

# NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

*magazine*

SPRING 2019

## **A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY**

This year, the Class of 1969 returned to campus to celebrate their 50th reunion.

## **STUDENTS ON THE SIDELINES**

Medical and health professions students practice sports medicine by assisting team docs on the field.

# VANCOUVER RISING

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Nearly two decades after the university headed west, NYIT-Vancouver has two locations, five degrees, and a community that is adding to the legacy of the city.



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## DEAR FRIENDS,

Offering access to opportunity to all deserving students is part of the mission of New York Institute of Technology. But what does it mean?

In some ways, it means providing them with an array of resources that include responsive faculty and staff, technology-fueled programs that lead to rewarding careers, and a campus-wide infrastructure that empowers our community of doers, makers, and innovators to reinvent the future. But we must first ensure that our students can afford a college education.

That is why we invest more than \$50 million each year to make certain our students receive financial aid that meets their needs. That includes those students who need financial assistance to go to college but are not in an economic position to garner lots of aid.

Families of police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and K-12 teachers—those who make all of our lives safer and better—often fall into that group. That is why we've just launched a unique new scholarship program that reduces tuition by up to 50 percent for the children of these public servants who work in New York, New Jersey, or Connecticut.

This program complements our other mission-driven initiatives to ensure that qualified students have access to an affordable college education. We've slashed tuition of our undergraduate summer courses by more than 40 percent and increased the number of credits covered by full-time undergraduate tuition during the regular semester from 17 to 18, allowing students to possibly take an extra class each semester and move more quickly toward their degree completion.

As for our graduates, our new Legacy Scholarship offers reduced tuition to the children of alumni, and we are offering alumni a discounted tuition of up to 30 percent on some of our full-time graduate programs.

Why do all this? Because New York Tech is a critical part of the New York metropolitan region, and we play an important role in lifting people to higher levels of economic achievement. Above all, these initiatives support our commitment to student success by addressing affordability, adding value, and improving the return on investment our students have made here.



**Hank Foley, Ph.D.**  
President, NYIT

ALEXANDER BERG



## LET'S BE FRIENDS

Like what you see? Share your updates and feedback at [nyit.edu/alumni\\_notes](http://nyit.edu/alumni_notes) and connect at [@NYITalumni](https://twitter.com/NYITalumni), [nyit.edu/linkedin](http://nyit.edu/linkedin), and [facebook.com/nyit.alumni](https://facebook.com/nyit.alumni).



## 2 Campus Buzz

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NYIT's Women's Corporate Council hosted its inaugural event in March.

**Meet Our Newest Trustee:**

Daniel Ferrara (D.O. '86), FACEP.

**Quick Question: What's the Future of AI?** Faculty members give us their thoughts.

**You Gave Big:** Funds from the first-ever NYIT Big Give will support our university.

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ALBERT LAW

### A Natural Beauty: NYIT-Vancouver

By Diane DiPiero

Nearly two decades ago, NYIT headed west and began offering an M.B.A. degree in Vancouver, Canada. Today, the campus boasts two locations, five degrees, and hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and alumni who are contributing to the life and legacy of the city between the mountains and the sea.

### 16 A Golden Anniversary

They watched the lunar landing and trekked to Woodstock. The Class of 1969 was part of a generation known for innovation and activism. This year, they celebrated their 50th reunion.



NYIT ARCHIVES

### 20 Students on the Sidelines

By Renée Gearhart Levy

Medical and health professions students learn sports medicine by assisting team docs in real-world settings.



BARRY SLOAN

## Mentors, Sponsors, Leaders: The Women's Corporate Council

This past fall, Catherine A. Allen, a member of the NYIT Board of Trustees and founder and CEO of the Santa Fe Group, approached Nada Marie Anid, Ph.D., NYIT vice president for Strategic Communications and External Affairs, about forming a corporate council of women leaders to empower the university community.

Anid was all for it. "That's how it started," she said. "We decided who we would invite to the first event and what their objectives were. We also envisioned a full-day event in the fall of 2019."

On March 14, New York Institute of Technology students, faculty, staff, and alumni, along with members of the wider community,

filled NYIT Auditorium on Broadway for the council's inaugural event. Allen served as moderator while Anid joined a panel that featured NYIT President Hank Foley, Ph.D.; Valerie Plame, writer and former CIA operative; and Shamla Naidoo, former global CISO for IBM and currently IBM Managing Partner, Global Security Services, where she's focused on board consulting.

The event kicked off with a live poll that asked the community to help set the agenda. According to Anid, the council chose this method in order to shape subsequent events and get a sense of their audience. "How can you empower when you impose?" said Anid. "We want to empower and inspire women at NYIT and beyond

BILL MOTZING

(Left to right) Catherine A. Allen, Hank Foley, Nada Marie Anid, Valerie Plame, and Shamla Naidoo.



through resources and networks in support of initiatives that advance research, career opportunities, and corporate partnerships.”

Inspiration was in abundance during the discussion as the participants related their own compelling and often poignant stories.

One of the topics raised was how others had—or had not—supported them throughout their careers. Plame said that when she hit a certain point in her career, she looked for someone higher up at the CIA who could help her advance—a sponsor. “A mentor is someone who is much more informal—they’ll offer you advice,” she explained. “A sponsor is the person you want in the room to talk about your promotion—the person who will advocate for you.” Plame never found either, but she drew on the experience later in her career. “Maybe because of my disappointment in not finding a mentor, I made it a point when I was [in a position of responsibility] to turn around and extend a hand. . . .The minute you are in a position to offer someone support behind you, do so.”

President Foley spoke about the importance of being a good mentor to others who don’t share your background. “Mentoring requires thoughtfulness and investing time in getting to know the person. . . .When you get to a place when you have influence, you know what the usual tropes are [such as placing an unjustified level of scrutiny on someone] and you know not to fall into them.”

“Strong leaders inspire ordinary people to do extraordinary things,” said Naidoo. “I’m very fortunate I’ve had strong leaders in my life that actually helped me to do exactly that.”

All the panelists agreed that, despite difficulties women may face when advancing their careers, taking risks and having integrity will only benefit their progress. “I haven’t had mentors, but I have had heroes—like my parents—who taught me to have no fear, and my daughters who remind me that ‘I can do it’ and to ‘always be myself as there’s no reason to ever be fake,’” said Anid.

Naidoo also related how taking risks was key to her career success. Growing up in Africa, she was one of the few people from her town to pursue an education and choose to work in an office. Later, she earned three degrees, all while working full time. “As women, we bring different things to the table—we bring different skills, life experiences, and strengths. And sometimes we have to be brave enough to stand up for where we are different,” said Naidoo. “We don’t always have to act like our male counterparts—we don’t always have to make decisions the way they do. . . .We shouldn’t ignore our differences, because what makes us different makes us better together.”

“Think of your career as a journey; it’s not a destination,” summed up Allen. “It’s continuous learning and being open and curious about the world and continuing to learn. . . .Take those risks.”

The council hopes to take risks and help women along their journeys as well, including at a September 26, 2019, conference: “Tech Workforce of the Future: Women and Minorities.”



Watch the full event: [bit.ly/WomensCorpCouncil](http://bit.ly/WomensCorpCouncil)



BARRY SLOAN

HEALER

## Meet Our Newest Trustee

**Daniel Ferrara (D.O. '86) FACEP**, is the most recent alumnus to join the NYIT Board of Trustees and the first from NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine (NYITCOM). A resident of Old Brookville, N.Y., Ferrara is northeast regional president for Alteon Health, a physician-led organization that supports some of the most respected health systems in the United States.

“An excellent physician, a superb entrepreneur, and an outstanding NYIT alumnus, Dan is an important addition to our board of trustees,” says NYIT President Hank Foley, Ph.D. “His dual focus on healing patients and running businesses gives him a unique perspective on generating successful outcomes, and we are very fortunate to have his experience contribute to our board.”

Ferrara has long been involved in giving back to the medical school. He provided guidance and financial support for the Healing Path, located on the Long Island campus, which was created to remind medical students to take time to reflect and focus on their own health and wellness. He is also helping to promote the restructuring and expansion of the school’s simulation center. “As an alumnus, I hope to amplify the student perspective at the highest level of institutional leadership and also to lead by example as an NYIT supporter,” he said. “Even small changes can lead to positive outcomes—whether for patients, students, or NYIT itself.”



## THE KETO DIET EXPLAINED

From Atkins to Paleo, there's always a new diet trending. Mindy Haar, Ph.D., RDN, assistant dean of undergraduate affairs at NYIT School of Health Professions, warns of the dangers that come along with one of the most recent fads: the keto diet. "A ketogenic diet includes fewer than 50 grams of carbohydrates, forcing the body to break down fat into ketones for energy. While this initially leads to rapid weight loss, consequences include headaches, constipation, dehydration, and/or bad breath." And there's more bad news: The weight is almost always regained.



Learn more:  
[bit.ly/KetoHaar](http://bit.ly/KetoHaar)

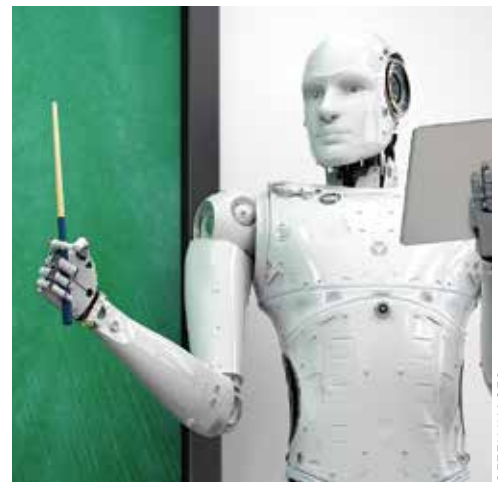
## Quick Question: What's the Future of AI?

**A**rtificial intelligence is now a part of our daily lives. What once was science fiction—think HAL 9000 in *2001: A Space Odyssey*—is now reality. With AI and its algorithms, Siri can tell us where to drop off dry cleaning, our cars can avoid traffic, and machines can diagnose disease and beat us on *Jeopardy*. We asked our faculty experts to share their opinions about this new intelligence. Their responses ranged from hopeful to anxiety provoking—and sometimes both at the same time.

**Ziqian (Cecilia) Dong, Ph.D., associate professor of electrical and computer engineering:** AI has the potential to provide the tools for developing a more resilient, sustainable, and just world. Maybe there will eventually be AI judges and politicians, once we can teach AI to learn about ethics, emotions, and justice. But it depends on how people decide to use it. If the information fed to the AI is biased, then we will end up with a biased system. In the meantime, I think it will be widely adopted in cyber physical systems or the Internet of Things, enabling more efficient logistics flow for transportation, agriculture, and manufacturing, as well as research, medicine, and many more fields.

**Wenjia Li, Ph.D., assistant professor of computer science:** In the near future, AI may change our daily lives in several fundamental ways. Our daily diet may be customized according to our health condition or mood automatically using AI techniques. Bed settings may be adjusted—the firmness of our mattress, the height of our pillow—according to our daily workouts and activities. Even the clothes we wear may be automatically chosen according to the weather, occasion, or mood.

