COVID-19 scattered students, faculty and staff to the safety of their homes—changing everything, except for our Pioneer mindset.
Busy as Bees

It’s summer, and the campus is abuzz with fall preparations—and the ongoing search for nectar. This busy bee was spotted exploring catmint near Hastad Hall.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

In its 174-year-history, Carroll has witnessed many extraordinary events. I think it’s safe to say that none of those have had as far-reaching and instantaneous an impact as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the course of a few weeks, the Carroll experience changed dramatically. We made the shift from on-campus learning to a virtual environment in a matter of days, through the truly Herculean efforts of our faculty, our instructional design team and the Office of Information Technology. We’re proud of their collaboration in meeting this seismic, unexpected challenge.

Their work allowed us to successfully shift our delivery model, continuing to provide the quality education that our students have come to expect while protecting health and safety. You’ll hear more about that accomplishment in our profile of Mohammad Samarah, Carroll’s first chief technology officer. You’ll also hear from faculty, including Tate Wilson, senior lecturer in physics, who hand packed and sent electronics kits to his students so they could continue their lab work from home; James Zager, professor of music, who will share his insights on his “aha moment” in determining how to teach dance virtually.

While COVID-19 changed the dynamics of our spring semester, we found ways to be together while staying apart. While heartbroken at not being able to celebrate the achievements of our graduating class on Main Lawn, our virtual Commencement was heartfelt in a different way. Dozens of faculty and staff recorded video messages of congratulations as part of the event, and the Class of 2020 made it personal by sending in videos and photos of themselves in their regalia, which were shown during the ceremony.

Pioneers are finding new ways to step up, serve and inspire, creating many points of light in this “new normal.” Those include a moving video showcasing the talents of 75 Pioneer alumni from across the country, who virtually performed “Children of the Heavenly Father,” led by Dr. Mark Arnot, professor of music. The Carroll Players performed a Virtual Musical Theatre Cabaret. Our National Service Project food drive surpassed all expectations. Chaplain Elizabeth McCord brought us moments of peace through a new program of spiritual support and reflection. Those are just a few of many stories of hope and inspiration—you’ll find more on our new web page, PioneersPersevere—accessible from the home page of our website. While our lives have been upturned and our priorities changed, these unprecedented times have also brought out the best in us.

While we work through the uncertainty that the coming months will surely bring, we are making plans and moving forward. Our Fall 2020 Planning Committee is exploring various scenarios as to what a return to campus might look like, with the health and safety of our Carroll community as our top priority. The finishing touches are being made to Education Hall, in anticipation of a fall dedication. We’ve begun accepting applications for fall 2020 for our first 100% online program, the Carroll MBA, to better serve a broad spectrum of adult learners. We continue to make progress on the goals outlined in our strategic plan as we work diligently to position Carroll for a strong future.

We’re doing what Pioneers have always done, facing unforeseen challenges and moving forward with grace, ingenuity and determination.
Back in mid-March, Carroll University leadership was weighing how to proceed with commencement. Across the globe, businesses, cities and whole countries were shutting down in hopes of slowing the gathering pandemic storm.

At Carroll, spring break had been extended and classes moved online, at least through early April. Kendra Zimdars was watching closely, and waiting. Zimdars was in her first year as the senior administrative assistant to the provost, and planning commencement was her responsibility. She wasn’t new to the task, as she had helped out with previous commencements since joining Carroll in 2014. But in all those years, the biggest worry had been whether foul weather would scuttle the traditional outdoor setting.

“T"is my first year overseeing this. I got the promotion the week off, Zimdars was optimistic about the challenge was in creating an event that would still serve as a celebration of each graduate’s accomplishment and be a day to remember. Planners settled on a combination of live and pre-recorded segments. That sent broadcast would originate outdoors, from Main Lawn, with a small group—maintaining correct social distancing measures—gathered to introduce the names and a pair of bagpipers playing. The broadcast would originate outdoors, from Main Lawn, with a small group—maintaining correct social distancing measures—gathered to introduce the names and a pair of bagpipers playing. The broadcast would originate outdoors, from Main Lawn, with a small group—maintaining correct social distancing measures—gathered to introduce the names and a pair of bagpipers playing. The broadcast would originate outdoors, from Main Lawn, with a small group—maintaining correct social distancing measures—gathered to introduce the names and a pair of bagpipers playing.

“This is my first year overseeing this. I got a curve ball for sure,” she admitted.

It was a dilemma campuses across the country were grappling with. “The options were to cancel, postpone or move it online,” said Zimdars. “I remember. Planners settled on a combination of live and pre-recorded segments. That sent broadcast would originate outdoors, from Main Lawn, with a small group—maintaining correct social distancing measures—gathered to introduce the names and a pair of bagpipers playing. That’s the idea of a podcast came up. Podcasts are essentially episodic radio shows recorded and available for downloading. “We had a lot of the resources here already. We already had microphones and mixers and the like,” said Meyer.

