

The BRIDGE

SPRING 2024
Upper Iowa University

Alumni Magazine



FEATURED INSIDE!

Q & A with President Emeritus Bill Duffy

Homecoming '23 Recap

FY '23 Annual Donor Report



START OF NEW SCHOOL YEAR - FALL 2023



MURDER MYSTERY THEATER AT PETE'S



GYPSY - STUDENT LIFE THERAPY PUPPY



KATHY FRANKEN, PRESIDENT/CFO

CHEERS TO ALL THINGS NEW AT UIU!



UIU-BATON ROUGE NOMINATED FOR BEST IN NONPROFITS & INSTITUTIONS ZACHARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



WOMEN'S WRESTLING



STUDENT FESTIVAL/ PEACOCK EXPERIENCE WEEKEND

“ Even during times of change and evolution in higher education and at Upper Iowa, some things will forever remain the same; UIU’s commitment to providing a high-quality education in an accessible and affordable way. These bedrock principles that have been a part of UIU since its earliest days will always guide me in my service as UIU’s 22nd President. I look forward to joining our Peacock Family in honoring the traditions that make UIU special while pursuing new initiatives that will make UIU stronger.”

Kathy Franken
UIU President/CFO

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OUR MISSION

Upper Iowa University provides quality educational opportunities accessible through varied delivery methods to inspire success and empower lives.

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INSIDE HIGHLIGHTS



Homecoming '23 Recap – Page 10



President's Ball Recap – Page 12



2023 Hall of Fame – Page 13

FEATURES

- 5 Civil War Digital Digest features UIU's 'University Recruits'
- 6 Duffys leave lasting legacy at Upper Iowa University
- 8 Upper Iowa University announces 22nd president
- 9 Introducing the 2023 Alumni Award recipients
- 16 Second Peacock Power 24-Hour Challenge sets new UIU Athletics record for giving
- 17 Passing the torch with the Alumni Referral Program
- 18 Celebrating 50+ years of adult learning at Upper Iowa University

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| 2 News Briefs | 20 Class Notes |
| 4 Faculty and Staff Notes | 24 In Memoriam |
| 13 Athletics Wrap Up | |



Front cover: Dr. Duffy and Sharon pose for their formal photo at the 11th Annual President's Fundraising Ball, held on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023. Read the complete story of Dr. Duffy's proudest moments as Upper Iowa University's president over the past decade on page 6.

Online program recognized by Forbes Advisor Education

Forbes Advisor Education recently recognized UIU for offering one of the best online bachelor's degrees in public administration. Upper Iowa and nine other U.S. institutions were recognized. To determine the 2023 rankings, Forbes Advisor Education sourced data from the National



Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as well as utilizing an expert advisory board of professionals and educator reviews to verify and ensure content accuracy. The methodology used included 16 data points in various categories weighted by student outcomes, affordability, the student experience, credibility and the application process. The 10 best schools were selected using a curved final score of 71.73% or higher. The ranked schools were all fully accredited, had higher student retention rates, and were nonprofit institutions with relatively low percentages of students in federal student loan deferment.

Science and environment club prepare for the 2024 cicada emergence



In collaboration with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, UIU's Conservation Management and Science and Environment Club students are conducting a multiyear research project. The initiative will evaluate the availability, use and benefits of the 17-year periodical cicada emergence in 2024 for Driftless Region fish like Brown and Brook Trout. While the use and benefits of this massive insect emergence have been well documented for terrestrial consumers, the benefits of this rarely available resource to aquatic organisms have not been studied.

The goal of this study is to better understand and characterize the ecological linkages between this rarely available resource subsidy and fish populations. With the help of donors to the club's crowdfunding campaign, many of whom were UIU alumni, almost \$6,000 was raised to purchase equipment used for evaluating the availability of cicadas to stream fish. During the summer of 2023, students assisted in collecting baseline data from 20 streams throughout Iowa's Driftless Region. During the 2024 cicada emergence, students and faculty will use stream drift samples, fish gut content analysis, isotopic analysis and population surveys to better understand the ecological benefits of this rare resource subsidy for stream fish.

Ecology class helps the Iowa National Heritage Foundation with ecological restoration



Dr. Jennifer Stoffel's BIO 335 Ecology class for conservation management took a trip to a property in northeast Iowa to learn more about ecological principles and practices in land stewardship that the Iowa National Heritage Foundation (INHF) uses. The INHF is a nonprofit organization that focuses on protecting and restoring Iowa's land, water and wildlife.

UIU named a "Best for Vets" college

Upper Iowa University was recently named a "Best for Vets" college by Military Times. UIU ranked 16th in the primarily online category. "The UIU faculty and staff deeply appreciate the commitment of servicemembers to our country," said UIU Director of Military and Veterans Affairs Brandy Branstetter. "In turn, we are honored to assist the entire military family in achieving their educational and career goals without sacrificing their military commitment. We take pride in providing students an education built for life."



According to the Military Times, the Best for Vets: Colleges 2023 rankings represent the most comprehensive annual ranking of schools for military service members and veterans. These rankings play a crucial role in aiding these individuals in making informed decisions about their educational pursuits.

Master of Arts in Psychology launching Fall 2024

UIU will be offering a Master of Arts in Psychology program! This new program will be offered entirely online. Students will have an opportunity to get to know the faculty teaching the program and will have direct opportunities to interact with their peers. Faculty will work directly with students to personalize their program to be most beneficial for them, while preparing students for career advancement, especially leadership and managerial positions. The Master of Arts in Psychology program will give students a strong foundation to further pursue a Ph.D. in a subfield of their choice! Recruitment will begin soon!

COMING SOON! **ONLINE PROGRAM ACCEPTING STUDENTS FALL 2024!**



Veterans Day program

Upper Iowa hosted a Veterans Day program for the public and the UIU community in November. The event featured Dennis Soppe (right), American Legion Department of Iowa Commander, as the guest speaker.

Following his graduation from North High School in West Union, Iowa, Soppe enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1966. Soppe's commitment to veterans and service led him to join the American Legion, where he eventually became the Department of Iowa Commander for the State of Iowa and a National Executive Committeeman.



Kathy Franken, President/CFO and Dennis Soppe present the ceremonial wreath in honor of those who served.

New UIU Counseling Center team member



Carly Heimerdinger, director of Counseling, is the proud owner of Gypsy, the Student Life therapy dog.

The UIU Counseling Center welcomed a new member to its team at the beginning of this academic school year! As a therapy dog, Gypsy, a petite Bernedoodle, is used to support students in therapy-assisted interventions.

All students sign paperwork prior to meeting with a counselor that states whether they want Gypsy in their sessions or not.

Numerous studies show that interacting with animals helps to lower blood pressure, increase engagement, and reduce anxiety and depression. This year, Gypsy has been well received by students, with 74.4% of students reporting that having her in the counseling center would make them more likely to schedule an appointment.

Students become creative with new course

Students can now take advantage of a new course in which their creativity can thrive! Makerspace is a one-credit course offering students an opportunity to enhance their marketing and social media skills. Students work closely with the Office of Communications and Marketing to produce videos, design social media graphics and content, plan events, writing short feature stories and interview alumni so their stories can be shared.

Study abroad trip set for March

A study abroad trip is scheduled for March 1-10, 2024. Dr. Nicole Dennler, assistant professor of communication, and Dr. Gina Kuker, professor of education, will be traveling with 15 students to Southern Germany and Zurich, Switzerland. This culturally immersive tour will highlight historic German landmarks, including the Berlin Wall Memorial, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial and the Neuschwanstein and Hohenschwangau Castles. With the trip's perfect pairing of big bustling cities and quaint German towns, the group will enjoy a great deal of what Germany has to offer!

Students participate in leadership opportunities held within the tri-state area

During the Dean's Challenge, held April 26-27, 2023, Student Life raised nearly \$2,400 for the Cabby Dean's Fund, which supports leadership development for UIU students. Thanks to generous donors, students were able to attend the following three leadership events:



R.E.S.E.T. Business Conference (held in Decorah, Iowa) — students gained strategies on starting and thriving in a small business. Students who attended were (l-r) Frider Blunck, Daigo Adachi and Vitoria Kazanovski; along with Danielle Cushion, assistant vice president for Student Life and chief diversity officer.



Faith and Four Letter Words seminar (held in West Union, Iowa) — presenters shared their experiences as women in the media and the importance of empowering and supporting other women at home and in the workplace. Staff and students who attended as follows. Back row (l-r): Hannah Lykins and Jamie Adams. Middle row (l-r): **Lizzie Van Dyk '19** (Amanda Goodman and Tara Thomas, presenters); Kathryn McEnery and Tayler Martin. Front row (l-r): Jasmine Smith and Alaina Sunlin.



The American Student Government Training Conference (held in Chicago, Illinois) — UIU Student Government Association (SGA) members participated in 20 training workshops and roundtables. They gained tips and ideas from student leaders and advisors from colleges and universities of all types and sizes. UIU SGA attendees included (l-r) Myah Brinker, vice president; Mateo Vidaurre, president; and Jamie Adams, secretary.

FACULTY AND STAFF NOTES



Christina Williams (left) and Marlene Franzen (right) joined Dr. Katie Laux, assistant professor of education, in Washington, D.C., in June 2023 for a Noyce Summit. Williams and Franzen are both Noyce Scholars, working on their All Science degrees in teacher education.



The Teaching Elementary Science students are conducting hydroponics projects thanks to grant funding secured by Dr. Katie Laux from the Environmental Issues Instruction grant. Additionally, through this generous grant from the Iowa Department of Education, UIU continued its commitment to supporting paraeducators on their journey to become certified throughout the summer of 2023.

An additional 20 students have successfully fulfilled the requirements and are now certified paraeducators. This achievement is a testament to our ongoing dedication to providing valuable educational opportunities and fostering professional growth within this vital sector of the education community.



Becki Wissmiller, lecturer of business and director of the Master of Business Administration program, attended the summer 2023 ACBSP National Conference, held June 29-July 2, in Chicago, Illinois. The conference theme was Celebrating Collaborative Alliances: Stronger Together. The Business department continues to work toward ACBSP accreditation and is working with an assigned mentor to help the department prepare for the survey.



Dr. Shilpashri Karbhari, assistant professor of criminal justice, was a co-discussant on a panel for the Iowa Human Rights Research Conference, held April 22, 2023, at Coe College. The event was organized by the Iowa Network of Human Rights Academics and the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights.



Dr. John A. Grummel, Maltbie Professor of Social Science, presented "Focusing Event Impact on Public Health/Racism as a Public Health Crisis," as part of the American Political Science Association Symposium; held Aug. 31-Sept. 2, 2023.

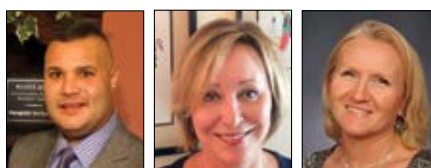


Dr. Hillary Wehe, assistant professor of psychology presented at the Midwestern Psychological Association conference in April 2023 in Chicago last spring and supported travel for three students. Those in attendance were (l-r) Kaylin Kent-Thomas, Dr. Hillary Wehe, Ethan Geiger and Federico McCants.



In addition, Dr. Wehe secured the 2022-23 Psi Chi Professional Development Grant for Teachers of Psychology. The grant will directly support student research in the newly opened UIU Psychology Research Lab. The funds will be put toward a computer purchase, research assistant stipend, conference travel and participant compensation.

Dr. Kathleen Jones-Trebatoski, assistant professor of counseling, presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Education in January 2024.



UIU faculty members presented at the International Association for Marriage and Family Counselors Conference that took place Feb. 3, 2024. Presenters included

Dr. Panagiotis Markopoulos, assistant professor and counseling program director; Dr. Kimberly King, assistant professor of counseling; and Dr. Anabel Mifsud, adjunct faculty of counseling.



Dr. Cindy Waters (far left), professor of education from 2002 to 2017, was recently inducted to the Lifelong Learner Hall of Fame. Joining her at the induction ceremony were Dr. Gina Kuker (middle), endowed chair in education and professor of education, and Dr. Janet Kehe (right), professor of education from 1997 to 2017. The Lifelong Learner Hall of Fame was

established to celebrate Iowans who have contributed to making Iowa a stronghold of lifelong learning and to help promote lifelong learning through recognizing, documenting, and sharing their accomplishments.



Dr. Kehe and Dr. Kuker presented Providing Hope: How to Get Your Students to Write Well for the MIDTESOL Conference in Kansas City Oct. 14, 2023. The presentation focused on assisting ESL teachers on strategies for working with multilingual learners.



Kathy Wenthold, executive director of Fayette Admissions and Retention (far left), along with students (l-r) Makenna Grove, Israel Hernandez, Hunter Brooks, Quinton Jensen and Dr. Gina Kuker, attended the Iowa Council

for Social Studies Conference in Iowa City Oct. 16, 2023. In attending the conference, UIU students learned of available resources, strategies, standards implementation, networking connections and current technology uses when teaching social studies curriculum.

Civil War Digital Digest features UIU's 'University Recruits'



President Emeritus Bill Duffy proudly shows off the Alexander-Dickman bell tower to Civil War Digital Digest creators. The bell, cast in 1856, tolled for the University Recruits as they marched off to serve in the Union Army during the Civil War. Pictured in the back row (l-r) are **Andrew Wenthe '12**, Mike Houston, Christian Hins and Bill Duffy. Will Eichler is in the front row.

Upper Iowa University's 'University Recruits' are being featured in the Civil War Digital Digest. Created by Civil War enthusiast Will Eichler, the Civil War Digital Digest is a YouTube series dedicated to exploring various aspects of Civil War history. The episode features fellow Civil War collector Mike Huston, who details the story of the UIU students who contributed to and enlisted for the Civil War in Company F of the 3rd Iowa Infantry and Company C of the 12th Iowa Infantry.

What is unique about the students is their efforts to recruit others from the area to join them and enlist. This brave group ultimately formed Company C of the 12th Iowa Infantry, otherwise known at the time as the University Recruits. The contributions of UIU's students extended beyond mere enlistment. Women from Upper Iowa hand-sewed the flag that accompanied the recruits to war and elected the color bearer for the company as well.


Company C of the 12th Iowa Infantry was most notably involved in the Battle of Shiloh, with the survivors subsequently serving as prisoners of war, some for up to eight months. Upon their release as part of a trade between the Union and the Confederates, they took part in subsequent engagements at Memphis, Vicksburg and Spanish Fort.