**Kevin LaGrandeur, Ph.D., professor of English:** The most unexpected application of AI will be in the area of brain-machine interface. Within the next 10–20 years, we will see bio-friendly micro-mesh that can be implanted in the human brain



to allow us to interface directly and instantly with AI. A prototype of this mesh has already been successfully developed and implanted in animals at Harvard by Charles Lieber and his team, and Elon Musk has bought the rights to it and spent millions of dollars starting a company called Neuralink to develop it.

### As for AI's impact on students and how they are taught...

**Li:** Students in 10 years may not need to meet a human professor face-to-face. Instead, they'll meet a "robotic" professor or teaching assistant who knows almost everything and can answer their questions 24/7. At the same time, human professors may be giving lectures to classes made up of both human and/or robotic students. Education will see more involvement of AI and robots at both ends.

**Dong:** Students will use AI for personalized education. They'll use new financial systems designed for new types of transactions, drive to class in self-driving vehicles, and use AI technology to develop new smart and resilient living communities, while building algorithms to detect online bullying and toxic comments to provide a safer social network and online environment.

Members of the community participate in the Big Give on April 2-3.



CARMEN MARMO-SAVINETTI

# You Gave **BIG**

**T**hank you! Because of your shared stories and giving spirit, the first-ever NYIT Big Give was a tremendous success. In 1,955 minutes (chosen in honor of our university's founding year), we more than doubled our initial dollars-raised goal and more than tripled our number of donors. Most importantly, New York Tech Bears from around the world came together to support students and programs that further scholarship, undergraduate research, athletic success, and much more.

Again, thank you for supporting our doers, makers, innovators, and healers. Together, we can reinvent the future.



EMILY SYERS

## Big Give by the Numbers





(Left to right) Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Will Roper; NYIT President Hank Foley; and U.S. Congressman Thomas Suozzi.

BILL MOTZING

## 21st-Century Leaders Conversation Series

In March, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Will Roper, Ph.D., and U.S. Congressman Thomas Suozzi (New York District 3) joined New York Institute of Technology President Hank Foley, Ph.D., for the university's inaugural 21st-Century Leaders Conversation Series. Roper and Suozzi spoke

about their careers, the impact of technology, and the ways that government and the private sector can collaborate on future technological innovation.

This new speaker series was created “to bring high-profile people here to New York Institute of Technology so they could share their career experiences, life journeys, their vision of the future,” said Foley, who moderated the discussion.

Roper—who heads up the U.S. Air Force’s research, development, and acquisitions—said he decided to pursue a career in STEM after reading *A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking. This led to a fascination with string theory. “Beautiful ideas have always been captivating to me,” he said. However, he pursued a career in the defense industry because he “needed to find a place where I could plant myself and grow.”

Roper also spoke about how the Air Force is evolving in this entrepreneurial era. A new initiative, Air Force Pitch Day, is launching

“”

[Moving faster] is not going to happen because people are working harder. It’s going to require new procedures, processes, systems, and exceptions.

— Thomas Suozzi



BILL MOTZING



this year and is modeled after commercial investment competitions. Its purpose was to award up to \$40 million to startups and small businesses using Air Force credit card payments. The event was intended to help address challenges that the U.S. government currently faces in developing new technologies in the 21st century.

“We’re still using the Cold War model of building systems and engaging with industry,” said Roper, noting that at that time, the government often dictated the progress of technological innovation—which is not the case today. “The thing that’s really different now than the last century is looking at all of the technology change that happens today. ... We’ve got to speed up how quickly we build things.”

Suozzi agreed but noted that “[moving faster] is not going to happen because people are working harder. It’s going to require new procedures, processes, systems, and exceptions.” Suozzi also described his vision for the future of Long Island, one closely tied to its past. The region, often called the Cradle of Aviation, is home to milestones such as Charles Lindbergh’s historic 1927 transatlantic flight from Roosevelt Field and Grumman Corporation’s construction of the lunar module.

Suozzi’s idea for the next step in Long Island aviation history? “I want to build a rocket,” he announced, citing the work of entrepreneur Max Haot, CEO of Brooklyn-based Launcher, which is currently testing rocket engines in Calverton, N.Y. “We can stop thinking about the Cradle of Aviation of yesterday and start thinking about the future.”

“NYIT is about halfway between Brooklyn and Brookhaven, and we want to play an ever-increasing role in that vision,” added Foley.

Noting that society can’t be a salmon swimming against the stream of progress, Roper summed up: “We’ve got to live in this world, where we have increasingly impressive technological tools in our hands that also come with impressive responsibility.”



Watch the full event:  
[bit.ly/Leaders21stCentury](http://bit.ly/Leaders21stCentury)



(Left to right) Nigel W. Casanova, vice president, NYIT Student Veterans Organization, and director, Veteran Community Outreach; Randall O’Shea, president, NYIT Student Veterans Organization, and director, Student Veterans Affairs; NYIT President Hank Foley; Joel Pederigan, chief of staff, NYIT Student Veterans Organization; and ESGR representative Gene Westmoreland.

## Supporting Veterans and Reservists

**NYIT continues to grow** its efforts to support students who are veterans and reservists. This past semester, the university welcomed Director of Military and Veteran Affairs **Frank Rivera, M.S.**, who joined NYIT thanks to student veterans who drafted a proposal outlining their desire to recruit more veterans and improve services.

Members of the community were also recognized for their work in this area. The Office of the Secretary of Defense’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) named NYIT President **Hank Foley, Ph.D.**, a Patriotic Employer, bestowed by the Department of Defense on outstanding supervisors of National Guardsmen and U.S. Military Reservists. In a ceremony on the New York City campus, ESGR Representative Gene Westmoreland thanked the president for contributing to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting employee participation in America’s National Guard and Reserve forces. Later, in March, **Amy Bravo**, senior director of International and Experiential Education, was also honored as a Patriotic Employer. Bravo was nominated by Navy Counselor and NYIT senior **Nigel W. Casanova**, who worked for Bravo as director of veterans community outreach.



ANDRE KOPINSKI

Amy Bravo receives the Patriot Award from Nigel Casanova.

# Faculty Making Headlines

From the psychology of pet ownership to dinosaur air conditioning, check out recent insights and research from members of our faculty of experts.

## A Call to End Juvenile Solitary Confinement

**Emily Restivo, Ph.D.**, associate professor of behavioral sciences in NYIT College of Arts and Sciences, strongly believes that solitary confinement should be abolished for juvenile offenders. “Prisoners who spend time in solitary confinement are more likely to commit crimes again in the future,” she wrote in an op-ed for *Salon*. Keeping juvenile offenders isolated from people their own age also can have long-term psychological effects. “It’s time to put convicted teenagers in correctional facilities with people their own age and prohibit solitary confinement for those under the age of 18.” >> [bit.ly/RestivoStudy](http://bit.ly/RestivoStudy)



BILL MOTZING

## A Really Cool Thing About Dinosaurs

How did dinosaurs like the club-tailed ankylosaurus keep from overheating in a warm climate? A team of researchers led by **Jason Bourke, Ph.D.**, assistant professor at NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine-Arkansas, used CT scans of fossilized skulls to re-create the long and winding nasal passages of two large dinosaurs. “We wanted to see if there were ways to protect the brain from ‘cooking,’” Bourke says. “It turns out the nose may be the key, and likely housed a built-in air conditioner.” The study was published in the journal *PLOS One*. >> [bit.ly/CoolDinos](http://bit.ly/CoolDinos)



JASON BOURKE

## Redefining Borders

When nations build defensive architecture along borders, they create societal divisions that may not otherwise exist. “The imposing structures between the two Koreas keep the peace at the border. But crucially, the DMZ is also an artificial wedge splitting one people in two,” writes **Dongsei Kim, M.Des.**, assistant professor of architecture, in a *Salon* op-ed. The U.S.-Mexico border also serves as an example where people are defying the architecture meant to split them



GETTY IMAGES

apart. There’s no reason communities that grow together should be a source of division between nations, Kim notes. “Well-designed architecture along borders creates opportunities for economic and cultural exchange—interactions that can improve the lives of residents on both sides,” he says. >> [bit.ly/DMZBorders](http://bit.ly/DMZBorders)

## For the Love of Pups

What humans are willing to pay for their pets may depend on how they view their relationship. In her study published in the *Journal of Business Research*, **Colleen P. Kirk, M.B.A., D.P.S.**, assistant professor of marketing in NYIT School of Management, describes how humans see themselves as masters of their dogs but as servants of their cats. “When owners feel in control of their pets, strong feelings of psychological ownership and emotional attachment develop,” Kirk says. She carried out three experiments focusing on the tie between psychological ownership of pets and the amount their humans are willing to spend on them. The results? When owners feel a mastery of their pets’ behavior, they are willing to pay more to save their lives. >> [bit.ly/Cats-Dogs](http://bit.ly/Cats-Dogs)



JOEL CHAVEZ

## Using Data to Ease Flooding Concerns

As rising water levels continue to threaten cities, data visualization can help “minimize future damages and save lives,” says **Ziqian (Cecilia) Dong, Ph.D.** In a piece published in *Scientific American*, the associate professor of electrical and computer engineering in NYIT College of Engineering and Computing Sciences cites success stories where computer modeling and visualization tools identified areas of infrastructure that needed to be strengthened. Dong also highlights the benefits of a tool she and others are working on called IN-SOURCE. “This visualization tool will enable utility companies and government officials to identify areas that are most vulnerable to extreme weather events and assess the effectiveness of potential infrastructure improvements.” >> [bit.ly/DataCities](http://bit.ly/DataCities)



THINKSTOCK



## Power for (Re)purpose

Twenty-three power plants across Italy have been abandoned in favor of cleaner energy sources. The sites, however, remain. This year, 15 NYIT School of Architecture and Design students brainstormed how to turn the power plants into public green space and bring communities together. They traveled to Italy to visit five of the plants and then developed proposals to revitalize the sites. Both local communities and Enel, the Italian distributor of electricity and gas that is funding the revitalization project, were impressed by the students, who presented their final projects to Enel in May.

>> [bit.ly/NYITPowerPlants](https://bit.ly/NYITPowerPlants)



## Becoming a League of Legends

NYIT leveled up its eSports game in March when NYIT Auditorium on Broadway hosted the symposium, Your Future in eSports. The event featured industry professionals, gamers, and eSports medicine experts discussing injuries eSports athletes face and the future of professional gaming. Then, in a best-of-five competition, the CyBears defeated Southern New Hampshire University in the first-ever East Coast Conference (ECC) League of Legends Championship.

>> [bit.ly/esportsAGame](https://bit.ly/esportsAGame)



Double inductee Burcu Hakyemez takes a selfie with her 2001 NYIT volleyball teammates.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ADAM RUBIN

## Athletics Honors 2019 Hall of Famers

**O**n April 12, nearly 250 current and former student-athletes, coaches, faculty, and staff came together to celebrate the seven individuals and four teams inducted into the NYIT Athletics Hall of Fame.

