



CENTENARIAN



Educating Leaders

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Now Streaming

A new podcast called the *We CU Experience* hosted by Centenary University President Dale Caldwell, Ed.D., debuted recently. In the inaugural episode, Dr. Caldwell and guest James McQueeny—a prominent public policy analyst, political commentator, and veteran journalist for *The Star Ledger* and *The New York Times*—examined the shifting national higher education landscape, its implications for small, private universities like Centenary, and innovative ways institutions are adapting to meet challenges. The *We CU Experience* is available on Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music, and other streaming platforms.

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Growing up, my parents made it clear that going to college was my only option after high school. At the time, I did not appreciate how privileged I was to come from a family that valued a college education. Through my career, I have come to understand that this isn't the case for every young person. Yet, frankly, it should be—earning a college degree is one of the biggest predictors of career success. Studies show that college graduates have 57 percent more employment opportunities, have received 72.4 percent of all jobs offered since 2010, and earned an average salary of \$84,000, compared to \$49,000 for those without a degree.

As president of Centenary University, I have learned three things that surprise me: The first is that most high school students are not aware of the benefits of attending college. The second is that many students struggle paying tuition because they don't understand the financial aid and scholarship process. And the third is that there are some strong anti-college voices on social media. I feel compelled to do something to address this situation.

In my Centenary University inauguration speech last year, I announced *Centenary Now: The Campaign for College & Opportunity for Everyone*, an \$8 million capital

campaign to ensure that every student at Centenary has sufficient financial support to graduate. This campaign is going well, and many of you have stepped up for our students. Together, we have provided scholarships for traditional day session students and new educational opportunities for working adults, community college students, and vocational students.

As we continue to make progress here at Centenary, I am now expanding my efforts to the broader college student crisis in New Jersey. Last year, more than a third of New Jersey high school graduates left the state to attend college. That's a shame—New Jersey has great college opportunities, often at a more affordable cost than other states. In addition, thousands of high school students aren't considering college at all because no one has encouraged them to apply.

Centenary University is in the perfect position to lead this charge: We have a strong track record for educating first-generation college students, and in fact, Centenary was recognized as a Top Performer in Social Mobility in the U.S. News and World Report 2025 Best Colleges listing. Now, I am leveraging the University's reputation—as well as my 26 years as a k-12 administrator and education professional—to initiate a speaking tour at the state's high schools and community colleges. Called Simplifying College, the tour focuses on teaching prospective students about the value of college, the financial aid and scholarship process, and the college opportunities close to home.

My goal is to increase the number of New Jersey college applicants to Centenary and every other college in the state. You can help: Talk to the high school students in your life about your Centenary University experience. Bring them for a tour of campus. Answer their questions about the college application process and financial aid—or reach out to someone on campus so we can help. And if you haven't already done so, please support *Centenary Now: The Campaign for College & Opportunity for Everyone*—to give every student a chance to attend college.

Dale Caldwell, Ed.D.
President

Civic Engagement in Action



Centenary University took the lead in engaging voters during the fall election season with a series of initiatives sponsored by its new Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership. The center seeks to spur students and the community to become more involved in elections through nonpartisan voter registration drives and events that encourage civil discourse on important issues. The new center is one of seven Centers of Excellence under development to establish Centenary as a national hub for innovative programs designed to inspire college students and members of the broader community.

While Centenary is still developing the physical space, the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership outlined a full slate of activities for the fall semester, including a partnership with Healing the Vote, a nonpartisan initiative that last year recruited, trained, and mobilized over 250 future healthcare providers from more than 10 campuses across New Jersey to help nearly 4,000 New Jerseyans to vote. Centenary University student members of Health Occupations Students of America, an organization for health-related degree majors, joined forces with Healing the Vote to continue registering voters and influencing policy to improve healthcare access. Prominent organizations like the American Medical Association and the American Association of Medical Colleges have acknowledged the link between voting and health, and conversely, that voting obstacles inevitably lead to worse health outcomes.

In addition, the University again participated in the national Ballot Bowl initiative, a student-led effort to spur voter registration; issued invitations to host Congressional

candidates on campus; and established the nation's first chapter of The League of Student Voters. As the league's founding member, Centenary has long-term plans to roll out the organization to college campuses across the country.

