D.D.S. '73
David V. Baron '72
Robert J. Bonin '79
Francis M. Borasz '73
Myrtle K. Boyer '78
George E. Brumbaugh Jr. '71 '74
Robert W. Clark '75
Mary (Vanden Bussche) Clor '79
Conceta M. Cozzolino '73
Martin J. Cygan '71
Margaret M. Drouillard '76
Margaret M. Dundas '77
Ronald J. Fesl '70
John A. Fleming Jr. '77
Mathew C. Friedemann, D.D.S. '73
Rev. Dayton F. Gnau '71
Richard J. Granata '71
Stephen M. Grimley '70
Shirley Hall '78
Carl M. Hessick '78
Thomas M. Hiegel, D.D.S. '73
Vivian (Carroll) Hock '72
James L. Humphrey '76
Michael J. Klier '71
Roger A. Knapp '74
Gregory P. Knoff '73, '76
Harriet I. Kofta '75
Leonard J. Kuhar '72
James D. Kulpa, D.D.S. '73
Marilyn P. Larabel '72

Robert R. Lusky '70
 Michael C. Lutz '72
 Ann Marie (LeTourneau) Malone '70
 Frank A. Marra '71
 Rober B. Marshall '74
 Mildred (Winfield) Mathews '76
 Allen Matta '75
 Leon Martin '74
 Joseph S. Mattingly '71
 Sr. Kathleen T. McCann OP '71
 Lawrence J. McCliment '71
 Daniel W. McKelvey '70
 Norman A. McKinney '78
 David E. McCright '79
 Anthony A. Messina '71
 David L. Moffitt '79
 Marcy C. Nolan, OP '77
 Pablo J. Paulino '70
 Patricia (Muldowney) Paruch '72
 Gary F. Peltier '71
 Mary (Dougherty) Porosky '75
 E. Laura (Roddy) Redic '74
 Gregory D. Reynolds '73
 Walter J. Roessler '71
 Harriet (Band) Rotter '71
 Timothy W. Sattler '78
 Bradley M. Simmons '79, '84
 Raymond Timm '70
 Paul R. Uimari '70

1980s

Patricia R. Beck '81
 Moises J. Bermudez '81
 Patricia (Scott) Bernoudy '84
 Sandra (Harrington) Greanya '82
 Margaret (Rose) Gulick '85
 Jon S. Hainline '87

Jon M. Hall '88
 Sabeh H. Hazine '84
 Peter N. Hill '82
 Phillip D. Howard '80
 Karen A. Humphrey '83
 Lawrence E. Isaacson '85
 Stephan M. Joseph '89, '90
 Jeanette (Wright) Kaake '85
 Kenneth P. Koberstein '80
 Steven J. Lebowsky '82
 Allen M. Peisner '87
 Michael T. Price '87
 Ronald P. Rakecky, D.D.S. '88
 Susan (Steinke) Rasette '88
 John J. Stanton '80
 Elizabeth (McDonald) Tice '83
 Gary E. Weiler '80
 Charles L. Wells '80
 Margaret Yott '87
 Etta B. Zivian '80

1990s

Willie G. Bender '91
 Nabil M. Charara '95
 Lucinda (Jeanne) Clark '90
 Mattie Conoway '92, '01
 David J. Demps '94
 Ronald E. Dziurlikowski '95
 James E. Francisco '91
 James J. Greco '91
 David J. Harville '93, '98
 Linda (Galat) Hess '91
 Raymond H. Hopson '92
 Joseph E. Jackson '96
 Frances E. Jasper '90
 Sandra J. Kalsic '90
 Mark A. Lamb, D.D.S. '97

Sally P. McCarthy '95
 Steven Ravezzani '91
 Jeffrey H. Richardson '94
 Michael F. Todd '95
 Russel A. Woodworth '97

2000s

Debra L. Arnold '05
 Dennis Bailey '00
 Brandon S. Buchanan '01
 Jeanne M. Duke '05
 Maureen (Carmody) Northrup '00

2010s

Jocelyn J. Perkins '10, '13
 Thomas O. Vaughn '13

2020s

Antoinette C. Calbone '21

Friends, Faculty and Staff

Colleen Marie Hickey, SSJ, Detroit Mercy Law Library

Mary (Mac Donald) Laird '73, McNichols Campus Library

Leon J. Lysaght Jr., faculty at Detroit Mercy Law

David W. Moody, cataloging librarian

Joseph G. Mueller, S.J., former trustee



FR. ALBRIGHT REMEMBERED

UDM's longtime professor of Biology Fr. R. Gerard Albright, S.J., died Sept. 22 at the Colombiere Jesuit Community in Clarkston, Mich. He was 97 and had been with the University for more than 60 years.

From 1960 to 2020 when he retired, Fr. Albright served as a professor of Biology, chair of the Biology Department several times, dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Education and superior and dean of the Jesuit Philosophy Program.

"He had an incredible memory for people as well as biology facts," wrote Ann Beckley-Forest '90, to a tribute page for Fr. Albright. "He taught both me and my mother, Barbara Sorensen '66, and remembered her when she toured with me on parents weekend! A model professor and human, one of my favorite teachers ever."



A REAL TREAT

For the first time since before the pandemic, the 34-year-old tradition Safety Street returned to the McNichols Campus.

The Halloween event invites families in the community onto campus to trick-or-treat. Treats were donated by students, staff and faculty and were handed out by members of student organizations in their own costumes.





Upcoming Events



Titan Winter Blast

Saturday, February 17
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Come to the McNichols Campus with your friends and family for the long-standing Chili Cook-Off competition, which includes toasty drinks, carriage rides and good ol' Titan camaraderie!



Becoming A Better U

Saturday, March 23
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Join us as we cultivate a culture of lifelong learning. This event is for our alumni to expand their horizons within their professional careers and personal lives.



Volunteer Appreciation

Thursday, March 21

Celebrate another successful academic year with fellow alumni volunteers and the students you supported. Event details coming soon.



Detroit Mercy is partnering with The Oral History Project in creating a unique collection of alumni stories. Look for more information on how you can participate in this exciting project in early 2024.



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SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

We at Spiritus would love to hear what you think of this magazine and University of Detroit Mercy.

Please share your thoughts with Ron Bernas, editor, at bernasrj@udmercy.edu or **Spiritus**, Second Floor, Student Union, 4001 W. McNichols Road, Detroit, MI, 48221-3038.