“I have always been driven to meet my goals in athletics, academically and professionally,” said softball player **Nancy Cassaro (B.S. '90)**. “Being inducted into the NYIT Athletics Hall of Fame makes me so proud to have been a part of the NYIT Lady Bears.”

The same is true for former volleyball sensation **Burcu Hakyemez (B.S. '05)**, a double inductee who flew all the way from her home in Istanbul, Turkey, to be with her teammates and former coaches. She also dedicated the award to her father, who passed away in July 2018. “He is the reason I became [an athlete],” she said. “Hopefully he is watching me and I will make him proud again.”

Inductees **Don Moscatelli (B.S. '83)** and **Mike Salvemini (B.S. '83)** were teammates when they played baseball in the early 1980s. The duo received numerous honors, including being named New York State All-Stars for the 1982 season. Other inductees were lacrosse standout **Tom**

**Zummo (B.S. '05)**, who played professionally in Major League Lacrosse; **Matt Sullivan (B.S. '10)**, who went from playing lacrosse for the Bears to joining NYIT’s coaching staff; and all-around quarterback **Mike Clifford (B.S. '81)**, who captained the football team for two seasons and holds the record for most career touchdown passes in NYIT history.

(Left to right) Hall of Fame inductee Mike Salvemini, NYIT Trustee and past inductee Henry Iervolino, and inductee Don Moscatelli.



“I still wish I could play football and enjoy the rush it used to give me,” said Clifford. “If I had to do it all over again, I would not change a thing.”

This year’s honorees also included the 1985 women’s track and field team, 2001 women’s volleyball team, 2012 women’s tennis team, and 2012–2013 women’s basketball team.

The class was selected by the new NYIT Athletics Hall of Fame committee, which is made up of past inductees Bob Hirschfield, **Henry Iervolino (B.S. '82)**, **John Sullivan (B.S. '82)**, **Roseanne Torre (B.S. '87)**, and **Gail Wasmus (M.P.S. '80)**. “The Hall of Fame committee did a masterful job of identifying and bringing forth a class that exemplifies what it means to be a Hall of Famer,” said Director of Athletics Dan Vélez. “This class includes All-Americans, champions, record setters, and trailblazers who shine as beacons for our current student-athletes. . . . They epitomize our belief that we will win every day at everything we do, and that we will win by displaying honor and pride on our way to becoming champions.”



**Learn more about the inductees and nominate athletes for the Class of 2020 at [nyitbears.com](http://nyitbears.com) or [@NYITbears](https://twitter.com/NYITbears).**

The Bears celebrate winning the NCAA DII Super Regional on May 25.



## Baseball Makes College World Series

It’s a hit! Following a 36-year absence, NYIT baseball returned to the NCAA Tournament in May. After defeating Wilmington (Del.) in the opening round, they bested Southern New Hampshire University in the NCAA DII Super Regional. The team then made program history with their first appearance in the College World Series. Although their season ultimately ended with a loss to Ashland, the Bears’ road to the NCAA championships is remarkable. Under the direction of first-time head coach Frank Catalanotto, they earned a program-record 37-16—a 16½-game improvement over last season and one of the largest turnarounds in consecutive years in DII over the past two decades. Read more about their story and follow the team on [nyitbears.com](http://nyitbears.com).

## Legendary Volleyball Coach Gail Wasmus Retires

**A**fter 33 seasons as head coach, **Gail Wasmus (M.P.S. '80)** has retired from the athletics department. “Ever since Gail stepped foot on this campus she has had a singular focus—bettering the student-athlete experience and ensuring that when our student-athletes graduate, they leave NYIT better than when they arrived,” said Director of Athletics Dan Vélez. “Her impact on this department and this school will be felt for generations to come.”

Wasmus has a storied history as athlete and coach. She played basketball, softball, and volleyball at Ashland (Ohio) University and became the school’s first female All-American in basketball and part of the first class of women inductees into its Hall of Fame. At NYIT, Wasmus produced a 638-428 volleyball record and led the Bears to 13 NCAA tournament appearances. The team earned its first NCAA East Region title in 2015 and its first East Coast Conference championship in 2016. Wasmus also served as the women’s basketball coach for the first 12 years of the program. Her 45 seasons of service exceed all the other active head coaches at NYIT combined.

“Tech has given me a lifetime of great moments,” said Wasmus. “My greatest pleasure, of course, was the opportunity to coach some amazing volleyball players over the years. I would say anyone who



Coach Wasmus with members of the NYIT volleyball team.

knows me knows I am all about our student-athletes and how I can assist them as they prepare for their futures.”

NYIT Athletics plans to nominate Wasmus for the American Volleyball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

# 730

**STUDENTS**

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REPRESENTING  
MORE THAN  
20 COUNTRIES

# 5

**DEGREES**

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- ENERGY MANAGEMENT, M.S.
- FINANCE, M.B.A.
- INFORMATION, NETWORK, & COMPUTER SECURITY, M.S.
- INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATORS, M.S.
- MANAGEMENT, M.B.A.

**NYIT IS HERE**

# 2

**LOCATIONS**

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DOWNTOWN  
AND BROADWAY  
TECH CENTRE

# 800+

**ALUMNI**

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# A NATURAL BEAUTY: NYIT-VANCOUVER

NEARLY TWO DECADES AGO, NYIT HEADED WEST AND BEGAN OFFERING AN M.B.A. DEGREE IN VANCOUVER, CANADA. TODAY, THE CAMPUS BOASTS TWO LOCATIONS, FIVE GRADUATE DEGREES, AND HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND ALUMNI WHO ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THE CITY BETWEEN THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEA.

**W**hen Irene Young became dean of New York Institute of Technology's campus in Vancouver in November 2016, the school had just over 150 students total. Today 730 students are pursuing their M.B.A. and M.S. degrees. Energy management alone has grown from three students to 160, and the 358 members of the Class of 2019 represented the largest graduating class in the campus's history.

The excitement around NYIT-Vancouver has been driven by an enthusiastic administration, engaged faculty and alumni, and intellectually curious students. "We are a global campus," says Young. "Most of our students come from outside of Canada and the United States. I see their commitment, along with NYIT's desire to build pathways to success for these students and alumni, as drivers in the school's achievements."

Hank Foley, Ph.D., president of New York Institute of Technology, agrees. "It's because of our incredible faculty and staff that this campus has experienced an unprecedented growth in enrollment—276 percent in the past two years alone."

## PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

Vancouver is a place known for both its vibrant city center and its stunning surroundings. NYIT's campus sits at the heart of it all. Students regularly spend time together enjoying the natural beauty of the area, getting to know the culture, visiting companies, and volunteering. The fact that graduate students from disparate programs have formed such a close-knit community may come as a surprise, but NYIT-Vancouver is committed to supporting its students and to cementing itself as an asset to the city.

Originally, the university established its presence in downtown Vancouver, but with the growth in enrollment over the past three years, it quickly ran out of room. In 2018, the campus opened its second location in Broadway Tech Centre across town. The new space accommodates the 207 students pursuing an M.S. in Information, Network, and Computer Security (M.S.-INCS)—British Columbia's only cybersecurity graduate program. And while NYIT expands its footprint physically, it continues to maintain its supportive atmo-

BY DIANE DIPIERO

sphere. Young has brought together a core group of professors with expertise in the industries students seek. “We encourage faculty to teach and do research,” Young says, “and so we are able to get some of the best.” Faculty also serve as mentors to students, encouraging them to be engaged and immerse themselves in the community. “It’s not a big machine,” says Sinan Caykoylu, Ph.D., associate dean and assistant professor of Management. “It’s cozy and casual. All of the business faculty are on the same side of the building. Students can walk to my office or catch me in the corridor.”

That dynamic helps students, especially those from other countries, to develop strong interpersonal connections.

### DEGREES THAT MEET DEMAND

Part of NYIT’s mission is a commitment to educating students for innovative, emerging fields. “The future is bright for NYIT doers, makers, and innovators seeking careers in British Columbia—or anywhere in the world—and we are excited to see that Vancouver is witnessing the fastest-growing tech workforce and startup ecosystem in Canada,” says President Foley. That means fields such as cybersecurity and energy management continue to strengthen in the region and even have the potential to rival existing industries like finance.

NYIT-Vancouver excels in preparing graduates to fill upwardly mobile positions within all these industries. “The business world needs people at the middle level. Not everyone is going to zoom up to the executive level,” explains Caykoylu. By prepping students

for these types of jobs within their chosen fields, the school gives students a head start on the path toward advancement and success. That strategy also distinguishes NYIT-Vancouver from its local competitors. “[The University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University] are primarily research institutions,” Caykoylu explains. “And they’re more expensive than NYIT.”

Tokunbo Makanju, assistant dean and assistant professor of Computer Science, adds that students do not have to fit into traditional categories either. “In M.S.-INCS, most of the students do not necessarily have a computer science background. They have an interest in cybersecurity, but they are not interested in getting regular master’s of computer science degrees.” Through the school’s custom degrees, he says, “we ensure that our classwork is relevant to current needs and trends in the industry.”

### LET’S BE REAL

Experiential learning plays a large role in preparing students for careers. “In each of Vancouver’s graduate programs, faculty members strive to introduce opportunities for students to apply the learning from their classes to real-world situations,” explains Logan Lorenz, associate director of Student Affairs and Career Services. And because the majority of students are from other parts of the world, NYIT stresses the importance of building contacts in the community. “We’re realistic from the first day,” Caykoylu says. “We tell them it will be an uphill challenge. They’ll have to work harder [than Canadian students] and they’ll have to do more networking.” The result? “Our students respond and prepare accordingly. They tend to get jobs within six months of graduation.”

Like many international students, **Victor Badejo (M.S. ’17)** chose NYIT-Vancouver for its career opportunities as well as its welcoming environment. “Victor is well-connected, and he’s a great speaker,” Young says. “He’s very engaging.” A native of Nigeria, Badejo immediately got involved in the life of the campus and the city. He served in the Graduate Student Association and as a student assistant for Information Technology (IT) administration, and he networked through organizations like the Vancouver chapter of ISACA.

“Vancouver is immigration-friendly,” Young says. “After two years of education, an international student can often get a work visa and be on the path to permanent residency.” What’s more, Vancouver is relatively small compared to other global cities yet boasts many of the same offerings as far as employment and lifestyle. Microsoft, Amazon, and Google are all represented here, along with several international banks. As for Badejo, he got a job in Vancouver with Best Buy as a cybersecurity analyst right after he graduated, and he recently joined PwC as senior associate of Cyber Risk.

The college’s reputation for producing highly employable graduates bodes well for the city and its student population.

“Twenty-four hours after I finished my M.B.A., I was already working full-time at a health-care college,” says **Miranda Cabiladas (M.B.A. ’18)**, who also worked at NYIT-Vancouver while she was a student and is an accomplished photographer. (Her photo

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DARKO SIKMAN





Irene Young

ANDRE KOPINSKI

of students kayaking graced the cover of the fall 2017 issue of *NYIT Magazine*.) “This speaks volumes not only about the diverse employment opportunities available for M.B.A. graduates, but also about the quality of education that NYIT-Vancouver provides.”

