

# LINDENWOOD

Connecting to Alumni and Friends

Spring **2018**

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

REAL EXPERIENCE. REAL SUCCESS.



This is an exciting time at Lindenwood University. On Jan. 1, the university implemented a new strategic plan that was a year and a half in the making and involved the university's entire senior leadership structure along with alumni, faculty, staff, and students. The result is a new vision to support our entrepreneurial spirit.

The process resulted in a new mission statement: "Real experience. Real success. Enhancing lives through quality education and professional preparatory experiences," as well as a statement of values, including integrity, dedication, excellence, creativity, and community, each of which is elaborated upon on the mission page of our website, [www.lindenwood.edu](http://www.lindenwood.edu).

This new mission strikes at the heart of Lindenwood's overriding goal—to send our students out into the workforce and/or

advanced studies not just able to get jobs but to get their chosen jobs, not merely able to contribute as well prepared workers but also as thoroughly educated citizens.

Additionally, the plan is divided into five key themes: Differentiate Academic Programs, Build Innovative Programs, Optimize Resources, Deliver High-Quality Experiences, and Redesign Branding and Marketing. Through these foci, we will build our reputation in high-demand areas, develop programs to allow students to obtain a bachelor's-plus-master's in less time while increasing internship and experiential learning opportunities, optimize and develop our workforce and facilities, create an unparalleled student experience from admissions through graduation, and develop a new branding and marketing strategy to better tell the story of Lindenwood.

We've launched a new section on our website devoted to the new strategic plan. There, you can read more about it and watch a series of videos on the components of the plan. Check it out at [www.lindenwood.edu/about/leadership/strategic-plan](http://www.lindenwood.edu/about/leadership/strategic-plan).

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Lindenwood*. As always, it is filled with interesting and inspiring stories about your alma mater and your fellow alumni. Here's wishing you a very pleasant spring, and as always, be sure to keep in touch.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL D. SHONROCK, Ph.D.  
System President, Lindenwood University

## LINDENWOOD

*Real Experience. Real Success. Enhancing lives through quality education and professional preparatory experiences.*

Approved by Board of Trustees  
Nov. 10, 2017

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Peter Cohen ( '98) is the owner of St. Louis-based Stringbean Coffee

## LINDENWOOD

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*Peter Cohen with his locomotive-shaped coffee bean roaster at his business, Stringbean Coffee.*



# MBA ALUMNUS GOES FROM BEAN COUNTER TO BEAN ROASTER

by CHUCK MCPHERSON

**Peter Cohen ('98) is having fun. Cohen owns Stringbean Coffee Company, a coffee wholesaler in St. Louis, Mo.**

One look around the Stringbean Coffee Company headquarters gives you a glimpse into Cohen's life. A wall full of guitars. A neon sign. A '50s-style diner booth. Cohen's journey to becoming a full-time coffee roaster is like no other. Cohen worked in the banking industry for 14 years and earned an MBA from Lindenwood University in 1998.

"I liked the campus," Cohen said. "A few of my friends went to Lindenwood and were faculty, and I had been to some of the events and was able to see the campus grow. It's such a pretty campus and has continued to blow me away with their success and growth."

While still working at the bank, Cohen, who loves coffee, began roasting coffee as a hobby in his garage in March 2011.

"I thought, 'Maybe I could do it better,'" he said. "I got a very small roaster that didn't come with instructions, and I bought some beans. I started with really expensive Fair Trade organic beans, so you don't want to screw up a whole lot. The first batch I did was inside and the smoke alarms went off and dogs were howling, and then it became more of an outside sport. It then moved to my garage, so I would roast at 10, 11 o'clock at night, and I came out with a roast called Midnight Run."

**"I just want to have fun doing what I'm doing, and I've accomplished that."**

Peter Cohen

He started Stringbean Coffee Company in May 2011, and after an eight-month overlap of banking and roasting, he said goodbye to the corporate grind and focused on Stringbean in October.

The Stringbean roasting room features a 25-pound San Franciscan roaster, built especially for him, that resembles a train engine, a wall full of framed vinyl records, and the original disco ball used from 1972 to 1978 on the television show *Soul Train*.

"Folks would ask, 'Why would you roast coffee under a disco ball?'" and I would respond, 'Well, why wouldn't I roast coffee under a disco ball?'" he said.

Cohen said that Stringbean is a labor of love and a combination of his interests, which include music and coffee. Cohen plays bass guitar, collects music, and used to review music with around 200 published articles to his credit. He still uses his Lindenwood education regularly.

"I use my MBA more now as an independent, self-employed coffee roaster than I did as a commercial banker," Cohen said. "I handle billing, marketing, bookkeeping, collections, play guitar, and drink coffee. I do roasting, help with bagging and distribution. I was a bean counter before I became a bean cooker, but I'm still a bean counter."

Cohen said the Stringbean mission statement is to educate, motivate, and entertain as many people as possible in an honest and ethical manner and have fun doing it.

"I just want to have fun doing what I'm doing," he said, "and I've accomplished that."

*Nicole Hensley after the U.S. women's hockey team was presented its gold medals at the Winter Olympics in South Korea.*



## USA, HENSLEY WIN GOLD IN WOMEN'S HOCKEY

**The United States women's Olympic hockey team and goalie Nicole Hensley, who graduated from Lindenwood in 2016, won a thrilling gold medal hockey game early in the morning (CST) on Feb. 22 against Canada in Pyeongchang, South Korea.**

The 3-2 win makes Hensley the first Olympic gold medalist among Lindenwood's students and alumni. Alumna Laia Pons won bronze in the 2012 games for Spain in synchronized swimming before she was a student at Lindenwood, and sled hockey player Josh Pauls has won gold in the Paralympics and captained the gold medal-winning U.S. sled hockey team in the Paralympics in South Korea in March.

In addition to women's hockey, Lindenwood students and alumni have participated in the Olympics in shooting, track and field, and synchronized swimming. Hensley, who joined the U.S. women's hockey team in 2017, was in goal against Canada when the team won the World Championship in the fall, and in the Olympics, she started the game against the Olympic Athletes from Russia on Feb. 13, recording a 5-0 shutout and stopping 13 shots on goal.

The next day, Feb. 14, Hensley told KSDK TV's Rene Knott in Pyeongchang that Lindenwood helped make her the competitor she is. During her career at Lindenwood, she stopped more than 4,000 shots and won the NCAA's Top 10 Award, which is given to the top 10 NCAA athletes in any sport at any level.

"It was definitely the right place for me to be...to grow as a goaltender," Hensley told Knott.

Canada had won gold in women's hockey the four prior Olympics, defeating the U.S. in the final game three times, including a heartbreaking come-from-behind win in Sochi, Russia, four years ago. This time, the U.S. team returned the favor after falling behind 2-1 in the second period and tying the game at 2-2 in the third period, which was the score at the end of regulation.

Neither team scored in a 20-minute sudden-death overtime period, which led to a tense shootout in which the U.S. came out on top for a 3-2 victory. It was the first U.S. Olympic gold medal in women's hockey since 1998 in Nagano, Japan.

**"It was definitely the right place for me to be...to grow as a goaltender."**

**Nicole Hensley,**  
time at Lindenwood

**Kaecey  
McCormick**



## THE POET OF CUPERTINO

# MCCORMICK NAMED POET LAUREATE FOR TECH HAVEN

by **CHRIS DUGGAN**

**Kaecey McCormick ('16) has been a writer as long as she can remember.**

"As a kid, I journaled, made up stories," she said. "I never had the courage to call myself a writer, though. My fiction and poetry I kept to myself."