The first podcast appeared in January and featured Dobie, chair of the department of visual arts. That history is the subject of a new book by Dr. Scott Hendrix, an associate professor of history at Carroll. “Gods, Philosophers and Scientists: Religion and Science in the West” is published by Oxford University Press. Hendrix published a complicated history. Are religion and science opposed? The popular view is that they are in conflict, but an examination of history reveals a much more complex relationship between the two. That history is the subject of a new book by Dr. Scott Hendrix, an associate professor of history at Carroll. “Gods, Philosophers and Scientists: Religion and Science in the West” is published by Oxford University Press.

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Unmanned Aircraft Minor Added for Fall

TAKING OFF

Once upon a time, the only drones to be encountered at Carroll were the low hums of bagpipes at commencement, but these days you may also find a few buzzing overhead. Drones, not bagpipes.

In fall, the university will officially launch a new minor focusing on the use of drone technology. The new Aviational and Unmanned Aircraft Systems Minor is designed to tap into the booming interest in drones and provide an additional skill set which students in many majors may find useful.

Mike Mortenson, distinguished lecturer and aviation sciences director, said the minor would help Carroll at the forefront of this growing field. “There really is a demand for this,” he said. Mortenson, who has been involved with drones for several years, says the technology has advanced far beyond hobby use and that drones are now routinely utilized by a growing number of industries, in construction, insurance, environmental science, real estate, and even the film industry.

Mortenson believes students from a number of programs can benefit from pairing their major with this new minor. “For example, someone interested in law enforcement who might be interested in a criminal justice degree, might use training in drone threat mitigation, offered in this minor, to enhance employability. Or an environmental scientist might find a drone of value in studying habitat loss or in mapping shoreline erosion. In short, we see this newly designed minor as a way our students can gain a valuable set of employable competencies, that will add and compliment those gained in their majors.

One example of that sort of integration will happen this summer in Pioneer Scholars project Mortenson will oversee. Two students, one a chemistry major and the other an environmental science major, are studying water quality issues on lakes in southwestern Wisconsin and will utilize a drone to gather data for their research. “This is a great example of how this can’t fit in with our other programs,” said Mortenson. The students will incorporate drone footage shot with a thermal camera with their other research methods to monitor the health of our lakes and identify when there are a couple of times a week over the summer.

The 16-credit minor will consist of four classes and will be run through 2023. Lembke, a Pewaukee, Wisconsin, senior who set the Carroll school record in the women’s high jump to win last year’s national indoor, had seven individual first-place finishes this season. The two-time All-American, three-time College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin champion and four-time national qualifier finished his career field led for third nationally.

Uitenbroek, a senior from Kaukauna, Wisconsin, was a two-time national indoor qualifier in the women’s weight throw. She placed 17th at the prestigious competition this summer, said Mortenson. The students will overlap. Two students, one a chemistry major and the other an environmental science major, are studying water quality issues on lakes in southwestern Wisconsin and will utilize a drone to gather data for their research.

For David Lembke and Emily Uitenbroek, two of the Carroll premier student-athletes, the true definition of success was about much more than capturing victories, record-breaking marks or national recognition, but instead centered around the ongoing, determined quest to become the best athlete possible.

That goal was ultimately achieved through a relentless pursuit for excellence, selfless team-oriented leadership and passionate drive to improve on a daily basis. Although COVID-19 brought the spring season to an abrupt, starting conclusion as the talented duo prepared to compete in the NCAA Division III Indoor Track and Field Championships, it couldn’t overshadow the lasting legacies the pair established over the course of the last four years.

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"No more shall there be an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who doesn't live out a lifetime... for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not hurt or destroy on all thy holy mountain, says the Lord."

—Excerpts from Isaiah 65:17–25

The “new normal” has become a frequently used phrase. I hear colleagues, friends and journalists say it. I even hear myself say it from time to time. Yet every time I do, I feel as if I resist a bit. I’m not ready for this to be the new normal, nor am I able to envision what “normal” will look like on the other side of COVID-19. Those days, normal seems more like a far-off dream, a fantasy, an alternate universe where we would like to dwell, but no longer do.

The truth is that normal has always been more elusive than we’d like to think. Yes, we have our routines. We wake in the morning, brush our teeth, read the paper, go to work. And yes, there are many things we take for granted without thinking about them: a monthly paycheck, a car that starts, a quick stop by the grocery store. But in reality, none of us is far away from crisis at any given moment. A lost job, a lost loved one, a loss of mobility, an accident or act of violence—in a flash the veil of normalcy may drop to reveal the frailty of our human bodies and the feebleness of our human systems.

Furthermore, those things many of us take for granted as “normal” are actually privileges. Around the world and even in our own communities, many people face each day without security of income or educational opportunities, of good healthcare or leisure time, of a roof or a meal, or even of basic safety. If COVID-19 has reminded us of anything, it’s that our individual well-being is entirely dependent on the well-being of the whole, and for the whole to be well, everyone needs equitable access to basic goods and services, healthcare and economic opportunity.