Centenary University President Dale Caldwell, Ed.D., noted that as the winner of two consecutive national Ballot Bowls (in 2022 and 2023), Centenary is uniquely positioned to lead the national conversation on the importance of voter registration and participation: "Every great movement has started with students who want to make society a better place. We need to encourage young people to register to vote and also to really analyze the issues. It's about voting with your mind, rather than with your emotions. This is a nonpartisan effort, so it's important to communicate that we don't care how you vote—but you need to vote smart. This is the beginning of a historic movement that will really make a difference in our communities."

Former White House Fellow and physician-advocate Aakash Shah, M.D. '21 HA, who is a founder of Healing the Vote, will serve as a visiting scholar at the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership. He said, "The partnership between Centenary and Healing the Vote will foster ongoing connections between students and their communities by creating opportunities for learning, growth, and service. In short, it seeks to help students bring their heads, their hearts, and their hands together to make a real tangible difference in their communities. I couldn't be more excited for the future of Healing the Vote and the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership at Centenary University."

ADVANCING IN THE RANKINGS

Centenary University was named a Top Performer in Social Mobility in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2025 Best Colleges listing, ranking ninth among Top Performers for Social Mobility among regional universities in the northeast and moving up 14 spots from last year's 23rd place ranking. In addition, Centenary improved its spot in the Regional Universities North listing, advancing to 97th from last year's 104th place ranking. These designations place Centenary among the nation's best educational institutions for advancing the careers and lives of its graduates, especially first-

generation students and those facing economic challenges.

According to the *U.S. News & World Report* website, the publication's social mobility ranking measures how well schools graduate large proportions of economically and educationally disadvantaged recipients of federal Pell Grants, the majority of which are awarded to students whose adjusted gross family income is under \$50,000 annually. The social mobility ranking specifically tracks each college's success at graduating Pell Grant recipients and achieving equitable outcomes for students

BEST

& WORLD REPORT
U.S. News

RANKINGS

from underserved backgrounds.

"I am extremely proud of the progress Centenary University has made in advancing our excellent reputation and the future of our students," said Dale Caldwell, Ed.D., president of Centenary University. "When all is said and done, social mobility is the most important factor to students and their parents when they're considering college, especially among first-gen students and those who face significant life challenges."

Providing Vital Community Support



Centenary University has been awarded a \$5,000 grant renewal from the Hackettstown Medical Center Community Advisory Board to continue a community-wide substance abuse prevention and addiction recovery support program. The program seeks to increase awareness of the signs, symptoms, and risk

factors of substance abuse and addictions through training sessions held at the University and in the local community. Vice President for Campus Life and Dean of Students Kerry Mullins said, "Community is at the heart of this grant and the University's outreach efforts to prevent substance abuse and support addiction recovery."

In the first phase of the grant, Centenary initiated a series of education and awareness workshops to equip

college students in addiction recovery with information, skills, and peer support to manage their own recovery. In partnership with organizations including Trinity Church in Hackettstown and the Hackettstown Stigma Free Task Force, the grant activities also engaged area high school students and their families—as well as professionals including teachers—to learn the skills to prevent substance abuse and identify those in need of intervention and support.

Through the grant renewal, the University will expand its partnerships and reach to include Hackettstown High School and the Hackettstown Hope Coalition, which seeks to engage the local community to prevent youth substance use. Workshops will be coordinated by Centenary University's graduate clinical counseling and school counseling programs. Centenary University Professor of Counseling and Director of the Graduate Counseling Programs Keith Morgen, Ph.D., L.P.C., A.C.S., said, "Our graduate clinical and school counseling programs are proud to collaborate with our community partners to offer this recovery support to the University and the broader community."



Meet the 2024 Hackettstown Scholar

Centenary University first-year student Kygan Garletts is dedicated to improving his community. An honor student while attending Hackettstown High School, the Allamuchy resident founded the Clean Community Club in his senior year to help the environment and raise funds. In its first year, the club recruited approximately 15 student volunteers and forged relationships with elected officials in Allamuchy and Hackettstown to pick up litter, earning more than \$750.

"Environmentalism is a huge deal for me, so I wanted to bring that part of my life into the school," explained Garletts, a biology and environmental science major at Centenary. "I also really like helping people, so through the Clean Community Club I wanted other students to experience the joy that I feel in helping others."

The University named Garletts the 2024 Hackettstown Scholar, a designation that awards a full, four-year tuition scholarship to a graduate of Hackettstown High School who demonstrates outstanding academic and extracurricular achievement, as well as service to the community. A high school student-athlete, Garletts was a member of his school's cross country, track, and swim teams, as well as the National Honor Society, the National Science Honor Society, the National Math Honor Society, and the Key Club. As a high school sophomore, Garletts signed on as a junior volunteer firefighter with the Allamuchy Fire Department, and today, he's a probationary firefighter preparing to begin Firefighter I training. Garletts said, "At Centenary, I can continue firefighting, while getting a college education. That's a huge plus for me."