Postwar, several members made significant contributions to American society, with members such as D.W. Reid and David Henderson play significant roles in historical preservation and politics, showcasing the enduring legacy of UIU's University Recruits.

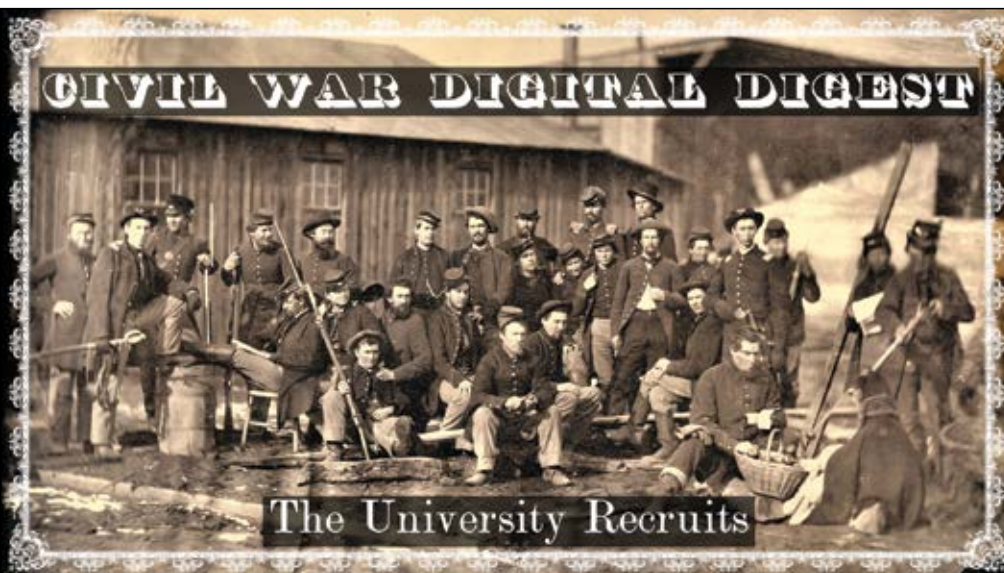
Over the years, UIU has received and displayed artifacts related to the University Recruits and the Civil War, including personal belongings of the students, a field desk and a UIU engraved Enfield Rifle, along with papers and letters that offer a poignant glimpse into the experiences of the UIU students. These artifacts can be found

in the Henderson-Wilder Library on the Fayette Campus.

The Civil War Digital Digest's "The University Recruits" takes an inside look into the historical highlights of those recruits during the Civil War, sharing the soldier stories and highlighting their efforts in a captivating and very educational way.

To watch the video, visit the Civil War Digital Digest at youtube.com/@CivilWarDigitalDigest and search for "The University Recruits." 

This photo of the University Recruits, along with many other historical photos, can be found in the University Archives, located in the Henderson-Wilder Library.



Duffys leave lasting legacy

June 30, 2024, will mark the end of an era at Upper Iowa University, as longtime President Bill Duffy will officially retire from UIU. Dr. Duffy announced his intentions to retire this past spring and is serving out the remainder of his time at UIU in a full-time fundraising role with the University. Inaugurated as Upper Iowa's 21st president in 2013, Duffy was the institution's longest-serving president since Dr. Eugene Garbee and, like Garbee, was named President Emeritus by the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Duffy's tenure at UIU overlapped with rapid and dynamic change at both Upper Iowa and throughout higher education. *The Bridge* sat down with President Emeritus Duffy to discuss his proudest accomplishments, reflections on the future and what he'll miss most about UIU in his retirement. For a complete version of this interview, visit uiubridge.com/DuffyQA.

Bridge: First of all, congratulations on your retirement. What is the one thing you think about first when you reflect on your time at UIU?

Duffy: First and foremost, Sharon and I will ALWAYS cherish the time spent with members of our Peacock family, who have been so very committed to the future success of UIU, and our students. Many of you have heard me say, "No employee is more important than any other employee; we simply have different duties and responsibilities." As such, our BEST memories have always been, and will always be, the lifelong relationships we have made with our UIU employees, students, alumni/friends, and our Board of Trustees. Words cannot adequately express how honored and blessed we are to have had you all in our lives throughout this journey. For the record, we're not done yet, and I have NO DOUBT our UIU family will continue to ensure the future success of our students and UIU!

Bridge: As you begin to look back at your tenure as UIU's 21st president, what are a couple of the accomplishments that make you especially proud?

Duffy: First and foremost, I consider any accomplishment to be the result of total teamwork, and I give full credit to all of our Peacock family members who spent much time planning, working overtime, collaborating, and doing everything possible to ensure the future success of our students and UIU. Having said this, here are a few achievements I'm especially proud of:

- 1. Maintaining and improving UIU's accreditation:** The most recent accreditation results are the BEST results I've seen in my 14+ years at UIU. I especially thank VP Doug Binsfeld for his invaluable knowledge and experience with the accreditation process and Dr. Billie Cowley '03, '08, dean for Academic and Educational Affairs, for her outstanding academic leadership. To everyone else involved, THANK YOU ALL for your teamwork and total commitment to UIU's success!
- 2. Establishing UIU's current core values and strategic plan:** Core values and a concise strategic plan are essential to the success of any organization. In addition, every organization needs to periodically review and update these documents. Accordingly, UIU involved all stakeholders in strategic plans throughout my

presidency and implemented, were guided by and continually assessed initiatives throughout the year at all levels.

- 3. Increasing UIU's endowment:** Since becoming UIU's president, the University endowment has more than doubled, growing from \$9 million to over \$20 million currently. We have done this by adding more restricted endowments for scholarships and programs and, even more importantly, generated support for UIU's unrestricted endowment. A BIG THANKS to VP Andrew Wenthe and the entire alumni and advancement team for being part of this effort!
- 4. Becoming a member of the Great Lakes Valley Conference:** During my third year as president, it became fairly clear that the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) Conference was not a good fit for UIU. Previously, our staff and our student-athletes were competing with large public universities, traveling long distances (a 13-hour bus trip to Minot State was very challenging for the student-athletes and their studies), dealing with numerous competition cancellations due to severe and unsafe winter driving conditions, and having to pay much higher travel expenses for travel and lodging! Typically, it takes two or three years to move from one NCAA conference to another. UIU completed the entire process in less than one year. Kudos to VP Rick Hartzell and his staff for helping to ensure the future safety and success of our student-athletes!

Bridge: Your wife, Sharon, was UIU's first lady for over 10 years and was involved in several UIU initiatives. Please describe what Sharon meant to UIU throughout your tenure as UIU's president.

Duffy: Without question, Sharon's role as first lady made a huge impact during our time at UIU. Not only is she my partner in life; she was my partner in everything UIU! She was always by my side, attending functions, sporting events and alumni visits. She loved to entertain and was always willing to host gatherings at our home.

She was involved in many initiatives at the university. The first was the renovation of the president's residence. When I first became president,



at Upper Iowa University

the president's residence needed a major renovation. We formed a committee to help with decisions, raised money for two years, and were finally able to move in during our third year. It was important to Sharon and me to maintain the integrity of the home and to honor those who came before us. She also wanted to make sure it felt warm and inviting, not like a museum. We hosted so many events there, gave tours and made sure everyone knew they were always welcome. We are so grateful to everyone who helped out with this project, with a very special thank-you to Chris Andres, the late Diane Harms, and the EYE girls, who all spent many hours helping and providing resources to ensure the renovation was successful!

The second big initiative that Sharon took on was the President's Ball (it was her idea to have a formal event similar to the military balls we attended annually throughout my military career). It was important to us to have an event each year to raise money and to bring awareness to the importance of giving back to the university. This was a night when we brought our entire UIU community together — staff, faculty, sponsors, alumni, students and community members — to say thank you for all they do to support UIU! Thus far, the President's Ball has raised nearly \$1.5 million! We will forever be grateful for everyone who made this event so special!

Sharon loved our students as though they were part of our own family. At the beginning of each new school year, we would walk through all the dorms while new students were moving in to make sure they were happy. Afterward, we would host a Bon Voyage event at the president's residence for the parents. We would serve coffee and cookies — and Kleenex. The point of all of this was to get to know the students from day one and to let the parents know that they were leaving their children in good hands.

Bridge: You've described your current fundraising role at UIU as "your final UIU mission." Describe what you mean by that and what you hope to accomplish before your retirement.

Duffy: UIU established an \$8 million fundraising goal for the 15-month period prior to my retirement in June 2024. As of early December 2023, we have achieved a little more than \$5.8 million toward that significant goal. However, while UIU has received a number of large gifts to help ensure UIU can achieve our fundraising goal, it is essential in the future for even more alumni to get involved as donors to UIU. Specifically, I'm appealing to all UIU alumni and friends to please consider the impact of giving smaller donations on a recurring basis (monthly, quarterly or annually).

I will provide you with the perfect example of how we can significantly increase donors for UIU. Nearly three years ago, I received a call from UIU alumni Tom Gray '72. Tom is a dear and humble friend whom I met early in my presidency. He is a retired teacher and lives in Iowa. He briefly mentioned that he had just experienced some very difficult surgery, was isolated for 20 days with another medical issue and was dealing with COVID-19!

Shortly after his update, Tom asked, "Can I help UIU in any way?" I thanked Tom, and let him know we had everything under control. I then asked Tom if he goes out to eat often, and he said, "Often enough." I said, "Well how about instead of eating out one day a

month, take that \$25 and consider donating that amount to UIU every month?" He said, "Hmmm, I'll think about it." Three months later, Tom called and said, "President Duffy, it's working, and I'm increasing the amount!" His goal is now to give \$80 per month. If UIU could get 10% of our alumni to make even a \$25 recurring gift once a month, rest assured that not only would our current goal be achieved, but our UIU family would far surpass that goal and improve the UIU experience for generations to come! So I suppose it would be more accurate to say that I have two final missions — to hit the \$8 million fundraising goal and to motivate more UIU alumni to become regular donors to their alma mater.

Bridge: The Board has granted you the title of President Emeritus, a special honor at UIU. Any final thoughts or "words of wisdom" you would like to share with your Peacock family?

Duffy: Simply stated, it has been the greatest honor in our lives to serve UIU as a vice president, president, and first lady for the past 14+ years. The GREATEST part of UIU are our dedicated Board members, our employees who have weathered many challenging storms, and our wonderful alumni and friends who are committed to UIU's future success! We will also miss being engaged with our students and their families on a day-to-day basis; however, we will always continue to stay in touch with many of our Peacock family members and, of course, watch UIU compete in Athletics!

As for "words of wisdom," here are some that I'm sure a few employees have heard me say occasionally: Always give credit to your employees, and accept the responsibility for failures; once a decision is made, own it as your own; bad news never gets better; set the standards for others to emulate; people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care; keep it simple; bottom line up front; if it's really important, call or visit me; I'm a Times Roman, 12 font guy; and HOOAH! Lastly, I want to say a special thank-you to Andrew Wenthe, Kathy Franken and Holly Wolff, who have all been working side by side with me throughout most of my years at UIU! 🏆



Upper Iowa University announces 22nd president

The Board of Trustees at Upper Iowa University has named **Kathy Franken '12 MHEA**, as the University's 22nd president. This marks a milestone in UIU history, as Franken is the first woman president to lead the University.

“Since becoming interim president in May 2023, Kathy has led the University through a number of critical initiatives, which made it clear that Kathy is the right individual at the right time to assume this very important role,” said UIU Board of Trustees Chairman, Scott Lebin. “The Board of Trustees has considerable faith and trust in Kathy’s ability to effectively serve as president, as well as the entire leadership team, faculty and staff who work tirelessly to fulfill UIU’s mission.”

Franken led Upper Iowa through a process of reimagining UIU’s academic offerings, athletic offerings and geographic locations. She also provided direction on the “Reimagine UIU” strategic plan, restructuring University leadership positions and efforts to reduce operating expenses.


Franken’s tenure at UIU started in the Waterloo Center in 2008, beginning as an academic advisor to adult learners before assuming the Waterloo Center director position. Before serving as interim president, Franken was vice president for Finance and Enrollment Management, overseeing University finances, Business Office Services, Facilities Management, Information Technology, Enrollment Management and Services, and Auxiliary Services.

“I am humbled and honored to become Upper Iowa’s 22nd president,” shared Franken. “I look forward to continued momentum for UIU that is driven by collaboration, and a student-centered learning and living environment. From my earliest days as an academic advisor, I have recognized the important role Upper Iowa plays in helping students reach their educational goals while supporting the workforce



Kathy Franken '12, MHEA – 22nd president

needs in the many communities that we serve. UIU is a great place to grow, learn and succeed; I look forward to championing great things to come as we focus on the impactful outcomes in higher education that fosters student success.”

Franken earned her Bachelor of Arts from Wartburg College, and her Master of Arts in higher education administration from Upper Iowa University. Franken and her husband, Chuck, reside in Fayette and have three children and five grandchildren. A formal Inaugural Ceremony is planned for Friday, May 3, 2024. 

SAVE THE DATE
FOR THE INAUGURATION OF

Kathy Franken

AS UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY'S
22ND PRESIDENT

PLEASE JOIN THE CELEBRATION ON

MAY | 3 | 2024

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING
THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION WITH YOU!

Reception to follow

Introducing the 2023 Alumni Award recipients

The following alumni were recognized for their accomplishments either professionally, as an emerging alum, or through service to the university or their communities during the Alumni Awards and Honor Class Brunch, held Oct. 14, 2023. If you would like to nominate an individual for a 2024 alumni award, visit uiu.edu/alumni-awards.

SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY AWARD – Jason Berggren '17



Jason enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1990 and spent nearly 30 years defending our country, with assignments in Hawaii, Japan, Afghanistan and beyond. A natural leader, Jason was deployed with the Defense Logistics Agency as the command senior enlisted leader and later retired in 2016.

He earned his Associate of Arts in general business in 2017. He began connecting with his alma mater at alumni events and the UIU Iowa State Fair booth. Jason and his wife, Maggie, joined Team Peacock and have been cycling with the team and fundraising for Upper Iowa ever since. When they are unable to ride, they are support crew members and team sponsors. Jason has also served as the keynote speaker at UIU's Veterans Day program. In addition, he was recently featured in a UIU video to share his own story of being an adult learner. This effort helped raise money for student scholarships, specifically adult learners.