Our religious traditions also remind us of our interdependence and vulnerability. The prophets of the Hebrew scriptures and the teaching of the Gospels continually call humanity to a reordering of systems and structures, so that wholeness belongs to the many and not just to the few. Such spiritual visions hold before humanity images for an entirely new “normal,” one we’ve never before witnessed, one marked by equity and grace, mercy and justice.

This vision is sometimes called the New Creation, or the Peaceable Kingdom, or even the Commonwealth of God. It is the alternate universe for which our souls long. It is the dream so wondrous that our hearts and minds cannot fully conceive of it.

God’s normal is not our normal. It is not routine or for our convenience. Instead, it exists for the glory of the One who is creating it, and so that all creation may find wholeness in it. We are beyond a doubt far from that Peaceable Kingdom today, and yet my prayer is that humanity will hear through these current fear-inducing, heart-rending cries of crisis, a gentler, reassuring voice of promise. May this be a moment when together we learn toward wholeness for all people. May we see our shared humanity and accept our interdependence more fully. And may we come just a bit closer to the Commonwealth of God, the dream, the vision for an altogether new normal.
When COVID-19 forced most of the Carroll community off campus this spring, it left a lot of us scrambling to cobble of Carroll's improvised offices, via social media posts.

By Sue Pierman

Office Hours

When COVID-19 forced most of the Carroll community off campus this spring, it left a lot of us scrambling to cobble together work spaces in our own homes. Below, a look at some of Carroll’s improvised offices, via social media posts.

Dr. Hamid Akbari joined Carroll University as the dean of the School of Business in January, after serving as the dean of College of Business and professor of management at Winona State University since 2014.

We asked him to discuss his first impressions of Carroll, and his plans for the new school under his leadership.

By Sue Pierman

Why did you choose to come to Carroll?

I was excited about Carroll University because of its excellent reputation, pioneer roots and spirit, and its strong liberal arts tradition. Moreover, I was energized and inspired by the vision of working together with the faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners for developing a world-class school of business under the leadership, support and guidance of President Gnadinger, Provost Blegen and the Board of Trustees. Moreover, upon further studying Carroll, I found out how passionate and supportive business alumni are about the future success of the School of Business. This was another main factor.

How have your first few months been?

I certainly expected to be welcomed at Carroll, but I was pleasantly surprised and felt that, as a newcomer, I was truly and warmly embraced. There’s something special about a culture of giving care to each other at Carroll. The kindness given to me by everyone, including students, faculty, staff, fellow deans, administrative leaders and alumni has been incredible.

How has the pandemic affected the School of Business?

Like the entire Carroll community and indeed most of the world, we were quite unexpectedly challenged to adapt to the rapid and sweeping changes brought upon all of us by moving our entire teaching and learning online. Yet even this upheaval has served as one more reason to feel proud about being at Carroll, with such resilient students and faculty and staff colleagues. Everyone has faced the challenges of this pandemic with grace and grit. In my view, what’s been most helpful amid these COVID-19 times, is Carroll community operating via its core values and its focus on showing care and empathy.

What goals have you set for yourself and for the School of Business?

The ultimate goal is to develop a premier School of Business in this region, nationally and in the world, a school that lives up to the Carroll’s enduring pioneer spirit. To reach this goal, we are guided by the strategic plan of the university and School of Business. Both of these plans emphasize the transformational power of experiential learning. That’s the kind of curriculum and co-curricular set of programming that we aim to further develop and implement over the next few years. In this ongoing work, we are keen on developing data, technological and human literacies in every one of our students. Towards these goals and within the context and content of the strategic plan, we need to discover our own unique answer to the ‘why?’ question for the School of Business.

Of those goals, which is the most important, why?

Every goal above is most important. However, in my view and based on my years of experience, finding our own ‘why’ and accentuating it is the most important initial step. In other words, among the School of Business faculty and students and other critical constituencies, we need to discover a common expression for our ‘Why?’ I am not suggesting it doesn’t already exist. I am saying we must answer it in a conscious way in a few words, and be ready to include this answer in everything we do. The answer should become a part of our DNA in all of our decisions and activities.

What kind of experience should students expect?

First, students should know that I’m here to listen to them and learn about their ideas, hopes and dreams, and about how we can facilitate their learning and development in new and innovative ways. I want them to know that as a student-centered dean, I want to get to know students more closely and will interact with them actively and in an ongoing way. I need their help to develop a distinct engaged and vibrant culture in the school to serve as a strong context and springboard for empowering them to lead their lives as Pioneer business leaders in the world. They should expect me to often ask them: What’s your inner Pioneer? How have you or will you put it in action?

What kind of value does the online MBA add?

Our online MBA will give a platform to the School of Business for serving a rising segment of professionals who are seeking a high-quality online graduate program in business. Online education was already on the rise, and it will only rise higher in terms of demand because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MBA online demonstrates and reinforces Carroll University’s School of Business pioneer spirit and drive, and its commitment to adapting to technological advances.

What does success look like?