**Valentina Lameda (M.B.A. ’18)** agrees. “My experience was great because I was always participating as a volunteer, student assistant, and in any way I could to network and get to know people from the community,” she says. Lameda took a position as an assistant for financial firm RBC Dominion Securities after she graduated and received her Canadian Securities Course certification.

### BUILDING A LEGACY

Alumni like Badejo, Lameda, and Cabiladas provide tangible examples of the merits of an NYIT-Vancouver education. It’s no surprise then that the college and its graduates form lasting ties. “I remain connected with many of the administrative staff who are still working at NYIT,” Cabiladas says.

**Young has brought together a core group of professors with expertise in the industries students seek. “We encourage faculty to teach and do research,” Young says, “and so we are able to get some of the best.”**

Sometimes, graduates find that the ideal job for them after graduation is right on campus. **Sharon Raj (M.B.A. ’15)** serves as business administration manager and helped launch the Broadway Tech Centre location. “From May to November 2018, my role was about setting everything up in the facility,” she says. “It was fun, and it looks great.”

Raj, a native of India, had long wanted to live in Vancouver. NYIT provided her a chance to fulfill that dream and pursue her career in

business. “They gave me the option of being able to get an M.B.A. without having a lot of previous work experience,” she says.

Flexibility is just one way NYIT-Vancouver creates unique opportunities to attract new students. Another is adding programs geared toward emerging careers. “In 2016, NYIT launched a Master of Science in Environmental Management,” says Remi Charron, associate professor in the Department of Energy Management. “We

have a good group of faculty connected with different aspects of the industry. We’re giving students a knowledge base in our discipline that they can apply to other challenges in their careers. One of our graduates from last summer is working with a company that does lighting energy upgrades and seems to really enjoy it.”

NYIT-Vancouver students also benefit from connections to the New York campus. “They have been so helpful,” Young says. “We rely a lot on the communications, marketing, and admissions staff. And we are bringing New York faculty here so our students can experience their expertise.”

Recently, the campus welcomed guests like Paolo Gasti, Ph.D., associate professor of Computer Science and a cybersecurity expert, and Babak Beheshti, Ph.D., dean of NYIT College of Engineering and Computing Sciences. Young has plans to invite more faculty to the campus, including those like Melda Yildiz, Ed.D., associate professor of Instructional Technology, to share expertise on global education.

“I would also like Vancouver faculty to teach in New York,” Young says. “I want to continue to grow that relationship.”



DARKO SIKMAN

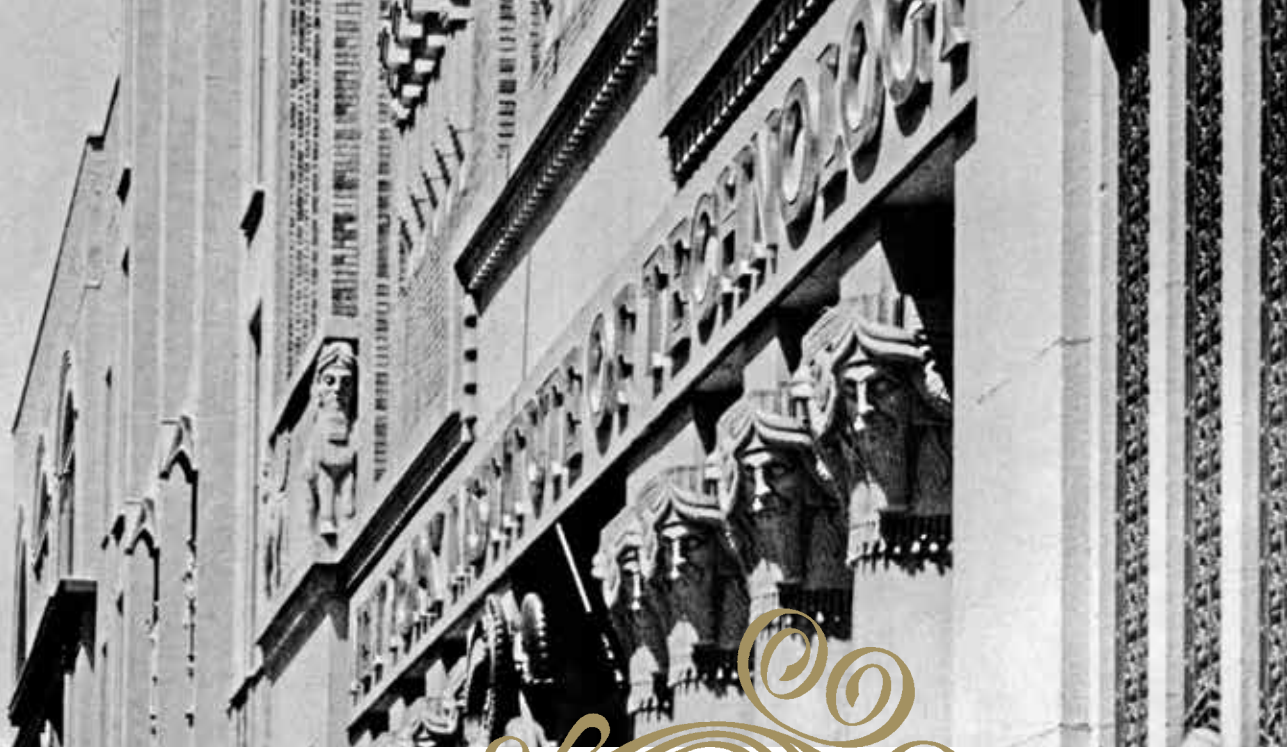
And she is devising ways to make New York Institute of Technology more recognizable in the Vancouver area. One important step, she says, is a more prominent physical presence. “The public institutions here are very competitive, so from a domestic standpoint we need to do more. Right now, we are split into the downtown campus and the Broadway Tech Centre campus. Longterm, we’d like to consolidate locations and have a building with our own front door.”

With increasing enrollment, favorable attention to academic offerings, and a talented faculty encouraging ongoing opportunities, it seems likely that Young’s long-term goals for NYIT-Vancouver will be realized. “I think we’ve proven that we’ve got a future here,” she says. ■



**Learn more:**  
[nyit.edu/vancouver](http://nyit.edu/vancouver)

A photo from the New York City 1969 yearbook shows students on their way to class in the Knights of Pythias building on West 70th street.



# A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

They watched the lunar landing and trekked to Woodstock—the Class of 1969 was part of a generation known for innovation and activism. This year, they celebrate their 50th reunion.



**In spring of 1969**, students from the New York City and Long Island campuses of New York Institute of Technology published *The Edumator* and *The Estate*, respectively. It was the first time the campuses published separate yearbooks—a decision that reflects the evolution of the institution and the changing times. NYIT was growing in degree programs, class sizes, and square footage. The Class of 1969, for example, was the first cohort to spend all four years on the campus in Old Westbury.\* But the yearbooks do more than commemorate the Class of 1969; they also capture the spirit of a generation coming of age in one of the most memorable periods of the 20th century.

Fifty years later, members of that remarkable class headed back to Old Westbury for their Golden Anniversary, which took place May 17–19. Together, they celebrated the New York Tech heroes, sung and unsung, who reinvented their future—and our present.



A professor teaches a business course.

PHOTOS FROM NYIT ARCHIVES

\*In his editor's note for the first publication of *The Estate*, Editor-in-Chief Richard Thaler wrote "The Old Westbury Campus is approximately seven hundred acres of rolling land that once belonged to an era gone by. ... As the Tech Campus grew, these estates melded together to become the campus of New York Institute of Technology. As a remembrance of where our campus came from, the yearbook, a book of remembrances, chose the name ESTATE."



Students participate in Black Week on the New York City campus.

## Events of 1968–1969

### 1968\*

- Assassination of Robert Kennedy
- Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Candidates for President: Richard M. Nixon, Hubert H. Humphrey, George M. Wallace
- Russia invades Czechoslovakia
- Apollo 7 test for moon trip
- Viet Nam bomb halt
- Paris Peace Talks begin
- Richard M. Nixon elected president
- Apollo 9 and Apollo 10 go around the moon

### 1969\*

- July 22: Man lands on the moon. Neil Armstrong says, "One small step for man; one giant leap for mankind."

### AND ALSO\*\*:

- Average cost of a new house: \$27,900
- Average cost of a new car: \$3,556
- Price of gas, per gallon: 33 cents
- #1 on the Billboard Top 100: "Aquarius/Let the Sunshine In (The Flesh Failures)" by The 5th Dimension
- Major League Baseball adds four teams: Montreal Expos, San Diego Padres, Kansas City Royals, and the Seattle Pilots (became the Milwaukee Brewers in 1970).
- The Beatles give their final live performance (on the roof of the Apple building in London).
- Robin Knox-Johnston becomes the first person to sail around the world solo without stopping.

\*As reported by the editors of *The Estate*, p. 185.

\*\*Average costs from census.gov and blog.chron.com.



See photos from the reunion:  
[nyit.edu/1969reunion](http://nyit.edu/1969reunion).

# MEMORIES From the Class of 1969

## Ernest Bruno (B.S. '69)

In March 1965, Ernest Bruno was sitting at his kitchen table in Brooklyn with one question on his mind: “Where to go to college?” Intrigued by the potential of computers, he decided to pursue a degree in computer science at NYIT’s New York City campus. Four years later, Bruno was ready to graduate but risked being drafted into the Vietnam War. “NYIT received a call from a [government-contracted] company in Syosset, N.Y., looking for computer scientists,” he says. “An interview was set up for me...and I was offered a computer programmer position. Because I would be employed by the United States government, [the company] wrote to my draft board requesting that I not be drafted. Needless to say, NYIT made that possible.” Bruno went on to program for the F-14 aircraft before switching careers to work in the software industry. After serving as vice president of sales for several companies, he launched his own firm in 2002. “None of what I was able to accomplish in my life would have been possible without the education provided to me by NYIT,” he says. “My advice to students today is follow your heart and be selective in choosing a field of study that the future will embrace.”



JORG MEYER



ANDRE KOPINSKI

## Sam Pakrad (B.S. '69)

Sam Pakrad describes 1969 as “Year One.” It was the year he married Millie (his wife of 50 years), the year he enlisted in the Army National Guard, the year he graduated NYIT, and the year he got his first job as an industrial engineer at IBM. “The key to my career was NYIT prepared me to practically apply what I learned as a student to the workplace,” he says. He also remembers being mentored by his professors—something he took to heart. After spending three decades at IBM, he became an entrepreneur, and in 1999, he launched SMP Enterprises. Over the next 20 years, Pakrad mentored dozens of employees and helped new generations launch careers. He and his wife also had two sons and now have five grandchildren. In 2012, they established a scholarship at NYIT for engineering majors, and Pakrad makes sure to meet with his scholarship recipient every year. “It takes just one person to discover the cure for a disease,” he says. “The potential for inspiring others is why I give.” He also has this piece of wisdom for students and alumni: “Reflect on what Tech has allowed you to do and, if you see it as a success, pay it forward.”