Jason and Maggie reside in Indianola, Iowa, and he works as a regional facility maintenance manager at Walmart Stores Inc. He's an avid fisherman and enjoys spending time with his children, Colton and Caitlin, and his granddaughter, Charlotte. The University appreciates all that Jason has done, and continues to do, to support his alma mater.

EMERGING ALUMNI AWARD – Bridget Saffold '20



Bridget earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2020, utilizing UIU's online platform. In 2015, she launched Focus on Diabetes, a nonprofit organization promoting additional diabetes education beyond the clinic. During the pandemic, this evolved as she recognized an incredible need in her community.

Diabetic patients were struggling to gain access to essential supplies, resulting in alarming life-or-death situations.

She acted swiftly and launched the "Focus on Diabetes COVID-19 Assist Program," which provided supplies to more than 200 individuals. She and a team of volunteers would drop off supplies at the doorsteps of those who were in need and also arranged for drive-through and other pickup locations throughout the community. Bridget's organization partners with Allen College of Nursing and Hawkeye Community College to immerse health care students in the community and provide hands-on learning opportunities.

In the fall of 2022, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds declared Sept. 5-10 as Focus on Diabetes Week in Iowa due to the success of Bridget's annual event raising awareness and offering health screenings. Her organization continues to expand. Project Health, a prostate cancer initiative, was recently launched to improve services and the screening process in Black Hawk County.

In addition to her nonprofit, Bridget is also a clinic operations supervisor for MercyOne. Currently, she resides in Waterloo, Iowa.

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY AWARD – William Kunzman '69



Bill earned his Bachelor of Science in 1969, majoring in mathematics and physics. For the last 23 years, Bill and his wife, Phyllis, wintered in Mission, Texas. At age 85, one might assume he was enjoying the typical retirement community activities. But not Bill. He became involved in and took over Mabel's Building

Mission, leading a group of retired senior citizens in building homes for impoverished families in Mexico.

He spearheaded a team of volunteers who would drive nearly two hours twice each week, October through May, to build modest homes measuring 12 by 16 feet, accommodating up to six people and all of their basic needs. Each home costs approximately \$2,000, so he would also organize fundraising efforts to complete the project. He shared with friends once that he couldn't believe how much someone would generously contribute for one apple pie! For his years of service, it's estimated Bill was responsible for the completion of 540 homes, impacting nearly 3,000 young couples and children.

Completely community-minded, Bill poured his heart and soul into countless organizations back in Iowa, including St. John Lutheran Church in Nashua, Strawberry Point Jaycees, Nashua City Council, Park Board, Ambulance Service, VFW Post, Meals on Wheels and more.

Sadly, Bill passed away on Aug. 14, 2023, after a short battle with lung cancer. His family knows he would have been extremely honored to receive this recognition.


PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARD – Carl Hargrave '76



Carl graduated with a Bachelor of Science in physical education in 1976. Some of you may recall him as a star defensive back on the Peacock football team, earning first-team All-Conference honors all four years. He was drafted by the NFL's Oakland Raiders soon after graduation and later returned to the UIU campus to join the Peacock coaching staff until 1980.

Carl excelled at coaching football alongside some rather noteworthy mentors at the collegiate and professional levels, including Northwestern University, the University of Iowa, the University of Pittsburg, the University of Houston, Mesa Community College, the Minnesota Vikings and the Arizona Cardinals.

In 2015, Carl became the founder, owner and director of Fit Four Recovery, serving Phoenix and Denver. The aim is to inspire those fighting drug and alcohol addiction to turn their lives around through engagement in personal fitness.

What sets Carl's approach apart from other programs is that he inspires people through his personal journey with addiction. He infuses his extensive knowledge of fitness and coaching with a drive to foster a supportive team environment. His organization has impacted hundreds of men and women who have turned their lives around through a commitment to fitness and well-being. While Carl no longer coaches on the football field, he takes great pride in "coaching on the field of life." 

HOMECOMING '23

RECAP

ALL IN FOR



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1. New this year, with a fresh twist on Homecoming activities, was the Powder Puff. This fun-filled game of flag football added an exciting element for students after the pep rally.
2. Alaina Sunlin, Makaela Meyer and Adrianna Welsh '20, were among the many students who attended the President's Ball, dancing the night away to music by Ultimate Entertainment.
3. Daryl Overstreet Jr., quarterback, receives crowd support as players walk through the tailgate area prior to the game.
4. The UIU Cheerleaders work their magic as they pump up the crowd for the football game against the McKendree University Bearcats.
5. Traegen Kramer, punter, executes on a fake punt against McKendree.
6. The Class of 1973 celebrates with enthusiasm during a wagon ride in the parade.
7. Homecoming Queen Jady Schult and King Bryce Baker wait for the parade to get rolling.
8. Tailgaters enjoy plenty of food and camaraderie prior to the kickoff at 3 p.m.
9. Cassidy McCusker and Allyssa Badker pose for a quick photo representing the many Greek organizations on campus.
10. Dr. Bill Duffy, president emeritus, and his wife, Sharon, take their seat in one of the many classic cars used in the Homecoming parade.
11. This year's parade was a huge success, with several new float entries vying for the grand prize, which went to the UIU Facilities Department.
12. The honor class gathered for a quick photo following brunch. Front row (l-r): James "Fuzzy" Clark '73, Mary Anne (Hedstrom) Macier '73, Steve Harms '73, Christine (Lamy) DeLong, Deb (Hand) Hess '73, Larry Borst '73 and Jerry McManigle '73. Back row (l-r): Greg "Gus" Stevens '73, Rick Knipper '73, Merlyn Boege '73, Jim Parsons '73, Bill Adams '73, Larry Woods '73 and Joan (Stocks) Nielsen '73.
13. Guests enjoyed a chance at winning cash prizes during the Heads or Tailfeathers game.
14. The Class of 1973 and their families enjoyed a delicious brunch, served by Aramark, at the Alumni Awards and Honor Class Brunch on Saturday morning.

To view all the fun-filled photos and video playlist, visit UIU.EDU/HOMECOMING.

77th Annual PRESIDENT'S FUNDRAISING BALL LIT UP THE Night!



Bill and Sharon Duffy present sponsor gifts during the dinner program to Peter and Laura Clemens (top left); Svetlana McCurry '20, '22 (top right); Fred Koch and Pam Whitmore '65; and Randy Kies from Woolverton Printing. UIU exceeded its goal, raising over \$205,000 for 2023! Over the last 11 years, this impressive event has generated over \$1.5 million to support students and emerging needs for the University.

The night's festivities kicked off with a lively dance-off contest, highlighting the skills of dance enthusiasts (l-r) Matt Cowley '00, Earnest Tucker, Matt Mickelson '86 and Dr. Duffy. Once completed, the cheerleaders rallied guests to dig into their pockets and donate for their favorite contender. The winner who earned the most funds was none other than Matt Cowley!



Similar to numerous attendees at this year's ball, (clockwise l-r) Aveline Miller, Daniel Cuadra '03, Brittany Diaz, Josem Diaz, Steve Andres, Ashley Andres, Chris Andres, Richard Andres, David Vaudt '76 and Aaron Miller '10 had the pleasure of savoring a delightful three-course meal provided by Aramark.



Guests of all ages filled the dance floor for a fun way to cap off the evening.



Initiating the dance portion of the ball, Dr. Duffy and Sharon captivate spectators with their graceful waltz and timeless elegance.



Phillip Knighten, Phyllis Kunzman and Tonia Knighten, family of William Kunzman '69, Charles City, Iowa, pose for a photo while waiting for the festivities to begin. William, who passed away in August 2023, was the recipient of the Service to Community Award, and his family received the award in his honor.



The Duffys pose for a quick photo with Michael Suggett '68 and his wife, Carolyn (center), prior to kicking off the evening's activities.



Matt Mickelson '86 takes the stage as the alumni keynote speaker, reflecting on his fondest UIU memories and the importance of staying connected to his alma mater.

Touchdown Against Cancer: A College Football Hero's Journey to Victory, Resilience and Graduation!

Another very special portion of the President's Ball program was a featured video presentation. UIU senior Ian Smith was diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma in the fall of 2022. His Peacock family rallied around him, offering support and encouragement throughout his cancer journey. No doubt, his resilience, determination, positive attitude and deep beliefs are what carried him through a very scary time in his life. Ian is now cancer-free and working hard to complete his business administration degree.

To watch this truly inspiring video, please visit uiu.edu/IanStory.



Ian Smith

ATHLETICS WRAP-UP

Peacocks induct four new honorees into UIU's Athletics Hall of Fame




Front Row (l-r): Steve Harms '73, Steve Exline '71, Dr. Darrel Lang '70, Bill Prochaska '63, Dennis Brumm '61, Al Seabrooke '61, Bill Roths '74. Middle Row (l-r): Wade Whitcher '02, Jena (Kilburg) Ernst '07, Josh McKeon '11, Marshall Richards '75, Lowell Tiedt '71, Mitch Norton '10, Jill (Preeshl) Norton '11, Rachael Schmidt '09, Rochelle (Schmidt) Engels '09. Back Row (l-r): Jill Williams '93, Rick Knipper '73, Matt Cowley '00, Jamie (Luchtel) Van Erem '01, James Rarick '99, Vicky (Ringenberg) Rarick '00.

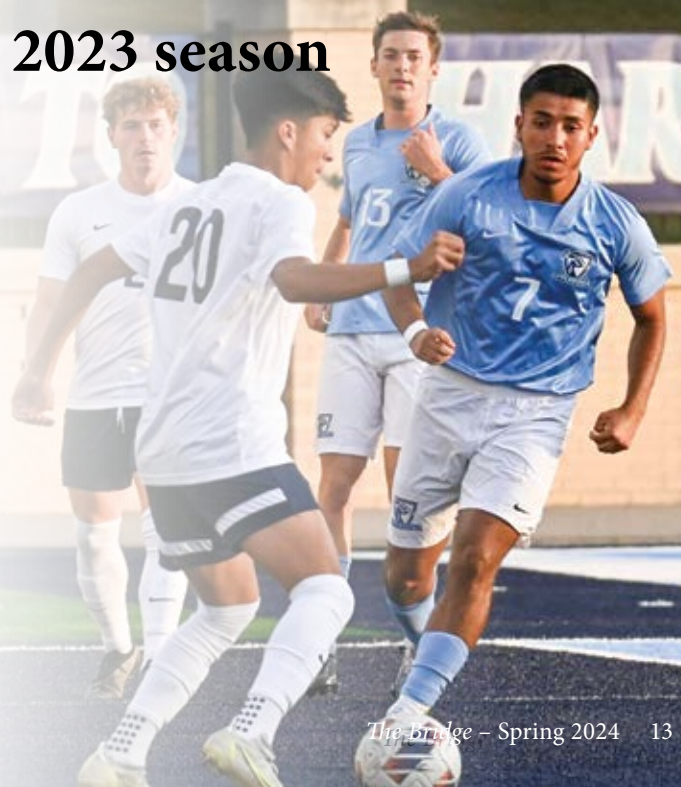
The Upper Iowa Athletics Department celebrated its Hall of Fame Day on Sept. 9, 2023. Six former Peacocks, including four new honorees from last year's spring meetings, were inducted into the legendary group of Peacock alumni. The four newest honorees included **Jill Williams '93**, **Jena (Kilburg) Ernst '08**, **Jill (Preeshl) Norton '11** and **Josh McKeon '11**. The quartet was joined by **Rachael Schmidt '09** and **Rochelle (Schmidt) Engels '09**, who were recognized as part of the 2021 class of inductees.

The Hall of Fame Day celebration at UIU began at 8:15 a.m. in the Student Center Ballrooms with a social and breakfast, followed by the inductions and acceptance speeches. The six inductees were a part of Fayette's Watermelon Days Parade, as fans, friends and family gathered in downtown Fayette, or in the tailgate area. There were nearly 30 Hall of Fame members in attendance who were recognized during halftime at the Peacock's home opener against St. Ambrose University.

Sports summaries from the fall 2023 season

MEN'S SOCCER – Upper Iowa men's soccer finished the season with a 7-7-3 record overall and a 4-7-2 mark in the Great Lakes Valley Conference (GLVC), placing ninth. The Peacocks pulled off a notable upset when they defeated No. 7 Indianapolis 2-0 at Harms-Eischeid Stadium, handing them their only conference loss of the entire season, prior to their GLVC Tournament Championship title and progression to the Super Region Semifinal in the NCAA Division II Championships before falling to Lewis 2-0.

The Peacocks were led by Mateo Rodriguez, who netted six goals and distributed six assists this past fall while recording a .486 shot on goal percentage. Frider Blunck netted five goals this season, and Daigo Adachi scored two goals and recorded the second-most assists in the GLVC with eight. Rodriguez was named to the All-GLVC First Team, and Daigo Adachi was named to the All-GLVC Second team. Dexter Garrett was awarded with the James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Award. UIU allowed just 1.94 goals per match behind their defenders Garrett, Florian Deick and Dan Pranger. The Peacocks saw depth in their bench, as 15 different players either scored or assisted on at least one goal this season. 



ATHLETICS WRAP-UP

WOMEN'S SOCCER – The Peacocks went 2-13-2 with a 1-10-2 conference record. They defeated William Jewell in GLVC play by a 3-2 margin and shut out non-conference opponent Minnesota-Crookston 3-0. Haylie Hutchinson led the Peacocks in assists with three, which all came in their victory over UM-Crookston. Rachyl Benavides led the team with three goals and finished second on the team with two assists.



Haylie Hutchinson



Rachyl Benavides

Six Peacocks scored at least one goal on the season, while eight players recorded at least one assist. Isabelle Wagner started 14 of her 15 matches in goal, recording 70 saves. She averaged 4.67 saves per game, which was the fifth-highest in the GLVC. Maile Kapualeinani Kehano and Chloe Jarosz each played in all 17 games this season as a part of the back line for the Peacocks. Hutchinson was selected as the James R. Spalding Award Honoree for women's soccer. 🏆

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY – The women's cross country squad competed in five meets this fall, concluding with the GLVC Championships, where they finished in 12th place. All five Peacocks ran their 6K season highs at the Championships, led by Eryn Sabelka with a time of 26:16.30. Mackenzie Rader and Jady Schultz finished with times of 26:26.93 and 26:30.83, followed by Nora Nouhali (27:53.17) and Alaina Sunlin (33:51.40).