As stated in the strategic plan under the vision statement, we will be successful ones we emerge as a leading School of Business known for graduating students with the state-of-the-art data, technological and human literacies and competencies. Yet we must continue to remain a school known for our finest tradition of having business alumni who underscore their allegiance to ethical and inclusive conduct, care for their communities and humanity. In my short time here, I’ve learned that these are indeed the values that are being taught and upheld at Carroll.

And we will be known and prominent as a truly pioneer School of Business through our innovative and high-quality academic and co-curricular programs.
Admission Adjustments

How is admission adjusting?

As a general rule, we’ve done all right. We’ve been fortunate. On March 5, we had a director meeting and walked through an activity that seemed crazy at the time. Imagine coronavirus closed campus and we couldn’t recruit students—what would we do? It gave us a head start.

What’s different now as opposed to last year?

Everything is different. I can’t think of a thing that hasn’t changed. At this point mid-April means are doing their last college visit, and usually it’s an overnight. Juniors are starting their search and can’t visit campus, so they need to explore virtually. We’re thinking, What can we do to stay out in front of students? We’re looking at things other than having them watch a video. We need to keep pushing for more interactivity. We’re looking for more and more opportunities like that.

The Facebook Live sessions I’m doing are designed to let people connect to our students. They are more casual, zoom and Teams. We’re trying them all. We see people starting to ask questions about next fall, and we’re hearing a lot more from Wisconsin students about commuting than we did a month ago.

How is COVID-19 affecting the families you’re working with?

We’re starting to hear from parents whose kids lost jobs, but we’ve seen the trend below with the housing crisis of 2008 and when Act 10 happened, and there was a huge change in take-home pay of public service employees. We saw more financial aid appeals. Colleges have choices to make, which are offering more aid or knowing you’re working with?

Financial aid. It’s comforting but surprising how normal some of the questions are. But we’re getting more questions about how campus handled the COVID-19 outbreak. We led pretty early with this, and we explained what we did. We’re just beginning to get questions about next fall, and we’re hearing a lot more from Wisconsin students about commuting than we did a month ago.

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We tend to think of history as a series of grand personalities and earth-changing events: a parade of Churchills, Roosevelts, Rosa Parks and other men and women familiar from our history textbooks, and the days of infancy and/or acclaim: Pearl Harbor, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and the War of Independence. But it is, in the sense that these pivotal events and outlierssidetrackthe role of the collective. Because history is both broader, and deeper, than that.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically altered life across the world. For many of us, it has meant a new way of living—avoiding crowds, wearing masks, working from our homes, socially isolating, staying in place. For universities such as Carroll, it meant navigating a huge transition in the middle of a semester, in a sea of uncertainty. Before an extended spring break had expired, the school had moved online, for all practical purposes closing the campus. The “new normal,” as some called it, was anything but. Home offices were carved out of dens, bedrooms and basements. Lectures, discussions, tests and meetings moved online. Countless spring activities—concerts, games, exhibits, plays, celebrations, even commencement—were postponed or morphed into online activities. Everyone has stories. Of learning new software on top of lessons, of troubleshooting a home computer network, of first donning a mask, of the fear and anxieties, of the utter weirdness of life, of how completely transformed our lives became overnight. But mixed in with those tales are stories of perseverance. Pioneer perseverance. Stories of faculty, staff, students and alumni, making do, making it work, making it better. Because that’s what Pioneers do.

PIONEERS PERSEVERE
Carroll University’s story is one of perseverance. It’s a trait that’s in high demand and very much on display right now. The COVID-19 pandemic has upturned our lives and changed our priorities. But facing these unforeseen challenges and moving forward with grace, ingenuity and determination has also brought out our best.

Read more stories of Pioneering Perseverance at carrollu.edu/pioneers-persevere

Unity in Isolation
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Unity in Isolation

Shaping Success

If all it took to learn how to sculpt a bust or use a potter’s wheel was watching a video, anyone who has seen “Ghost” would be an artist. But learning to work clay—pinching, pulling, prodding and slowly drawing the desired shape—well, that takes a learned touch. Fortunately, by the time spring classes at Carroll moved online, the students in Michael Imes’ two ceramics classes had already spent time in the studio, learning firsthand the proper techniques for working with clay.

"It was really advantageous that we got half the semester in so that I could give an intro to many of the techniques," he recalled. "I could introduce pinching, and pinching coil work and soft slab and stiff slab and the use of the potter’s wheel." Figuring out the remainder of the semester was a matter of technology and materials. Imes spent some time trying to determine the best platform for conducting virtual classes. Most of the online meeting options hosted lectures easily, allowing a moderator to lead discussions. But Imes needed a setup that allowed the students to see and interact and to present their work to the full class. He ended up buying a month’s subscription to one service.

"I managed to do some online demonstrations," he said. "And we set out clay outside behind the studio so that students could come in and pick it up without entering the building." The department even lent out a couple potter’s wheels to students interested in pursuing that technique. Students living farther afield secured materials online. The one concession to the pandemic was forgoing the requirement that the work be fired, though Imes is hoping to schedule individual appointments when students can drop their work off and have Imes supervise the firing.

