IN A NEW LIGHT

The Klingler College reimagines how the humanities and those who study them serve the greater good.
As I reflect upon the past year, my heart is filled with gratitude. We have faced new challenges with courage and creativity. Thank you to our faculty members who taught students across multiple modalities, carried out research and engaged in transformational public-facing work. Thank you to our staff members who worked so hard to keep the enterprise going, support students and enable the whole university to continue our mission. Thank you to our students for adapting to new class experiences and modes of learning and fostering community with your fellow students, faculty and staff during a most unusual year. Thank you to our alumni and friends for your enduring support.

The Klingler College of Arts and Sciences is the foundation of Marquette University. This 2021 issue of A&S magazine illustrates our work across disciplines to create an integrated experience in the classroom and beyond. Our cover story demonstrates the power of the humanities to shape students’ lives and address grand challenges. Related stories describe the launch of our Civic Dialogues program to foster healthy conversations about our world’s most pressing problems, the capacity of popular social networks to engage students and the power of the Education Preparedness Program to create new possibilities for currently and formerly incarcerated members of our community.

We are celebrating the Ignatian Year, which commemorates the 500th anniversary of St. Ignatius’ cannonball moment that changed the course of his life and the 400th year of his canonization as a saint. This celebration provides an impetus to consider our understanding of self and world and to foster practices and habits that nurture our mutual flourishing.

A special thank you to Senior Assistant Dean Mary Minson, who retired in May 2021 after 38 years of devoted service. Through the Arts and Sciences Advising Center and across campus, Mary provided thousands of students with the guidance and resources they needed to succeed. We celebrated her career with a joyful virtual event in August. If Mary played a role in your journey, I invite you to consider making a gift to the Mary Minson Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Thank you for your active engagement with the Klingler College of Arts and Sciences. I would love to hear from you!

IGNATIAN MOMENT

And yet in the midst of our lives, of our freedom and our struggles, we have to make a radical, absolute decision. And we never know when lightning will strike us out of the blue. It may be when we least expect to be asked whether we have the absolute faith and trust to say yes.

— Rev. Karl Rahner, S.J., excerpted from The Great Church Year

We appreciate your feedback on A&S magazine. Please send all comments to the editor at sarah.koziol@marquette.edu.

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Please send all comments to the editor at sarah.koziol@marquette.edu.

@marquette.edu
The Klingler College has introduced three new majors this fall to its academically diverse program options: environmental science; statistical science; and Middle East and North Africa studies.

The environmental science major is an interdisciplinary program that complements the environmental studies major introduced in 2016. The curriculum integrates a fundamental understanding of the ecology of natural ecosystems and the processes by which humans influence, exploit, evaluate, conserve and restore their environment. Emerging career opportunities for graduates include environmental scientists, protection technicians, conservation scientists and environmental consultants, just to name a few. (See related story on p. 22.)

As the employment outlook in statistics has grown tremendously in the past 20 years, the new statistical science major will complement the Department of Mathematical and Statistics Sciences’ offerings and build upon faculty expertise in computational statistics and statistical areas to provide students with a uniquely technical analytics program. The major also satisfies a goal of the Northwestern Mutual Data Science Institute, of which Marquette is a partner, to expand Marquette’s data science program offerings.

The Middle East and North Africa studies major arose from a growing interest from students in current Arabic language and culture courses. The interdisciplinary program was developed from that course work and provides knowledge in the languages, histories, theology and cultures of this diverse area of the world. Graduates can find careers in a variety of fields including education, law, government, armed forces and international affairs.

Inside Arts and Sciences

Marquette's Master of Science in Computing program jumped to No. 6 nationally on U.S. News & World Report’s 2021 list of Best Online Master’s in Information Technology Programs. U.S. News’ rankings in this category are based on student engagement, faculty credentials and training, student services and technology, peer reputation and admissions selectivity. Marquette’s master’s program offers specializations in information assurance and cyber defense, and the computing career change opportunity.

This fall the Graduate School also launched a Master of Science in Data Science program to tackle today’s problems in the ever-growing data-driven world through theory-based and hands-on data analytics courses. Students can choose from two specializations — big data or machine learning — or complete a research-based thesis option. Visit marquette.edu and search “Graduate School degrees” for more information on both programs.

Inside Arts and Sciences

It started with the north-facing wall of Holthusen Hall transforming into a head-turning, community-impacting mural project painted by artist Mauricio Ramirez. Then the mural, Our Roots Say That We’re Sisters, inspired a podcast series of the same name. Both efforts aim to showcase the diversity, richness and complexity of Marquette’s campus and surrounding Milwaukee communities by amplifying the stories of female-identifying students, faculty, staff and alumnae of color who personify positive leadership.

Dr. Nakia Gordon, associate professor of psychology and faculty fellow in the Klingler College Dean’s Office, was the inaugural guest when the podcast was introduced this March. Gordon shared her story about growing up in Detroit and how that plays a role in who she is. “I tell my story to students exactly the way I am, because that’s the only way that I can be, and I also hope that gives them a sense that they can be exactly who they are,” Gordon says.

As the center’s director, Kim is responsible for promoting the visibility and impact of the humanities at Marquette to campus and the surrounding communities; supporting humanities faculty research and teaching, as well as undergraduate humanities research and scholarship; and securing external funding for humanities work.

The Center for the Advancement of the Humanities, which opened in 2018, was created to improve the public’s understanding of the value of the humanities — especially in thinking about complex social issues — by welcoming internationally known speakers; hosting interdisciplinary events, programs and seminars; and catalyzing innovative teaching.
DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUE
BY BRINGING TOGETHER DIVERSE VOICES, A NEW CIVIC DIALOGUES PROGRAM HOPES TO FOSTER RESPECTFUL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SOCIETY’S MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS.