### NYIT CLASS OF 1969 50TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION COMMITTEE

- Ernest Bruno (B.S. '69), College of Engineering and Computing Sciences
- Bert J. Cunningham (B.F.A. '69), College of Arts and Sciences
- Kenneth Jones (B.S. '69), School of Management
- Sam Pakrad (B.S. '69), College of Engineering and Computing Sciences
- Keith Rouse (B.F.A. '69), College of Arts and Sciences

**Interested in planning your Golden Anniversary? We are currently looking for volunteers for the classes of 1970, 1971, and 1972.**

**Email us at [alumni@nyit.edu](mailto:alumni@nyit.edu).**



## John Petraglia (B.S. '69)

“Find something you enjoy doing. But also find a problem and solve it.” John Petraglia’s advice is based on experience. As an undergraduate, he struggled to find the right path. “My aha moment was in a computer science course at NYIT,” he says. He ultimately graduated with honors and launched a successful career. Petraglia was the leader of the team that created the first real-time, multitasking, multi-processor operating system for the 8086 CPU (the same processor used in early IBM PCs); worked on secret projects for the Department of Defense; and served in high-level jobs, including as president of SPD Control System Corporation. Looking back on his career, he sees a pattern: “I said ‘yes’ when others said ‘no,’ and I hired a team of problem solvers who knew what ‘yes’ meant.” Petraglia has since retired and moved to Hilton Head, S.C., but he hasn’t slowed down. He recently wrote a grant proposal for an electric shuttle that provides free tours of Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge to visitors interested in ecotourism (including those with accessibility challenges). Even in retirement, Petraglia is solving problems.



GEOFF L. JOHNSON



STEVE BOXALL

## Keith Rouse (B.F.A. '69)

When Keith Rouse helped start WNYT radio and the Theatre Technics Association on the Long Island campus of NYIT, little did he know he’d be working alongside famous artists and musicians throughout his career. Originally a music major, he changed to communication arts at NYIT because it better suited his interests. (He was also the first news editor of the *Campus Slate*.) His background served him well. Over the course of his 50-year career he’s collaborated with everyone from auteurs to rock stars. He was a production manager and second assistant editor on director Louis Malle’s iconic film *My Dinner With Andre*; toured with Wham! in 1985 to help make their documentary, *Wham! in China: Foreign Skies*; and has met and photographed luminaries like B.B. King, David Cassidy, and the Everly Brothers. And he hasn’t stopped. He was the technical director of the Miami Jewish Film Festival for 17 years and still freelances as an editor and photojournalist. Now based in Miami—where his wife, Alexis, owns and operates live music venue Luna Star Café (pictured)—Rouse urges creative up-and-comers to seize the moment: “Opportunities only strike once, but they can lead to an exciting life.” ■



Medical student Caroline Varlotta (left) and Assistant Professor Matthew Heller, D.O., stand on the sidelines during a lacrosse game, prepared to treat athletes if needed.



BARRY SLOAN

# STUDENTS ON THE SIDELINES

**Medical and health professions students learn sports medicine by assisting team docs in real-world settings.**

**L**ast year, researchers at NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine's (NYITCOM) Center for Sports Medicine made news with results from a pioneering study that employed innovative technology to investigate the impact of subconcussive hits on lacrosse players. Ten student-athletes on the NYIT men's lacrosse team wore digital mouthguards with sensors to register all their "checks" throughout the 2018 season and participated in cognitive testing before, during, and after the season. But the Bears aren't the only students involved in the research. Just as noteworthy as the results is the fact that the research has been conducted by NYITCOM students—a natural outgrowth of students shadowing and helping medical professionals treat athletes on the field.

## **Sideline Action and Scientific Method**

Center for Sports Medicine physicians serve as team doctors for student-athletes from NYIT, Long Island University's Post campus, and several nearby Long Island high schools. Similarly, sports medicine doctors at NYITCOM-Arkansas (located on the campus of Arkansas State University in Jonesboro) fill the same role for the Division I teams there. These doctors not only bring their cutting-edge medical expertise to the sidelines; they also engage their medical students, providing a unique learning environment to experience sports medicine in action.

Third-year NYITCOM student Caroline Varlotta began shadowing team doctors and athletic trainers during her first year of medical school on the Long Island campus, mostly through attending soccer and lacrosse games. That's where she developed an interest in concussion research and the possible impact of subconcussive hits.

"This project was student initiated and student led," says **Hallie Zwibel, M.P.H. (D.O. '11)**, director of NYIT Center for Sports Medicine, who supervises the students along with **Matthew Heller (B.S. '08, D.O. '11)**, assistant professor of medicine and principal investigator on the project. "We're really serving as advisors and mentors to the students to ensure scientific rigor and provide overall guidance."

**By Renée Gearhart Levy**

## STUDENTS ON THE SIDELINES

After a literature review confirmed a lack of research on sub-concussive hits, Varlotta worked with Zwibel and Heller to develop a research project focusing on team populations not typically examined (most sports-related concussion research has focused on football). Medical students Joshua Giordano, Brandon Burg, and Joseph Miceli joined her in the project.

“The goal is to make sure the athletes are performing to the best of their abilities on and off the field,” says Varlotta.

The initial research involved preseason, midseason, and post-season testing of 10 NYIT men’s lacrosse student-athletes in three categories: a symptom checklist, neurocognition, and balance.

“Each medical student tests one athlete at a time, and the testing takes about 20 minutes per athlete,” says Varlotta. “Our testing was overseen by the team physicians, but we were independently performing the testing.”

During play, the student-athletes wore digital mouthguards that used accelerometers to assess the force of impacts to athletes’ heads. For instance, one player sustained more than 1,700 hits, many measuring over 80gs of force, which Zwibel says is equivalent to being in a 40-mile-per-hour car accident while wearing a seat belt.

Remarkably, while the test results showed subtle declines in verbal and visual memory and slower cognitive reactions, the athletes noticed little or no differences in their memory or reaction time. The study, which was later adapted to include the women’s soccer team, raises questions about the effects of repeated subconcussive blows and how the cumulative impact of mild head injuries can affect cognitive brain function. It also should help physicians, coaches, trainers, and athletes in all sports be more aware of the possible changes players may experience from repeated head impacts throughout their sports season.

Burg says attending the games is extremely valuable. “It’s great to see what we are studying in real time,” he says. “Observing the mechanism of injury enhances the level of care you can provide.”

At NYITCOM on Long Island, sideline coverage of sporting events is coordinated through the school’s student sports medicine organization. Miceli, a second-year medical student, is the current president. “Participating in these studies has greatly increased my understanding of the long-term effects of sport-related head trauma,” he says. “I am continually impressed by the team physicians’ willingness to have students attend events with them and their desire for us to gain meaningful, hands-on experiences to enhance our overall educational experience.”

### Friday Night Fights

Students who participate in the research typically have an interest in sports medicine, and many were athletes themselves. Miceli, for example, ran track at SUNY Binghamton and wanted to stay involved in athletics as he made the transition into his professional career.

The curriculum of the first two years of medical school focuses on basic science, so shadowing a physician can provide the clinical experience students crave. “We do a lot of studying but have limited



COURTESY OF BHAVESH JOSHI

Bhavesh Joshi, D.O., (back row, center) travels with the A-State football team to all their games and provides medical assistance. Medical students (pictured) also attend and provide support.

patient encounters,” says second-year student Lauren Schwartzberg. “Thanks to the team doctors, I’ve been able to see how exciting it is to practice our skills in the real world. It’s nice to have a Friday night where you’re reminded why you’re doing all this hard work and what’s waiting for you at the end of the tunnel.”

Schwartzberg has helped team physicians for football and basketball and volunteered extensively with Heller, who covers boxing, kickboxing, pro wrestling, and Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) events in the metro New York City area.

Students take vitals and help with neurological and musculoskeletal exams on the athletes. Heller needs the help. “There are times I have to evaluate up to 40 fighters before the event,” he says.

“It’s exciting because a lot of them have higher blood pressures prior to their match so we see the physical changes in the sympathetic nervous system firsthand,” says Schwartzberg. “In a standardized patient encounter like we have at school, we only see normal heart rates and read normal blood pressures.”

Third-year medical student Maximillian Ganz has spent the past year working with Heller at MMA events. He used to compete in Brazilian jujitsu tournaments and plans to pursue orthopedic surgery. The events typically include 10 bouts with both amateur and professional fighters. “We arrive two hours before the fights to medically clear the athletes with a physical and review of their recent blood work,” says Ganz. “During the fights, I will take one side of the cage or ring, and Dr. Heller will take the other. This allows us to see the fight from multiple angles, and we have easy access to the ring in case we need to intervene. After each fight, I do a rapid scan of the athlete, check for broken bones and mental status, and do a quick cranial nerve exam to ensure they do not need immediate care.”

Athletes in combat sports, Ganz notes, feel they need to fight through whatever injury they have, but that mindset can cause problems. “It is important to learn to work with these athletes in real time to help them understand that sometimes they need to stop and heal before inciting irreversible or long-lasting trauma,” he says.



“I think it’s a very cool experience for medical students to see that there is medicine being practiced outside the hospital,” says Heller. “It gets them away from their books and out of the clinic on a Friday night, but they’re still learning.”

### The Big Game

NYITCOM’s location in Jonesboro, Arkansas, provides the unique opportunity for medical students to work on an even bigger field: Centennial Bank Stadium, home of the Division I Arkansas State Red Wolves football team.

Sports medicine specialist Bhavesh Joshi, D.O., assistant professor of Clinical Medicine, is a team physician for the Arkansas State (ASU) athletic department, supervising athletes’ primary care in the team clinic and providing sideline care. He tries as much as possible to use those settings to teach students. “I love having students shadow me to see how wide and diversified the field of medicine can be,” he says. “My students and I are able to interact with the training staff, operations personnel, and team orthopedic surgeons. They can see the preparation and evaluation that goes on before the event, as well as any medical issues that arise during the game,” he says.

One of those students is Cody Shopper. “I’d shadowed on the sideline of my old high school football team in Kansas City, which was rather unremarkable,” says the second-year medical student. “Being on the sideline of ASU football with Dr. Joshi was totally different. The speed of the game and the intensity—it can be like two semi-trucks colliding in front of you.”

As a medical student, Shopper says it was eye-opening to see the team interaction between trainer, orthopedist, and team physician in terms of formulating a management plan for someone who is hurt. “As the team physician, you have to be quick on your feet and

confident that if you put a recently injured player back into the game, they’ll be able to perform and not reinjure themselves,” he says. “The responsibility is humbling.”

Michelle Tedrowe’s interest in sports medicine also stems from her own experiences: She was a walk-on to the University of Arkansas track team as a pole vaulter but was medically disqualified due to a previous knee injury. During both her second and third years at NYITCOM-Arkansas, she volunteered with team physicians on the sidelines and to help give preseason physicals to A-State athletes. Her experiences solidified sports medicine as her future career choice. “I’ve encountered athletes with cardiac, hematologic, and orthopedic disorders that I might not have been exposed to otherwise,” she says.