When Garletts heard about the scholarship, he applied immediately. He said, "Finances are an issue for me right now, so I was looking for a college with the lowest possible cost. My dad was so happy when he heard about the scholarship. It's such a blessing—the most amazing thing that could have happened."

As he settles into his freshman year, Garletts values the small class sizes at Centenary that have given him the opportunity to interact closely with his professors. His future plans include attending graduate school to study environmental engineering and forestry. He has this message to the donors who funded Centenary's Hackettstown Partnership Scholarship: "I'm going to make sure that your investment in me will be worth it. I want to make an impact on the community by continuing to help others, and on the world by improving environmental stability."

AROUND CAMPUS



BALLOT BOWL THREE-PEAT

Centenary University was the winner of the 2024 New Jersey Ballot Bowl, achieving the state's top spot for the third consecutive year. This year, 11.84 percent of Centenary students pledged to vote in November's general election, a record high for the University, which placed ninth in this year's national Ballot Bowl competition. An annual nonpartisan initiative, Ballot Bowl promotes voter registration and engagement across the nation's college campuses.



FIRST-GEN SUCCESS

Centenary University marked National First-Generation College Student Day on Nov. 8 with a series of events to highlight the achievements of first-gen students and support their efforts to be successful in college and their careers. The all-day event concluded with the induction of 15 students and one Centenary staff member into Alpha Alpha—also referred to as Tri Alpha—an honor society that promotes academic excellence and provides opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, and campus and community service for first-gen students.

WELCOME TO THE NCEA

Centenary University's new NCEA team debuted this fall, winning two of five competitions. In addition, two Cyclones were awarded MOP (most overall points) honors in the fences and flat sections of the final meet on Nov. 9. The NCEA (National Collegiate Equestrian Association) is the highest level of competition offered for women riders through the NCAA.



CYCLONES CARE

Centenary University recently marked its second annual Cyclones Care Day, sending a team of volunteers—including President Dale Caldwell, Ed.D.—to provide service within the local community. This year's efforts included moving elementary classrooms, creating a parent lounge, and rearranging furniture in the teen center at Trinity Church in Hackettstown, as well as conducting an outside fall cleanup at the YMCA's Camp Bernie in Port Murray. Cyclones Care Day was first held in fall 2023, when Dr. Caldwell requested that the University community recognize and celebrate his inauguration as Centenary's 15th president with service activities.



THE GRAND ILLUMINATION

The holiday season officially arrived on campus with the grand illumination of the Edward W. Seay Administration Building. The event is part of the annual Hackettstown Hometown Holiday Celebration. The grand illumination was funded through several generous donors, including a lead gift by Stephen M. '19 HA and Sharon Somers, as well as Drew and Dottie Wintemberg (hot cocoa sponsor) and C&H Environmental, Inc., a JHCrow Company (gingerbread sponsor).



Educating

At Centenary University, leadership is instilled in students across all areas of study. The latest example: Four Cyclones who recently graduated from the New Jersey State Police Academy.



Leaders

Recruits who attend the New Jersey State Police Academy are the best of the best, undergoing a thorough background check, fitness test, and psychological screening even before they set foot on the elite training center's campus in Sea Bright, N.J. Then, they undergo a rigorous 24-week regimen that tests even the best and brightest candidates.

Not everyone rises to the challenge, leading about a third of candidates to drop out. Yet, four recent Centenary University alumni were among the 124 graduates of the 166th New Jersey State Police Class last July: Kevin J. Zaccareo Jr. '23, Peter J. Diaz '23, Anthony V. Cecere '20, and Yousef Y. Fahmi '22. Their success is a testament to the emphasis on hard work, leadership, and responsibility instilled by Centenary faculty in

every student. "It's highly unusual to have four guys in one class come from the same college, especially since Centenary is a smaller school," said New Jersey State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick J. Callahan. "A few years ago, these four troopers sat in a Centenary classroom and heard me speak about careers with the State Police. So for me, their graduation is a tremendous source of pride."