The Lindenwood MFA in writing grad was installed in January as the poet laureate of Cupertino, Calif. It's fair to say she's comfortable wearing the mantle of writer now.

"I had a moment when I decided that what I wanted to do was write," said McCormick. "I looked at a lot of MFA programs. I have four children and was working part-time. I wanted flexibility and had a sense it would be a really great place. What kept me in the program was the community of students and instructors."

She entered Lindenwood's program as an online student in 2014 and started publishing short works not long after. She currently works as a freelance writer and also teaches writing as an adjunct for Foothill College. In addition to multiple publications in literary magazines, she has written a book of poems titled *Sugar & Spice: Growing up Girl*.

The process of applying for and being selected as poet laureate began with her predecessor, Ann Muto, who met McCormick at some poetry workshops she was conducting and encouraged her to apply for the position.

To apply, she submitted writing samples, beginning last summer, and letters of recommendation, including one from Beth Mead, who chairs the Lindenwood MFA in Writing program.

**"This recognition is well deserved, and we're very proud of the work Kaecey is doing through creative writing in her community."**

**Beth Mead, chair of MFA in Writing program**

With its recent ranking by BestColleges.com as the second best writing MFA program in the country, behind only Harvard, McCormick's appointment is another feather in the program's cap.

An interview process followed with a selection panel, including readings of her poetry; the panel ultimately selected McCormick as its finalist. The final step

was an interview with the Cupertino City Council, which voted in September to appoint her to the volunteer post. She began her two-year term Jan. 1 and is the fifth person to hold the position, which began in 2011.

Her main charge is to celebrate and promote creativity in the community. Toward this end, she conducts community poetry nights, runs booths with activities at festivals and events, offers a series of poetry workshops, and works with kids on their writing and reading of poetry. In April, poetry month, she will be a judge for Cupertino's poetry competition.

McCormick points out that Cupertino, the home of tech giant Apple, is a very STEM-oriented community. She believes her job is to inject the arts to help make it a STEAM community.

"Adding creativity and the arts in a tech world only helps," McCormick said. "I'm passionate about the transformative power of poetry. Giving back to the community, doing something I love—it's a good fit."

# LAIA PONS EXCELS IN SWIMMING, BUSINESS

by BRIAN VORCE



Laia Pons

**From the Lindenwood swim team to working for a successful business technology consultation firm, Laia Pons ('17) succeeds in her endeavors. But if the path has been like swimming upstream, it's hard to tell based on her many achievements.**

At Lindenwood, Pons, a former Olympian, starred with the synchronized swimming team and also in the classroom.

As a double-major in finance and international business, Pons is experienced at multitasking. At one point, Pons was taking seven classes, interning at Maryville Technologies, acting as the Accounting and Finance Club president, competing at the CFA Financial Analyst Competition, and practicing synchronized swimming. She did so while maintaining a 4.0 GPA that semester.

"It is all about time management and prioritization," Pons explained. "Being able to manage all that workload requires you to have a very clear picture of what your objectives are."

Pons' impressive résumé helped her get the internship with Maryville Technologies, and she clearly made an impression, as she now works as a consultant for the company.

Pons' job is in technology business management, where she focuses on creating cost transparency for the corporate information technology clients of the company.

"I personally find this to be a very interesting area to be involved in at this point in time, Pons said. "It allows me to use my financial background while also giving me an understanding of the technology era that we live in.

"My Lindenwood education provided the financial background that supports my day-to-day activities at my current position, but, more importantly, it has helped me expand the networking capabilities that brought me to meeting the CEO at Maryville Technologies in the first place."

Before finding success in the business world, Pons helped the Lindenwood synchronized swimming team win a national championship in 2014 as a freshman. Pons, who hails from Spain and won a bronze medal with the Spanish synchronized swimming team at the 2012 Olympics, said her time at Lindenwood helped her see the sport from a different perspective.

"There are many dynamic differences between competing for a top national team and a college team," Pons said. "There are also cultural differences between the style of the two nations. One of the biggest takeaways for me has been learning to actually have fun in and out of the pool, rather than taking it so professionally."

Lori Eaton, who was Pons' synchronized swimming head coach at Lindenwood, said Pons played an integral role in shaping the personality of the team.

"She led from within, exhibiting the maturity and creativity necessary to lift her teammates to new heights," Eaton said. "In that sense, she's the ideal student-athlete—committed, respectful, positive, and supportive."

**"Being able to manage all that workload requires you to have a very clear picture of what your objectives are."**

Laia Pons

Pons said she draws from her experience in both Spanish and American cultures to help her personally and professionally.

"Getting immersed into a new culture teaches you tons about the world that we live in," Pons said. "It also gives you an extra dose of acceptance. You look at differences and go from saying 'that is weird' to saying 'that is different,' which, although it means the same thing, has a very different connotation."



# THE REALITY OF JEFF KEANE

## ALUMNUS BUILDS MEDIA PRODUCTION COMPANY

by CHUCK MCPHERSON

**St. Louis native Jeff Keane ('92) has a firm grip on reality—reality television, that is.**

Keane got his start in communications in college, spending parts of four years at Miami University of Ohio and completing his degree in mass communications at Lindenwood in 1992.

While attending Lindenwood, Keane had a shift at KCLC 89.1 FM, calling it a great experience.

"Getting that firsthand experience at the radio station and doing some of the things I really liked to do was a lot of fun," he said.

After a stint in Lexington, Ky., Keane and his wife moved back to St. Louis, where he worked at a local ad agency and as a freelancer. In 2002, he started Coolfire Studios.

"I felt like I always wanted to have my own business, and I felt like I was finally ready," he said.

Coolfire began as a commercial and post-production company, but Keane had bigger ideas, adding reality TV, digital entertainment, and interactive media to the mix.

"We could have remained a commercial production company and still have a successful business, but I always wanted to grow it into something bigger that had a little bit more to offer," he said.

He longed to do something more creative than commercials, which led to reality television.

"It was an opportunity to tell longer form and more creative stories than 30-second TV spots or short corporate videos."

By leveraging the Midwest location often overlooked by coastal production houses, Keane found great characters, developed concepts, and was able to sell television shows.

The first ideas from Coolfire to make it to air were *Fast N' Loud* on Discovery and *Welcome to Sweetie Pie's* on OWN. Coolfire partnered with Pilgrim Films to get those first two shows on the air, but in 2012, the company was able to get its own shows to television: *Mom Friends Forever* on Nickelodeon and *Resale Royalty* on Style.

"There's a tremendous amount of blood, sweat, and tears that goes into creating and producing a TV show, and when you finally see it on the screen, there's a great sense of satisfaction." Keane said.

**"There's a tremendous amount of blood, sweat, and tears that goes into creating and producing a TV show, and when you finally see it on the screen, there's a great sense of satisfaction."**

Jeff Keane

Keane said he has encountered people during his travels who have told him how much they enjoyed shows produced by Coolfire, including a cab driver from Ireland and an American couple he met in Costa Rica.

"When you run into somebody who has seen it and likes it, that feels really good, because that's what you're trying to do," he said. "You're trying to put something out there that people are going to enjoy and something that's going to entertain people. And when you get that feedback from a stranger that they've seen it, that they like it, they enjoy it that you've entertained them, that's a really good feeling."

Keane said Coolfire has about 50 ideas in various stages of development at any given time.

The goal is to get bigger and better at what we're doing," he said.