**“Allowing students to shadow you on the sidelines provides them a great learning environment...but it’s also a mentoring opportunity.” — Hallie Zwibel**

Coming full circle, Tedrowe completed a clinical rotation last fall with Ramon Ylanan, M.D., at the University of Arkansas—the same doctor who ended her athletic career when he failed her physical as an undergraduate. “We had a good laugh about it my first day on the rotation,” says Tedrowe, whose goal is to help people recover from their injuries and get back to enjoying the activities they love. “Dr. Ylanan loves to teach, so it was a great place for me to learn. I made plans to go back and do physicals at his clinic, and I’m very appreciative for the role he’s played in my career.”

### From Mentee to Mentor

Back on the Long Island campus, the digital mouthguard study continues and is expanding to include more athletes and testing to better understand the short- and long-term effects of sport-related head trauma.

“I am truly grateful for the opportunity to see this research grow from an idea to its integration into multiple sports,” says Varlotta. “Through both sideline and research experience, I have increased my medical knowledge, enhanced my network of friends, and gained mentors in Drs. Heller and Zwibel, who I can turn to for advice about research, clinical rotations, or my future career plans. From them I have learned how to build a trusting relationship with student-athletes, which I hope to apply in my future clinical practice.”

That’s precisely the goal, says Zwibel.

“Allowing students to shadow you on the sidelines provides them a great learning environment. They’re experiencing acute care while working directly with attending physicians,” says Zwibel. “But it’s also a mentoring opportunity. A physician typically spends several hours with one or two students so you really get to know them and where they’re coming from. It’s beneficial to both sides.” ■



COURTESY OF MATTHEW HELLER

(Left to right) Lauren Schwartzberg, Matthew Heller, and third-year medical student Craig Silverberg.

Chantel Diaz at Coachella 2019.



DOER

COURTESY OF CHANTEL DIAZ

## Chantel Diaz (B.F.A. '13, M.A. '15)

“I have been on a lot of panel discussions lately, and every time I do one, I learn more about myself,” says Chantel Diaz, coordinator of global diversity and inclusion at AEG, a sports, music, and live entertainment company that manages festivals like Coachella.

But before she was guiding diversity initiatives for Instagram-ready companies and giving the next generation a helping hand, Diaz had to teach herself how to negotiate her education and career path. “No one else in my family went to college or got their master’s degree,” says Diaz, who grew up in Los Angeles. Her mother, however, had different ideas for her daughter. Even though

she was a single parent of four, she refused to let Diaz work in high school and instead told her to concentrate on her studies and sports.

Diaz set her sights on college, but her journey was nearly derailed by a clerical error. “I had a 3.8 GPA, and I was an All-Star athlete, but my high school counselor didn’t check the fee waiver on my college applications.”

Diaz spent her first year out of high school living and working on her own. When she went to Santa Monica College the following year, her two “awesome” basketball coaches, Lydia Strong and Danny O’Fallon, made sure not to make the same mistake as her guidance counselor. “Coach Strong

sent a video of me playing to other universities,” Diaz says. When the coaches of the NYIT women’s basketball team saw it, they were impressed.

With the help of a scholarship, Diaz enrolled in NYIT and moved across the country. After earning her B.F.A. in Communications and TV Production, she got her master’s in Media Management. To pay for school and get a head start on her career, she held down four jobs and somehow found time to intern for NBC and for News 12 Long Island. “I had a lot of experience before getting out in the real world,” she says.

Diaz returned to the West Coast after graduation. She worked in corporate partnerships for the Oakland Raiders and community relations for the Los Angeles Clippers—at the same time.

“I saw the look on the kids’ faces, and with my background, I wanted to give back,” she says.

At a Clippers game, Diaz met a senior vice president of human resources at AEG. “She offered me a temp position in her department,” she says. It quickly turned into a full-time position, and later, Diaz discovered the Diversity and Inclusion Department. The team was a perfect fit. Now, she runs several outreach programs for underprivileged youth.

“Just seeing the kids grow and retain the information is amazing,” she says. The students get to meet with professionals from local organizations and teams like the Dodgers and Lakers. “The first year, we held a graduation, and we all started crying. I can’t wait to see where these kids end up.”

## INNOVATOR

# Bill Thirsk (M.B.A. ’08)

“I was a nontraditional student before it was cool,” says Bill Thirsk, chief digital and information officer (CDO/CIO) at Brown University. “I got out of the service when I was 22, and it took me nine years to get my undergraduate degree. I had to work hard and pay rent.”

The word “nontraditional” could also be used to describe Thirsk’s start in information technology. After spending time in the Marines, he put himself through school with the help of a series of jobs, including as the driver for his college’s president. He recalls being in the room during a sales pitch for a new computer system. “The president was a former Naval officer, and the college was having financial difficulties.” After wondering whether they could afford it, how difficult the new system would be to learn, and what it would cost to hire an IT person, the president pointed to Thirsk and said to the salesman, “Train him, Bill—my driver.”

The next day, Thirsk became the school’s systems administrator.

After Thirsk graduated, he took IT jobs at several colleges before working his way up to chief information officer for SunGard Higher Education Inc. at Mercy College, a provider of software to colleges and universities. “I was very good on the technology side, but I wasn’t so good on the

financial and business side,” he says. He decided to rectify that gap and earned his M.B.A. at NYIT while working at SunGard. “My wife says she was an ‘NYIT widow,’ but it was worth it.” When an opportunity to serve as CIO at Marist College

*Continued next page.*



COURTESY OF BROWN UNIVERSITY

*Continued from previous page.*

in New York opened up, Thirsk's NYIT M.B.A. helped him get the gig.

His 12 years at Marist gave him a new addition to his portfolio: research. "Technology was core to Marist's strategy," he says. "I worked closely with IBM on cybersecurity, software-defined networks, and sensitivity label computing, and I got to incubate a couple of really cool companies."

Among other honors, Thirsk was invited to be on the board (and later became chair) of NYSERNet, the nonprofit New York State Internet, Education, Research, and Technology

Association. He also serves on the finance committee of NEREN (North East Research and Education Network) and was named to ComputerWorld's Premier 100 IT Leader List.

Thirsk recently made the move from Poughkeepsie, N.Y., to Providence, R.I. At Brown, he is overseeing and enhancing all digital and technology systems for the 255-year-old university. He's also had time to reflect on how he got where he is today. His advice for current NYIT students? "Be patient, persistent, and diligent. If you hang in there, you can end up on the top of your profession."

MAKER

## Jimmy Marsanico (B.S. '12)

**A**s the student class speaker at New York Institute of Technology's 2012 commencement, Jimmy Marsanico finished with this shout-out to fellow students: "You are a product of your own hard work." Now an enterprise product manager at Bloomberg LP, Marsanico is drawing on his own advice as well as his background to help him negotiate his career.

The Queens (N.Y.) native heard about NYIT through a brochure in the mail. "I was torn

between studying psychology, architecture, and computer science—NYIT had majors in all three. I was accepted as an architecture student... but I loved math and science, so I switched." He earned his undergraduate degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering at NYIT and then his master's from Carnegie Mellon University.

Marsanico credits his mentors at NYIT for not only imparting their knowledge, but also for helping him become a better leader. He also made sure to get experience early. "I always held jobs and internships while I went to school," he says.

That experience helped him as he took on roles in companies including a software consulting firm, large corporations, and several startups. "Spending time at a startup, you have to wear a different hat every day. My background in data science provides a strong foundation and is applicable to a lot of different industries."

From data science, he moved into business intelligence, and then to the product side. "As a product manager, it's really important to understand the needs of your customers. At Bloomberg, my customers are typically data scientists and developers; I can put myself in their shoes because I have the technical background, and that helps me connect that gap."

When Marsanico started at Bloomberg in 2017, his team was looking to modernize the technology they use to sell data to clients such as banks and hedge funds. "Everyone is becoming much more



COURTESY OF THEMUSE.COM

technical at those firms. Our goal was to make our whole offering more advanced in terms of data delivery.”

Marsanico plans to build on his experience and hopes one day to start his own company. “Product

managers have such a unique career path. There’s no one road to it, and there are so many doors being a product manager can open for you. The key to being successful is an open mind, a touch of humility, and a ton of empathy.”

## INNOVATOR

# Stephanie Wu Ho (M.S. '93)

**W**hen Stephanie Wu Ho was working on Wall Street as a vice president, she often experienced headaches, a racing heart, sore throats, and insomnia. She was worried, but her doctor said she was healthy.

“I asked the doctor what I could do,” says Ho. “He suggested Prozac and that if I didn’t want to take it, I had to help myself.” Ho, who was concerned about the drug’s side effects, sought other options and when another doctor suggested hypnosis, she looked into it. To her relief, it helped.

The more research she did on hypnosis, the more interested she became. Ho even went to a National Guild of Hypnotists (NGH) convention to learn hypnosis and become a certified hypnotist. After logging some more time on Wall Street, she quit. “The money was good, but I enjoyed helping people with hypnotism more,” she says. “I continued learning and became a certified hypnotist instructor, certified NLP master and instructor, power of thought and Chinese Zen expert, and life and career coach.”

Now, Ho helps people change their lives. Hypnotism, she explains, can aid people with a host of debilitating issues, including chronic pain, phobias, and addiction. In her practice, she treats individuals along with groups at corporations. “I can help them relax and de-stress,” she says. On a recent trip to Beijing, she hypnotized her entire audience. She is also director of the Society for Naturopathic Medicine, a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing awareness about naturopathic medicine and improving health conditions around the world.

And she gives back in other ways. As one of the newest members of the NYIT Alumni Association board, she finds opportunities to engage alumni (including during her trip to Beijing) and support the next generation of professionals.



COURTESY OF STEPHANIE WU HO

When she is home in New York, Ho mentors NYIT students from China and prepares them for interviews. “I instruct them on body language, how to walk, shake hands, keep their heads up, look people in the eyes. . . .When they go back to China, they say it’s very easy for them to get a job.”

And while Ho is often the expert in the room, she’s also continuing to learn new things. Three years ago, the former Wall Street executive added actress to her list of accomplishments; she’s since performed in television shows and commercials. “My motto is: Enjoy life.”



NYIT ARCHIVES

## COMMENCEMENT '69

The Class of 1969 from the Long Island campus, along with family and friends, head into the Westbury Music Fair for graduation on June 15. Other events that year included a trip to Grossingers in the Catskills and the opening of the Dairy Barn.

### 1960s

Meet members of the Class of 1969 on p. 18.

### 1970s

Ron Daniels (B.S. '70), a retired senior engineer at Lockheed, sends in this bit of NYIT history: "Fifty years ago, NYIT played its

first football season. [We] played a limited game schedule that included the homecoming game at the University of Rochester and a night game against Manhattan College."

### Alfonso Siverls (B.S. '71)

graduated from NYIT with a degree in behavioral science and went on to earn a master's degree

in clinical psychology. For the next 25 years, he worked as a therapist and administrator in a not-for-profit organization in New York City. Later, he served as a full-time faculty member in the counseling department at CUNY. Now retired, he shared this memory: "NYIT was a small school with a one-building campus. This created a closed environment in which strong personal relationships developed. This was important, especially when you consider the social turbulence of the 1960s."