For the past four years, Col. Callahan has visited Centenary's campus at the invitation of Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice Douglas Compton, Ed.D '06/20, who teaches a course called Careers in Criminal Justice. During his presentation, Col. Callahan invites current Centenary students for a personal tour of State Police headquarters. Not many take him up on the



offer—but two years ago, Trooper Zaccareo and Trooper Diaz did. The meeting with the colonel, which included a tour of the New Jersey State Police Museum to learn more about State Police history, solidified their plans to apply to the state's top law enforcement organization.

"I've wanted to be a trooper since high school," said Trooper Zaccareo. "At Centenary, I really learned how to better present myself and ask questions. So, when Col. Callahan spoke in my class, I knew that I needed to pick his brain to understand more about the State Police. The academy was definitely the best few months of my life. Today, I love my job because I love interacting with the public."

In October, Trooper Zaccareo and the three other new Centenary troopers joined Col. Callahan on campus to speak with current students. Trooper Diaz shared that he had always looked up to his aunt, a state trooper who works directly with Col. Callahan. He told the Centenary students, "I grew up seeing my aunt in her uniform, so for me, to graduate from the

academy was easily the proudest day of my life. I was in this very class when Col. Callahan invited me to visit him at the museum. The history of the State Police sparked my interest even further. This is the best law enforcement organization in the country."

For Dr. Compton, who had a 26-year career in law enforcement before teaching at Centenary, seeing his former students excel as state troopers affirms his belief in the education Centenary provides to all students: "Our classes are small, and there's a big emphasis on discipline, responsibility, and accountability. Higher education creates well-rounded candidates across all sectors of law enforcement. That's important, because as a police officer you need to listen to victims, take mental notes, produce well-written reports, and maybe even testify in court. It speaks volumes about Centenary that these four state troopers were so successful at the academy."

While students like Troopers Zaccareo and Diaz had a clear vision for their careers before graduation, others take some time to explore their options. Trooper Cecere worked several jobs after earning a Centenary degree before applying to the academy. The inspiration: His older sister, whom Col. Callahan calls "one of the toughest undercover narcotics detectives in Newark." Recalling the moment at this year's State Police graduation when his sister presented him with his badge, Trooper Cecere told the students, "It was really a proud day for me. It's ok if you graduate Centenary and aren't sure which direction you want to take. You'll figure it out. I took my time, and now I'm on a very good career path and I'm proud to be standing here with these guys."

While his fellow Centenary troopers all majored in criminal justice, Trooper Fahmi followed a different path. A biology major, he was drawn to criminal justice several years after earning his college degree: "It took me two years after graduation to figure

LEADERSHIP ACROSS CAMPUS

Centenary University incorporates opportunities for leadership across all academic programs and activities. Here are two more programs that produce outstanding Cyclone leaders.



AAUW

Centenary University's chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) empowers young women on campus to develop confidence, leadership, and success in their personal lives and careers. This year, seven Centenary students were awarded full scholarships to attend the AAUW's national leadership conference at the University of Maryland.



EOP

The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) provides academic, social, and financial support to eligible Centenary students. The program, which recently celebrated its 40th anniversary at Centenary, has produced countless student leaders and successful Centenary alumni. EOP Director Devon Vialva, Ed.D. '97/08/21 says, "Some EOP students have incredible burdens at home. We don't allow that to be their story. We're proud that Centenary EOP students and graduates go on to do some pretty incredible things."

out what I wanted to do. Sometimes, it takes time. Centenary gives you the resources to explore and build connections. Eventually, I learned that there are so many opportunities to work in different departments with the State Police, which is awesome."

Career exploration is a big part of the criminal justice curriculum at Centenary. In addition to Col. Callahan, professors invite law enforcement professionals to campus from a variety of agencies—including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, New Jersey Department of Corrections, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, local police departments, and more—to give students a chance to consider the many career options available. Col. Callahan recently told Centenary students, "I'm not here to talk you into becoming a state trooper. As college students, you need to find what you're passionate about and follow that dream."

Jeffrey Carter, Ph.D. '03/04, directs the Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership at Centenary. He has mentored many Centenary undergraduates and graduate students on the road to leadership and successful law enforcement careers. Asked to define what sets Centenary apart, Dr. Carter cited the many former law enforcement professionals who now teach at the University. A retired lieutenant from the Franklin Township Police Department, he said, "The faculty at Centenary have deep expertise and experience. We don't teach because we need a job. We teach because we were blessed with successful careers. It's our way of paying it forward."