Alumna Helps Bring Japan to Students

Graphic communications professor Dan Becker’s class on Japan is a campus favorite. Students spend a semester studying Japanese life, capped by a two-week immersive trip to the island nation, where they experience the culture firsthand. They spend most of their time in Tokyo and the immediate surrounding area, paying special attention to arts, fashion, language, food, historical events, music, religion and popular culture. Past trips also visited Osaka and Kyoto, experiencing the oldest and newest Japan has to offer. For many, it’s an experience of a lifetime.

This spring, that opportunity vanished when Carroll canceled all student travel due to COVID-19. The students in NCE329: Japan – A Culture of Contrasts would not be embarking on a breathtaking, 13-hour trans-Pacific journey; instead, they were headed home. Becker shared in their disappointment, but he was faced with an additional challenge: continuing to provide a meaningful cultural experience.
EXPLORATION

Garretto ’17 was a former student of Services) and everyone else for the work discussion of life in Japan. “The technology was awesome,” said Becker. “Everything worked great. It streamed quite well. I deeply appreciated all the efforts made by ITS (Carroll’s Information Technology Services) and everyone else for the work they put in getting us ready to go online, and for the training they provided. It made all of this possible.”

“Like the provost said early on, take it as a real bonding that goes on,” Zager said. “Best practice is that you log in and turn your mic off. We did away with that. In each class as everyone is gathering, we can see each other and talk to one another.”

The seminars were created to help teachers move their classes online and determine best practices for delivering content to students. The lecture class could be taught asynchronously, with readings and assignments spread out over the course of the week. But the dance class would work best presented live to students at the regular class time, twice a week.

At ten o’clock on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Zager and his students gathered together virtually. The students see Zager; Zager sees all of the students. He demonstrates choreography, moving farther from the camera to highlight larger moves, the moving closer to demonstrate smaller gestures.

“It is not ideal. The confines of his condo limit the scope of the movements he can perform. And his students deal with similar issues—one tunes in from his parent’s basement and others have improvised studio spaces in bedrooms and dens. Yet, being apart has in some ways brought the class even closer together. He has met his students’ boyfriends and girlfriends, parents and pets online. One student performed a duet with their dog.

“There is a real bonding that goes on,” Zager said. “Best practice is that you log in and turn your mic off. We did away with that. In each class as everyone is gathering, we can have this personal conversation. Chat with me, chat with each other. And at the end of the class, I make sure everyone can see each other and talk to one another.”

They are, after all, in this together.”

As for Zager’s neighbors? “Once they knew what I was doing, that I was teaching a class, they were very sweet.”

The note James Zager received from his condo association was to the point: the students don’t seem to be missing out on any content.”

Prof Draws Ire from Condo Association

Dance Party

The note James Zager received from his condo association was to the point: the students don’t seem to be missing out on any content.”

You can’t have a dance party at 10 o’clock. Apparently, some of his neighbors took umbrage at the music and dancing coming from his condo two mornings a week. A dance party? During a pandemic? But Zager, a professor of theatre arts, wasn’t hosting bash-thumping raves in his condominium; he was actually trying to teach his theatre dance class. Online.

When Carroll announced in March that the remainder of the spring semester would be taught online, Zager had mixed feelings. He teaches Intro to Theatre Arts, a big lecture class, and he could envision that being taught digitally, with recorded lectures, assigned readings and homework assignments all completed online. But his other class? Theatre Dance! Here is how the course is described in the course catalog: “Exploration of various dance styles within the context of dance performance. This course will include the analysis and practice of dance techniques from various periods of theatrical dance.”

Zager had been teaching the class in a dance studio on campus. It’s a semester of demonstration, rehearsal, observation and performance, all done in a large, open space surrounded by mirrors. It’s a choreography of smaller and grand, of jumps, runs and drops.

Lectures, he could move online. But the dance class? “When you are in a studio together with mirrors, it’s one thing, but when you are in your basement or bedroom, it’s another thing altogether,” Zager said. In this class, the 10 students learn and practice about various styles of dance through history. How could he properly demonstrate the choreography and observe their attempts to learn it?

The answer came to him in a training session Carroll presented to faculty during the extended spring break. The seminars were created to help teachers move their classes online and determine best practices for delivering content to students. The lecture class could be taught asynchronously, with readings and assignments spread out over the course of the week. But the dance class would work best presented live to students at the regular class time, twice a week.

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As for Zager’s neighbors? “Once they knew what I was doing, that I was teaching a class, they were very sweet.”
When Carroll opened its campus for the 2019–20 academic year, students were not the only ones eager to earn their education. After years of preparation, biology professor Sue Lewis and Humane Animal Welfare Society (HAWS) associate Leann Boucha ’12 ’19 were ready to introduce their new dog training course to Carroll’s animal behavior program. The course, taught by Boucha, saw students working with dogs to prepare them for adoption. Lewis was inspired to create the course when she noticed many of her students were interested in working with animals. When Lewis began researching similar programs, she saw that Carroll College in Montana had begun a dog training course that involved fostering local shelter dogs. Lewis asked Boucha at HAWS to be a partner in the program, and the two started to design the Introduction to Animal Care, Behavior, and Training course.