BY PAULA WHEELER

The 2018 Marquette Forum, Democracy in Troubled Times, brought an expert on deliberative democracy to campus amid a hyperpolarized national political climate. As part of the visit, a campuswide deliberation was organized around the issue of immigration. “It went fine,” Dr. Amber Wichowsky says, “but it was also pretty clear that we struggled to talk about issues of political conflict.”

That dialogue kick-started the idea for a multifaceted initiative housed in the Political Science Department to focus on the teaching, practice and study of democratic deliberation. Wichowsky, associate professor of political science, is directing the newly launched Civic Dialogues program, described as an interdisciplinary hub drawing faculty, students and community partners together to explore and advance the practice of deliberative and honest exchange about pressing contemporary challenges.

Support among a politically diverse group of donors is funding a two-year pilot of the program, with allocations for a speaker series, thought-leader-in-residence and high-impact program, with allocations for a speaker series, classes, modules and even research. “In the past academic year because of limitations brought on by the pandemic, So, he spent considerable time brainstorming about different assignments for his Introductory Social Psychology class that students would find enjoyable, engaging and educational but at the same time be feasible in an online format.

He decided on incorporating something Gen Z would appreciate — TikTok.

TikTok was gaining popularity during the months of lockdown, with its short-form videos showing off users’ dancing, singing, meme-making and joke-telling skills. Howard considered how it might be useful for learning social psychology.

He developed a project in which he asked students to create TikToks that demonstrated their understanding of social psychology concepts using TikTok videos. Dr. Simon Howard also extended his creative teaching assignments to his Psychology of Racism course this past academic year. He asked student teams to create their own original playlists of TikTok videos that explore a theme covered in the course work. Students presented their playlists to the class, explaining the connecting thesis, theories and research on the psychology of racism. One group, for example, presented their “Who Am I?” playlist inspired by Stanford University psychology professor Dr. Hazel Markus’ research project of the same title. They discussed how race can be a source of meaning, belonging and motivation, and used lyrics from Solange Knowles and Vince Staples to connect to Markus’ work on identity and self.

“When students are given opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of course material in an interesting way, they seldom disappoint,” Howard says. “Based on the success of these assignments, I will be more likely to experiment with my assignments in future classes.”

Based on the success of these assignments, I will be more likely to experiment with my assignments in future classes.
Internships provide valuable skill-building opportunities but are too often unpaid, making it hard for students to invest time in them. “It’s really a matter of equity and access,” says Dr. Andrew Kunz, chair and professor of physics, who is the principal investigator for an Arthur Vining Davis Foundation grant — a two-year gift that is providing 140 students with financial support while they pursue unpaid internships. “For students who are under financial pressure, to ask them to take on an unpaid internship is a hardship.”

For Marinella Krezic, Arts ’21, who majored in cognitive science and philosophy with a minor in neuroscience, the AVDF grant allowed her to be financially compensated while taking on a prestigious internship at the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities at the Medical College of Wisconsin. The center, one of the first of its kind in the nation, was created to nurture multidisciplinary approaches to explore the challenging ethical questions that have arisen amid the scientific advances and changes in the health care delivery system. The MCW internship allows students to engage deeply with the scientific, philosophical and societal issues at stake. Krezic received three credits for working approximately 140 hours over the course of the internship. Thanks to the AVDF grant, she also received a stipend of $1,600. “When you’re in college, any help you can get is great,” she says of the compensation, which she plans on using toward paying off college loans.

During the internship, Krezic participated in grand rounds with physicians and residents, researched how doctors and scientists approach bioethical quandaries, giving her an idea of what a potential future career in the field of bioethics might entail, which will help her as she considers graduate education options.

“My courses and this internship were all geared toward the Jesuit principle of cura personalis,” Krezic says. “It’s truly been about learning to care for the whole person.”

The AVDF grant also allowed the college to hire Alexis Lockett-Glover as internship coordinator to help students prepare for internships and to teach a Career Ready Internship with Professional Development seminar.

For Marinella Krezic, Arts ’21, interned at MCW’s Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities her senior year, earning a stipend through an Arthur Vining Davis Foundation grant.

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A TURN TO INTERN

ARTHUR Vining DAVIS FOUNDATION GRANT MAKES INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES MORE ACCESSIBLE AND APPEALING.

BY JENNIFER ANDERSON

LEAVING A LEGACY

REMEMBERING FATHER DORAN’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORKS OF PHILOSOPHER BERNARD LONERGAN.

BY LAUREN (HERB) SCHUDDSON, GRAD ’97


Father Doran, Grad ’75, was well known within the Klingler College and the Department of Theology and served as founding director of Marquette’s Campus Ministry from 1970 to 1972. He was considered one of the most gifted Catholic theologians in recent times, building upon the philosophies and theories of Rev. Bernard Lonergan, S.J., a Canadian Jesuit priest, philosopher and theologian whose 1957 book, Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, was the basis for Father Doran’s dissertation and his later quest to chronicle and champion Lonergan’s work.

Since 2006, he served as director of the Marquette Lonergan Project and was the general editor of 25 volumes of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, the last of which was published in 2019. Dr. Joseph Ogbonnaya, associate professor of theology, now directs the project.

Father Doran completed his doctorate at Marquette and contributed to Father Lonergan’s studies by including psychical conversion with Lonergan’s intellectual, moral and religious conversions. Father Lonergan later endorsed his theses as a correct understanding of his thoughts and Father Doran’s psychical conversion as an important complement to his works, according to Ogbonnaya.

Dr. Danielle Nussberger, associate professor of theology, says, “In addition to leaving us the legacy of his monumental scholarly achievements, Father Doran modeled for us what it means to teach and minister to others with the utmost humility, generosity and compassion. The indelible impact of his mentorship will be felt for generations to come.”

Marquette’s unique contributions to the Lonergan enterprise can be found at bernardlonergan.com and lonerganresource.com. Also visit lonerganresource.org for the Lonergan Society at Marquette University, a student organization connected with the project.