Centenary University President Dale Caldwell, Ed.D., noted that the success of Centenary's four recent State Police troopers points to the character of the University's students: "Our students have grit. Some of them are working two jobs while going to college. We also provide students with interpersonal skills, so they respond well to others. The combination of those two traits makes Centenary graduates unbeatable in the job market."





A Season to Remember

In spring 2011, the Centenary softball team clinched its first conference championship, earning an NCAA berth. That feat catapulted the team into the annals of Cyclone history—and now, into the Centenary University Athletics Hall of Fame.



The University reinstated the Athletics Hall of Fame this year to recognize Centenary's rich athletic tradition. The process sought nominations to honor student-athletes, teams, coaches, and other individuals who have made significant contributions to the Cyclone tradition of excellence. This year's induction ceremony was held at Alumni and Family Day on Oct. 5.

Back in 2011, Centenary competed in the Colonial States Athletic Conference (CSAC), and clinched its first CSAC championship in softball with a win over three-time defending champion Neumann University. The season came to an end when the seventh seed Cyclones fell to third seed Middlebury College in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

That year's team set a program record with 19 conference victories in 2011. Catcher Cara Montferrat '13 earned First Team All-CSAC, CSAC Player of the Year, and CSAC Tournament MVP honors, as well as National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) First Team All-East Region. Outfielder Caitlin Veverka '12 also took home First Team All-CSCA and NFCA First Team All-East Region accolades, and outfielder Jen Vasta '12 was recognized with a Third Team NFCA slot.

Now a member of the Atlantic East Conference (AEC), Centenary's softball team is still making history. In May, the Cyclones echoed the success of the now legendary 2011 team, emerging as this year's conference champions, earning another berth at the NCAA DIII regional round.



Thrill of Victory

The Cyclones men's soccer team earned its first Atlantic East Conference playoff berth this fall, clinching the tournament's fifth seed in a 1-1 tie with Gwynned Mercy University. The team's tournament appearance ended with a heartbreaking first-round loss to Marywood University in a double overtime shootout after neither team scored in regulation play. In Head Coach Ashley Nesbit's second season, the Cyclones posted a 5-10-4 overall record, and 1-2-3 record in conference play.



New on the Mat

Centenary University's women's wrestling team makes its debut this season, with a familiar face at the helm—seasoned Cyclones men's Head Coach John Garriques. An Olympic sport for nearly 20 years, women's wrestling has seen remarkable growth. The National Wrestling Coaches Association estimates that the number of female wrestlers in the United States has surged from 804 in 1994 to more than 50,000 in 2024. The Cyclones inaugural women's team will share training facilities and practice alongside the men's team, leveraging Centenary wrestling's national reputation and the talent of this year's first class of recruits to build a strong program at Centenary. The Cyclones launch their first season as a club team and will eventually grow into an NCAA DIII program.

Let us know what's new!

Send us your news and keep up to date with classmates: alumni@centenaryuniversity.edu. Class News and Notes are edited to reflect Centenary's guidelines.

1949

Florence Austermuhl Larson writes: "I go to church meetings and visit with family. My youngest great-grandson just turned 1. My two sons just returned from Maui. I would like to hear from more of the class. Get in touch with me or Centenary."

Betty Poppele Barrett writes: "My granddaughter, Amy, gave birth on Oct. 18 to a baby girl. That makes me a great-grandma five times. I have three great-grandsons and two great-granddaughters, and another great-granddaughter due in March. I am truly blessed to see this happen. I have been busy with house projects that are now completed. My gutters are installed and I have a newly-painted house. My son and daughter live close by and are a big help with my doctor appointments and food shopping. Life is good."

1955

Nancy Franklin Cunningham works full time as a real estate broker with Sea Pines Real Estate on Hilton Head Island, S.C., where her family moved from Philadelphia in 1974. She is also very active in volunteerism, with 16 years at Hilton Head Hospital, as well as at The Bargain Box at First Presbyterian Church. Nancy's two daughters, Sunny and Amy Nolde, are also real estate agents and live nearby. Her son, Hans Nolde, retired from security at The Pentagon and is now director of security at a large apartment complex in Jacksonville, Fla. She has three married grandchildren and three great-grandchildren: Baker, 3, and John Thomas Ford, 1, and ZoeyRose DeZeeuw, 4. Nancy writes: "I have been truly blessed with a remarkable family, good health, and so many friendships!"