Chief William Clay



Chief Thomas Coppotelli



Chief Nick Gailius



Chief Todd Link



Sheriff Richard Watson



Commander Derek Wise

# LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS RELY ON LINDENWOOD BELLEVILLE

by **SCOTT WUERZ**

**Six top law enforcement officials in the Metro-East have one thing in common on their résumés—they all hold degrees from Lindenwood University-Belleville.**

Local police leaders who have graduated from Lindenwood Belleville include

- Belleville Police Department  
**Chief William Clay**
- Caseyville Police Department  
**Chief Thomas Coppotelli**
- Fairview Heights Police Department  
**Chief Nick Gailius**
- Glen Carbon Police Department  
**Chief Todd Link**
- St. Clair County  
**Sheriff Richard Watson**
- Illinois State Police Dist. 19  
**Commander Derek Wise**

Link, Watson, and Wise earned Master of Science degrees in criminal justice administration, while Clay and Gailius earned MBA degrees and Coppotelli earned a Master of Science degree in human resources. According to faculty member Dr. Thomas Trice, a retired captain with the St. Clair County Sheriff's Department, many other Lindenwood Belleville graduates hold high ranks within the chain of command at local police agencies.

Watson, who began his law enforcement career nearly 40 years ago in 1978, said he was repeatedly asked by younger classmates what he hoped to learn at Lindenwood Belleville after his many years of experience?

"One reason I chose to go to Lindenwood Belleville is because it is local, so it was an easy commute," said Watson. "But I also chose Lindenwood Belleville because the instructors are practitioners in my field. They have lawyers, judges, and U.S. attorneys, people with real experience in the field, teaching there. It was very interesting to take their classes, and I'm glad I did it, because I truly learned a lot. I see the benefits every day."

Gailius said he sought an MBA because, beyond the work of solving crimes and enforcing the law, running a police department is like running a business.

"A police chief is in a leadership position that in many ways isn't much different than a leadership position in the business world," said Gailius. "We have human resources and personnel issues, and we have a \$7 million annual budget that has to be carefully managed. My MBA is definitely a benefit, and I am a better chief for having it."

Dr. Cindy Manjounes, campus dean for Accelerated Degree Programs, said it was important to create degree programs that allow area officers the opportunity to get their education while still allowing them to do their jobs.

"The flexibility of our degrees fits with the sometimes-unpredictable lives of our law enforcement community," said Manjounes. "These men and women understand the value of education in helping them to be the best they can be in their positions."

"I feel truly honored and blessed that so many have gone through our ADP programs. I have been fortunate to get to know many of them, and the level of their character and integrity as well as their determination to make our communities better places is, indeed, commendable."

**"My MBA is definitely a benefit, and I am a better chief for having it."**

**Chief Nick Gailius, Fairview Heights Police Department**

Manjounes said Lindenwood Belleville is in the process of adding to its ADP offerings to help working adults reach their education and career goals.

"I am truly excited about what the future holds for our program with some planned curriculum enhancements, and we are consistently working hard to assure the continued value of the program to our students as well as our community," Manjounes said.



*Rodrigo Kurogi*

# KUROGI LANDS MARKETING GIG WITH TOP CONSTRUCTION FIRM

by **JENNIFER FERGUSON**

**Rodrigo Kurogi ('16) began preparing for an American education when he was just 9 years old. As a boy growing up in Sao Paulo, Brazil, he was certain about two things—he wanted to earn a degree and play tennis at an American university.**

"I began studying English at a very young age in preparation for studying in the United States," said Kurogi. "Then, when I was 18, all of the hard work I put in as a child paid off because I came to Lindenwood Belleville in pursuit of playing collegiate tennis and earning a degree in business administration with an emphasis in marketing, a degree that would be internationally recognized."

As a member of the Student Government Association, Kurogi participated in service projects and volunteer work for organizations like Habitat for Humanity, which directly affected his employment prospects post-graduation.

During his senior year, Kurogi spent about two hours each day applying for job opportunities, and even solicited the help of his professors and the campus president on his quest for employment.

"I really had a great mix of professors while at Lindenwood, and many of them stay in touch with me now," Kurogi said, "but what really surprised me is that the president of the university was willing to meet with me and gave me advice and tips on how to secure a job after graduation. I get the sense that doesn't happen at a lot of universities."

With that, Kurogi received a call from the construction firm TopBuild, based in Daytona Beach, Fla. Now, as a marketing analyst, Kurogi is in the front line for his company, analyzing various markets to help determine where the company may want to invest resources or deploy sales teams.

"My transition into the professional world of work couldn't have been any smoother," said Kurogi. "I am very grateful for the support and guidance offered to me by so many faculty and staff members at Lindenwood Belleville. It was a perfect starting point for my time in the United States."

As an international student on an F-1 visa, Kurogi was eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT) for up to a year following his graduation. Upon completion of an international student's OPT, the student must either return to his home country or be sponsored by his employer to begin the process of securing a work visa. The Human Resources Department at his company recently reached out to Kurogi to begin his sponsorship process.

"I really like TopBuild and the analytical side of developing and running a company," said Kurogi. "So, I hope to stay with TopBuild and gain the necessary industry experience to move up in my career when the time is right."

To learn more about the Division of Business and Entrepreneurship, contact Division Chair Dr. Chris Gourdine at 618.671.6060 or CGourdine@lindenwood.edu.

**"I am very grateful for the support and guidance offered to me by so many faculty and staff members at Lindenwood Belleville. It was a perfect starting point for my time in the United States."**

*Rodrigo Kurogi*

Victoria Gainor



# GAINOR PROUD TO BE AMONG MANY 'FIRSTS' AT LINDENWOOD BELLEVILLE

by JENNIFER FERGUSON

**When O'Fallon, Ill., native Victoria Gainor ('15) accepted a scholarship to participate on the dance team at Lindenwood University-Belleville in 2013, she didn't anticipate being part of an inaugural group of students who established so much for the Belleville campus' history.**

"I'm very proud of all the 'firsts' I made at Lindenwood Belleville," said Gainor. "I was on the first dance team to make it to nationals and the team's first captain, the first student to have a solo art exhibition on campus, and a member of the first class to graduate in interactive media and web design."

Gainor, who started her educational career at Southwestern Illinois College, transferred to Lindenwood Belleville and graduated with her bachelor's degree in 2015. She said the degree she pursued fit well with her love of art and graphic design and that Lindenwood Belleville was the right university for her.

"I loved the environment at Lindenwood Belleville," she said. "It was small, but not too small, the staff was amazing, and the support system there is something that you can't get at a larger university."

Gainor said that she is extremely grateful for the opportunity to study with professors like Danielle Oser, who taught several of her design courses.

"Danielle was extremely helpful with diving deeper into the programs to make sure I fully understood what we were doing," said Gainor. "She was also able to meet before class, after class, pretty much whenever to answer any questions I had or help me solve a problem I was having. She was supportive of all my work both while I had her and after I graduated."