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MAKING A PLACE A HOME
LIFE EXPERIENCES INSPIRE DR. SERGIO GONZÁLEZ TO STUDY THE STRIVING OF LATINX PEOPLE TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN THE MIDWEST.

BY MARTINA IBAÑEZ-BALDOR, COMM '15

Growing up as a first-generation Mexican American, Dr. Sergio González has always wondered why his family settled in Wisconsin. This curiosity has led to a professional dedication to the study of the development of Latinx communities in the Midwest.

“I wanted to study something that really mattered to me, and I was really interested in how, in spite of what sometimes feels like insurmountable barriers, Latinxs have found ways to not only survive but to thrive,” González says. (Latinx is a gender-neutral term.)

González, assistant professor of Latinx studies, is currently collaborating with scholars on an interdisciplinary project, Building Sustainable Worlds: Latinx Placemaking in the Midwest. An Andrew W. Mellon Foundation/ Humanities Without Walls-funded project, it examines the significance of Latinx efforts in building socially and economically sustainable communities across the region. Over the last few years, scholars of Midwestern Latinx communities have met at HWW-participating universities to share ideas, interact with community groups and conduct research that will culminate in a book to be published next spring through the University of Illinois Press.

For González’s part, he wrote a chapter on the 1980s sanctuary movement in the Midwest, studying the ways in which communities provided sanctuary spaces to support Latinxs in crisis, such as Central American refugees fleeing civil war in their countries and those fleeing deportation in the U.S. “It became quite clear that it’s been very difficult for Latinx communities to build sustainable spaces in the Midwest for a number of different reasons. Oftentimes, it’s difficult to not be seen as workers but to be seen as human beings,” González says. “This study dives into those complexities but at the same time also highlights the ways in which, in spite of those difficulties, Latinx peoples have created spaces for themselves in this region.”

One of the goals of the book is simple: to change the perception of Latinx people in the Midwest. “They are not outsiders, they are not aliens, they are integral members of the communities that they call home,” González says. The book emphasizes that although Latinx communities in the Midwest have certainly faced hardships and difficulties, there are also stories of joy, accomplishment and prosperity.

This past spring semester, González taught a new class that he developed called Midwest Latinx Communities, a part of Marquette’s new Latinx Studies program. The class was so popular that it had a waiting list. “Latinx students on campus are hungry to learn more about themselves, their families and their place within this region,” González says. “It was the perfect opportunity to take a lot of the work that we’ve been doing in this [Latinx Placemaking] project and put it into practice.”

González was happy to see that students were, without prompting, coming to the same questions that he and his colleagues had been asking as academics. “It’s a reminder that the questions we’re asking are not highfalutin academic discourse,” he says. “They are questions that people are really interested in and matter to them.”

PREDICTING PTSD RISKS
A MACHINE-LEARNING ALGORITHM AIMS TO WARN PEER MENTORS BEFORE MILITARY VETERANS ENGAGE IN HARMFUL BEHAVIOR.

BY TRACY STAEDTER

“As data and computer scientists, it’s always impactful when you can solve real-world problems rather than working on theoretical issues,” says Dr. Praeuen Madiraju, associate professor of computer science.

Madiraju is doing that by addressing one of the biggest problems facing military veterans: post-traumatic stress disorder. High levels of PTSD symptoms are associated with an increase in risky behaviors that include alcohol abuse, aggression and violence. In some cases, these symptoms lead to harming others, self-harm and even suicide. About 18 military veterans die by suicide each day, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

A large multidisciplinary team, led by Dr. Iqbal Ahamed, professor and chair of the Department of Computer Science, included Madiraju; Medical College of Wisconsin colleagues Drs. Zeno Franco and Katinka Hoozer; and student researchers. The team developed a new machine-learning algorithm for an app they created a few years ago for the national community-based veteran support organization Dryhootch. (“Hootch” is military jargon for a safe place to sleep during combat.) The app, called Quick Reaction Force, connects Dryhootch clients with peer mentors who monitor a vet’s wellness and offer support.

Previous analysis, they say, has taken a broad, either-or approach, categorizing individuals as being “at risk” or not at risk.” Madiraju says that the extra layer of machine learning will aid early intervention by alerting the Quick Reaction Force app on the mentor’s phone that a veteran’s answers have crossed the high-risk threshold. Although the machine-learning algorithm has not yet been tested with Dryhootch clients, lab-based analysis indicates that the algorithm was able to make accurate predictions as early in the program as week four.

Ollie Winsted, executive director of Great Lakes Dryhootch, sees the app and its ability to flag high-risk individuals as an important component of healing. He’s found that because there isn’t a paper trail, mobile apps allow veterans to open up and make themselves more vulnerable. Mentors can engage with their mentees in meaningful ways, having text-based conversations that may occur in short bursts over several days, instead of happening once per week for an hour, as in therapy sessions.

“You build trust,” he says.
THE STORIES THAT WE TELL OURSELVES — AND OTHERS

DUELING NARRATIVES ABOUT RACE AFFECT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BLACK IN AMERICA.

BY LORA STRUM

For years, whiteness has been the lens through which we see the world, says Dr. Cedric Burrows, associate professor of English and author of Rhetorical Crossover: The Black Presence in White Culture. There’s music, and then there’s urban music. There’s film, and then there’s Black films. There’s history, and then there’s Black history. “Cultures that aren’t white are considered niche,” Burrows explains. “Learning about them is something you can do if you want, but it’s usually seen as an elective.” Exposing the many ways Black culture is unique was critical to Rhetorical Crossover’s key effect: to examine music, education, film and social movements to argue that elements of Blackness are reinterpreted into acceptable narratives for predominately white audiences. These narratives affect everything society does, including how it fights for racial justice, Burrows adds. He references a video he found on social media shortly after a white supremacist drove a car into a group of anti-racist protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia. The posted comments denounced the white Klansman. The entered comments decried how marginalized and miserable the Black community was during the Jim Crow era, yet family members and Black residents revealed to him how vibrant the Black community was at that time.