1960

Gail Stadler Mewborn writes: "I loved Centenary with all my heart. Life has been very good to me, except for the sad loss of both my husbands. Some of you knew my first husband, Bill Weber, a 1960 Lafayette graduate, whom I met over dinner at Reeves with student leaders from Lafayette. He went back to his fraternity house that night and announced that he had just met the girl he was going to marry. Lucky me—we had 42 years together until he died of acute leukemia

in 2002. We had two sons, one born in 1965, the other in 1967. Bill and his family live in St Paul, Minn., and Tim and his family live in Safety Harbor, Fla. Most of the children are scattered, but we manage to be together often and I have 12 grandchildren. I was remarried in 2007 to Duke Mewborn, a Georgia Tech engineer. It was a blessed second chapter; he died of cancer after 15 years of marriage. Now, it is just my little dog, Alli, and me in Atlanta. I remember all of you with great affection. Love to one and all."

1965

Rod McAlpin wrote upon the passing of his wife, **Diane Lamb McAlpin**: "Diane thoroughly enjoyed her Centenary years and especially so after she met at a mixer a lucky young guy named Rod, a Princeton undergraduate student who was a mere one hour away from Hackettstown. She was my point of light for 61 wonderful years and will be deeply missed."

1969

Judy Bartsch Widger writes: "I attended Centenary in the late '60s when it was a junior college. After graduating I married Dick Widger, who was from a famous racing family in Ireland. We bought a farm in Rockleigh, N.J., where we imported hunters and jumpers from Ireland, showed our horses in Madison Square Garden, were members of the Essex Hunt Club in Peapack, N.J., and Windy Hollow in New York State. I taught equestrian skills, as well as introducing our riders to cross country riding, hunting, and showing. We moved to Oldwick, N.J., and started a new chapter, where fox hunting with the Essex Hunt Club in Peapack was our life. I taught D1,2, and 3 pony club kids how to ride and hunt and enjoyed our life until we moved to Florida, where I got involved with sailing at the Clearwater Sailing Center. We belonged to the Clearwater Yacht Club and I also taught members how to sail and compete in regattas. We raced against other clubs all over Florida and it was a wonderful chapter. Presently, I sail at the Clearwater Sailing Center and hope to resume racing when my skills are up to par. All in all, I've had a wonderful life with unforgettable experiences."

1996

Tamiko Scian is a management and program analyst with U.S. Customs and Border Protection/ Department of Human Services. A member of the Centenary University Alumni Association Executive Board (AAEB), she is also involved in organizations including Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Nu Zeta Omega, Waldorf, Md., chapter) and Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. (Prince Georges County, Md., chapter).

1999

Sue Ann Erickson writes: "I went back to school after having a family, and graduated from Centenary with a fine arts degree in design, *summa cum laude*; at the time, my name was Sue Ann Jones. I went back to my birth name and moved to California in 2004 to eventually get a second bachelor's degree in graphic design from Art Institute-CA in San Diego. I moved back to New Jersey in 2014 and just finished illustrating my fifth children's book with Dayton Publishing, LLC."

With over three decades of professional dedication to mental health, **Jaeme Schwartz, Th.D., Div.D.**, has become a beacon of compassionate care in the community. Leading as CEO, she specializes in creating a safe and confidential environment that encourages personal growth and transformation. Dr. Schwartz's commitment to integrity and a humanistic, client-centered approach remains the cornerstone of her mission to heal and transform lives. She has attained two doctorates and has over 30 years' expertise in psychology, both as an academic and neuropsychologist. Dr. Schwartz is a dedicated mom, volunteer, minister, and ambassador to Congress for mental health.

2002

Adam Renaldo was appointed to the Board of Trustees at Goucher College in Baltimore, Md. He is vice president of finance at Singer Ashland, a commercial food service equipment dealer and design-build construction company. In that role, Adam is responsible for the financial and strategic leadership and oversight of the company's contract business, including accounting, finance, budgets, and strategic planning.



2004

The Westwood Regional School District has named **Patrick McQueeney, Ed.D., '04/24** as superintendent. Dr. McQueeney earned a Master of Business Administration and Doctor of Education from Centenary University.

2007

Michael Iris, Ed.D., was recently named to the NJBIZ Forty Under 40 listing, which honors professionals who are shaping the economic future of New Jersey. Dr. Iris is associate vice president, alumni relations, and career services, at Berkeley College. In that role, he maintains strong connections between the college and its graduates and establishes partnerships with local businesses to create internships and job placements for students and alumni. Dr. Iris is also an instructor in the School of Business, Media, and Writing at Centenary University, which has honored him with its Distinguished Alumni Award.