Cross country team members Eryn Sabelka, Nora Nouhali, Alaina Sunlin, Jady Schultz and Mackenzie Rader pose for a quick photo.

The Peacocks saw their highest finish at the start of the season, when they came in sixth place at Mount Mercy and fifth place at Luther College. Sabelka finished with the best time at both these 5K meets for the Peacocks, highlighted by a 24th place finish with a time of 21:59.80 in Cedar Rapids. Schultz was the team's James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Award Honoree. 🏆

MEN AND WOMEN'S GOLF – Men's golf participated in four meets during their fall season, highlighted by third-place finishes at both Concordia-St. Paul and Winona State. The Peacocks recorded scores of 598 (+30) and 581 (+5) in their two third-place victories. Following the final meet of the year, Tate Carlson was named GLVC Player of the Week after finishing in eighth place in the 96-golfer field. He recorded scores of 71-74-69 for a total score of 214 (+1) and tied for first in scoring average on par 3s with 2.94.



Tate Carlson

Upper Iowa women's golf competed in four meets during their fall season, completing a season-best eighth-place finish at Winona State. The Peacocks recorded a score of 675 (+107) and were led by Katie Schweers, who tied for 14th place with a 158 (+16) score. UIU also finished ninth at Concordia-St. Paul and Lewis with scores of 719 (+151) and 709 (+133), respectively. 🏆

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL – Upper Iowa volleyball finished the season with an 11-17 record, going 6-8 in conference play. They faced tough competition, as the GLVC held representation in the National AVCA rankings each week with a handful of teams. The Peacocks finished eighth place in the conference and clinched a spot in the GLVC Tournament, where they fell 3-0 to the regular season champions, University of Missouri – St. Louis.



Zoe Semelroth



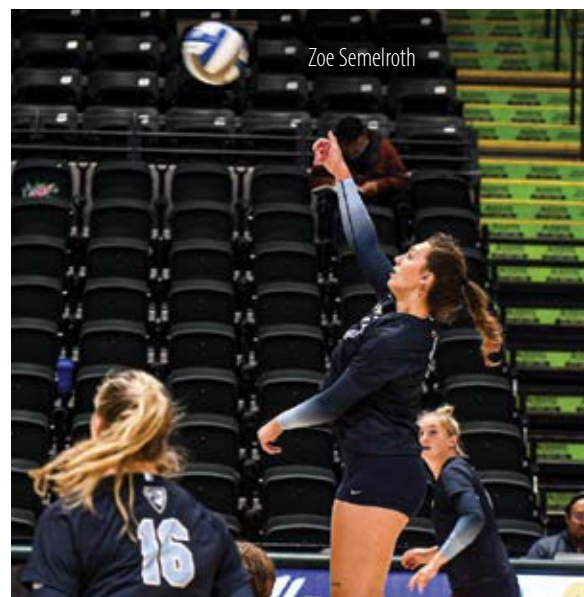
Nicole Pozorski



Madelyn Rettler

Upper Iowa's season was highlighted by a 3-1 upset victory over Maryville on UIU's Senior Day. Zoe Semelroth finished top 10 in the GLVC in three different categories. She recorded the second-most service aces with 23, finished seventh in kills with 183 (3.52 per set) and had the ninth-best hitting percentage at .323. Nicole Pozorski dished out a total of 1,031 assists this season, averaging 9.64 per set while adding 2.51 digs per set and 31 service aces. Semelroth and Pozorski were both named to the All-GLVC Second Team.

Kaci Beesecker recorded 253 digs on the season, surpassing 1,000 career digs in her career. Madelyn Rettler was named James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Award Honoree. 🏆



Zoe Semelroth



Advancing on the field, Jayden Mitchell, the running back, smoothly navigates downfield following the ball transfer from Darryl Overstreet Jr., the quarterback.

FOOTBALL—The football program recorded their most wins in a season since 2018, as they went 3 - 8 for the regular season and 1 - 6 in GLVC play, finishing seventh place in the conference. Darryl Overstreet Jr. and Marcus Orr split reps at quarterback this season, as Overstreet threw for 1,926 yards and 14 touchdowns, completing 59.7% of his passes. Orr finished the season with seven touchdowns and 727 yards, completing 72.6% of his passes. He was named GLVC Player of the Week after throwing five touchdowns for 234 yards in Upper Iowa's victory over Missouri S&T.



Darryl Overstreet Jr. Marcus Orr



Jayden Mitchell Diamante' Morrow Eddie Burgess

Jayden Mitchell led all Peacocks in the ground game with 494 rushing yards and six touchdowns while rushing for 5 yards per carry. Diamante'

Morrow and Eddie Burgess combined for 15 of UIU's 22 passing touchdowns on the season. Morrow nabbed 58 passes for 827 yards (both of which were team highs) and caught seven touchdowns. Burgess caught 43 passes for 616 yards, scoring a GLVC-high eight receiving touchdowns. John Butsch anchored the Peacocks defense, leading the team in tackles with 76, recorded 12.5 tackles for a loss of 34 yards and tallied 3.5 sacks. Butsch also blocked a field goal and recorded two interceptions this season.



Peyton Bieber



Baxter Bohr



Zacarius Murray

Peyton Bieber finished second on the team in tackles after registering 57, four of them for a loss of yardage. Baxter Bohr finished second on

the team with six tackles for loss and three sacks. Zacarius Murray aided the defense, as he recorded 39 tackles, two tackles for a loss, one interception and three pass breakups.



John Butsch



Tyler Nielsen



Willy Comacho

Ten Peacocks received All-Conference honors. The First Team All-GLVC was composed of Burgess, Morrow and Butsch. The




Ben Kamara



Traegen Kramer

Second Team was made up of Tyler Nielsen, Willy Camacho and Murray. The Honorable Mention team consisted of Darryl Overstreet Jr., Bohr, Ben Kamara and Traegen Kramer. Orr received the James R. Spalding Sportsmanship Award. Following

the season, tight end Eddie Burgess was named to the D2CCA All-Region Second Team. 

ATHLETICS WRAP-UP

Second Peacock Power 24-Hour Challenge sets new UIU Athletics record for giving

The UIU Athletics Department hosted the second Peacock Power 24-Hour Challenge on Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023. Alumni, family and friends of Peacock Athletics stepped up and generated a record amount of gifts for the second-straight year.

Nearly 600 donors, 594 to be precise, generated \$138,933 toward the 16 Peacock sport programs, strength and conditioning, and student-athlete development. The 2023 total surpassed the inaugural challenge total by nearly \$12,000.

“We are extremely appreciative to have received a \$41,000 gift from Roger and Alice Mangan as part of the day’s success,” said Rick Hartzell, UIU vice president for Athletics. “While a large portion of that gift will support the men’s wrestling team, the Mangans also earmarked \$11,000 of their support to be spread between women’s wrestling, men’s and women’s golf, men’s and women’s basketball, baseball, and women’s cross country and track and field, as well as strength and conditioning and student-athlete development. We are grateful to the Mangans and blessed by their support of the Peacock Athletics department.”

The gifts generated through the second Peacock Power 24-Hour Challenge will directly impact Peacock student-athletes by providing them with the resources needed to have a first-class experience at Upper Iowa.

The donors that gave, no matter the amount, have provided the means for us to help our student-athletes reach their full potential in the classroom, on the playing field and in the community.

“We couldn’t be more excited, humbled and blessed by the outpouring of support for the Upper Iowa Athletics department,” said Howie Thompson, senior associate athletics director for External Operations. “Thank you to all 594 donors that stepped up and generously gave to our programs.

“The support given to the Peacock sports, as well as strength and conditioning and student-athlete development, is a testament to the amount of love that our alumni, family and friends have for Upper Iowa and the amount of faith they have in how we do business in the Athletics department. The student-athlete experience is our number one priority and underscores our three core values of grit, pride and growth.”

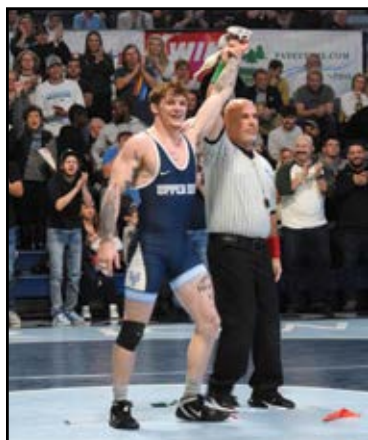
“ We are extremely appreciative to have received a \$41,000 gift from Roger and Alice Mangan as part of the day’s success... We are grateful to the Mangans and blessed by their support of the Peacock Athletics department.”



Roger '62 and Alice (DeLong) '61 Mangan

Rick Hartzell
Vice President for Athletics

Men’s wrestling won the challenge with \$46,879, while softball (\$21,223), men’s golf (\$10,750) and baseball (\$9,558.91) rounded out the top four in the challenge in total dollars raised. 🏆



Passing the torch with the Alumni Referral Program

Nate Mendoza '07 was excited to discover the opportunity and benefit of submitting an Alumni Referral. With no hesitation, he referred his niece, Mya Mendoza.

“I was the first person in our family to graduate college. I was also fortunate enough to receive an athletic scholarship to Upper Iowa to play baseball from 2005 to 2007. I played for Coach Mark Danker and was named All-Conference and team captain my senior year,” said Nate.

“In the two seasons I was there, I started every game at third base and was named defensive player of the year. More importantly, I received an excellent education from UIU, and the experience I had there absolutely made a huge impact on who I am today. I am married and a father of three children. My career has included high school special education teacher, head baseball coach and head football coach. I have been a high school administrator for the past seven years, and I am also currently the head football coach at Santa Barbara High School. Selfishly, I would love nothing more than to have my niece receive the same experience at UIU that I had 17 years ago.”

Within weeks of Nate submitting his Alumni Referral, Mya traveled to the Fayette Campus for a tour and to learn more about UIU. The result? She felt Upper Iowa was a great fit for her and enrolled! Mya is thankful to receive a \$500 Alumni Referral tuition award each semester, thanks to her uncle. She is currently pursuing a degree in education, is a member of the women's wrestling team, volunteers with the Student Philanthropy Club and works on campus for the Student Engagement Crew.


Since its November 2021 launch, the Alumni Referral program has produced 55 matriculated students and 4 registered students, thanks to 131 alumni referrals. You too can make a difference by submitting a referral. Who do you know who would be a great fit for UIU?

“**Selfishly, I would love nothing more than to have my niece receive the same experience at UIU that I had 17 years ago.**”

Nate Mendoza '07



Nate Mendoza '07, Santa Barbara, California, with his niece, Mya Mendoza.

To learn more or submit a referral, visit uiu.edu/alumni/referral. 

Four great reasons to refer a student to UIU

1. Your referral could earn up to a \$4,000 tuition award, making a UIU education even more affordable for a deserving student!

2. You help grow our Peacock family and strengthen UIU's finances.

3. It's rewarding to share your positive educational and life experiences with others.

4. All who submit a referral are proudly recognized on our website.

Celebrating 50+ years of adult learning

Upper Iowa continues to recognize the accomplishments and achievements of alumni who have graduated from the Self-Paced, Online or Center learning experiences, all of which stemmed from the original Coordinated Off-Campus Degree Program, launched in 1973. The Self-Paced degree program was designed to provide educational opportunities to working adults wanting to earn a bachelor's degree and has helped nearly 3,500 UIU alumni achieve their educational goals during its 50-year span. The program also created a blueprint for UIU's foray into other expansions in adult-focused education. To read more stories featuring our adult learners, visit uiu.edu/50YearsStories.

Two-time UIU alum plays leading role at Wisconsin's No. 1 ranked hospital

Robert "Bob" Flannery '88, '99 credits a blue-collar work ethic developed as a youngster growing up in small-town Wisconsin, two UIU degrees and a willingness to learn from others as a few reasons why he now serves on the executive team at Wisconsin's No. 1 ranked hospital.


Flannery has served as the chief financial officer for UW Health, the integrated health system of University of Wisconsin–Madison, since 2016. Serving over 700,000 patients annually, UW Health employs over 1,700 physicians and 24,000 employees in seven hospitals and at more than 70 locations. UW Health, which also is a partner in a 368,000-member health plan, was recently ranked by U.S. News & World Report as the Best Hospital in Wisconsin for the 12th consecutive year.

In his current role, Flannery has oversight of finance, managed care contracting, the physician practice plan and the revenue cycle team. He also plays a leadership role in strategic planning, including long-term planning for facility and equipment needs within the system, which currently is in various stages of development on multiple projects totaling hundreds of millions of dollars.

A career as expansive as the one he enjoys now was not immediately in the cards for Flannery after growing up and graduating from high school in the small town of Argyle, Wisconsin (pop. 850). Having worked at his uncle's farm beginning at a young age, a career in dairy farming was his immediate pursuit after graduation. However, Flannery's uncle convinced him that he need not lock into that career, which had its own set of challenges and stressors, especially in the 1980s. Flannery was convinced to enroll at Madison Business College one year after earning his high school degree. Flannery met a friend and future roommate at Madison Business College, Scott Link '88. They both received their Associate of Arts degree and then immediately enrolled at Upper Iowa's Madison location in the business program.

Flannery worked for three years in the finance department at Physicians Plus Medical Group, primarily focusing on accounts payable and payroll. Little did Flannery know that this position would lead him to a 37-year (and counting) career in health care finance administration. Link and Flannery both successfully completed their CPA exams after earning their bachelor's degrees, and Flannery eventually parlayed his experience into the role of vice president of finance at a hospital in Monroe, Wisconsin.

Ironically, this hospital was where his mother, Janice, worked for many years in the environmental services department. Flannery recalls visiting his mother in her department over many lunch hours after he became the vice president of finance. Eventually, Flannery accepted a role with UW Health in 2002, commuting first for several years before moving to Madison in 2010.

Flannery recalls receiving an excellent education during both his undergrad and graduate stints at UIU. The faculty, staff and adult learners he encountered were outstanding people. He proudly attended his commencement ceremony when receiving his Master of Arts in 1999, which he earned one year after marrying his wife, Angela, who also worked in health care finance. Bob and Angela have raised two daughters, Caitie and Alivia. Caitie is a registered nurse working for UW Health, and Alivia will be a junior at UW–Madison as a nursing student. 