**"Without the information and tools I was exposed to as a student, I wouldn't have been able to be as successful as I am."**

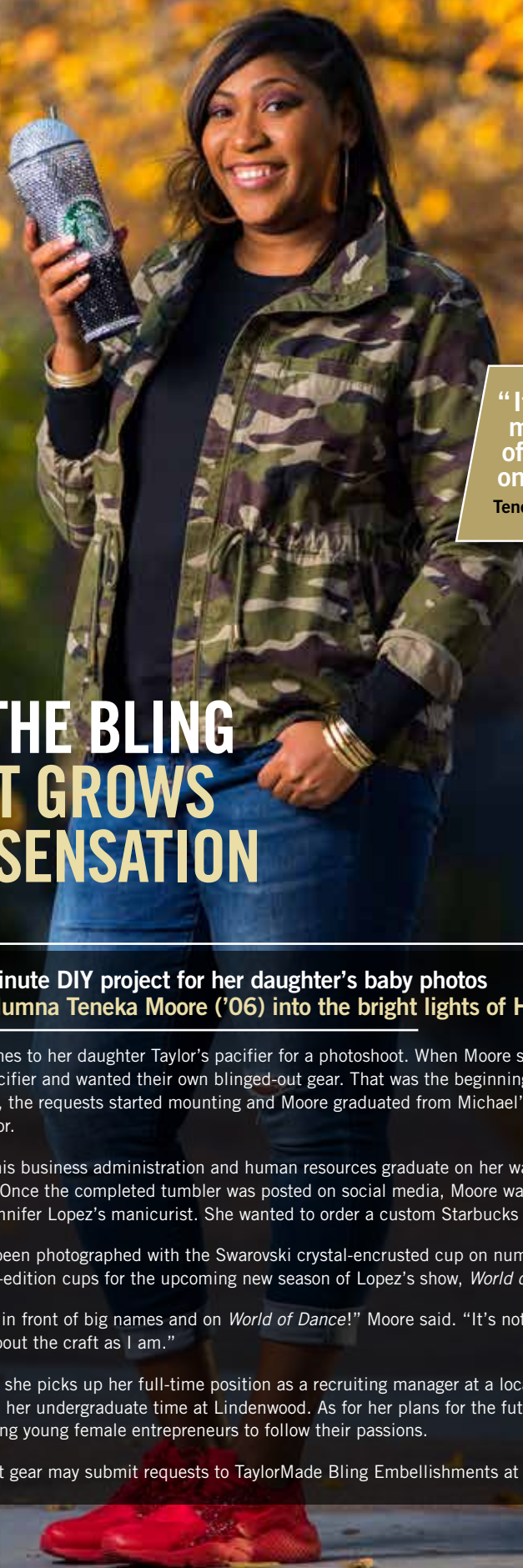
Victoria Gainor

Upon graduation, Gainor said she immediately started job hunting and was looking to find something in the field of graphic design, which had been her long-time passion.

"In March following my graduation in December, a friend of my mom's said her company was hiring a marketing and website manager" said Gainor. "Though I didn't have much experience in marketing, I applied for the job anyway because of my design and web background and was offered it shortly thereafter."

Gainor held that position for two years but decided she wanted to pursue something more closely related to graphic design. With that, she recently accepted a position as a lead designer at a company called My Scratch Offs, LLC, in Swansea, Ill. In her new position, Gainor manages the design of custom orders like wedding save-the-date cards, business cards, gender reveal items, and company contest items.

"My degree from Lindenwood Belleville definitely impacted my career," said Gainor. "Without the information and tools I was exposed to as a student, I wouldn't have been able to be as successful as I am. I'm thankful for all the memories and grateful for the lessons that will last a lifetime."



“It’s so exciting to see my handiwork in front of big names and on *World of Dance!*”

Teneka Moore

# ALL ABOUT THE BLING DIY PROJECT GROWS INTO VIRAL SENSATION

by BAILEY KINNEY

**What started out as a last-minute DIY project for her daughter’s baby photos has launched Lindenwood alumna Teneka Moore (’06) into the bright lights of Hollywood.**

In 2012, Moore glued some rhinestones to her daughter Taylor’s pacifier for a photoshoot. When Moore showed her friends the photos, they noticed the glittering pacifier and wanted their own blinged-out gear. That was the beginning of TaylorMade Bling Embellishments. Not long after, the requests started mounting and Moore graduated from Michael’s and Hobby Lobby to an official Swarovski crystal distributor.

A special request in 2014 truly set this business administration and human resources graduate on her way to stardom. That order was for a crystallized Starbucks cup. Once the completed tumbler was posted on social media, Moore was flooded with requests for cups, including a request from Jennifer Lopez’s manicurist. She wanted to order a custom Starbucks cup for J. Lo’s birthday.

The pop icon loved her cup and has been photographed with the Swarovski crystal-encrusted cup on numerous occasions. The cup’s popularity has led to a line of special-edition cups for the upcoming new season of Lopez’s show, *World of Dance*, starting this summer.

“It’s so exciting to see my handiwork in front of big names and on *World of Dance!*” Moore said. “It’s nothing short of a blessing that people are as excited about the craft as I am.”

When Moore puts her glue gun down, she picks up her full-time position as a recruiting manager at a local company, where she uses the education she gained during her undergraduate time at Lindenwood. As for her plans for the future, Moore hopes to continue growing her business while encouraging young female entrepreneurs to follow their passions.

Those who want their own blinged-out gear may submit requests to TaylorMade Bling Embellishments at [embellishme12@gmail.com](mailto:embellishme12@gmail.com).

# UNFORGETTABLE ODYSSEY SENDS ALUMNUS BIKING ACROSS SOUTH AMERICA

by RACHEL JOHNSON

**Attempt. Excel. Transform. Repeat.**

**That's the mindset that's guided Lindenwood University alumnus Ryan Griffin ('12, '13) from one adventure to the next and recently led him on a personal quest to ride a bicycle across 9,000 miles of South American terrain.**

"My life has never felt average," Griffin said. "I've learned to fight against the formula of what's expected."

To understand where he was headed, you have to understand where he came from. A native of Sydney, Australia, Griffin came to the United States to play baseball for a junior college in Texas. Shortly thereafter, he was recruited by Coach Doug Bletcher to play for Lindenwood.

During Griffin's junior year, his season was cut short by an emergency appendectomy. He used his recovery time and the off-season to change his left-handed overhand style to a submarine-style. His new approach was a success. He was halfway through the next season before he gave up a single run.

Academically, Griffin started college as a business administration major but soon switched his focus to marketing after taking a class with Lindenwood Professor David Arns. Griffin went on to become Lindenwood's second-ever first-team Academic All-American and also earned the Joseph G. Mathews Award for graduating at the top of his marketing class.

After earning his MBA, Griffin worked full-time as an account executive for a digital advertising firm in Australia. He quickly rose through the ranks, earning promotions to an executive-level position and managing a team of staff within three years of being hired.

Then, seemingly all at once, life threw Griffin a few curveballs. He suffered a car accident, and, soon after, unrelated health issues required two separate surgical procedures. The aftermath had a devastating effect on him physically and mentally. "For 10 months, I was basically bedridden," he said. "I'd become overweight and depressed," Griffin said. "I was desperate for a new challenge."

Griffin quit his job, moved out of his apartment, sold most of his belongings, and found a riding partner. They bought bikes, packs, and camping gear and soon found themselves in Ushuaia, Argentina, a small town located at the southernmost tip of South America nicknamed "The End of the World."

"We picked out all the things we wanted to see: the Perito Merino glacier, Chile's Carraterra Austral, Bolivia's salt flats, and Machu Picchu," Griffin said. "We just connected the dots from there and traveled north as our general travel map."



On his bicycle trek from Argentina to Peru in South America, **Ryan Griffin** and his fellow riders encountered every kind of terrain and weather imaginable, including mountains, flatlands, heat, and wintry cold.

"We initially thought the whole trip would take about six months, but about two months in we realized that was drastically off-base," he recalled. "But, I wasn't in a rush. I had plenty of food, water, good company, and enough funds to ride for a few years if necessary."

Through blazing sunshine, torrential downpours, and intense altitudinal changes, the duo rode as far as their legs would take them each day. They camped on roadsides, in fields, and at schoolhouses and police stations—wherever they could find shelter from the elements and a safe place to rest.

"The South American beauty of Patagonia and the Andes Mountains was great, but I found that the most beautiful part of the trip was the people. For the full 10 months of the trip, I was never told I couldn't stay somewhere. People would stop on the roads and give us food and water. Everyone was absolutely lovely and welcoming."