2009

Kevin O'Connell has been named executive director of the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) Foundation in Alexandria, Va. He recently served as nonprofit strategic advisor to FYN Creative, a digital storytelling agency he founded in 2014 to produce video content, create campaigns, and provide training for universities and nonprofits. Kevin earned a Master of Arts in Leadership and Public Administration from Centenary University.



2012

Jennifer Vasta Baggot ran the Atlantic City Marathon—her first marathon—on Oct. 20. She placed 10th among female finishers in a time of 3:32:29. Jennifer was also a member of the 2011 Cyclones women's softball team inducted into the Centenary University Athletics Hall of Fame last fall (see story on page 10.)

Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., has named **John Manos** head coach for the women's golf program. John previously led the men's and women's golf programs at Drew University. At Centenary, he was a three-time MVP of the men's golf team.



Lauren Senn, D.V.M., is now on staff at Plantation Animal Hospital in South Carolina. Dr. Senn earned her undergraduate degree in biology at Centenary and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from St. George's University in Grenada. She previously worked at the New Jersey State Fish Hatchery, where she helped to spawn 15 different species of warm and cold freshwater fish.



2014

Kyle Conner was recognized by the *Delaware Business Times* in the DBT40, a listing of 40 dynamic young leaders under 40 who are making a name for themselves through innovative ideas, business excellence, and community involvement. Kyle is director of development at Exceptional Care for Children, leading fundraising campaigns that have raised over \$12.8 million for Delaware's most medically-fragile children.



Samantha Howard has been named president and CEO of the Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County in North Carolina. She previously served as executive director of the Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation in Bayonne, N.J., transforming and rebranding the organization to become a high-performing agency, increase services, meet compliance standards, implement emerging technologies, and streamline financial donations. Samantha earned an MBA from Centenary University.



Cyclones Celebrate!

Cyclone pride filled campus on Oct. 5, as alumni, current students, and family members gathered for Alumni and Family Day 2024. It was a day to celebrate all things Centenary, featuring tailgates, food trucks, a wine and chocolate tasting in the President's House, traditional tea in the Seay Building front parlours, campus tours, faculty-led workshops, and cheering on our Cyclone athletic teams.



Heidi O'Neill and Daniel Milleman, Ph.D., are thrilled to announce their marriage on June 15. The couple met while working as research scientists at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.



2016

A photo taken by **Jenna O'Connor** won the category "Credentialed Professionals in Action" in the 2024 PATH Intl. Photo Contest. Jenna's photo depicted a rider and instructor with TRAC (Therapeutic Riding At Centenary). Jenna said of the award, "Feeling very grateful to work with Karen Brittle and Centenary University students who are becoming certified professionals in the industry, volunteers, and the students who get to ride the lovely TRAC unicorns." PATH Intl. promotes safe and effective therapeutic riding among its 794 member centers, nearly 4,000 individual members, and more than 4,800 certified professionals in countries all over the world who help and support more than 46,600 children and adults with special needs through equine-assisted services.

Steven Schlacter has been promoted to information technology director for NRI 3PL, a large global distribution company. His position involves running the firm's help desk and cybersecurity departments. Steven writes of his success that it took "tons of work to get here, and a large part of it was the guidance of my professors during my time at Centenary."

2017

Julian Alvarez and **Ashleigh Lamanna '18** were married on Sept. 21. Congratulations from everyone at Centenary University!



2018

Asanté Balaam is a New Jersey-based real estate agent. She has sold homes to several Centenary graduates.

Melissa Ferrell Coleman was recently appointed principal of the Albert Terhune Elementary School in Wayne Township, N.J. She earned a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership from Centenary University.



2022

Cameron Bruffy was sworn in as a police officer in Hawthorne Township, N.J. An NCAA All-Regional wrestler at Centenary, Cameron recently said of his Centenary experience, "Wrestling showed me how to be a hard-working and disciplined individual in all aspects of my life. Centenary wrestling breeds a culture of hard work, mental strength, physical strength, and respect. This has helped guide me and I will use all the tools this program has given me to better protect and serve the Hawthorne community."



Haley Grimes recently earned a Master of Science in Clinical Counseling and Applied Psychology from Centenary University and has passed the licensing exam for a clinical counseling associate license. She is working as a trauma outpatient clinician at CarePlus New Jersey. Haley is newly engaged and is planning her wedding.