Bob '88, '99 and his wife, **Angela Flannery**

at Upper Iowa University

Rising the ranks at John Deere

After eight years toiling in the “computer room” at John Deere’s Quad Cities location, **Merlin Sebastian ’76** knew that a college degree would be necessary to reach his goal of working in the company’s systems department. Originally from Postville, Sebastian was aware of Upper Iowa and took classes via UIU’s Correspondence program from 1974 to 1976, including three weeks on the Fayette Campus in 1976.



Dr. Duffy and **Merlin Sebastian ’76**

“I remember Dr. Charlie Clark fondly as well as Dr. William Drake, an IT professor at UIU,”

said Sebastian. “Dr. Drake would joke with some of us who were already working fulltime with computers, which weren’t all that common in the mid-1970s, that we might know more about them than he did! But there

was no question that without my UIU degree, I would not have completed a 36-year career at John Deere, primarily working in systems.”

During his illustrious career, Sebastian developed processes using what were new technologies at the time, including working on the mainframe and with IBM and Tandem computers to put together warehouse systems. One of his most satisfying projects was integrating an automated storage and retrieval system into John Deere’s warehouse control system. His work took him to John Deere’s facilities in Germany, sparking a love of travel that would stay with him well after his career. Following his retirement from John Deere, Sebastian consulted for Rock Island Arsenal on a nearly full-time basis for eight years.

Merlin and his wife, Lynne, have been married for nearly 58 years and enjoy traveling around the world, including five trips to Japan and long cruises in different parts of the world every April. They have three kids, 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. 🏆

‘Poor country boy’ to telecom executive

Phil Matthews ’83 looks back with pride at a journey that took him from being born a “poor country boy” in Durham, North Carolina, to a nearly 40-year career with stops around the world in the early days of the modern telecommunications industry. Matthews began his long career with General Telephone & Electronics, once the largest independent telephone company in the U.S. and now known as Verizon, prior to earning a college degree.

“After rising to become a district manager in one of our Georgia offices,” recalls Matthews, “I realized that everyone reporting to me had a college degree and that I’d need to have the same if I wanted to continue to advance.”

Upper Iowa enjoyed one of its earliest corporate partnerships with GTE at the time, and Matthews was able to earn his education at his employer’s expense provided he maintained a “B” average. After taking many courses via UIU’s Correspondence program, Matthews spent two summer sessions in Fayette, eventually earning his degree in 1983 at the age of 42. Matthews later earned a master’s degree from Dallas Baptist University, in addition to taking management training courses at both

Duke University and the University of North Carolina.

Matthews’ career path included stints leading a five-state region as a general manager in Durham, a district manager position in Georgia and a business planning position at the corporate headquarters in Connecticut. During the 1990s, Matthews worked in GTE’s international department, which included lengthy stints in Venezuela, Argentina, Indonesia, Thailand and China. Matthews eventually retired from GTE during its merger with Bell Atlantic in 1999.

Phil and his wife of 60 years, Jerri, have enjoyed a variety of activities during their retirement, including sailing, golf, woodworking and travel. They currently reside in Sun City, Texas. 🏆



Dr. Duffy and **Phil Matthews ’83**

CLASS NOTES

1960s



Sue (Crafton) Regan '67, Lavonia, Georgia, (far left) was awarded the Seton Hall's Champion for Change Award at their celebration of 50 years of women's athletics. This award recognizes an individual who has dedicated their time and efforts for the

advancement of girls and women in sports and beyond. In Sue's honor, moving forward, the award will be known as the Sue Dilley Regan Champion for Change Award.

1970s

Joan (Stocks) Nielsen '73, Battle Creek, Iowa, has been included in the Marquis Who's Who Among America's Teachers. Individuals are recognized due to noteworthy accomplishments, visibility and prominence in a field. Joan serves as professor emerita at Morningside University, where she taught classes in the teacher education and teacher preparation program, trained and mentored students, established an English as a second language program, and worked as an interim department chair.



Jim Foth '78, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, was inducted into the Marion High School Athletic Hall of Fame for coaching on Sept. 15, 2023. He is the all-time winningest varsity boy's tennis coach in school history with 82 career meet victories. He retired from coaching after serving 18 years as the head varsity boy's tennis coach at Marion High School and was also the Linn Marr Middle School boy's tennis coach for 22 years from 1996

to 2017. Previously, in 2017, he was recognized as High School Coach of the Year by the United States Tennis Association Missouri Valley Iowa District.

1980s

Dr. Larry Seals '86, Fort Scott, Kansas, retired in July 2023. During his career in obstetrics and gynecology, he served the communities of Fort Scott, Kansas, and Bridgeton, Missouri.

Vicki (Hanson) Villacrez '89, Lodi, Wisconsin, has been appointed by the Telephone and Data Systems Inc. (TDS), board of directors to serve on the TDS board. Vicki currently works as the executive vice president and chief financial officer. She has been with the company for more than 30 years.

1990s

Aaron McKay '94, Pleasant Hill, Iowa, has been appointed as the Iowa attorney general's chief of staff. Prior, he served as the state of Iowa director for U.S. Congresswoman Mariannette Miller-Meeks. Aaron has over 20 years in the legislative branch of the federal government.

Kris (Andrews) Martin '94, Independence, Iowa, is the new middle school and high school principal at Starmont Community School District in Arlington, Iowa.

Angie (McNamara) Corcoran '96, Ryan, Iowa, was recognized by Women We Admire as a 2023 Top Women Leader of Iowa. Angie serves as the chief human resources officer at Hibu, where she has worked since 2015.

Leanne Herman '97, Jackson, Wisconsin, joined Sepire as director of postal affairs. She has over 25 years of experience working with all facets of the U.S. Postal Service regulations.



Michelle (LaPole) Bales '99, West Des Moines, Iowa, traveled to Exmouth, Australia, to see her 12th hybrid eclipse in 2023. In November 2023, she traveled to Egypt to

experience the oldest ancient wonder of the world, the pyramids. She also visited the Great Sphinx of Giza, the Valley of the Kings and Karnak Temple and enjoyed a four-day cruise on the Nile River.

CLASS NOTES

David Megna '99, Hales Corners, Wisconsin, was recognized as a Notable Alumni by BizTimes. David is vice president of Wisconsin field operations for Milwaukee-based WEC Energy Group.

2000s

Dedria (Seay) Black '00, '02, Modesto, California, has been named director of the Henley-Young-Patton Juvenile Justice Center in Jackson, Mississippi. Previously, she served as deputy director of LifeSTEPS.

Amy Fosdick '01, Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, joined the Bank of Sun Prairie as an assistant vice president, residential mortgage lender. She has worked in home lending for notable financial institutions for more than 20 years. She also serves on the Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce board of directors as president-elect.

Mario Weekley '02, Biloxi, Mississippi, was elected vice president of the Mississippi Association for School Resource Officers.

Dr. Joe Robinson '03, Worcester, Massachusetts, was named director of Veterans Services with the Worcester Department of Health & Human Services. Originally from Waterloo, Iowa, Joe served in the U.S. Marines from 1990 to 1999.

Todd Eipperle '06, Ankeny, Iowa, retired on Oct. 31, 2023, after a 40-year career in the Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve. He retired with the rank of first sergeant/E-8 in the National Guard and a sergeant major/SGM in the Army Reserve. He returned to his job as director of annual giving at the Mid-Iowa Council, Boy Scouts of America, on Nov. 1, 2023.

Steve Fellhauer '08, Northville, Michigan, accepted a position as the recreation supervisor of sports with the City of Novi, Michigan. Previously, he worked at Howell Recreations as the recreation manager of sports. Steve is also president of the Western Suburban Soccer League, impacting youth in the community.

Jennifer (Strelow) Friedly '08, Waterloo, Iowa, has been named market president for UnityPoint Health, Waterloo. Previously, she served as vice president and chief operating officer for UnityPoint Health Allen Hospital and president of UnityPoint Health Marshalltown Hospital.

Amy (Bockenstedt) Kuker '08, Hudson, Iowa, joined the Hudson School District as a first grade teacher. Prior to this position, Amy taught in Cedar Falls for nine years.

Sasha (Heiken) Steele '09, Forman, North Dakota, accepted a high school counselor position with Mt. Pleasant School District in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. She earned her early childhood education degree from UIU and a Master of Science in school counseling from the University of Mary in North Dakota.

2010s

Christa (Noel) Ardoin '10, Mamou, Louisiana, has achieved the rank of Lean Six Sigma Green Belt, which reflects knowledge to serve as a trained team member within her function-specific area of the organization. She is currently a child welfare specialist-3 at the Department of Social Services for the state of Louisiana.

Shane McComb '10, Palm Desert, California, was named head football coach at Oak Mountain High School in Birmingham, Alabama. He spent the last seven years at Palm Desert High leading them to six straight district championships, boasting a 33-2 conference record. Shane is a former Peacock football player and has had coaching stops in Illinois, New Mexico and Southern California near where he grew up.

Alex Huisman '11, Summerville, South Carolina, will serve as the director of men's basketball operations at Charleston Southern in Charleston, South Carolina. Previously, Alex was assistant head coach and, later, head men's basketball coach at Iowa Wesleyan from 2014 to 2022.

Emily (Reinert) Boge '12, '15, Farley, Iowa, was featured by Today's RDH (Registered Dental Hygienist) in a spotlight story focusing on her journey to become a leader in her industry.

Thomas Calarco '12, Carthage, North Carolina, became the new garrison command sergeant major for the U.S. Army Fort McCoy on July 13, 2023.

Kathy Franken '12, Fayette, Iowa, was named UIU's 22nd president on Oct. 18, 2023. *Read the full story on page 8.*

Gerard Washington '13, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was named fire chief for the city of Vista, Wisconsin. Gerard is a 32-year firefighting and community service veteran.

Brandon Bledsoe '14, Pardeeville, Wisconsin, has been named village administrator for the village of Marshall, Wisconsin.



Madison Corkery '14 (left), Asan, South Korea, began teaching English at the Chungnam Foreign Language School. She previously taught in Indonesia through the Peace Corps and is originally from Independence, Iowa. Upon arriving in South

Korea, she was reunited with Lee Mi Jin (Seoul, South Korea) who attended UIU for a year abroad in 2014.

CLASS NOTES

Nick Soyer '14, Marion, Iowa, graduated from Harvard Law School and is now an honors attorney at Federal Deposit Insurance Company



Kesha (Kaiser) Billings '15, Coggon, Iowa, was honored at Waypoint's 42nd Annual Tribute to Women of Achievement event in Cedar Rapids on Dec. 5, 2023. The event celebrates women's personal, professional and civic contributions to their communities. Kesha is the senior planner at the city of Marion's Community Development

Department and has been instrumental in the long-range planning, managed complex annexation processes and led the development of the city's trail network.

Stephanie (Morlan) Gorsuch '16, Grimes, Iowa, joined Pella Regional Health Center as an emergency department provider to the medical staff. Stephanie has over eight years of experience working in emergency medicine, critical care and family medicine settings in Central Iowa.

Sara (Volker) Laures '16, Waterloo, Iowa, was recognized by Women We Admire as a 2023 Top Women Leader of Iowa. Sara is the chief people officer for VGM Group Inc. She has been with the company since 1998.

Michael Cardwell '18, Urbandale, Iowa, has been named fire chief and emergency preparedness director for the city of Urbandale. He had been serving as the city's assistant fire chief since 2008.



Markus Hawes '18, Fayette, Iowa, has been hired as the city administrator/clerk for the city of Fayette.

Dr. Jessie Hynek '18, Newhall, Iowa, has opened River Valley Family Chiropractic in Marengo, Iowa. His practice will focus on patients ranging from infants to the elderly to empower them to take charge of their health naturally. Jesse is a 2022 graduate of Palmer Chiropractic College in Davenport, Iowa. He and his wife, **Gabbie (Mohs) '19** reside in Newhall, Iowa, and have one daughter, Haisley.

Tanner Thompson '18, Fayette, Iowa, has accepted a position as a lecturer of finance and economics at UIU while continuing to serve as a financial advisor at Northwestern Mutual in Fayette, Iowa.

Adam Hansen '19, Gillette, Wyoming, is the North Gillette game warden for the Wyoming Game & Fish Department. He began his new duties in September 2023 after transferring from his previous post as the Kaycee District game warden, which he held for two years.

Dr. Nate Skare '19, Spring Valley, Minnesota, opened Skare Spine & Performance in Rochester, Minnesota, in May 2023. His practice incorporates different types of treatments beyond traditional chiropractic adjustments.

Welcome to the Peacock family, little ones!

Rebecca (Miller) Lohse '10, Traer, Iowa, and her husband, John, welcomed their first child, a baby girl, Annabelle Rose, on Nov. 10, 2023. She weighed 6 pounds, 12 ounces, and was 20 inches long.



Maleek '19 and Abby (Huhe) Williams '19, Cresco, Iowa, became the parents of a son, Ezra. He was born on Aug. 18, 2023.



Jordan '16 and Sierra (Lichty) Rinken '16, LaPorte City, Iowa, welcomed their first child, a daughter, on Nov. 10, 2023. Josey Romaine weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces, and was 20 inches long. She joins her four-legged sister, Lola.



Jalen '15 and Jackie (Jellings) Cooper '15, Lansing, Iowa, welcomed a son, Jaxx Robert, on Oct. 30, 2023. He weighed 7 pounds, 1 ounce, and was 19.5 inches long. Jaxx joins two sisters.



Sara (Franzen) Hageman '21 and Nolan Hageman, Ossian, Iowa, welcomed Murray Dennis on July 19, 2023. Murray joins big brother Everett, age 2.

CLASS NOTES

2020s

Dzeneta Jusufovic '20, '23, Waverly, Iowa, joined Expo Alternative Learning Center as a general core English teacher.

Sarah Swanson '20, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, accepted a position with the Summit League as assistant commissioner for sports, championships and student-athlete services.

Jodi Tukker '20, Pella, Iowa, was promoted from associate director to executive director at the Christian Opportunity Center.

Serianna Dehmlow '21, Huntley, Illinois, launched her own business, SMD Creative Corrections, specializing in copy editing, proofreading, social media consulting and content creation.

Natalie Dinius '21, Fayette, Iowa, accepted a position with UIU as an admissions counselor.