About eight months into the excursion, Griffin began to suffer ill health effects from a bacterial infection he'd acquired along the way. He continued to bike for several more weeks after the onset of symptoms, but eventually he became too ill to carry on and was forced to end the trip in Lima, Peru.

Now recovered and living back home in Sydney, he's had some time to reflect on the trip and what he gained from it. The answer, he said, is a more memorable life.

**"My life has never felt average. I've learned to fight against the formula of what's expected."**

**Ryan Griffin**

"For me, four years at a desk job melted into just a couple of highlights. I'd gone on autopilot and found it difficult to

distinguish one day from another," Griffin recalled. "But, every night on the bike trip I would record my GPS location and write a small note about that day to specifically remember and smile about."

"The days weren't always positive. Many of them were actually miserable, but they all have a story behind them and I can vividly remember each one like it was yesterday. I set out to create something from every single day, something I would remember forever. I accomplished that."

Griffin is currently working as a scuba diving instructor, running an independent advertising consultancy, and planning his next trip—most likely riding a motorbike around the world. Whatever his future plans are, he's sure to carry them out with a keen appetite for adventure and a determination to live life to the fullest.

"To me, the destination has always been and will always be second to the journey."

# DECEMBER GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Dec. 16, 2017,  
St. Charles Family Arena



# DISCOUNTED ESTATE PLANNING AVAILABLE THROUGH NEW PARTNERSHIP

Lindenwood University has entered into a new partnership with TuckerAllen, a St. Louis-based estate planning firm, which entails a 25 percent discount off its standard fees for estate planning services for Lindenwood alumni, faculty, staff, and students.

“It is important that everyone has a will; we are excited to provide Lindenwood alumni, faculty, and staff the opportunity to partner with TuckerAllen,” said Nathan Payne, director of development at Lindenwood. “The fact that their services are provided at a discount for those in the Lindenwood family is an added bonus.”

TuckerAllen deals exclusively in estate planning and offers comprehensive packages for wills and trusts for individuals and couples, as well as services for elder law and special needs planning, and promises an easy, user-friendly process. The offer is available until Dec. 31, 2018. For more information about TuckerAllen or to schedule a consultation, visit [tuckerallen.com](http://tuckerallen.com) or call 314.335.1100. The firm has six locations in the St. Louis area.



“Lindenwood University and TuckerAllen have a common objective—to make getting a will or trust easier and more affordable for Lindenwoods’s alumni, faculty, staff, and students,” said Thomas C. Erb, chairman of TuckerAllen. “The truth is that many people procrastinate, because they think it’s difficult and expensive to get a professionally prepared estate plan. Often times that’s true, but not at TuckerAllen. We make it easy and convenient, and Lindenwood has helped make it even more affordable by arranging this affinity program with TuckerAllen.”

## Personalized estate planning. Made easy.

**WILLS & TRUSTS ELDER LAW SPECIAL NEEDS**



**Lindenwood University alumni now receive 25% off services from TuckerAllen.**

As part of a new program with TuckerAllen, a local estate planning law firm, we are pleased to share that Lindenwood University alumni will receive a special rate of 25% off of TuckerAllen’s estate planning services.

Creating a will or a trust is one of the most important things someone can do for their family, loved ones, and the organizations they care most about. TuckerAllen makes personalized estate planning accessible and easy.

To learn more about this special program with TuckerAllen, call **(314) 396-7629** or visit [tuckerallen.com/lindenwood-university](http://tuckerallen.com/lindenwood-university).

**TuckerAllen**  
ESTATE PLANNING ATTORNEYS

*Multiple Locations in the Greater St. Louis Area*



This initiative will allow Lindenwood to continue to attract exceptional student-athletes.



# 52 SPORTS—ONE TEAM

## One Roar Campaign Seeks to Transform Lindenwood Athletics

The One Roar major gift initiative is the center point for transforming Lindenwood Athletics to the next level of success, which in turn will help attract elite student-athletes from across the globe.

By enhancing numerous athletic facilities for 52 competitive teams and supporting athletic excellence and career and professional development, this initiative will allow Lindenwood to continue to attract exceptional student-athletes. It will lay the foundation to future initiatives that will bring additional first-class facilities to the university.

Those interested in participating in the One Roar initiative should contact Mark Bohr at

636.949.4321 or mbohr@lindenwood.edu or visit the campaign website at [www.lindenwood.edu/one-roar-gift-initiative](http://www.lindenwood.edu/one-roar-gift-initiative).

In Lindenwood's current period of growth, dating back to the late 1980s, the university has added numerous new buildings and major renovation projects, including the J. Scheidegger Center for the Arts, the Evans Commons, a renovated and expanded Harmon Hall, and, most recently, the Library and Academic Resources Center, which opened in fall of 2017.

During the same period, many athletic facility projects were completed, such as the Lou Brock Sports Complex, a renovated track facility, a tennis complex, a renovated Harlen Hunter Stadium, and the Student-Athlete Center, among others.

The university is an economic power in the region, bringing hundreds of millions in

economic impact to St. Charles County and the surrounding region. Lindenwood currently has the largest MBA program in the St. Louis metro area, and it has one of the largest athletic departments in the country with 27 NCAA Division II sports and 52 athletic programs overall. Since 1998, Lindenwood teams have captured more than 70 team national championships, and numerous student-athletes or alumni have competed in the summer and winter Olympics. Most recently, women's hockey goalie Nicole Hensley ('17) won gold in the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea with the U.S. women's hockey team (see story on page 4).

Outstanding athletic teams, facilities, and equipment are the brightest billboard on the busiest highway. They help make the statement, "Our university is the best. Come join us."

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Be sure to save the date for these Lindenwood events:

**SIBLINGS DAY**  
April 14  
(St. Charles campus)

In this inaugural event, siblings of current students are invited to campus to visit and enjoy various activities.

**FAMILY DAY**  
Sept. 14  
(St. Charles campus)

This event, in its sixth year, is an

excellent opportunity for parents, siblings, and extended family members of current students to visit, watch Lindenwood sports and arts events, and take part in planned activities.

**HOMECOMING**  
Oct. 15-21  
(St. Charles campus)

It's not too early to plan for Homecoming 2018. All alumni are invited to return to

campus for a host of activities.

**PARENTS, FAMILY, AND ALUMNI REUNION AT HOMECOMING**

Oct. 26-28  
(Belleville campus)

During this exciting weekend, parents and family are invited to visit with their students as alumni return to campus for Homecoming festivities.

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN



The team from the Office of Development and Alumni Relations is excited to announce a series of alumni events around the country. Alumni will have the opportunity to visit with Lindenwood University System President Dr. Michael Shonrock, meet fellow alumni, and hear news and reminisce about their alma mater.

The following stops are planned:

- GREATER DALLAS AREA—October 2018
- NAPLES, FLA.—early November 2018
- LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—early spring 2019
- CHICAGO, ILL.—late spring 2019

Stay tuned for announcements of specific dates/details.



# SCHEIDEGGER 2017-18 SEASON TO END WITH AVALON, MILLER



*The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra*



*Frankie Avalon*

**With just two acts to go, it's fair to say the 2017-18 professional season at Lindenwood University's J. Scheidegger Center for the Arts has been exciting and memorable for audiences.**

"We have had a wonderful season so far, full of exciting entertainment from Kenny Loggins and Penn & Teller to Wynonna and the Irish Tenors," said Peter Colombatto, director of marketing and communications for Lindenwood's School of Arts, Media, and Communications. "We've welcomed back returning patrons while introducing Lindenwood to thousands of first-time guests with a line-up we knew would appeal to our community."