Jacy M. Jones is a police officer in Montclair, N.J. A former Cyclone wrestler, he previously served the municipality as a dispatcher. At his recent graduation from the Essex County Police Academy, he was recognized with the Male PT Award. Jacy credited his experiences at Centenary with his career success: "Becoming a wrestler at Centenary University was one of the best things I could have done. All the challenges I faced helped prepare me for the life I'm living now...Challenges are a part of life, but wrestling at Centenary helped

show me that anything is possible with will and determination. I'm grateful for Coach (John) Garriques' lessons and the friends and family I met throughout my four years at Centenary. The four words that resonate with me to this day are, 'Live the Good Life.'"



2024

Jiovanni Cosme recently released a new song, *Can't Be Real*. It is available on all music platforms.



In Memoriam

Sara Leon Broadbent '60 6/22/2024
Helen Stapff Dietz '49 5/14/2024
Patricia Terhune Hoffman '47 6/11/2024
Joan Cramer Kapler '51 7/1/2024
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Jean Macomber Phillips '52 7/9/2024
Patricia Drury Sullivan '53 4/29/2024
Deborah White '77 11/6/2024



30-Under-30

Alumni and Family Weekend kicked off with the 30-Under-30 Awards reception honoring young alumni who have achieved remarkable success after graduation. Recipients are selected for their leadership in the workplace and community, as well as at Centenary University. Congratulations to this year's winners:

Jenna O'Connor '16
 Chancey Q. Page '16
 Angela B. Randle '16
 Ariana Selimi '16/19
 Abigail Rose Bigelow '17
 Amanda J. Deppa '17
 Alexandria P. Holbrook '17
 Kyle Maris '17
 Priscilla Ortiz '17
 Jamie Rose Weingarten '17

Ameer R Copper '18
 Alejandro Espinal '18
 Brienne Lechner '18
 Tim Maxwell Jr. '18
 Quiomarie Munoz '18
 Justin Dalcourt '19
 Najee Evans, L.M.S.W., Ph.D.'19
 Joseph Lentine, Jr. C.F.P. '19
 Benjamin Poisseroux '19
 Lucile Vigouroux '19

Nicauris Veras Brito '20
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 Katherine Weber, M.A., L.P.C. '21
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 Vanessa Valentine '22
 Isaiah James Anderson '23
 Jenna Glinko '23/25

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Centenary donors are true visionaries who believe in the future of this University. Last year, when President Dale Caldwell, Ed.D., announced his strategic initiative to raise the University's profile, expand educational opportunities for all students, and increase financial support you responded:

- Giving in 2023-2024 outpaced the previous academic year
- 269 donors—including many alumni—stepped up with a first-time gift
- Centenary received leadership gifts to fund scholarships, new academic programs, and more

Thanks to this strong foundation, Centenary is now poised for even bigger gains in the 2024-2025 academic year. To all of our donors, we truly appreciate your support!



Centenary's continued success is made possible through the generous support of the individuals and organizations listed in this report. We salute alumni, friends, and benefactors for helping to send forth graduates who lead by serving others.

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Choosing Happiness



In an era marked by national division, Mayor Angie Devanney of Berkeley Heights, N.J., is choosing to promote happiness and wellness. Betting that her constituents are ready to join together and be happy again, she established a Mayor's Wellness Committee promoting better physical and emotional well-being earlier this year and has enrolled in Centenary University's Master of Arts in Happiness Studies program. Devanney said, "At first, I was a little fearful that people would see my vision as hokey, but the Centenary master's program, which was created by a former Harvard professor, lent it some credibility."

It turns out that Devanney's instinct was right. So many residents from all walks of life signed on to the committee that Devanney had to expand its membership, and almost a year in, her broader vision is taking shape. The Mayor's Wellness Committee has already launched a program in local schools to provide care kits for children experiencing anxiety and stress. Inspired by a class assignment on the Blue Zones lifestyle featured in a recent Netflix docuseries, Devanney is also laying the groundwork to enhance elements of healthful living in Berkeley Heights that experts say extend lifespans in Blue Zones communities around the world. In addition, Devanney is incorporating the SPIRE Model of Happiness into township operations. SPIRE focuses on spiritual, physical, intellectual, relational, and emotional wellbeing and was developed by Tal Ben-Shahar, Ph.D., director of Centenary's Master of Arts in Happiness Studies.

"My courses at Centenary have elevated my life in ways I never imagined," explained Devanney. "There are three Republicans and three Democrats on the Berkeley Heights council. We've found that things like happiness and wellness transcend politics. We believe truly in our hearts that we are there to make a difference. I think that's a message that could change the national tone right now."



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