Mark C. Hehl (B.S. '72) published his second book, *An Immigrant's Dilemma*, earlier this year. The result of a decade of research, it chronicles the journey of an immigrant during

the peak Italian immigration period of the early 1900s. Hehl writes: "At age 69, I still serve my international consulting clients, mentor STEM students, speak at professional society conferences, and volunteer for Engineers Without Borders. I do not plan to retire anytime soon!" Hehl lives with his wife in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains in Northwest Connecticut. He has three children, two stepchildren, and five grandchildren.

[bit.ly/mark-hehl](http://bit.ly/mark-hehl)

Minnesota Good Age profiled Dave Fielding (M.B.A. '75), a musical archaeologist and former executive at Eastern and Northwest airlines. Now retired, he preserves lost or forgotten compositions in digital

formats. "It's resurrecting the music so that others in the future can take it to whatever level they want," he told the publication. "This is my legacy. I'm not looking to sell it. It's just what I do."

[bit.ly/DaveFielding](http://bit.ly/DaveFielding)

Retired U.S. Air Force veteran and Suffolk County police officer **John Lenihan (B.S. '76)** was honored by Hampton Bays (N.Y.) School District as part of its ongoing project to recognize a veteran in their community for each month of the school year.

[bit.ly/JohnLenihan](http://bit.ly/JohnLenihan)

**Bob Weir (B.S. '79)**, a retired New York City police officer and business owner, is enjoying his most recent career as a writer. In addition to publishing several novels, he also works as an editor and writes a column "Weir Only Human," for several publications in Texas. Of his path from police to prose, he says: "I will always fondly remember my education at NYIT. It was there that a professor of English literature told me that I had writing talent. Sadly, it took many years before I took that compliment seriously. However, one of my greatest joys these days is sitting alone in my study and tapping out my thoughts on politics, business, community affairs, and anything else that motivates me at the moment."

## 1980s

The Hampton Bays School District flew an American flag during the entire month of December to honor Vietnam veteran **Bob Ettl (M.A. '80)**. After leaving the army, Ettl worked in business and as a professor of management. He continues to support veterans organizations and enjoys spending time with his grandchildren.

[bit.ly/BobEttl](http://bit.ly/BobEttl)

"Shout out to all former NYIT Bears footballers!" writes **Michael Lombardi (B.S. '81)**, executive vice

president for DataSavers in Jacksonville, Fla. He is also the proud father of **Andrea**—a third-year medical student at NYITCOM-Arkansas.

**Neal Blauzvern (D.O. '83)** has practiced pain management anesthesiology in Austin, Texas, for more than 30 years and is currently the medical director for the Center for Specialized Surgery.

**John Gering (B.Arch. '83)**, managing partner at architecture and design firm HLW, received the honor of being elevated to the AIA College of Fellows in recognition of his significant achievements in the field.

[bit.ly/JohnGering](http://bit.ly/JohnGering)

Friends for life! **Philip M. Bottega (B.S. '84)** reports that he, **Al Caiola (B.S. '84)**, **Tim Heaney (B.S. '84)**, **George Burgagni (B.S. '83)**, and fellow classmate Dennis Coughlin celebrated together over the holiday season. "We all owe our successes to NYIT for teaching us how to become great architects and even better people," Bottega says.

**Joe Bolano (B.S. '85)** joined Colliers International's Healthcare Project Management team as regional director, healthcare and life sciences. He will oversee the construction and design of healthcare projects and help develop a specialized health-care team. Bolano has more than 30 years of experience in the field, including serving as vice president of Capital Project and Facility Services for Northwell Health.

After 26 years, **Mary Jo Kutler (B.S. '86, D.O. '89)** decided to retire and transition her pediatric clinic to new leadership. Kutler lives in Ahwatukee, Ariz., and plans to spend more time with her family, including her grandchildren.

[bit.ly/MaryJoKutler](http://bit.ly/MaryJoKutler)

Industry vet **Kelly Britt (B.F.A. '87)** is the gaffer (chief electrician)

# Alumni CONNECTIONS

## Dear Alumni,

As director of Alumni Relations at New York Institute of Technology, I am excited to welcome the Class of 2019 into our global network of 103,000+ alumni. There has never been a better time to be part of our community. Last fall we hosted NYIT's first homecoming in 35 years, and we will continue to create initiatives to welcome you back to our campuses. We also plan to travel around the country and the globe to engage and connect with alumni in their backyards, and we will host annual programming in New York City and on Long Island.

I am also thrilled to introduce you to our new alumni association board: **Chantel Diaz (B.F.A. '13, M.A. '15)**, **Martin Feuer (B.S. '72)**, **Fred Harris (B.S. '08, M.B.A. '10)**, **Stephanie Wu Ho (M.S. '93)**, **Meryl Manthey (B.S. '81)**, **Michael Price, Ph.D. (B.S. '68)**, **Ralph Sepe (B.S. '97)**, **Chinyere "Will" Udoh (B.S. '14, M.S. '16)**, and **Liz Uzzo (B.P.S. '85, M.S. '95)**.

Together we'll be working on a number of fun events and initiatives, including our second annual homecoming on September 21, 2019, Career Conversations in New York City and Long Island, a Women's Professional Network, Bears of the Last Decade Council, and more. We're always looking for suggestions. Email me with your thoughts at [spolidor@nyit.edu](mailto:spolidor@nyit.edu).

I also want to thank all of our alumni and friends who joined in the inaugural NYIT Big Give. Your support truly expressed how much NYIT and its success means to all of you (see more p. 5).

Keep an eye out for upcoming networking and reunion events in your inbox and remember to visit [nyit.edu/alumni](http://nyit.edu/alumni) to learn about benefits and how to stay connected to the university and one another.

Go Bears!



Sabrina Polidoro  
Director, Alumni Relations



ANDRÉ KOPINSKI

MAKER

## A Golden Commencement

On June 15, 1969, as his classmates received their degrees, **Richard Ventre (B.F.A. '69)** (pictured left with President Hank Foley, Ph.D.) began his first day of work. The day marked the beginning of his extraordinary career as a theatrical scenic artist. Ventre worked on dozens of film, television, and theatrical productions, including as master scenic artist for the Emmy Award winning *Death of a Salesman* and the Academy Award winning *Sleepy Hollow*. Now retired, he continues to work as an artist specializing in photomontage. Ventre finally had the chance to celebrate earning his degree in May by walking during NYIT's 58th annual commencement ceremony. >> [rventre.com](http://rventre.com)



ANDRE KOPINSKI

on the revival of *Murphy Brown*. Other recent credits include *Madame Secretary* and *Blue Bloods*.

**Clifford Feiner (D.O. '87), FACP**, was appointed chief of the division of geriatric medicine at South Nassau Communities Hospital. [bit.ly/CliffordFeiner](http://bit.ly/CliffordFeiner)

iCAD, Inc., a company dedicated to providing innovative cancer detection and therapy, appointed **Michael Klein (M.B.A. '87)** as executive chairman and interim CEO. Klein is also chairman of iCAD's board. [bit.ly/MichaelKleiniCAD](http://bit.ly/MichaelKleiniCAD)



## NOTES TAKEN

We welcome all kinds of news for Alumni Notes. Submit your latest accomplishments—and remember to attach the pics!

[nyit.edu/alumni\\_notes](http://nyit.edu/alumni_notes) or [magazine@nyit.edu](mailto:magazine@nyit.edu)

**Adriene Rosell (B.S. '87)** was named vice president of operations at the Elizabeth Seton Pediatric Center in Yonkers, N.Y., where she will oversee the daily operations of nearly 170 residents and a team of more than 600 staff members. [bit.ly/AdrieneRosell](http://bit.ly/AdrieneRosell)

Executive Vice President and COO **Joe Mottola (B.Arch. '88)** recently celebrated 30 years of service at H2M architects + engineers, along with some fellow graduates: Senior Vice President and Market Director—Education **Guy Page (B.Arch. '88)**, Studio Director **Kevin Paul (B.Arch. '88)**, and Senior Architect **Maria Di Natale (B.Arch. '88)**. H2M currently employs more than 60 NYIT alumni.

## 1990s

**Juan Melendez (B.S. '90, M.B.A. '92)** joined INSIKT, a financial institution focused on community development, as vice president of retail and sales. Previously, he was senior vice president and head of North America at MoneyGram International.

**Richard Savior (M.B.A. '90)** recently finished his time as a Fulbright Scholar in Amman, Jordan, where he worked at

Princess Sumaya University for Technology. “My project was to assess and develop recommendations for enhancing the university’s current internationalization strategy as a means of furthering student experiential, cross-cultural learning, and faculty engagement and collaboration,” he writes.

**Carolyn Haskell (D.O. '91)** joined Mid-State Health Center in Plymouth, N.H., as a family doctor. She told *The Laconia Daily Sun*, “As a family practice physician, I’ve been trained to take a whole-person approach to treatment and care. I look forward to meeting new clients in the Plymouth community and providing them with quality, personalized medical care.” [bit.ly/CarolynHaskell](http://bit.ly/CarolynHaskell)

Food and beverage industry executive **John Cavallo, Ph.D. (M.B.A. '92)** joined flavor manufacturer Citromax as senior vice president of Technology and Commercial Development. In his new role, he will work with the R&D and flavor departments as well as senior management to grow the scope of the company.

**Frederick “Fred” Corsentino (B.S. '93)** was named chief revenue

officer at BIO-key International, Inc., a technology company that provides biometric software and hardware solutions. In the announcement about his position, he said, “Digital and device security has never been more urgent than it is now, and as organizations and consumers turn to biometric technology, I look forward to playing a role in driving broad scale adoption of BIO-key’s secure and convenient biometric solutions.”

Filmmaker and community advocate **Doug Ruffin (B.F.A. '93)** is heading south. After more than two decades serving the Buffalo (N.Y.) community and making films documenting the region and its history, he’s decided to settle in Maryland. *The Challenger Community News* spoke to him about his career and his impact on the city. [bit.ly/DougRuffin](http://bit.ly/DougRuffin)

**Robert Tudisco, M.B.A., (A.A.S. '94, B.T. '95)** operations manager at Donnelly Mechanical Corporation, returned to campus several times, including to speak at Career Conversation events. “I am also very excited about the NYIT extended education course I will be teaching this summer: Service Operations Leadership. It will be a unique look at real-



world business operations and management skills required to be successful in today's technical service industries," he writes.

Marketing professional **Christy Lamagna (M.A. '97)** writes "Although my NYIT days are long behind me, the knowledge I gained while earning my master's in communications is used every day." In 2001, she founded Strategic Meetings & Events, a firm that "turns meetings into powerful marketing tools that shorten sales cycles." She also adds she would love to hear from her fellow alumni! [christy@strategic.events](mailto:christy@strategic.events)

**Steven Coleman (M.S. '99)** was appointed associate laboratory director for Environment, Safety, and Health at the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory in Upton, N.Y. With more than 30 years of experience in the field, Coleman will be responsible for environmental protection and occupational safety and health at the 5,300-acre site.