Though a season with standout performers like those—not to mention Bob Newhart and the Christmas show featuring Jody Watley, Marilyn McCoo, Billy Davis, Jr., Peabo Bryson, and Ruben Studdard—would

be outstanding in its own right, Colombatto promises even more great memories for audience members. While Paul Anka, initially scheduled to perform in May, has to cancel for personal reasons, his replacement is the legendary Frankie Avalon.

"Looking ahead, we will have Frankie Avalon's surprise performance, taking Paul Anka's place on May 19 and the World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra's return to the Scheidegger Center on May 27," Colombatto said. "We are hard at work scheduling our 2018-2019 season, which will bookend 10 years of excellent entertainment at the Scheidegger Center. Make sure to watch for our season announcement in July."

**Frankie Avalon**, performing at 8 p.m. on May 19, was one of the best-known teen idols of the '50s with hits like "De De Dinah," "Gingerbread," and "Just Ask Your Heart," as well as the last number-one record of the '50s, "Why." Avalon parlayed his recording success into a career as a motion picture star with films like *Guns of Timberland* with Alan Ladd and *The Alamo*

with John Wayne, as well as the "Beach" movies for which he was best known and a memorable part singing "Beauty School Dropout" in the movie musical *Grease*.

The season wraps up at 8 p.m. on May 27 with **The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra**, which returns to the Lindenwood Theater stage. Dating back to the 1930s and its namesake founder, the 18-member ensemble is possibly the best-known big band in the world. It continues to play many of the original Miller arrangements and some more modern selections arranged and performed in the Miller style and sound.

Tickets for all shows are available online at [LUboxoffice.com](http://LUboxoffice.com), by phone during box office hours at 636.949.4433 or in person at the box office, which is located in the J. Scheidegger Center for the Arts on the southeast corner of campus, 2300 West Clay St. in St. Charles. For more information about any of these shows or those coming in the spring semester, visit [LUboxoffice.com](http://LUboxoffice.com)

## UPCOMING PERFORMANCES AT THE J. SCHEIDEGGER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

### STUDENT THEATRE

***The Threepenny Opera***  
by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill  
April 5-7, 7:30 p.m.

### STUDENT MUSIC

**Opera Theatre**  
April 20 and 21,  
7:30 p.m.

**Spring Chamber Series**  
April 24-30,  
(time?)

**Student Conductors Concert**  
April 24-25,  
7:30 p.m.

**Voices Only**  
April 28-29,  
7:30 P.M.

### STUDENT DANCE

**Spring Dance Concert**  
April 19-21,  
7:30 p.m.

### STUDENT FASHION

**Spring Fashion Show**  
April 21, 7 p.m.,  
at Old Post Office  
in St. Louis, VIP  
Reception, 6 p.m.

### ART EXHIBITS

(Boyle Family Gallery)  
**Fashion Design BFA Exhibition**  
April 12-22  
Opening reception,  
April 12, 6-8 p.m.

**Graphic Design BFA Exhibition**  
April 26-May 5  
Opening reception,  
April 26, 6-8 p.m.



*Graeme Hossack*



*Geoff Hartlieb*



*Connor Law*

# SPRING ATHLETES MAKE THEIR WAY AS PROFESSIONALS

by **DANIEL NEWTON**

**Among the many reasons that springtime is a special time of year at Lindenwood is the success of the team's athletic programs during this season. Just last year, the women's lacrosse, baseball, and men's golf programs all advanced to the final site of their respective national championship events.**

Lindenwood's spring sports have also produced some of the top individual athletes in school history, and four of those alumni are currently still playing their respective sports at the professional level.

The top men's lacrosse player at Lindenwood is **Graeme Hossack**, who finished his collegiate playing career in 2015. He was a four-time first-team all-conference selection, a two-time conference Specialist of the Year, and a first-team All-American during his senior season. Hossack ranks fourth in NCAA Division II history with 452 ground balls. He is also Lindenwood's all-time leader with 145 caused turnovers and finished with 33 goals and 18 assists.

Since leaving Lindenwood, Hossack has played professionally in both lacrosse leagues in North America. In the National Lacrosse League, which is played indoors, he is a defenseman for the Rochester Knighthawks. He made his pro debut on Jan. 9, 2016, and scored a pair of goals in his first game. He went on to be the 2016 Rookie of the Year for the Knighthawks and was named to the NLL All-Rookie Team.

The following season, Hossack led the team with 215 ground balls and 29 caused turnovers. He earned the team's top defenseman award and was a finalist for NLL Defensive Player of the Year. In just his second season, he was named an NLL Second-Team All-Pro.

In the Major League Lacrosse Association, which is an outdoor league, Hossack has played for the Atlanta Blaze. In two seasons, he has collected 83 ground balls and caused 36 turnovers.

Three Lindenwood baseball players are also working their way up the minor leagues: **Geoff Hartlieb**, **Connor Law**, and **Brendan Feldmann**.

Hartlieb finished his Lindenwood career in 2016 after he was selected by the Pittsburgh Pirates in the 29th round of

the baseball draft. Last season, he started the season in single-A and was promoted to Class A Advanced midway through the season. Between the two teams, Hartlieb had a 2.12 ERA, and, thanks to a fastball clocked as high as 100 mph, struck out 62 batters in 63 2/3 innings.

Connor Law and Brendan Feldman were the two pitching leaders on last year's team, which reached the NCAA Division II College World Series. Both players had ERAs under 3.20, and they combined for 16 wins and 13 saves.

After the season, both players signed free agent deals and played rookie ball. Law signed with the Toronto Blue Jays organization. He spent most of the year in the Gulf Coast League and had a 1.54 ERA in 14 relief appearances. Feldman signed with the Houston Astros organization and also played in the Gulf Coast League. He had a 0.54 ERA in 12 relief appearance and struck out 21 batters in less than 17 innings.



# ROLLER HOCKEY ACHIEVES SEVERAL MILESTONES

by PHIL VIDA

**Roller hockey reached several milestones January 26-27 during Great Plains Collegiate Inline Hockey League (GPCIHL) action at Midwest Sport Hockey in Ballwin, Mo., and Matteson Square Garden in St. Peters, Mo.**

The first major accomplishment was win number 1,000 in program history encompassing all three squads: the Division I Lions and the D3 Gold and Black teams.

After a win from the **D3 Gold squad** over the **D3 Black squad** early Friday night, the **Division I team** defeated conference

nemesis Bethel University (Tenn.) 4-2 to achieve the 1,000th victory. After the remainder of the conference schedule over the weekend, the overall program record stood at 1,005-153-21.

The next milestone was victory number 200 for D3 Gold Head Coach **Jon Hilke**, which came in the next game for the Lions, a 5-2 win over the Bethel D3 squad. With another victory on Saturday, Hilke has now compiled a lifetime Lindenwood record of 201-37-5 since taking over the reins of the team in 2009. The Gold team has another milestone in its sights. Win number 350 is just four victories away.

Major accomplishments continued on Saturday when Lindenwood stopped the University of Missouri 9-2 for win number 500 for the D1 squad. The Lions added a 3-2 victory over Bethel later in the day and now sit at 501-41-5 overall. In his 15th season, Head Coach **Ron Beilsten** has been at the helm for most of those games. His Lindenwood record now sits at 428-18-5. He will have several chances to add to that mark before the current season ends. The GPCIHL Regional Championship is February 23-25 at Midwest Sport Hockey, and the National Collegiate Roller Hockey Association National Championships take place April 11-14 in Fargo, N.D.