"When Black people express natural emotions, it is often seen as unusual or threatening," Burrows states. "What we perceive as victimization is the way the world is structured. The way society is structured. The way race is structured. It's not about how we perceive racism; it's about how society perceives us."

"We tell ourselves the stories that are told to us. We’re not taught to question those narratives," he says. "We’re taught to accept them without question. And that’s what makes the stories that are told to us so powerful."

As climate change increases temperatures across the globe, scientists are concerned with how these increases, no matter how slight, may affect the populations of vital organisms that live on our planet. Dr. Lisa Petrella, associate professor of biological sciences, is one such scientist, and she’s now armed with a $459,000 National Institutes of Health grant to investigate how species regulate their reproductive processes when under the environmental stress of higher temps.

Petrella is studying C. elegans, a soil-inhabiting, transparent, 1-millimeter-long worm whose rapid reproduction can be observed under a microscope. "I am interested in the question of why we have so many species that are producing offspring in these stressful conditions," she says. "I want to understand what is happening in these species to help us understand what is happening in our own species."

"I think that it’s crucial for us to understand how these species are adapting to stress," she adds. "Because if we don’t understand how these species are adapting, we may not be able to adapt ourselves to the same stress."
Since 2010, Drs. Heather Hlavka and Sameena Mulla reported to the Milwaukee County Courts to research the role forensic science plays in sexual assault trials. After analyzing more than 600 hearings and trials, their findings revealed that the evidence — fingerprints, hairs and fibers, blood and other bodily fluids, analyzed for DNA — rarely determines a defendant's guilt or innocence, yet it often reinforces old stereotypes of sexual violence.

The public perception of forensic evidence and the influence such evidence has on the outcome of sexual assault cases contribute to what legal scholars call the "CSI effect." In the popular courtroom television drama, it's often the last, crucial piece of evidence that solves a case. In reality, however, forensic evidence is either unreliable or not found at all. In fact, of the 680 hearings the researchers analyzed, 34 cases went to full trials and only seven of those showed documented injuries during the forensic examination; just five contained DNA identification.

Hlavka, associate professor of social and cultural sciences, and Mulla, now a faculty member at Emory University, detailed these findings and other revelatory themes in sexual assault cases in the book Bodies in Evidence: Race, Gender and Science in Sexual Assault Adjudication.

"The public generally believes that when you have that kind of evidence, it's going to resolve a question of guilt or innocence, and what you see is that it doesn't," Hlavka says. "The prosecution always assumes that the jury members are like, 'Where's the DNA evidence?'

For that reason, prosecutors feel the need to address the absence of evidence. Those disclosures, Hlavka and Mulla argue, raise credibility questions and reinforce myths about rape in the courtroom. The notions that victims are lying or to blame because of what they were wearing, for example, are cultural constructs that have been challenged in courts since the 1970s. Although the old law that required corroborative evidence in sexual assault cases has since been removed, forensic evidence is often used to uphold such stereotypes, Hlavka says.

In their book, the researchers explore how forensic science not only in courtrooms but in many other sectors of social life and in the creation of forensic and objectivity over lived experience and knowledge.
Transformative Teaching

The Education Preparedness Program is revealing its great promise — shaping future leaders to better understand the effects of incarceration and providing a prison-to-college pathway through academic opportunities and community partnerships.

By Diane M. Bacha

In the spring of his junior year at Marquette, Dan Brophy, Arts ’20, then a student government leader pursuing majors in philosophy and political science, learned about an intriguing philosophy class focused on mass incarceration. His classmates would be a mix of students from Marquette — people pretty much like him, typically from Midwestern middle-class suburbs — and students from a local community college who had once been incarcerated.

He signed up, thinking this would be unlike any other class he had taken. Turns out, he underestimated that expectation. “I came in one person,” Brophy now says of the experience, “and came out a completely different person, both as a student and as a human being.”
It was a huge experience in humanization and in understanding other individuals and perspectives that I’ve just never understood before.”

— DAN BROPHY, ARTS ’20

It’s not an uncommon reaction among those involved with Marquette’s “blended classes,” which since 2015 have brought students from currently and formerly incarcerated communities (CFI) together with Marquette students who have been incarcerated. The team behind EPP sees this effort as a natural extension of Marquette’s Jesuit mission. It promises to transform Marquette’s impact on Milwaukee and potentially transform the way future leaders think about the carceral system. As Brophy’s story attests, that transformation starts at the personal level. The blended-class experience forced Brophy to look at his privilege more closely and upended his perceptions of the criminal legal system. He’s now pursuing a career in public policy with a particular interest in social justice and incarceration; he sees a law degree in his future. “When we talk about that course, anybody from that course, the words you’ll hear come up a lot are ‘humanity’ and ‘humanizing,’” Brophy says. “And that’s really what it was. It was a huge experience in humanization and in understanding other individuals and perspectives that I’ve just never understood before.”

This is by design, say the course instructors. While conversations about mass incarceration can happen in many settings, “Higher education has an opportunity to bring people together who don’t typically interact,” says Dr. Theresa Tobin, Arts ’97, associate dean of student development for the Graduate School. Along with graduate students Marisola Xhelili Ciaccio and Drew Durnane, and colleagues from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s Marquette-supported program, Tobin launched the blended classes and continues to co-instruct them. “I love the space to get people together to grapple with who we are, how we live, what that means, how we dehumanize each other—and how we dehumanize humane approaches in new ways. This happens through intentional efforts to create a respectful, intimate and thoughtful environment,” she says.