Kara (Lukes) Miner '21, Shell Rock, Iowa, has accepted a position as a preschool and early childhood special education teacher at Lincoln Elementary School in Osage, Iowa.

Kaity Adamov '22, Fayette, Iowa, accepted a position with UIU Athletics as director of internal operations.

Jack Beulke '22, Wanamingo, Minnesota, is working as a production intern for the Minnesota Twins organization of Major League Baseball.

Dalton Baker '23, Nevada, Iowa, has accepted a Rec Center graduate assistant position at UIU.

Colby Page '23, Milo, Iowa, has accepted an industrial technology teaching position at the Melcher-Dallas Community School District in Melcher-Dallas, Iowa.



Do you have something special to share?

Submit a class note at uiu.edu/alumniupdate, or contact the Alumni Office at alumni@uiu.edu.

Wedding Day Bliss Congratulations!

Jenna (Hermsen) Klos '15, West Salem, Wisconsin, married Nick Klos on July 1, 2023. Jenna works as an occupational therapist at the La Crosse School District and also has her own nature-based pediatric private practice.



UIU friends that joined in on the celebration are as follows. Front row (l-r): **Katie Mnichowicz '15; Madie (Wilkin) Lechtenberg '16; Shelby (Crist) Kobliska '15; Kristina Helgeson '16, '19; Whitney (Williams) Munkwitz '15**; Jenna, bride and Nick Klos, groom; **Tricia Hanson '14; Amanda (Weiss) Seston '15**; and **Carmen (Lezpona) Adams '15**. Back row (l-r): **Tyler Adams '14; Jacqueline Flood '16; Shannon Nix '18**; and **Brad Sweeney '16**.

Jarrold Esquibel '09, San Jose, California, married Krystina Bertoldi on July 15, 2023.



Nicole (Henry) Stemo '11, Denver, Colorado, married Scott Stemo on July 8, 2023. Nicole is the regional director for RPM Living.

Jordan Hay '17, Marion, Iowa, married Kara Bell on Sept. 23, 2023. Jordan works as an enrollment coordinator at UIU-Cedar Rapids.



Samuel '18 and **Alexis (Lloyd) Broome '18**, Grundy Center, Iowa, were united in marriage on July 22, 2023.

Ashten (Wolff)

Ludwig '18, '23, Farley, Iowa, married Adam Ludwig on Nov. 18, 2023. Ashten is an elementary special education teacher at the West Delaware School District in Manchester, Iowa.



Cody '23 and **Bri (Dahring) Lawrence '23**,

Fayette, Iowa, were married on Aug. 19, 2023. Bri is the head coach for competitive cheer and dance at UIU, and Cody is an office assistant at City Laundry.



IN MEMORIAM

In honor of their memory, we proudly recognize these Peacocks and their special connection to Upper Iowa University.

Richard Clark '53, '73
09/20/2023, Washington, DC

Daryl Engelhardt '53
04/02/2023, Hailey, ID

Wendell Eike '55
11/06/2018, Radcliffe, IA

Janann (Mork) Seabrooke '55, '64
09/14/2023, West Union, IA

Lyle Bergeson '56
12/18/2023, Des Moines, IA

Randolph Harvey '56
11/28/2023, Dearing, GA

James Rima '57
07/20/2023, Stronghurst, IL

Richard Arndt '58
12/01/2023, Oelwein, IA

Lorenz Behrens '59
12/24/2023, Bloomington, IL

Jack Aurand '60
08/01/2023, Maitland, FL

Bernard Necas '60
02/14/2018, Dubuque, IA

Yvonne (Brooks) Morrison '61
09/07/2023, Lake Zurich, IL

Roland Sawyer '61
09/24/2023, Wheaton, IL

Jerry Snyder '61
12/20/2023, Oakridge, OR

Marvin Knoll '62
04/15/2023, Willis, TX

Taras Powroznyk '64
03/11/2021, Saint Petersburg, FL

Bonna (Bishop) Gehring '65
08/02/2023, San Antonio, TX

Nancy (Wagner) Hemphill '66
09/08/2023, Newton, IA

Marilyn (Falb) Larson '66
10/20/2023, Greene, IA

Donald Paul '67
03/13/2023, La Vista, NE

LaVonne (Meier) Emkes '68
09/16/2023, Waverly, IA

William Kunzman '69
08/14/2023, Charles City, IA

Bernita (Herman) Moser '71
10/22/2023, Strawberry Point, IA

Barbara (Clark) Bunnell '72
10/18/2023, Glidden, IA

Paul Barnes '73
04/27/2023, Mason City, IA

Delores (Torkelson) Everett '73
11/22/2023, West Union, IA

Jean (Nading) Parker '73
07/15/2022, Garnavillo, IA

William Steffen '73
10/13/2022, Storm Lake, IA

Larry Busse '74
07/13/2023, North Liberty, IA

Ronald Ginapp '74
08/25/2023, Marshalltown, IA

Reinald Carter '75
12/08/2023, Severna Park, MD

Walter Wiley '76
02/28/2018, Vienna, VA

Gael Himmah '77
12/28/2021, Paradise Valley, AZ

Charles Sullivan '78
10/28/2023, Mc Kees Rocks, PA

William Pinkston '81
11/26/2023, Chesapeake, VA

David Schlotterback '81
12/12/2020, Oswego, IL

Carol (Hayes) Cales '83
11/22/2023, Lewisburg, WV

Johnny Murray '85
11/18/2023, Salem, VA

Dolly (Dawson) Garrison '89
07/19/2023, Bryant, AR

Brian Guess '89
01/21/2020, Yuma, AZ

Allen Manges '89
10/30/2023, Partlow, VA

John Rice '92
08/30/2023, Dysart, IA

Mark Erickson '94
11/26/2019, Chandler, AZ

Tracey Manternach '94
08/10/2023, Des Moines, IA

Sheila (Kottman) Wendel '95
11/23/2023, Clive, IA

Lisa (Haberkorn) Ferch '98
07/15/2023, Cedar Rapids, IA

Howard Wilson '98
08/12/2023, Visalia, CA

David Hoehl '01
10/02/2018, Carroll, IA

David Loecke '02
11/17/2023, Manchester, IA

Dale Tolliver '03
12/15/2023, Fort Collins, CO

Justin Henning '03
12/16/2023, Burlington, IA

Lyman Rud '06
10/13/2023, Janesville, WI

Joseph Thorne '08
09/10/2022, Winnetka, IL

Matthew Dauzat '14
01/03/2023, Alexandria, LA

Riquita (Carpenter) Wagner '19, '20
05/11/2023, Raeford, NC

Sandra (Perry) Weddle '19
01/04/2024, Milwaukee, WI

CURRENT FACULTY
Deborah (Larson) Cipale
11/30/2023, Des Moines, IA

FORMER FACULTY
Eldon Peters
10/11/2023, Parkersburg, IA

John Schrum
11/11/2023, Cedar Falls, IA

FORMER STAFF
Jay Collins
08/06/2022, Splendora, TX

FORMER STUDENTS
Gene Beinke
01/11/2024, Clinton, IA

Gerald Blue
12/23/2023, West Union, IA

Gary Bostrom
01/08/2023, West Union, IA

Margaret (Smith) Campbell
10/21/2023, Nashua, IA

Patricia (Henry) Dixon
12/05/2023, Bettendorf, IA

Wilma (Holthaus) Hatch
12/07/2023, Manchester, IA

Lorraine (Larson) Livingston
07/22/2023, West Union, IA

Marlene (Keenan) Murdock
10/01/2023, Marion, IA

John Reade
10/18/2023, Monticello, IA

Rose (Edie) Tucker
10/19/2023, Cresco, IA

Jane (Rische) Vescio
09/21/2023, Clay, NY

Joanna (Nehl) Walz
09/02/2023, New Hampton, IA

Steven Schaer
10/07/2023, Johnston, IA

Joseph Guyer
07/23/2023, Cresco, IA

Shirley (Nefzger) Smith
08/08/2023, Fayette, IA

Jacqueline (Buchanan) Hansen
08/29/2023, Ankeny, IA

Darlene (Butterfield) Brainard
07/21/2023, Cedar Rapids, IA

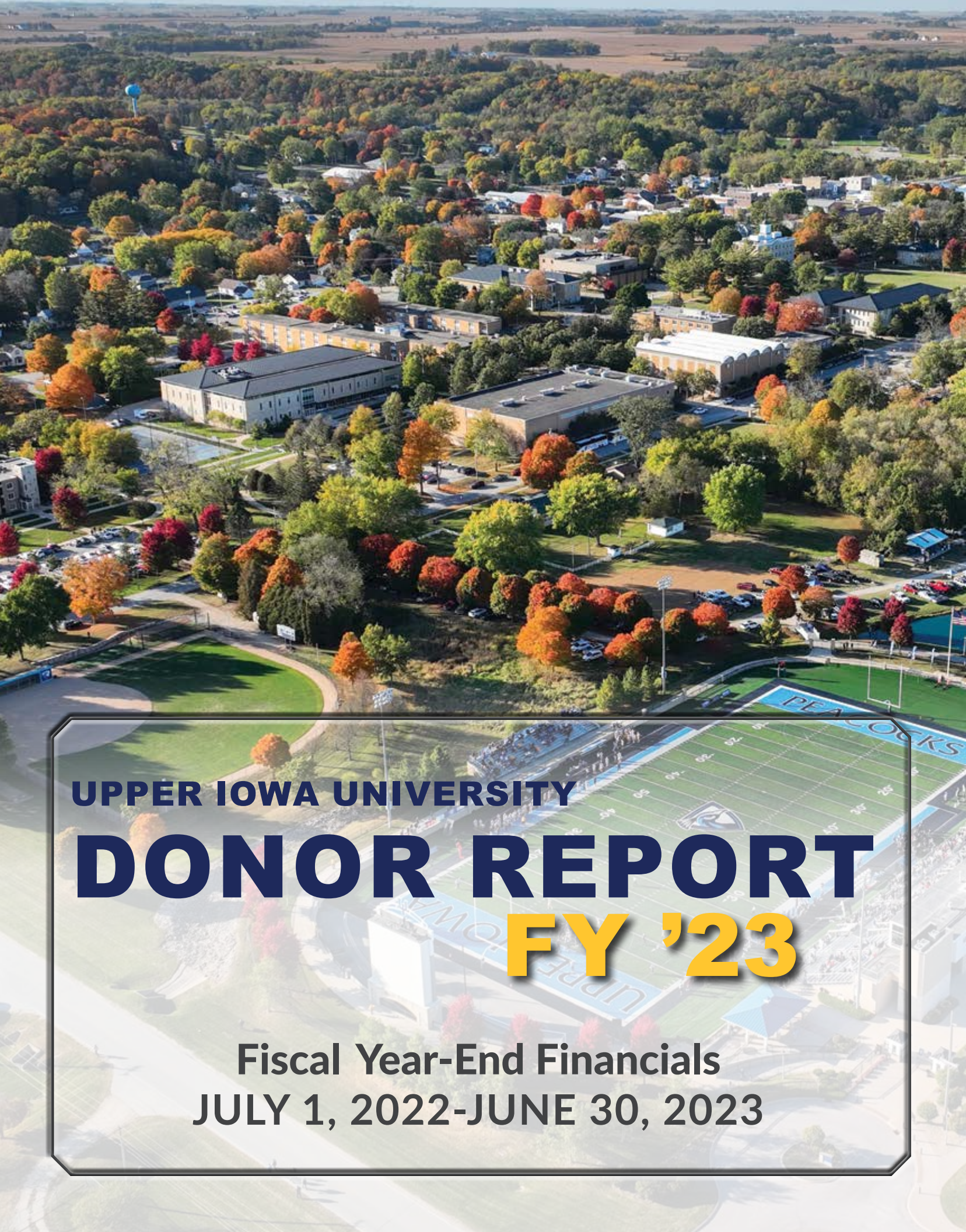
Lukie Ealey
12/10/2017, Denver, CO

FRIEND OF UIU

Kenneth Peckosh
12/16/2021, Robins, IA

'IN MEMORIAM' SUBMISSIONS

Should you learn of the passing of a fellow Peacock, please notify the Alumni Office via email at alumni@uiu.edu or send us a note to P.O. Box 1857, Fayette, IA 52142



UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY

DONOR REPORT

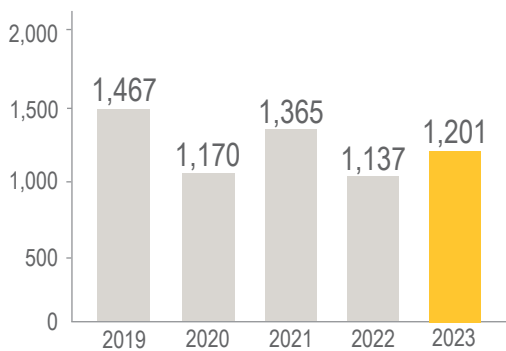
FY '23

Fiscal Year-End Financials
JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023



Donor Participation

Upper Iowa Alumni

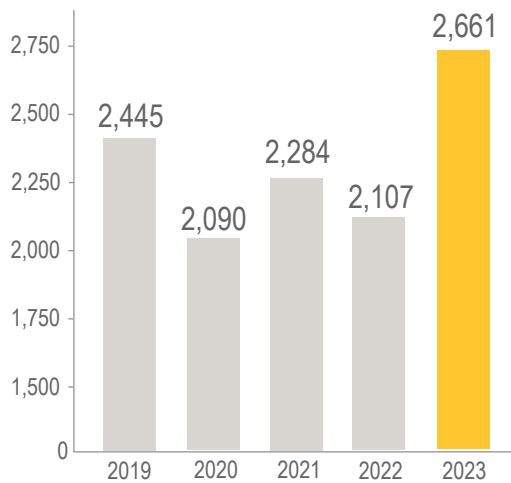


FINANCIAL

Reporting **FY '23**

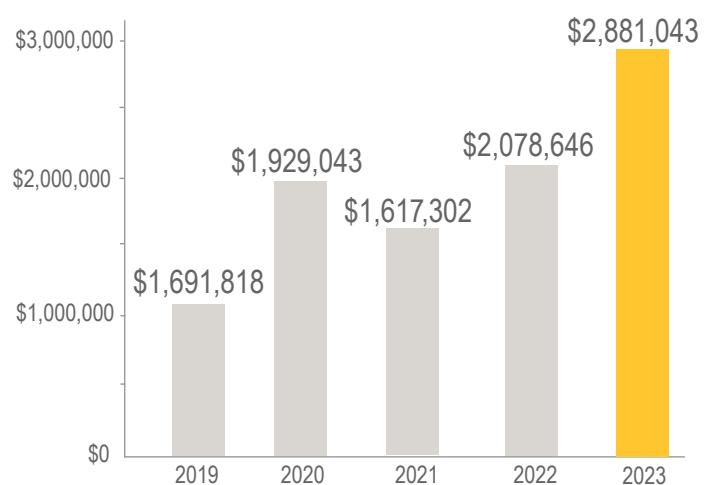
Donor Participation

All Donors



Total Charitable


Donations



DONOR Clubs

Just when we thought our supporters couldn't be more amazing, we're proven wrong! Thanks to the generosity of an impressive 698 donors, the program has reached a new, all-time donor count during its nine-year history. On the next few pages, we proudly recognize all of our fiscal year 2023 Donor Club members.