In the fall, students in the course learn “how to read canine body language, positive reinforcement and force-free training methods,” said Lewis. Then, in the spring, students get an “immersion experience in animal training as they take in a foster from HAWS for the full semester.”

When Holland began training Ora, the dog was “extremely shy and aloof, she was nervous around everyone and it wasn’t uncommon for her to growl to communicate that she was uncomfortable.” Now, after three months of hard work, Ora “allows strangers to pet her and she explores new environments with curiosity instead of fear,” according to Holland. “It’s an amazing transformation to see!”

Lindsay Green is another animal behavior major who registered for the course. She was paired with a one-year-old boxer named Bowie. Green took interest in the course because of her lifelong passion for dogs. Green describes Bowie as “a bundle of energy” and “one of the sweetest, most personable dogs.” Still, Green said it was a challenge to balance her own needs while taking care of Bowie. “Most of the time, I was putting my foster dog’s needs first.”

When Carroll’s campus closed due to COVID-19, students enrolled in the course were worried about how it would affect their education and the dogs’ training. Before quarantine, students in the program would bring their dogs to their Monday and Wednesday courses and would have a three-hour lab each Friday. This helped the dogs socialize and get used to everyday life.

However, students in the program still filmed training videos and completed assignments online like they had been doing prior. There weren’t any drastic changes to the course; according to Green. Although the students missed interacting with their peers, the campus shutdown may have helped the dogs. According to Holland, “having online classes allowed me to train and prepare Ora better. It was such a big factor in decreasing her anxiety.”

While a planned and highly anticipated dog graduation ceremony was cancelled due to the campus closing, students and their dogs were able to do a meet and greet at HAWS, where the Carroll students helped screen potential adoptive families. While students enrolled in the new animal behavior course faced many challenges, it’s safe to say it was a major success. “This course is a rare experience in an already uncommon undergraduate major, which is amazing to see at Carroll,” said Holland.
Voices of Choir Alumni Unite to Perform Campus Favorite

**Sing Together**

The idea arose during a virtual happy hour in the first few days of Wisconsin’s Safer at Home initiative: Wouldn’t it be cool to get some alumni (chair) members to join a virtual chorus and sing a well-known song? That suggestion grew into an inspiring online event, as 75 alumni sang the hymn “Children of the Heavenly Father,” conducted by Professor Emeritus of Music Dr. Mark Aamot.

Sara (Thoms) Meyer '99, ’01, Carroll’s promotion and events manager, had been chatting with Dr. Joel Matthys ’95, assistant professor of music, and Mark Wampfler, a 2019 graduate with a degree in music education, when they came up with the plan. It seemed like a nice gesture that might brighten people’s spirits. “And we realized we had just the right skillset to pull it off,” said Meyer.

Meyer put out an appeal on Facebook and went to bed. When she logged on the following morning, there were upwards of 70 responses from people eager to participate.

With that interest in hand, they next needed a recording that each person could listen to and sing along with, recording their own part. “So, the next morning, I went and recorded on piano the choral part,” said Matthys. “I sang with Doc many times, so I tried to match exactly the way he did his phrasing. And then we distributed that to everyone in the alumni choir.”

And waited for submissions. Would people actually bother to take the time? It was one thing to click “like” on a Facebook post, quite another to actually take the time to rehearse and record it.

Wampfler, who had been in choir himself, had put together a few multi-track recordings and done some editing. Weaving together several recordings wouldn’t be too difficult. And then they received recordings from seventy-five alumni!

“I didn’t expect 75 videos to come in!” Wampfler remembered. “I was really happy to have so many people who wanted to be involved. And that happiness superseded the fear of having to edit together 75 videos.”

“When we shared it that night, we had 108 shares in the first hour,” said Meyer. “It really brought back memories.”

**Choir alumni participated in the virtual performance**

75

Social shares within the first hour of the performance's debut

100

A recording of the livestreamed performance is available with the digital version of this article at carrollu.edu/magazine
Stephen Kuhn is retiring this summer after an 11-year tenue as Carroll's vice president for institutional advancement, but his presence on campus will be felt for years to come.

Steve Kuhn began his time as vice president of institutional advancement at Carroll University in February 2009. Upon Kuhn’s arrival in 2009, he re-touched the advancement staff and soon began work on a $50 million campaign. Many members of the board of trustees were a little apprehensive about a campaign that large—and actually thought it was impossible for Carroll.

Then president of the university, Doug Hastad, recalled the size of the task. “(Kuhn’s) most important challenge as the vice president of advancement was to move the Carroll campaign to its goal of $50 million. This was a huge initiative for Carroll, one that would far surpass any previous campaign," said Hastad. “Well, as most remember, this was the peak of the great financial recession, a time when large donors were reluctant to make big gifts. Nonetheless, Steve trudged forward. When the dust settled a few years later, and the campaign was officially closed, he did not hit $50 million. Yes, he missed the target! Truth be told, he told and his colleagues raised more than $52 million dollars in gifts and grants. This is a fine testament of his leadership.”