Alison Webb



# LADY LYNX BASKETBALL RANKED NO. 20— HIGHEST IN PROGRAM HISTORY

by CHARLIE MAGER

**The Lindenwood University–Belleville women’s basketball team (22-8, 19-5 in conference play) has been ranked No. 20 in the nation by the NAIA, which is the highest that the team has been ranked in program history.**

The Lady Lynx started American Midwest Conference play on Thursday, Nov. 16, with a home matchup against the Williams Baptist College Eagles and came away with a 73-50 win.

Two days later, the Lady Lynx pulled off perhaps their most impressive win of the year over No. 3-ranked Freed-Hardeman University, which was 4-0 at the time, 83-79 in Lynx Arena. After losing to No. 16 Columbia College on Nov. 30, the Lady Lynx went on a five-game winning streak to close out the first half of the season.

When the squad returned to Lynx Arena on Dec. 30, it played host to the Missouri Baptist University Spartans and passed two milestones. The Lady Lynx won 111-

91, the first time since Feb. 20 and 24 of 2014 that the team won back-to-back games with more than 100 points.

Also, senior guard **Torre Kohrmann** accomplished something that only her older sister Shelby had achieved with the program, passing the 1,000-point threshold for her collegiate career.

**“This is the greatest group of individuals that I have coached during my tenure here at Lindenwood.”**

**Women’s Head Coach Jeff Reis**

Two months later, on Feb. 17 in Hannibal, Mo., Kohrmann passed her sister for most career points recorded in program history when she nailed a three-pointer to put herself at 1,172 points for her four years at Lindenwood.

The Lady Lynx then earned their sixth straight victory with an 86-68 win over the William Woods Owls on Jan. 2.

The Lady Lynx continued their surge as the second half of the season began, recording two eight-game winning streaks for the first time in program history and earning themselves a No. 4 seed in the AMC tournament and a bid to compete for the national title.

“This is the greatest group of individuals that I have coached during my tenure here at Lindenwood,” Head Coach **Jeff Reis** said. “Not only do we have a great group of student-athletes, but they’re great people as well. Good team chemistry, leadership, and a willingness to help each other out has paved the way for our success this season, but we still have a lot of work to do.”

Despite a tough loss to the William Woods Owls in the quarterfinal round of the American Midwest Conference tournament, the Lady Lynx earned a spot in the NAIA championship tournament in Billings, Mont., for the second straight year, where they were slated to play Mid-America Nazarene (25-6) on Thursday, March 15.

# ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES SPRING 2018

## '60s

**Tricia Byrne ('68)** has agreed to be the class agent for the 50-year class reunion at this year's Lindenwood Homecoming and Reunion. She is reaching out to fellow classmates and hopes to have a great reunion this October.

## '70s

**Marsha Hollander Parker ('71, '87)**

recently won the Lindy Alumni Award for 2018. The Lindy Awards are presented annually by the School of Arts Media and Communication to recognize outstanding student work across a variety of media, as well as an alumnus who has distinguished himself or herself in the communications industry. Parker began her career at Lindenwood in 1987 and has served the university in a variety of positions including director of evening and graduate admissions, alumni director, and dean of fine and performing arts and communications on the St. Charles campus and director of theatre and professor of theatre on the Belleville campus.



## '80s

**Jeffrey Blackwell ('86)**

was recently named the Standex Refrigerated Solutions Group VP of operations in Hudson, Wis. The announcement was made by Nor-Lake, a designer and manufacturer of refrigeration equipment for the food service industry. Blackwell has many years of experience in operations, serving two years as VP of operations at Amesbury Truth Corp and was responsible for multiple sites in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. He earned



a B.S.B.A in Industrial Management from Lindenwood.

## '90s

**Jeff Arnet ('94)**

was recently named the superintendent of the Kirkwood School District after serving as deputy superintendent of the Independent School District in Austin, Texas. Arnett began his 30-year career in education serving the St. Louis area as a teacher in the Fort Zumwalt School District. He also taught in the Chicago area and worked for the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, N.Y., serving as a communications, education, and public programs director. Arnett has bachelor's degrees in education and communications from Evangel University in Springfield, Mo., master's degrees from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and Lindenwood University, an education specialist's degree from Western Illinois University, and a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Phoenix.



**Justin Meeks ('96, '98)**

recently resigned as Bourbon County Attorney to focus on administrative law as the Bourbon County Counselor. He held both positions since February 2015. He will now be giving the county legal advice about contract, acquisition, and human resources.



**Jo Anna Pollock ('97)** is

one of 10 attorneys recently elevated to shareholder by Simmons Hanly Conroy, one of the nation's largest mass tort firms.



Pollock practices in the firm's Complex Litigation Department, where she focuses on litigating international child sex abuse, environmental, and class action cases. She also is very active in volunteer and pro bono work and in 2012 founded the Madison County Bar Association Internship Program to mentor high school students interested in the legal profession. Pollock received her law degree from Saint Louis University School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts from Lindenwood (magna cum laude).

## '00s

**Shane Stone, Ph.D. ('00)**

joined the faculty at Eastern Wyoming College as a criminal justice instructor. Prior to accepting the position at EWC, Stone worked as an investigator for the Missouri Department of Corrections and as U.S. probation officer, sheriff's deputy, police officer, and Missouri State Trooper. Stone served in the Army National Guard and Army Reserves as a military police officer in the criminal investigative division. Prior to his position at EWC, he taught at Casper College for five years. Stone has a Ph.D. in leadership from the University of Cumberland; a master's degree in theological studies from Midwestern Baptist College; a master's in criminal justice from Lindenwood; and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Central Missouri State University.



**Katie Marie Brooks Jones ('01)**,

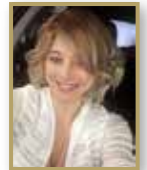
director of programs and political action for Boone Center Workshops, was appointed in October 2017 by Missouri Governor Eric Greitens to serve a five-year term on the



Governor's Council on Disability (GCD). The GCD promotes full participation and inclusion of the nearly 1 million Missourians with disabilities in all aspects of community life by educating citizens, businesses, schools, universities, and others of their rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition to her job at BCI, Jones is also a member of the National Association of Workforce Development and chairman of the legislative committee of the St. Charles County Coalition of Service Providers. Jones earned her bachelor's degree in social work.

**Tesse Jercinovic ('02)** is currently

living in Huntington Beach, Calif., and is an assistant manager for Lacoste; her store is one of the top 10 in the U.S. market. This year marks her 10th anniversary with this company. She is able to return to the St. Louis area and fondly recalls her time at Lindenwood and her Delta Zeta sisters. She received her B.A. in retail merchandising.



**Leonard Rhine ('05)** was recently

named the new executive director of Life Care Center of Bridgeton. Rhine's previous roles include executive director of Carondelet Manor in Kansas City, Mo., and administrator at Garden View Care Center in Chesterfield, Mo. He earned his bachelor's degree in business administration at the University of Missouri in St. Louis and his master's degree in business administration at Lindenwood.



**Alumni News & Notes** continues on next page...

# ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES SPRING 2018 continued

## '10s

**Sarah Christian ('10)** and Randy Gildehaus recently acquired Ultimate Fitness Plus in Troy, Mo. Sarah has been in the fitness industry for about eight years, starting her career in nonprofit with the YMCA as a program director overseeing health and wellness and aquatics programs. She transitioned to parks and recreation as the fitness specialist for the City of Des Peres before the acquisition of Ultimate Fitness Plus. She earned her B.S. in exercise science.