As this program grows we're excited to hear again and again that fellow members jumped into a particular club because they were inspired by a friend or classmate who appeared on the Donor Club list. We hope this positive response continues, and we encourage you to help us recruit even more compassionate individuals and businesses to consider joining a club.

To learn more about the UIU Donor Club program and special perks that are offered, or to become a member, visit uiu.edu/DonorClubs. 

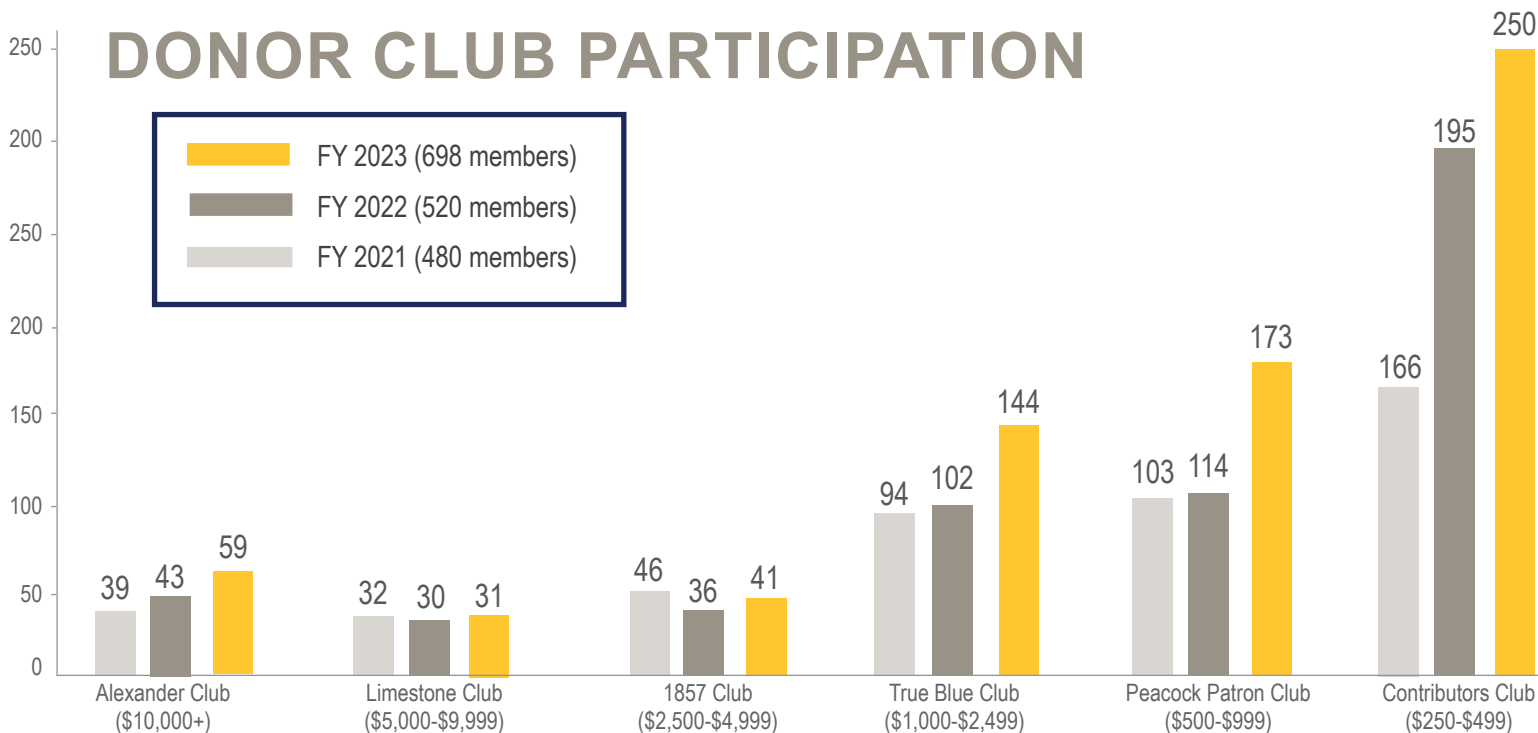
Member Spotlight

Jesse Rawley '02 earned his financial management degree in 2002 and lights up when he reflects back on his Fayette Campus experience. Memories include the small-town feel, deep connections to professors and coaches, and the beauty that surrounds Northeast Iowa. As a former football player, he still cheers on the Peacocks, and he has volunteered on the Alumni Association board of directors and gives back to UIU frequently, supporting causes that matter to him.

Jesse is a partner and employee benefits consultant with USI Insurance Services, who is also a UIU Donor Club member. He and his wife, Bethany, and their two girls, Isla and Eloise, live in Gig Harbor, Washington.



Jesse Rawley '02 and family
True Blue Club



FY2023 Donor Club Members

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Larry & Tracey Seals
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Kyle Thompson
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Tim Weber
Ricky & Barbara Wilkerson
Neil & Heidi Wilkinson
Kenneth Williams*
Tim & Holly Wolff
Timothy & Nancy Wulfekuhle
DT's Pub & Primetime Pizza
Jim & Kay Yanecek

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**Indicates deceased. Giving totals include outright gifts, in-kind gifts and pledge payments (not pledge commitments) made from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.*



HERITAGE Society

The Heritage Society was created to recognize and honor those who have included Upper Iowa University in their estate plans or have made some other type of planned gift commitment. During fiscal year 2023, 13 Heritage Society commitments were made, resulting in a 44% increase over fiscal year 2022.


We were delighted to welcome **Ed Menuey '91** and his wife, Judith, as new Society members. Ed attended UIU-Waterloo and earned his management degree in 1991. He enjoyed a 44-year career at John Deere in supply chain and other roles. Ed and Judith reside in Easley, South Carolina, and support Peacock students any chance they can!



Ed '91 and Judith Menuey
Heritage Society Members

Estate planning is an important task for everyone to complete. And UIU has a convenient (and free) resource that all alumni may utilize. FreeWill is an online will-writing tool that allows anyone to produce a legally binding will in about 20 minutes. So far, 198 alumni have taken advantage of this beneficial opportunity.

If you've opted to work directly with a financial advisor, that's great too. If you wish to be recognized as a Heritage Society member, we ask that you please complete a letter of intent so we may properly document your specific intentions.

Questions may be directed to Andrew Wenthe, vice president for external affairs, at wenthea@uiu.edu or 563-425-5348, or visit uiu.edu/HeritageSociety. 

Thank you, Heritage Society members!


- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
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* Indicates deceased

ENGAGEMENT Crew

These dedicated students connect with alumni of the University throughout the year. They are calling to provide campus updates, update our system, learn about your experiences and inform you of what is happening at the University. The student call center is located in the lower level of the Alumni House in Fayette. Our 16 callers come from a variety of academic backgrounds, such as business, conservation management, criminal justice and education. Share with them your experiences and guidance!

Calls also provide an opportunity for you to support your passion at the University. Our students understand the impact your gifts have on their experiences and enjoy the opportunity to personally thank you for all you do to support the University.

Student callers are vital to the success of fundraising at Upper Iowa University and to maintaining strong relationships with alumni. Students are the best ambassadors to talk about the Peacock experience because they're living it. Our students are looking forward to talking with you. Thank you for your support! 

“ Being a part of this team for two years now has allowed me to interact with Peacocks from various campuses and different walks of life. The best part is hearing their stories from when they were at UIU and learning from their experiences. UIU was and has always been about the people! The Crew has helped me develop my interactive skills and is a great way to contribute and help UIU make a positive change for the current and future Peacocks.”



Belle Wagner '26
UIU Sophomore and
Engagement Crew Member

2023 stats & facts



Scholarship initiative to benefit

An Upper Iowa University education will become even more affordable for 10 members of each of UIU's next two incoming classes thanks to the generous support of Ralph and Erica Kauten.

Kauten, a native of rural Fayette County and student at UIU in the late '60s and early '70s, has committed \$500,000 to establish the Kauten Scholars program at UIU. The scholarship initiative aligns the charitable priorities of the Kautens with the strategic priorities of UIU. The generous contribution will be used to award annual scholarships to 10 qualifying students from each of the two incoming classes. The fortunate Kauten Scholars recipients will receive up to \$24,000 in tuition aid funded by this program during their four-year educational journey at UIU, provided they remain in good academic standing.

The Kauten Scholars initiative is a continuation of UIU's efforts to make a quality college degree accessible at an affordable price. In 2021, UIU announced the Peacock Promise initiative, which makes tuition free for any Iowa student who qualifies for the Iowa Tuition Grant. The Kauten Scholars program will target students who do not meet the income requirements for the Iowa Tuition Grant but who still demonstrate financial need.

"The granting of a scholarship will provide a person with encouragement and the resources to improve their capabilities allowing them to achieve their potential and improve the lives of the people they touch. With the right encouragement, support and their personal determination, these students will make life on earth better for all of us," said Kauten.

“ We know there are students who still face barriers standing in the way of attending college and the Kauten Scholars program will help to remove these obstacles.”

Kathy Franken
UIU President/CFO

"UIU's recent tuition reset, the Peacock Promise; merit scholarships for all incoming Fayette Campus students; and a bevy of donor-funded 'Honors & Awards' scholarships all combine to make a UIU education incredibly affordable," said Kathy Franken, UIU President/CFO. "However, we know there are students who still face barriers standing in the way of attending college, and the Kauten Scholars program will help to remove these obstacles."

Kauten co-founded or led several startup companies in the life sciences and biotechnology industries. He is currently the owner of Air-Lec Industries and co-owner of Mirus Bio. He has previously co-founded or served in a leadership role at Promega Corporation, PanVera Corporation, Mirus Bio, Quintessence Biosciences Inc., and Lucigen Corporation. The Kautens currently live



Ralph and Erica Kauten

Classes of '28 and '29

in Madison, Wisconsin, where Ralph serves as a board member for several private and public organizations in the Madison area. However, he continues to care deeply about the rural Northeast Iowa region where he grew up as the youngest of 11 children on a family farm near Fayette.



Ralph Kauten presented Elizabeth Roneker with her scholarship award at the 2014 Honors and Awards Banquet.

“Strengthening and adding vitality to rural communities is important, and institutions like Upper Iowa University are a critical part of keeping places like Fayette alive,” said Kauten. “Erica and I are proud to provide these scholarships, which will not only help UIU students but also assist in growing UIU’s Fayette Campus.”

Kauten Scholars recipients will be selected by a small committee with representation from the UIU faculty and the admissions, financial aid, and advancement departments. Kauten Scholars will receive the UIU Merit Scholarship that they are eligible to receive based on past academic performance plus an additional Kauten Scholars tuition award, for a combined \$6,000 annual aid package. Students may also be eligible for additional aid during their UIU career, such as Honors & Awards scholarships, further reducing their tuition costs.

Preference will be given to students coming to Fayette from rural-serving school districts who also demonstrate financial need but who are not eligible for UIU’s Peacock


Promise scholarship, which makes tuition free at the Fayette Campus. Since the creation of the Peacock Promise program, UIU has increased the number of Iowa residents attending the Fayette Campus by over 90%.

“Because of Ralph and Erica’s support, the Kauten Scholars initiative will provide our Admissions team with an important recruitment tool while enhancing our ability to make a college degree attainable to students who might otherwise not be able to afford one,” said Kathy Wenthold, executive director of admissions and retention. “We are excited to meet the first cohort of Kauten Scholars students during this year’s recruitment season and look forward to celebrating their successes at UIU and as alumni in the years ahead.”

“With the right encouragement, support and their personal determination, these students will make life on earth better for all of us.”

Ralph Kauten

The gift establishing the Kauten Scholars initiative is not the first time the Kautens have lent their support to UIU and area students. In 2012, Ralph and Erica established the Ralph Kauten Endowed Scholarship at UIU, which has gone on to support six West Central and North Fayette-Valley graduates who went on to attend Upper Iowa. Nearly \$20,000 has been awarded from this endowed scholarship, and it has produced UIU alumni who are now enjoying careers spanning fields from law to teaching.

“I understand the value of investing in educational opportunities that can help to change lives,” said Kauten. “This has been true for me as a prior UIU endowed scholar and with our 2012 endowed scholarship program at UIU. We are happy to hopefully make an even larger impact with the Kauten Scholars program.” 

HONORS & AWARDS Program

Over \$460,000 in scholarships was awarded to 187 UIU students in fiscal year 2023. The Honors and Awards Committee is excited to coordinate this tremendous program once again.

NEW THIS YEAR! Students no longer need to complete an online application. To simplify the process and eliminate unnecessary stress on our students, all students who meet the criteria are eligible to receive Honors & Awards Scholarships.

Mark your calendars: All are invited to attend the Annual Honors & Awards Banquet on Saturday, April 13, 2024, at Fayette Campus. The dinner program is a Peacock favorite. It's a wonderful way to recognize our incredible students and honor generous donors who make these awards possible. Banquet RSVPs are required. Please visit our website at uiu.edu/alumni-events to sign up.

To view a complete list of all Honors & Awards Scholarships, visit uiu.edu/scholarships.



Pictured are student recipients from last year's Honors & Awards Banquet, held April 1, 2023. Back row (l-r): Kayla Veto, McKenna Diermeier, Lydia Imbrogno and Emily Kono. Front row (l-r): Martha Pace and Vitoria Kazanovski.