$52.7m
Amount of money raised from 7,533 donors during Campaign Carroll: The Common Thread, Carroll’s largest capital campaign to date.

First
The Michael and Mary Jaharis Laboratories was the first gift/grant building in Carroll’s 174-year history.

65+
Construction projects during Kuhn’s 11-year tenue at Carroll.

Campaign Carroll: The Common Thread was in fact the largest, most ambitious fundraising initiative in Carroll’s history. It did exceed its original target of $50 million—raising over $52.7 million from 7,533 donors, to support facilities, programs, endowment and operating needs. “It is hard to sum up what Steve’s impact on Carroll has been,” said President Cindy Gnadinger. “Obviously, we can point to the fact that he led the most successful capital campaign in Carroll’s history. In addition, he helped to cultivate the largest single gift in Carroll’s history. These are not insignificant contributions.”

The Michael and Mary Jaharis Laboratories marked two significant firsts for Carroll. It was the first new academic building constructed in over 50 years and most importantly, it was the first all-gift/grant building in Carroll’s history. While the Jaharis Laboratories and Prairie Springs Environmental Education Center were two of the most recent and largest projects during his tenure, there have been over 65 construction projects and dedication of new spaces, including the Crofts Morava Pavilion, Doug and Nancy Hastad Hall, the reopening of Rankin Hall, Richard Smart House and Shirley Hilger Hall, amongst others.

Gnadinger added that Kuhn’s impact extended beyond the fundraising. “Steve has been a valuable member of our senior staff. He has decades of experience in higher education and those experiences have enriched our discussions and assisted the senior team at times when we have had to make difficult decisions. His wisdom will be missed.”

Additionally, I am grateful for Steve’s help to orient me to Carroll three years ago when I was named president. He has been extremely supportive to me in making outreach and introducing me to many of our wonderful alumni. We have traveled together across the country for alumni events, and for all these years, his wife Kathy has been part of those events. She has been a true partner in his work at Carroll. John and I will certainly miss them and I know for a fact they will be missed by many in our extended Carroll family.

Kuhn said he had been thinking of the timing of his retirement for a while. “For me, it was always a question of best timing to benefit Carroll,” he said. “With a comprehensive campaign and other initiatives being made to support a new and essential strategic plan, it was important to me that Carroll—and Cindy, have the best advancement team available for the duration of a lengthy campaign.”

Kuhn said he was proud of his team’s accomplishments in strengthening alumni engagement, building programming and fundraising—for the Common Thread campaign, the Jaharis Laboratories and Prairie Springs Environmental Education Center. “However,” he added, “none of this was even conceivable without the very generous support of many, many donors. Carroll constituents—alumni, parents, friends, foundations and corporations—have stepped up big time for Carroll’s strategic initiatives. And they will continue to do so into the future.”

Kuhn Retires

Vice President Steps Down After 11 Years of Relationship Building

IN MEMORIAM

1940s
Helen (Bratlie) Friedl ’42 passed away Jan. 4, 2020, in San Antonio, Texas, at the age of 97. Before earning her master’s degree, Helen spent two years in Cuba on a scholarship and taught Spanish in New Mexico and New York.

Joyce C. (Stelter) Miller ’51 passed away Jan. 21, 2020, in Waukesha, Wisconsin, at the age of 94. Her husband predeceased her granddaughter Elizabeth Bertecharis ’20.

Dona E. (Jacobsen) Nylander ’52 passed away Nov. 29, 2019, in Ellums, Washington, at the age of 94.

John Kuckuk ’52 passed away Jan. 19, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio, at the age of 89.

Robert E. Hegland ’55 passed away April 14, 2019, at the age of 85. Robert served with the United States Navy during the Korean War.

George Schussler ’56 passed away June 10, 2019, in La Crosse, Wisconsin, at the age of 85. George was inducted into the Carroll Athletic Hall of Fame and went on to play for the Green Bay Packers.

Everett Marvin Farrell ’57 passed away Feb. 14, 2019, at the age of 84. He was preceded in death by his wife Mary (Richert) Farrell ’58 on Dec. 1, 2019. He is survived by sister Elizabeth (Farrell) Hunt ’52.

Samuel T. (Petersen) Grottkuck ’58 passed away May 9, 2020, in Virginia, Florida, at the age of 82.

David W. McNichol ’59 passed away Dec. 16, 2019, in Blaineville, Georgia, at the age of 82. David was a decorated U.S. Army Air Force combat veteran who worked with the FBI for 27 years.

1950s
Robert Veyson ’50 passed Jan. 26, 2020, in Union Grove, Wisconsin, at the age of 94.

John F. Towne ’51 passed away June 24, 2016, in Hadley, Massachusetts, at the age of 96. John was an accomplished artist, having his work shown at the Museum of Fine Arts in Massachusetts and New York.

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John R. Claybaugh ’62 passed away July 11, 2019, in Kanohsi, Hawaii, at the age of 79. He is survived by his wife, Karle (Wotring) Claybaugh ’63.