This happens through intentional efforts to create a respectful, intimate and thoughtful environment into healing practices. It’s not an uncommon experience for former incarcerated individuals to be devalued that way. I’m going to fight more fervently because I know from the people I talked to and the friends I made in that class that this is something no one should go through. “When I look at the people I’m going to be defending, I think of the people I was in class with,” he says. He remembers their stories, sometimes told through tears, of enduring solitary confinement, navigating prison hierarchies, trying to find work after reentering the community. “I don’t want to force someone to be devalued that way. I’m going to fight more fervently because I know from the people I talked to and the friends I made in that class that this is something no one should go through.”

Milwaukee’s mass incarceration challenges have been well-documented. The 53206 ZIP code has the highest incarceration rate in the state and, by some measures, the nation. This wasn’t going unnoticed in the Marquette academic community. While Tobin and Xhelili Ciaccio were building support for the blended classes, others were discussing ways to involve Marquette in a community-wide effort to address the inequities facing Milwaukee’s CFI population.

This included Dr. Darren WheeLOCK, associate professor of social work, criminology and law studies and a sociologist focusing on the criminal justice system. Well-versed in the sobering statistics about incarceration and reentry rates for communities of color, WheeLOCK had been in discussions about bringing an existing prison-to-education initiative to Marquette. Smith had been interested in addressing carceral challenges before arriving at Marquette to direct CURTO. The two started working together, envisioning CURTO tapping campus and community resources to deliver services such as tutoring and counseling. When they learned about the blended classes, it didn’t take long to connect the dots. The two approaches — humanities-based classroom experiences and “wraparound” support services — came together.

Xhelili Ciaccio, Tobin, Smith and WheeLOCK constitute the core EPP team. The concept behind EPP is twofold. Marquette will offer a humanities-based curriculum for CFI students as part of a regional consortium of 12 accredited academic institutions, with credits transferable among them. An educational readiness hub, hosted at CURTO, will use both campus and community resources to fill gaps in the CFI students’ education and daily lives. “It’s take some time,” says Smith, “but we have an opportunity to create a model here in Milwaukee that will be an ideal example of how to build a successful prison-to-college pipeline.”

The blended classes, meanwhile, have evolved into something unique to Marquette, now with “blended instruction.” Those touched by incarceration in some way — justice-impacted people — are invited to plan and facilitate classes. Watkins is now a co-instructor whose reading list, “writings from and about the inside,” includes works by Nelson Mandela, Nikki Giovanni, Primo Levi. The Roots and a friend whose essay about the carceral experience has become “a fixture of the class,” according to Xhelili Ciaccio. “If I were to encapsulate all of it,” says Xhelili Ciaccio, commenting on both the classes and the larger program, “it’s about transforming punitive practices into healing practices.”

Watkins sees in the blended classes a powerful opportunity to do just that by moving conversations about the carceral system into new spaces. “It’s freedom-affirming to see more returning citizens participate in these classes. The conversations we once had amongst ourselves, we now have in the halls of academia, with the privileged class. And it is respected,” he says. He’s eager to watch today’s students make a difference in years to come. “The conversation has got to start somewhere. Why not in the halls of academia? Why not with people who were formerly incarcerated? Because those who are closest to the problem are closest to the solution.”
As the newest member of the Humanities Without Walls consortium, the Klingler College reimagines how the humanities and those who graduate from its disciplines influence the greater good.

By Lauren Sieben

It might have seemed like a career departure when English doctoral student Amanda Zastrow tackled a fellowship in Marquette’s Office of Research and Innovation, the department tasked with advancing the university’s research and innovation initiatives. Yet the literature scholar settled into her assignments, creating an undergraduate research website and developing materials to promote the 707 Hub’s offerings.

Zastrow found the shift “impactful,” but the fellowship had greater intentions: “It brought to my attention the ways in which the skills I already have, due to my humanities training, can be used in a variety of fields that aren’t necessarily humanities-based,” she says.

Zastrow, who is considering careers in and out of academia, spent three weeks this summer in another fellowship; this one offered speakers from diverse career fields, resume-writing workshops and exploration of career resources.

“This fellowship stressed that as humanities students we already possess so many wonderful skills that will aid us in almost any job we might be interested in — that we have what it takes already,” Zastrow says. “We can do so much with a Ph.D. in the humanities, and that was really refreshing to hear.”

Data from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences indicates that humanities doctorates are less likely to have secured a full-time job or postdoctoral position upon graduation compared with doctoral candidates are interested in exploring other paths.

“Fifty percent of Ph.D.s who graduate end up in careers outside of the academy,” says Margaret Nettlesheim Hoffmann, Grad ‘13, a history doctoral student and associate director of career diversity for Humanities Without Walls at Marquette. “It’s just not something that we talk about, because there’s been this cultural norm that the only ‘real’ outcome is to get a tenure-track position.”

A laser focus on faculty positions for doctoral graduates has persisted for decades, says Dr. Theresa Tobin, Arts ’97, associate dean of student development for the Graduate School, and while the Klingler College encourages academic careers, it is now intentionally providing tools to graduate students to consider futures in other professions as well.

“Nobody ever talked to me about what I might want to do with a Ph.D. in philosophy. It was part of the culture that you would try to find a job as a full-time professor,” Tobin says. “The work we’re doing at Marquette is intended to support students better in discerning and training for careers open to them and to be honest and intentional about the fact that not all students pursue or get academic jobs or necessarily want them.”

Expanding opportunities for humanities students In 2018 Nettlesheim Hoffmann worked with Tobin and Dr. Doug Woods, dean of the Graduate School, to
coordinate a career symposium, panel discussion and weeklong career diversity boot camp for graduate students across campus.

The events have allowed graduate students to hear from doctoral graduates in nonacademic jobs, learn how to translate their skills into resumes and cover letters, and go on site visits to employers including Northwestern Mutual and the Social Security Administration.

Nettesheim Hoffmann (left) was inspired to coordinate the events after being selected as a fellow for Humanities Without Walls, a consortium of universities that fosters collaborative research and explores the contributions of humanities in the world. In 2017 she attended HWW’s three-week intensive summer workshop focused on career diversity in the humanities. Afterwards, she set out to bring what she learned back to Marquette.