**Jeff Wilkins ('11, '12)** and **Michelle Jackson Wilkins ('13)** were married in September 2015. The birth of their first daughter, Hadley Marie, was in October 2017. They purchased their second home in Ballwin, Mo., last March. Jeff is currently area manager of Enterprise-Rent-A-Car in South St. Louis, overseeing 12 locations. Michelle earned her SHRM-CP human resource certification in 2016 and is currently an immigration specialist at Percipient Information Technology and Services in St. Louis. Jeff earned his B.A. in marketing and an MBA in management. Michelle earned her B.A. in human resources management.



**Kinsey Nicole Bryant ('13)** is engaged to Daniel John Betzinger, both of Troy, Ill. Bryant is an accountant at Agency for Community Transit. Betzinger joined the military in 2001 and is employed by the U.S. Department of Justice. Bryant has a Lindenwood bachelor's



in business administration and a master's in business administration with an emphasis in accounting. A September wedding is planned in Aviston, Ill.

**Valentin Fiquet ('14)**

returned to France after graduation in December 2014 and was accepted in the KEDGE Business School in Marseille, France, in 2015 and studied luxury and brand management until May 2017. He secured a six-month internship within the Christian Dior Couture House to finalize his degree. In November, he was offered a position as trainee manager, which is a two-year formation to become a head manager for a flagship boutique, which he hopes to do in the U.S.



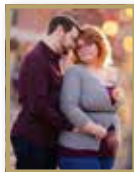
**Elbey Aliyev ('14)**

is in his third year of employment at British American Tobacco, one of the largest tobacco companies in the world, and has recently been promoted to area manager in Baku, Azerbaijan. He also recently got married.



**John Mertens ('14)** and Megean Hubbart recently announced their engagement. Hubbart

graduated from the University of Missouri-St. Louis with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and psychology. Mertens earned a Master of Arts degree in nonprofit administration from Lindenwood. They live in St. Charles and plan to be married Nov. 9, 2018.



**Katie Lynn Nadler ('15)**

and Levi Jerome Gildehaus were married Sept. 23, 2017, at Femme Osage United Church of Christ in Augusta, Mo. After a honeymoon in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, the couple reside in Washington, Mo. She has a B.F.A. in graphic design and is employed by Concourse Sports as lead graphic designer.



**Marko Cubranovic ('15)**

returned to Serbia after graduation and worked at several private businesses and continued coaching water polo for VK Tas. In late 2015, he went to Qatar to work for St. Regis Doha, started a water polo academy, and met his future wife, Kadia, whom he married in May 2017. In September he accepted a position to manage the club's UAE branch in Abu Dhabi. In December 2017, his son Luka was born. Cubranovic has a B.A. in human resource management and an MBA in management from Lindenwood.



**McNein Hewitt ('15)**

has worked since graduation in advertising, overseeing mass print productions for new campaigns across the country as well as new digital projects for the client websites, web applications, and auto shows. He accepted an analyst position and has had the opportunity to work on several Tier 1 CPG companies. He is currently a senior analyst in Canada. He continues to play lacrosse in a Senior B indoor league as well as a Senior A field lacrosse league and hopes to try out for the Canadian professional Arena Lacrosse League next fall. He has an MBA with an emphasis in marketing.



**Priyadharshan Kannappan ('16)**

will graduate in May 2018 from Webster University with a master's in management and leadership. While at Webster, he was a member of the Webster-B Chess Team, which won the Pan-American Intercollegiate Chess Championship in 2016 and the Final Four of Collegiate Chess 2017 and finished fifth rank in the 2017 Pan-American Intercollegiate Chess Championship. He has been selected as an assistant coach of the Webster University chess team for 2018 Final Four of Collegiate Chess to be held in New York in April. In September 2016 he became one of approximately 1,600 players worldwide to hold the grandmaster in chess title, and since graduating from Lindenwood in 2016, he has earned numerous championship titles. He is founder of SANGAM, the Indian student organization at Webster. He is the manager of Webster Windmills, a team comprised of players from the Webster Groves area who participate in PRO Chess League, and is the president of the Webster University Chess Club.

**Zach Farmer ('17)**

is a designer at TOC Artwork, in St. Louis, Mo., and recently purchased a home. He has also purchased an art studio with fellow Lindenwood alumnus Zach Smithey ('06), in the hopes of collaboration.



**Luke Pearl ('17)** is a case manager at the Brain Injury Foundation of St. Louis, a startup nonprofit organization that works with individuals with brain injuries. An avid bowler, he bowls in a traveling Illinois league in Ellisville and returns to St. Charles lanes for a league. Pearl's degree is a bachelor's in nonprofit administration.

**Kayla Bierbaum ('17)** of Augusta, Mo., is engaged to David Reckert of Defiance, Mo. Bierbaum has a bachelor's in education and modern languages from the University of Central Missouri and has a master's degree in administration from Lindenwood. She is employed by the school district of Washington as a second-grade teacher. Her fiancé graduated from Linn State Technical College in 2011 with an Associate of Applied Science degree and is employed by Merkel Mechanical as a service technician. A May 2018 wedding in Augusta is planned.

## IN MEMORIAM

Please be aware that the names listed in the In Memoriam section are of alumni that may have passed within recent months or within the past couple of years.

**Elizabeth Davis Harvat ('46)**,  
Denver, Colo.

**Helen Bowman Keller ('46)**,  
Marion, Ill.

**Jacqueline Ann Whitehead Jenkins ('46)**,  
Amarillo, Texas

**Georgia-Lee Mon ('51)**,  
San Marino, Calif.

**Sharon Vance Jones ('53)**,  
Indianapolis, Ind.

**Mary Mattingly Gilbert ('56)**,  
Silver Spring, Md.

**Barbara A. Schweppe Hanes ('56)**,  
Anaheim, Calif.

**Marva La Bonte' Weiny ('59)**,  
Upland, Calif.

**Rev. Linda McCormick ('69)**,  
Garland, Texas

**Virginia Moore ('78)**,  
St. Charles, Mo.

**John B. Wainscott, Jr. ('87)**,  
St. Louis, Mo.

**Kresno A. Djayandaru ('91)**,  
Washington, D.C.

**Melinda McAfee Hart ('92)**,  
San Antonio, Texas

## ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON FEB. 7, 2018



*More than 170 recipients, donors, and Lindenwood personnel attended the Endowed Scholarship Luncheon in the Scheidegger Center on Feb. 7. Currently, more than \$478,000 in endowed scholarships benefit 135 recipients.*



*Recipient Baylie Clynes and benefactor Arthur Goodall were the featured speakers for the event.*



*Scholarship recipient Raylon Bivins*



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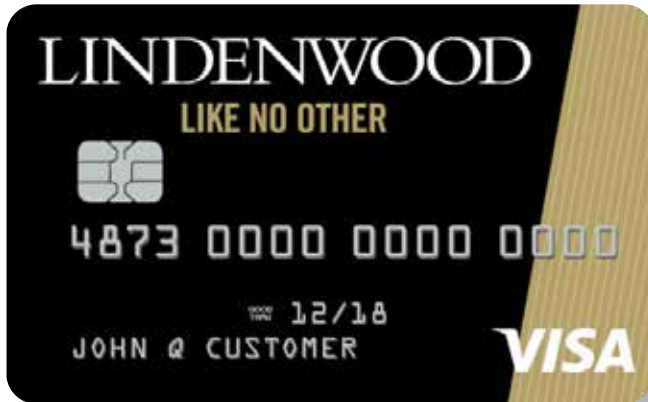
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<sup>2</sup> Merchants self-select the category in which they would like their transaction items to be listed. Please note some merchants may be owned by other companies, therefore transactions may not be counted in the expected category.

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