**UIU
GIVING
DAY**

Battle of the Generations!

April 24-25, 2024 | uiu.edu/GivingDay




Peacock alumni endow scholarships

Longtime UIU Athletics booster **Darwin Dean '99** cemented his legacy at his alma mater by establishing the Darwin Dean Endowed Scholarship late in 2023. The endowment will support a scholarship for a female student-athlete, with the first recipient to be acknowledged at the 2024 Honors & Awards Banquet in April. The recipient must have a 3.0 GPA or higher and will be a rising junior or senior participating in athletics at UIU.

Dean, who lives in Fayette, is an ardent and passionate fan of the Peacocks. He can almost always be found in the same section of bleachers in Dorman Gymnasium to cheer on the volleyball and basketball teams or at his familiar perch in the Harms-Eischeid Stadium Suites for football games. His devotion and faithfulness to women's athletics at UIU extends back over a decade, with years of consistent and generous support for all women's sports.

In addition to the legacy Dean will leave with his endowed scholarship, this faithful alumnus has been recognized

for his support of a variety of projects benefiting UIU Athletics, including equipment enhancements at the Peacock Arts & Athletics Center and the UIU Softball field.

Dean attended UIU's Fayette Campus as an adult learner, earning a degree in management information systems in 1999. He is a proud member of UIU's Heritage Society and has been recognized as a member of UIU's Donor Club every year since the program's inception. 



Darwin Dean '99 (center) poses with the women's soccer team.

Twenty years after his graduation, **Deo Sanders '01, '03** decided it was time to demonstrate his passion and appreciation for Upper Iowa University and the impact it made on his life. Deo, along with wife Kayla, made a gift of \$25,000 in late 2023 to endow a scholarship that will help to keep the college dream alive for students who have experienced significant hardship that could otherwise stand in the way of attaining a college degree. Deo and Kayla made an additional \$5,000 gift to jump-start the scholarship program.

Sanders, born and raised in Carsicana, Texas, just outside of Dallas, left his home state for the very first time at the age of 18 to board a Greyhound bus bound for UIU's Fayette Campus to meet UIU Basketball Coach Dave Martin. The first in his family to attend college, Sanders arrived at UIU on a scholarship and left four years later with several basketball accolades, two degrees, and a job offer from Pfizer Pharmaceuticals. Deo spent 20 years with Pfizer, working in Oncology sales, sales training, leadership, and marketing. He now works for Gilead

Sciences in a role that allows him to lead a United States-based team that educates breast cancer thought leaders and physicians on a variety of oncology pharmaceutical options.




Andrew Wenthe '12 (left) and Dr. Duffy (right) are pictured here with **Deo Sanders '01, '03**.

"If I hadn't gotten the opportunity to attend UIU and instead had stayed in the Dallas area, my life would be very different today," said Sanders. "I loved everything about my experience at UIU."

Sanders recalls having two internship opportunities offered during his senior year; one with Pfizer and the other with Valley Fair amusement park in Minnesota. He opted for the Pfizer gig and the company offered him a full-time job in February of his senior year. Sanders has balanced a successful career with a desire to give back to his community. In addition to their recent gift to establish an endowment at UIU, the young couple support scholarships for students from Deo's high school who are headed to college. You can learn more information about Sanders' efforts at www.sanderscommunity.org.

"There are students who attend college whose parents don't have \$1,000 in the bank at the time of their attendance," said Sanders. "I was one of those students and am very grateful to now be able to provide value to others in perpetuity. Being able to partner with Upper Iowa creating space for students with financial need brings our family great joy!"

Deo and Kayla currently live in Houston with their daughter, Levi Grace (6), and son, Deo Jr. (19 months). Daughter Makena (18) is a freshman at the University of Oklahoma. 

STUDENT PHILANTHROPY Council

For the Students, by the Students

The Student Philanthropy Council (SPC) is a volunteer student group serving as philanthropic ambassadors for UIU. Their goal is to inspire a tradition of giving among students. Working closely with the Alumni Office, they organize student-led fundraising (and friend-raising) projects with the highest level of integrity, professionalism and UIU spirit.

SPC hosted the Gift of Giving event on Dec. 11 and 12, 2023, which included four featured student-led projects: Classroom Improvements, Athletic EmpowHERment, Campus Beautification and SPCGives Back. Thanks to the generosity of 62 donors, the event generated \$5,027 for these student projects!

“SPC collected feedback from fellow students and thoughtfully crafted these four initiatives for this year’s fundraiser,” said Belle Wagner, SPC student leader. “Strengthening the classroom, campus and student-athlete experience are all very important to us, as is finding fun ways to grow the student body at UIU.”


The excitement and sense of Peacock pride generated by SPC’s Gift of Giving event would not be possible without the loyal support of our donors. We are proud to thank and recognize all supporters at uiu.edu/SPCgift.



SPC connected with fellow students at the UIU Clubs & Organizations Fair, held Sept. 6, 2023.

Looking ahead, SPC is gearing up for its 2024 Class Gift initiative. All student donors who participate by making a gift to UIU will be recognized during Commencement on Saturday, May 4, 2024. Supporters will receive a philanthropy cord to wear with pride as a symbol of paying it forward. The Class of 2023 garnered 124 donors, raising \$3,001. This year, SPC aims to surpass that.

SPC is composed of 21 student volunteers: Peighton Dolan, Jaden Francis, Taylor Greene, Makenna Grove, Jonah Hamberger, Taylor Hanks, Israel Hernandez, Haylie Hutchinson, Nevaeh James, Rio Johnson, Ellie Kalb, Addison Kirby, Mya Mendoza, Alex Saurez, Reese Schuler, Jayden Shaw, Lucero Torres and Belle Wagner.

To learn more about SPC or to show your support of this student organization at any time, visit uiu.edu/SPC. 



EMPLOYEES Give Back



Mariea Schnor '89, '13, associate professor of business and accounting, and **Jen Brady**, financial aid specialist, volunteer at the American Red Cross blood drive on Nov. 6, 2023.

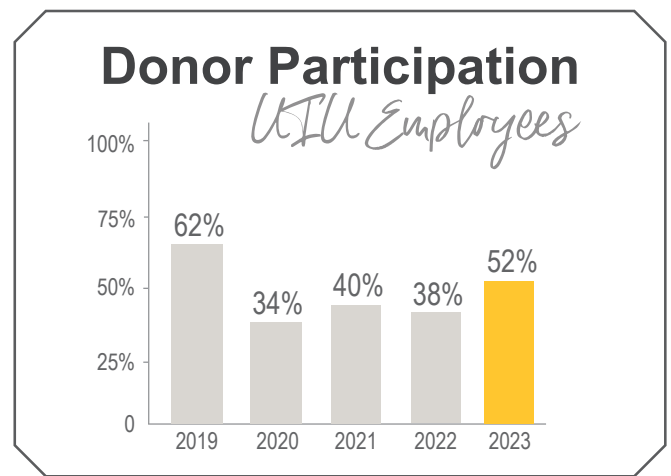
An important milestone was reached during fiscal year 2023 when over 50% of Upper Iowa University employees elected to make a donation to the University. This statistic illustrates just one of the many ways that a dedicated and talented assemblage of faculty and staff play an integral role in paving the way for the success of current and future students.

When alumni are asked to share what they remember most about their time at UIU or who most impacted their collegiate experiences, it's commonplace for them to reference faculty or staff members by name, no matter how much time has elapsed since graduation. There is little question that the passion of UIU employees makes possible an education and experience that is unique when compared to many universities.

Faculty and staff have embraced UIU's effort to promote a culture of giving and service within the institution. The generosity of UIU employees may take many forms, be it making an extra effort to help a student succeed,

cheering on accomplishments outside of the classroom, or simply coming to work every day with a positive attitude and a desire to make UIU a better place for everyone. UIU employees also give back to UIU and the communities it serves throughout the year in other ways, such as volunteering on Fayette Appreciation Day, participating in service projects on Martin Luther King Jr. Day or utilizing UIU's employee benefit that allows for eight annual hours of paid time off for volunteering.

During fiscal year 2023, 52% of UIU employees contributed to a variety of important University initiatives, including Student Philanthropy Council projects, UIU Giving Day, UIU Athletics' Peacock Power Challenge, Dean's Funds, scholarships and much more. Many employees also make recurring gifts by utilizing a payroll deduction process. Cumulatively, these gifts make an enormous impact, with over \$63,000 donated by employees during the fiscal year. To learn more about the Employee Giving Campaign and to see a list of employee donors, visit uiu.edu/FSG. Thank you to all UIU employees who have chosen to give back to UIU! 🏆



Staff Spotlight

K "I choose to give back to Upper Iowa University because I believe in the University. As a first-generation college student, I understand the importance of having a dynamic support system. UIU has this system, and I want to ensure all students can access it."



Emil Suder
Cedar Rapids Center Coordinator

ALUMNI Association

The Alumni Association board of directors' mission is to promote goodwill, create a dynamic alumni program, build loyalty, increase involvement and generate support for the University.

During the board's annual meeting on Oct. 17, 2023, a new slate of officers was elected. Congratulations to **Jeff Stavnes '76** (board president), **Tom Petsche '75** (board vice president) and **Ron Bergfeld '77** (board secretary). We thank **Danny John '16, '18** (former board president) and **Tom Webber '69** (former board vice president) for their leadership and service. In addition, we appreciate the years of service given by outgoing members **Aaron Calkins '16, Don Lyons '82, Michael Salmons '76** and **Zuraidah Zakaria '06**.



The Alumni Association is pleased to welcome two new board members (l-r): **Jill (Northrop) Buchan '02** and **Daniel Cuadra '03**.

Cuadra received his athletic training degree from Upper Iowa in 2002. He is a former Peacock wrestler, is a member of Sigma Alpha Tau and the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, and was honored as UIU Homecoming king during his

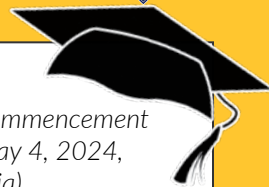
senior year. Currently, he works at Baptist Health Hospital as an orthopedic outreach/certified athletic trainer in Miami, Florida.

"I am very excited to be able to give back to UIU and help the alumni community," said Cuadra. "Hopefully with my past experience, I can provide great service. My strength would be that I am very passionate and have the energy to see things through."

Jill earned her elementary education degree in 2002. While on Fayette Campus, she played softball and volleyball, ran women's track, and was a member of EYE Sorority. She is currently a peak performer for Optavise, representing Washington National. Jill and her husband, **Ben Buchan '99**, have four children and reside in Ankeny, Iowa.

"My best ability is to build relationships. Without a doubt, this is a skill that everyone notices about me. I always meet people on their level and always make time for people," said Jill. "Being involved in countless academic activities and playing on the UIU volleyball and softball teams enabled me to build a huge Peacock network that spans the world."

To learn more about the Alumni Association or view board member profiles, visit uiu.edu/AlumniAssociation.



Second Chance Commencement

The Alumni Association board is proud to offer a second chance to any alumni who were unable to attend their own commencement ceremony - no matter the reason! Respective graduates will be recognized alongside the Class of 2024 on Saturday, May 4, 2024, during the 1:30 p.m. ceremony. Registration is required, and the participation fee is \$40 (unless you already have regalia).

Direct questions to the Alumni Office at alumni@uiu.edu or 563-425-5388. Sign up by March 15, 2024 at uiu.edu/alumni-events.

Advancement Staff



Front row, (l-r) **Anne Puffett '19**, Brenda Luzum, Julie Games, **Andrew Wenthe '12**. Back row (l-r): Daryl Grove, Mark Danker, **Mike Schrock '99, '21**, Howie Thompson.

9 EASY WAYS TO GIVE

- GIVE ONLINE** UIU.EDU/GIVE
- CALL THE ALUMNI OFFICE** 563-425-5388
- MAIL A CHECK:** PO BOX 1857 FAYETTE, IA 52142
- SET UP A MONTHLY EFT AT** UIU.EDU/GIVE
- TEXT-TO-GIVE** TEXT \$ AMOUNT TO 563-362-9795
- FARMERS CAN GIVE** THE GIFT OF GRAIN AT UIU.EDU/GIVE
- VENMO** @UPPERIOWA
- PAYPAL** @UPPERIOWA
- CORPORATE MATCHING**

2024 ALUMNI CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Peacock alumni and friends of Upper Iowa University are invited to all of our get-togethers. No matter the occasion, these are great opportunities to reconnect with fellow alums, reminisce about your UIU experience, meet new friends and, most important, have fun! It would be our pleasure to see YOU at an upcoming event.



February 17: Basketball Alumni Day – Fayette Campus

February 21: Alumni Mix & Mingle + Iowa Wild Ice Hockey – Des Moines, Iowa

March 9: Alumni Tailgate & UIU Baseball Game – St. Louis, Missouri

March 9: Peacock Night at the Black Hawks – Waterloo, Iowa

March 30: Alumni Tailgate & UIU Softball Game – Bolivar, Missouri

April 12: President Emeritus Bill Duffy Retirement Reception & Dinner Program – Fayette Campus

April 13: Honor & Awards Banquet – Fayette Campus

April 24-25: Giving Day – uiu.edu/GivingDay

May 3: Inauguration of UIU's 22nd President, Kathy Franken – Fayette Campus

May 4: UIU Commencement & Second Chance Commencement – Fayette Campus

June 7: Annual Peacock Golf Classic – Fayette, Iowa

June 18: Alumni Night at the Ballpark – Cedar Rapids, Iowa

July 24-27: Team Peacock rides RAGBRAI – Iowa, state-wide

August 8-18: UIU at Iowa State Fair – Des Moines, Iowa

October 4-5: Acacia Fraternity 50th Anniversary Weekend – Fayette Campus

October 7-13: Homecoming Week – Fayette Campus

For more details or to RSVP, visit uiu.edu/alumni-events.
Dates and locations are subject to change.



SAVE THE DATE!

Acacia Fraternity will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its national charter on Oct. 4-5. More details will be shared directly with fellow members. We look forward to gathering together on Fayette Campus!

Questions may be directed to the planning committee:

Jeff Stavnes: 712-299-2199 | jstavnes1954@mediacommbb.net

Jon Miller: 319-361-3512 | jmiller1978@hotmail.com

Mike Knickrehm: 563-210-9338 | iron_mike@mchsi.com



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 **UPPER IOWA EVENTS**