“It was a transformative moment in my life because it wasn’t just about me. It was: How can I bring these tools to my colleagues at Marquette?” she says. At the time, “There was no real structured programming at Marquette to help Ph.D. students think about their career development.”

HWW leadership took notice of Nettesheim Hoffmann’s work. In 2020 Marquette became the first university added to the consortium since 2014 and was awarded a $13.6 million subaward of HWW’s $55 million renewal grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Now, Marquette gets “a seat at the table to be a part of the projects at other consortium-partner universities that fosters collaborative research and explores the contributions of humanities in the world,” she says.

Career diversity events have also fostered career development opportunities for graduate students, and Marquette students. Three years later when she attended one of the career diversity symposiums, Xhelili Ciaccio began to see how she could grow that project into something bigger.

“I started thinking about it as a career possibility for the first time after attending these workshops and hearing that it wouldn’t be a failure to redirect myself to do the work that I have already been passionately doing, as opposed to seeing it as a side thing,” she says.

The project was recently folded into the Education Preparedness Program, a new Mellon-funded Marquette initiative that supports students affected by incarceration, and Xhelili Ciaccio now serves as the program’s associate director (see related story on p. 14).

“Sometimes there is an assumption that various serious challenges we face in the world — the coronavirus pandemic, new technologies, racial disparities, or disruptions in the nitrogen or phosphorous cycle of the Earth — are simply technical or scientific issues,” says Dr. Heidi Bostic, dean of the Klingler College. “Yet, we know at the heart of all of these challenges lie the basic questions of who we are and how we should live. For that reason, the humanities and broad liberal arts are crucial to addressing grand challenges.”

From side project to career focus

Philosophy doctoral student Mansola Xhelili Ciaccio, who attended the first HWW career diversity events at Marquette, has been forging her own path in academia ever since her undergraduate years.

“As an immigrant and first-generation college student, I struggled with imagining an authentic future for myself in academic philosophy,” she says. “I felt an alienation from what I wanted to study, how I wanted to study it and the things that moved me internally.”

A typical doctoral program is often tightly framed around course work that doesn’t leave room for students to apply humanities principles in practical ways, Xhelili Ciaccio says. So in 2015, she started working on a project to teach blended courses to both incarcerated students and Marquette students.

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“I get to be part of a team that shapes that vision, which is so exciting,” Xhelili Ciaccio says. “It didn’t start out that big. It started out as a class.”

Career diversity events have also fostered collaborations between graduate students. At the first boot camp, Nettesheim Hoffmann organized, a master’s nursing student and a doctoral candidate in history became inspired to create a new history class for nursing undergraduates that explains the history of racial segregation in Milwaukee and the ways institutionalized racism affects patient care.

“That came about because of the boot camp,” Nettesheim Hoffmann says. “They had a chance to tear down those disciplinary silos and recognize that history can really inform the work that we do in our nursing courses.”

Another student with a master’s in Spanish uncovered an unexpected career path after attending a site visit to the Social Security Administration office. During the visit, she learned about job opportunities in government for people with advanced language skills. A few months later, she landed a job with the Social Security Administration.

“She told us she would have never applied or realized that career path was open to her without having that experience,” Nettesheim Hoffmann says.

For Nettesheim Hoffmann, spearheading career diversity efforts at Marquette has shaped her own professional plans.

“Having this experience and support from our dean and our faculty members saying, ‘OK, Maggie, here’s the money, go run with this and see what you can do’ — that really empowered me,” she says.

Nettesheim Hoffmann says she might pursue a career in higher education administration, but she knows for certain she’s not planning to become a tenure-track professor.

“At HWW we often say we’re career agnostics,” she says. “We don’t really care [what you do] so long as you find something that’s energizing and makes you feel as if you’re contributing something to the world”

Faculty are “plugging in”

Aside from boot camps and events tailored to students, humanities faculty across departments are also working to integrate career diversity and preparation in their own curricula and course work.

In the doctoral programs for English, history, philosophy and religious studies, career diversity internships and fellowships supported by the Graduate School offer practical work experience beyond traditional research assistantships. University leaders are also in conversation about potential changes to the structure of humanities doctoral programs.

For now, the momentum among faculty — and from the growth of initiatives like Humanities Without Walls at Marquette — is promising, Tobin says. But it’s just the beginning.

“We need Ph.D.-level humanities training in many places in society, including higher education and also in government, law, business and community,” she says. “We are working to support students in exploring career options that are meaningful to them and help them develop skills to pursue those, whatever they may be,” she says.
PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

The Klingler College cultivates faculty strength in ecology and research while establishing its new environmental science program.

By John Blum

From tropical rain forests to temperate forests to prairie grasslands, Klingler College ecology and evolutionary biology faculty travel near and far to understand the complex interrelationships between living organisms and their physical environments. Over the last decade at Marquette, there’s been a steady drumbeat of interest in all types of academic investigations into the environment. A critical mass of student interest, for instance, led to the creation of an interdisciplinary environmental studies major, one that examines political, social, economic and ethical dimensions of environmental issues.

That student interest, together with several relatively recent faculty hires in the Department of Biological Sciences, led the university to approve an environmental sciences major for fall 2021, a STEM-intensive program that includes course work in biology, chemistry, physics, math, statistics and data sciences, with elective crossovers to environmental engineering.

These developments, alongside an expanding portfolio of faculty research, signal the Klingler College is making its mark in a field grappling with the health and survival of our environment.

At a National Science Foundation-funded ecological research site in the Cascade mountains of Oregon, Marquette biology students map and measure trees in old-growth forests to determine what factors — such as microclimate, soil chemistry and topography — influence survival and growth rates.

Taking care of the environment “is really important for the Jesuit mission,” Schnitzer reminds us.
Over the last decade, there’s been a steady drumbeat of interest in all types of academic investigations into the environment.