Donald Natalizio ’62 passed away Dec. 3, 2019, at the age of 80. Donald was inducted into the Carroll Hall of Fame for football for his accomplishments playing defensive backfield. He is survived by family including his wife, Eloise (Wendell) Natalizio ’61 and brother, Natalzio ’61. Donald was preceeded in death by his father, Natalzio ’58. Donald was preceeded in death by his father, Natalzio ’58. Donald was preceeded in death by his father, Natalzio ’58.

Jane L. (Hansen) Gulbransen ’75 passed away Nov. 14, 2019, at the age of 67.

Christopher R. Brokshire ’78 passed away Nov. 29, 2019, in Panama City, Florida, at the age of 63. While at Carroll, Christopher was president of the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity and held an active role with the Carroll Players.

Janella (Van Susteren) Johnson ’79 passed away Nov. 12, 2019, in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, at the age of 62. She is survived by her sister, Linda (Van Susteren) Walker ’73.

Sandra A. Merfeld ’89 passed away August 30, 2019, at the age of 79. Sandra worked for many years in the Milwaukee County Hospital and the Milwaukee County jail system.

Jennifer “Jenna” M. Bowser ’95 passed away July 31, 2019, in Brookfield, Wisconsin, at the age of 45.

Susan D. Ocampo Brown ’99, M.Ed. ’10, senior director of Alumni Engagement, said, “We thought it would be a perfect way to be able to take that sharing of love to a different level. It is a very unique kind of once-in-a-lifetime event.”

The event attracted 31 Carroll couples from Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Illinois and Mexico. Class years spanned from 1960 to 2015. Carroll’s chapel, The Rev. Elizabeth McCord, joined by special guest and former Carroll chaplain, The Rev. Bill Humphreys, shared words of wisdom about marriage and relationships before couples renewed their vows. Carroll musicians played “Can’t Stop Falling in Love with You” by Elvis, and couples, lined up side by side under the center of the chapel, joined in with singing the song together.

“Carroll did a lot to shape and form our adult lives through the relationships we built there,” said John Harris ’76, who renewed wedding vows with his wife, Sue (Carroll) Harris’76, celebrating 43 years of marriage on June 4, 2020. “This is where we met. This is where our life and our adult work started.”

The Carroll Couples Vow Renewal Celebration on Feb. 14 marked a first for the university but had somewhat been 10 years in the making. It was 2010 when the Office of Alumni Engagement first started soliciting Carroll couples to share their stories each Valentine’s Day in written essays with tales told of “How We Met.” As staff planned for the 10th year of the story feature and realized that Valentines’ Day of 2020 would come on a Friday, they decided to invite Carroll couples with their stories back to campus for a wedding-style event, complete with a ceremony, buffet dinner, flowers, cake and a live band to spark a night of dancing. Dolores Diomaro Brown ’99, M.Ed. ’10, senior director of Alumni Engagement, said, “We thought it would be a perfect way to be able to take that sharing of love to a different level. It is a very unique kind of once-in-a-lifetime event.”
PIONEERS

But behind the scenes, Carroll sprang to life. IT staff devised efficient and innovative ways to create a digital Carroll experience. Faculty improvised broadcast studios in their homes and worked tirelessly to keep learning happening. Everyone pitched in to ensure that the essence of what it means to be a Pioneer could continue. Creativity and ingenuity kept classes running and our community connected and, in May, we celebrated our first-ever virtual commencement.

But rising to meet these new challenges has been costly. Students were forced to make sudden travel arrangements, secure needed technology and rearrange their lives. The COVID-19 disruption carried a price and continues to, as we scan the horizon for what the near future may bring.

Your support now of the Carroll Fund, the Carroll Cupboard or the Student Emergency fund can help our students cope with the very real challenges of this pandemic and help us as we continue to fulfill our mission to offer a life-changing education.

• The Carroll Fund helps to bridge the gap between the actual cost of a Carroll education and what students pay to attend.
• Carroll Cupboard is a food share program aimed at addressing food insecurity.
• The Student Emergency fund offers assistance to students dealing with financial issues related to COVID-19.

Each one is critically important to our students’ welfare and the success of our mission. Find out how you can help at carrollu.edu/giving-back/ways-to-give

RISE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE

The world changed this spring, as the shadow cast by COVID-19 darkened our world. At Carroll, the pandemic emptied our classrooms, labs, athletic fields, residence buildings and dining halls. Outwardly, our bustling, vibrant campus fell silent.

In Line

Here are just a few of the completed coloring pages from the last issue of FIRST. For a few more fun diversions, you can download a Carroll activity book at carrollu.edu/social/activity-book.

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A Civil Rights Pioneer Reflects

A true Pioneer, Howard Fuller graduated as part of one of Carroll’s first racially integrated classes in 1962. His life and career have been devoted to advocacy, and he has long served on the national stage, fighting for civil rights and educational reform. Upon his retirement this summer, the former distinguished professor of education at Marquette University sat down with us for an interview. Read the full article online at: carrollu.edu/articles/alumni/2020/07/fuller