Lianas’ biomass resides in its leaves, not wood, and wood stores more carbon for a much longer time. If not as much carbon is being sequestered, climate change may accelerate because these tropical forests currently store 28 to 30 percent of the Earth’s carbon. An infestation of lianas would compound this problem, and that’s what has been occurring in tropical forests around the world. Schnitzer’s field sites in Panama have jumped from 32 percent infested in 1968 to 75 percent infested in 2007. Scientists aren’t yet sure exactly what is causing the infestation — drought, disturbance, elevated CO2 and nitrogen deposition are possible culprits — causing the infestation — drought, disturbance, elevated CO2 and nitrogen deposition are possible culprits — allowing lianas to colonize newly opened spaces faster.

In fact, Schnitzer’s recent NSF grant will allow him to test the notion that the lianas maintain this tree diversity by suppressing the growth of dominant tree species, which better tolerate shade, to allow for the survival and coexistence of diverse, much-light-oriented subordinate trees.

At his Panamanian experiment site, Schnitzer has set up equally sized plots where he has removed all the lianas, which he can then compare with an equivalent number of control plots that still retain their lianas. The site comprises about 30,000 trees and 300 different species, giving him ample opportunities to compare changes in tree density richness, diversity and composition with and without lianas. At a nearby 124-acre observation site, the Schnitzer Lab has been tracking the fates of 61,500 lianas since 2007. Having spent the last two years updating the census, Schnitzer feels that the data are now finally refined enough that his team can soon publish findings about those changes to the lianas over the last 10-plus years.

Schnitzer’s lianas ecological work looks to answer the following questions in two broad areas. First, what explains species coexistence, and what mechanisms allow for diversity to be maintained? “Are there specific mechanisms that produce these diverse communities, or is it just random drift — species come, species go?” Second, what explains the distribution of organisms? “Is it biotic interactions — the interplay among the living creatures in an ecosystem such as animals, plants and bacteria? Or is there an alignment with abiotic factors, such as different combinations of water, soil nutrients and sunlight?”

This summer Schnitzer received a prestigious Fulbright Scholar Award. The award will allow him to spend time at Wageningen University in the Netherlands, where he and his colleagues will combine efforts to understand how the tropical forests might be reaching a tipping point in transitioning from being tree-dominated to liana-dominated — especially in terms of species diversity and carbon loss — and its potentially harmful impact on climate change.

Fire’s effects on plant-pollinator interactions

Dr. Joseph LaManna, assistant professor of biological sciences, tackles problems complementary to Schnitzer’s work. But whereas Schnitzer has been navigating the tropical rain forests, LaManna has been hiking among the temperate forests.

LaManna sees “two fronts” to his ecological research: biodiversity and carbon sequestration. He looks at how species interact and form communities across food-chain levels: from microbes in the soil to plants and trees, insects, birds and mammals. And in his research into forest ecosystem dynamics, he’s interested in how species’ interactions influence the amount of carbon stored in a forest and how quickly that forest carbon is turning over.

His research methodologies range from experiments and observational studies in the field to powerful quantitative analyses that allow him to crunch the numbers of extremely large data sets. His analytics on the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survival data set — which provided data for nearly 300,000 individual birds over 16 years from more than 600 bird-banding stations — were instrumental in understanding how West Nile virus affected different bird species. And his work with the data supplied by the Smithsonian Center for Tropical Science Forces — which provided data for nearly 300,000 individual birds over 16 years from more than 600 bird-banding stations — were instrumental in understanding how predators, pathogens and parasites maintain biodiversity by limiting abundances of dominant species.

He recently teamed up with other scientists to research the effect that western wildfires have had on plant-pollinator interactions. Those results showed that the right kind of fires — those of mixed intensity, not the “scorched earth,” high-intensity fires — can result in greater abundances of both plants and pollinators. Findings like these are being used to establish best land-management practices, such as controlled burns.
PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

The new Environmental Science program prepares students to understand a growing list of contemporary environmental concerns—the affects drought and wildfires have on insects and plants, and larvae’s role in forest tree diversity, for example.

Current NSF funding will allow LaManna to convene panels of experts to come to a consensus on one process for maintaining plant diversity. If too many plants of the same species grow too closely together, many will die off because of shared diseases and intense competition—and these deaths allow other types of plants to move in, thereby increasing diversity. But it’s not yet known how significant this is for overall plant diversity.

At field sites near Dousman and Spring Green, Wisconsin, Lemoine has set up rainout shelters that let him impose different drought conditions on prairie grasses such as little bluestem and sideoats grama. He can then track key physiological data about the grasses: their ability to absorb nutrients from the soil, disturbances to their photosynthesis capabilities, chlorophyll levels and more.

He then looks at how herbivore insects—such as grasshoppers—respond to drought and affect the ecosystem. “The role of insects in U.S. grasslands and their responses to extreme drought are poorly understood,” says Lemoine. Although we might be most familiar with photographs of swarms, or “outbreak species,” there was a lot of research into drought and water loss—but not so much on “the trophic levels above the grass, the insects.” From there, he chose to pursue the question: “Is there a specific trait that dictates how grasslands respond to drought?”

With an overarching interest in how climate change affects species’ interactions, Lemoine focused his interests as a postdoctoral fellow in a grasslands lab in the vast, desert-like plains of eastern Colorado, where he worked to establish, the groups look to set pathways to diversity. These workshops, to be held at Marquette, will be run by Drs. Chelsea Cook, Tony Gambite and Chris Marshall, and associate professor of biological sciences Dr. Krassi Hristova, and also can be found in nearly every department in the Klingler College.

For Schnitzer, the Klingler College’s robust assemblage of ecology researchers coupled with the new environmental science major really boosts Marquette’s bona fides. “Marquette is building its assemblage of ecology researchers coupled with the Klingler College. Constructively relating theology, the natural and social sciences, and ethics provides students with a more comprehensive understanding of their world. Schnitzer hopes that interdisciplinary environmental science studies will strengthen in the Klingler College. Constructively relating theology, the natural and social sciences, and ethics provides students with a more comprehensive understanding of their world.

Schaefer sees “a tremendous promise for sharing with our students that, hopefully, will inspire them in their professions to care about and for the Earth community.”

Schaefer, Grad ’94, points to data from the Pew Research Center in which more than 80 percent of people throughout the world self-identify with a religion or spirituality. Even in an age of secular institutions, a strong majority still relate to the world through faith-based spirituality.

“All world religions have traditions upon which to draw for valuing the natural world and motivating believers to live responsibly within Earth,” says Schaefer. Throughout her scholarship, Schaefer has sought to retrieve these faith traditions for motivating acceptance of moral responsibility for conserving species and the flourishing of ecosystems. She pioneered research in patristic and medieval creation theologies and eventually published three books and many articles on these themes in theological and conservation science journals. Schaefer hopes that interdisciplinary environmental science studies will strengthen in the Klingler College. Constructively relating theology, the natural and social sciences, and ethics provides students with a more comprehensive understanding of their world.

Schaefer has contributed through her research and leadership in cultivating an interdisciplinary environmental ethics minor in 2001 and an environmental studies major in 2016.

For decades, the Klingler College has vested Ignatian spirituality and the Catholic theological tradition with the task of informing a holistic ecological stewardship. Schaefer has contributed through her research and leadership in cultivating an interdisciplinary environmental ethics minor in 2001 and an environmental studies major in 2016.

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She notes the progress Catholic theologians, the church magisterium and other religious leaders have made on this front since she began working on environmental policy issues in the 1980s. In more recent years, caring for the Earth has become a cornerstone of modern Catholic social teaching as evidenced by Pope Francis’ 2015 watershed encyclical, Laudato Si’, On Care for Our Common Home. Schaefer hopes that interdisciplinary environmental science studies will strengthen in the Klingler College. Constructively relating theology, the natural and social sciences, and ethics provides students with a more comprehensive understanding of their world.

Schaefer retired from the university in May 2021 after more than 25 years of service and is continuing her interdisciplinary interests through Marquette’s Center for Peacemaking and Justice Studies. “My students have been delighted to find faith principles for motivating the kind of behavior we should be demonstrating toward one another, other species, ecological systems and the biosphere of Earth,” she says. In the theological roots of the Jesuit liberal arts education, Schaefer sees “a tremendous promise for sharing with our students that, hopefully, will inspire them in their professions to care about and for the Earth community.”

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By Paula Wheeler

Amid a thriving law practice, Burke Scholar alumna Brittany Lopez Naleid commits time to support domestic abuse survivors.

When she first arrived at Marquette as a scholar of the selective and service-oriented Burke Scholarship Program, Brittany Lopez Naleid, Arts ’07, says, she was not at all savvy about the city. She’d spent her teen years in a suburb just a few miles north, but driving downtown to move into McCormick Hall on Marquette’s urban campus “was a totally new experience.”

What wasn’t new for Naleid was community service, which is a requirement baked into a Burke Scholar’s college years and a hallmark of Marquette’s Catholic, Jesuit education. In high school, she regularly carved out time to help others — tutoring students and volunteering weekly at Sojourner Truth House to provide respite child care for domestic abuse survivors.

Today, as a seasoned attorney, Naleid still helps such survivors, but in a very different way: securing legal restraining orders, preparing abuse victims for court and handling their appeals.

This is not Naleid’s job. She works full time at the Milwaukee law firm Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren, assisting employer clients with legal issues from wrongful termination and employment discrimination cases to occupational safety, shareholder disputes and non-compete agreements.

Her work on behalf of domestic abuse survivors is a part of her firm’s pro bono program, and it’s done on her own time. “To help a survivor through the injunction process is maybe 10 to 15 hours of my time,” says Naleid. “That’s a really small amount to, hopefully, give something to someone that is really valuable to them to move their life forward in a positive way, and get out of what is generally an awful situation.”

It was during her time at Marquette that Naleid’s interests in service and the law crossed paths. Her community and campus-based service projects included caring for small children at Penfield Children’s Center, coaching sports and mentoring middle schoolers at Milwaukee’s United Community Center, and participating in Midnight Run and a Marquette Action Program trip. “Marquette wasn’t just about taking classes and learning,” she says. “It was about improving as a whole and recognizing what’s around you, who is around you, your level of privilege and what you should be doing with that. That had a huge impact.”

Her sophomore year, Naleid began volunteering as a victim/witness advocate at the Milwaukee County Courthouse, where her role was to ease victim and witness anxiety about appearing in court. Most arrived with many questions more logistical than legal: “People want to know what the room is going to look like ahead of time. They want to know where to sit,” says Naleid. “If the defendant was in jail, it was, ‘Is he going to be able to come talk to me? Will he be wearing handcuffs?’”

The experience helped cement Naleid’s plan to get her law degree. Through the Wisconsin Bar Association’s diversity clerkship program — for which she currently chairs the selection committee — she landed a summer clerkship at Reinhart. There, she noticed even senior attorneys devoting time to pro bono work and realized that she could apply her legal skills to support underserved communities.

Naleid’s volunteerism extends to the Milwaukee Justice Center, a project co-staffed by Marquette Law School students who provide free legal advice alongside practicing attorneys. She also serves on the board for SHARP Literacy, whose executive director nominated her as a 2021 Milwaukee Business Journal 40 Under 40 honoree. When she was selected, Naleid says, she was “so excited, really surprised. It was really flattering.”

Ask this working mom of two young children how she balances work, family and a strong commitment to community service, and she offers sage advice gained early in her career: “If you want to be good at your job, a good friend and family member, and do good in the community, you can’t be all three of those things every single day. You have to accept prioritizing one or two of those things at a time.”
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