## 2000s

**Robert Wittenhagen (B.P.S. '00)** is the executive chef at Linden Ponds, a retirement community in Hingham, Mass., where he develops new menus and manages the culinary staff. In an interview with *Citybizlist*, he described his culinary style as "a little bit of everything, with an emphasis on local New England and Italian cuisine." [bit.ly/RobertWittenhagen](http://bit.ly/RobertWittenhagen)

**Sarah Swammy-Tsouratakis (M.S. '01)**, senior vice president and chief operating officer for the portfolio solutions businesses in State Street Global Market, LLC, and State Street Bank and Trust, co-authored the book *Crypto Uncovered: The Evolution of Bitcoin and the Crypto Currency Marketplace*, which features an introduction by NYIT President

Hank Foley, Ph.D. NYIT School of Management Professor Steven Shapiro, Ph.D., also contributed a chapter. [bit.ly/SarahSwammy](http://bit.ly/SarahSwammy)

**Michael Grimaldi, Ed.D., (B.S. '02)** was named the new principal at E.M. Baker School in Great Neck, N.Y.

After a lengthy career in publishing and marketing, **S.W. Miliano (B.F.A. '02)** launched his own advertising and marketing firm, the Stone Register, which specializes in digital billboards for Times Square. "It is extremely exciting for our clients (and us!) to witness these ad campaigns coming to life in such a grand fashion," he writes. The company also provides news release services, as well as web design and graphic and video ad production. "I truly do utilize all the skills I learned at NYIT Old Westbury," he says. "I remember, following graduation, I'd struggled to find an 'ideal job'. It took me many years, and finally, starting my own company to realize that there are so many other ways to make the most of one's degree." The Stone Register has been featured on ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, Yahoo! Finance, Business Insider, and more.

**Maureen Mba (B.S. '03)** became director of the new Department for Compliance at the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), a pan-African multilateral financial institution devoted to financing and promoting intra- and extra-African trade.

**Amanda Ramirez (M.A. '03)** is executive producer of *My First Miracle*, a film which addresses the blood disorder MDS (Myelodysplastic syndrome) and the need for multiethnic/mixed race people to become bone marrow donors. She is also associate producer of *Laddie: The Man Behind the Movies*. The film about Hollywood legend Alan

## Upcoming **EVENTS**



25

Explore our calendar to find upcoming conferences, career fairs, volunteer opportunities, reunions, and more.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

**Alumni Day with NYCFC: June 29, 2019**

**BOLD (Bears of the Last Decade) Annual Reception: September 20, 2019**

**Homecoming 2019: September 21, 2019**

**Tech Workforce of the Future: Women and Minorities: September 26, 2019**

**FRIENDS of NYIT School of Architecture and Design Annual Reception: October 10, 2019**

[alumni.nyit.edu/events](http://alumni.nyit.edu/events)

Ladd Jr. won best documentary at the 2019 Julien Dubuque International Film Festival and can be seen on streaming platforms.

**Jessica Craig (A.O.S. '04)** was featured as the Chef Spotlight by Robert Parker's Wine Advocate website for her work as executive pastry chef at the New York restaurant L'Artusi. She told the website, "Pastry is something that I've always loved. Even growing up as a kid, I was always in the kitchen baking." [bit.ly/JessicaCraig](http://bit.ly/JessicaCraig)

**Michael Coney (B.S. '05)** was named chief operating officer of Voci Technologies, a leading speech analytics platform provider, where he will be responsible for marketing, sales, and customer support.

**Melissa Navia (B.A. '05)** is an actor, writer, and comedian. Her recent work includes guest starring on *Dietland* (AMC) and *Billions*

(Showtime). On April 2, she returned to the Long Island campus to talk about her career with NYIT student members of Phi Eta Sigma. When she was a student, Navia served as editor-in-chief of *The Campus Slate* and was a member of the Student Government Association and theater program. [MelissaNavia.com](http://MelissaNavia.com)

Filmmaker **Kurt Wright (B.F.A. '05)** recently wrapped the pilot of his series *Origins*, which is based on his award-winning film of the same name. He hopes the series, which was filmed in Jamaica, will showcase Jamaican talent and culture to an international audience. [bit.ly/KurtWright](http://bit.ly/KurtWright)

Writer **Judy Greenlees (M.B.A. '06)** published several articles on [moneyinc.com](http://moneyinc.com), covering topics like the Boston Red Sox logo and Heli Skiing. She also writes novels and short stories.

**Frank White (B.A. '06)**, director of food service for Yesway, joined the editorial advisory board for *Convenience Store News*, as well as the Foodservice Advisory Council, a panel of experts from the retailer, supplier, wholesaler, research, and consulting fields.

The International Association of Top Professionals named **Lev Bangiyev (D.O. '07)** Top Professor of the Year in Clinical Radiology for his leadership and commitment to the field. Bangiyev is professor of Clinical Radiology for Stony Brook University and a neuroradiologist at Stony Brook University Hospital.

**Wilmer Cantos (B.Arch. '07)** graduated from New York University with his Ph.D. in Civil Engineering.

Bergmeyer Associates in Boston, Mass., promoted **Michael Finch**

**(B.Arch. '07, M.Arch. '10)** to senior architect. As part of his role, he leads project teams working on commercial building and retail projects.

**Chris Seymour (M.B.A. '07)** is co-founder and managing director of Seymour-Screen Excellence. Using new technology, he is making large, motorized projection screens for home theaters more affordable and easier to ship and set up. [bit.ly/ChrisSeymour](http://bit.ly/ChrisSeymour)

## 2010s

**Deepak Nainal (M.B.A. '10)** joined CHP Family Dental in Great Barrington, Mass. He is a graduate of the Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine.

**Jamila Rowser (M.A. '11)** published her debut comic book *Wash Day*, which follows

a black woman from the Bronx, her roommate, and her hair. She funded the project through Kickstarter, meeting her goal in just two days and ultimately raising enough money for a Spanish translation. In an interview with *Boca Raton* magazine, she said: "I wanted to write stories that I cared about and that I thought my friends would care about. ... Hair is one of the most contested parts of our body. ... I wanted to have a comic to celebrate the endurance that, in spite of everything we go through, we decide to put so much time into this. I wanted something for us that's positive." [bit.ly/JamilaRowser](http://bit.ly/JamilaRowser)

Physician Assistant **Bobby Hold (M.S. '12)** recently completed his self-help book *Lose Weight, Find Yourself! 6 Steps to Having a Healthy Relationship with Food... Bite by Bite and Pound by Pound* about his weight-loss journey. [loseweightfindyourself.com](http://loseweightfindyourself.com)

**Melissa Makowski, RA (B.Arch. '12)** was promoted to associate of MDSzerbaty Associates Architecture, an architectural practice with locations in New York and Arizona. She has been at the firm since 2012 and previously served as project architect and project manager.

**Stephen DelCasino, Jr. (M.S. '13)** left Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, Maine, to join Urology Specialists of Nevada as a physician assistant.

**Vudy "Vud" Somboonkulavudi (M.A. '13)** is the founder and director of Made By Legacy: New Old Community, a collective of people passionate about vintage arts and crafts who run a flea market in Bangkok, Thailand. [bit.ly/MadeByLegacy](http://bit.ly/MadeByLegacy)

**Si Zhang (D.O. '13)** joined Stamford Health Medical Group

as an anesthesiologist and a pain management specialist for patients with chronic illness.

**Brennen Forster (B.S. '13, M.B.A. '17)** enjoys staying active as an alumnus. He recently spoke to NYIT School of Management students about his career path and segue into the financial services industry. As a student, he played baseball for the Bears for five years.

**Christina Mezzone (M.S. '14, D.O. '14)** joined Health Quest Medical Practice as part of the Division of Primary Care. A member of the Carmel High School Class of 2003, she will be returning to the area to work in the Fishkill and Carmel (N.Y.) offices.

**Irum Noor (D.O. '14)** joined ENT and Allergy Associates in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, as an allergist and immunologist.

**Khalif Chaplin (B.S. '15)** is a teaching assistant at Marshall Pre-K School. He is also working as a TA in the New York state My Brother's Keeper after-school program.

**Christina Toscano (B.Arch. '15)** is the newest and youngest member of the Society of American Registered Architects Board of Directors. "As a proud graduate of NYIT's five-year Architecture program, I would love to see more NYIT students and alumni recognized for their work," she writes.

Automotive and e-commerce expert **Daniel Yuabov (B.S. '15)** launched Carvoy, a company that makes the process of leasing a car easier for both the dealers and the customers. He spoke about the startup with Forbes.com. [bit.ly/DanielYuabov](http://bit.ly/DanielYuabov)

**Elliott Luty (D.P.T. '16)** was named clinical director of Professional Physical Therapy's new branch in Bernardsville, N.J.



THINKSTOCK

## Take Our Survey

Share your thoughts with us about the magazine and anything else you'd like us to know. As you can see, we did things a little differently with this issue. Your input will help us evolve the magazine and tell the stories you most want to read. And, if you take the survey by July 20, 2019, you will be entered in a drawing to win NYIT gear. Thank you for your feedback!



Take the survey by July 20, 2019:  
[nyit.edu/surveymagazine](http://nyit.edu/surveymagazine)

## Remembering Family and the Holocaust

**Dana Arschin (M.A. '10)** is an Emmy Award-winning reporter at Fox 5 News in New York. In April 2018, she traveled to Poland to learn more about her ancestors, who were murdered in the Holocaust, and also to document her experience. Arschin's three short films aired this past year on Fox 5's evening newscasts in the New York/Tristate area. Arschin writes: "My grandfather, Nat, who's in his 90s, miraculously survived more than two years in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp. I've always felt it was my obligation to share his stories because I know I wouldn't be here if not for his perseverance and will to survive. . . . The segment touches on my personal journey, but also focuses on the different Nazi camps that operated in Poland during World War II. It's so important to remember the horrors of the Holocaust and keep the victims' memories alive."



[bit.ly/ForgottenCamps](http://bit.ly/ForgottenCamps) (aired October 15, 2018)

[bit.ly/CommunityReborn](http://bit.ly/CommunityReborn) (aired November 8, 2018)

[bit.ly/March-of-the-Living](http://bit.ly/March-of-the-Living) (aired February 25, 2019)



COURTESY OF DANA ARSCHIN

**David Dongwook Sun (B.S. '16)** started his career in domestic car sales promotions in South Korea before moving to California, where he became the senior coordinator in the PR department at Hyundai Motor America. "During my days

on NYIT-Manhattan's campus, many great professors and fellow colleagues taught me the skill sets and knowledge to enter the marketing world," he writes. "Thank you, NYIT, for all your help!"

## Marriages

**Qi Sun (M.B.A. '02)** married John Dougan

**James Francis Pereira (B.Arch. '05)** married Ann Liz Murugi Matthews

**Raquel Olivia Alvarenga (M.B.A. '09)** married Edward Joseph Loya Jr.

**Alexander Voldman (D.O. '12)** married Rebecca Mazur

**Jason Charles Scott (B.S. '15)** married Molly Feingold Brown

## Passings

**Richard Fielder (B.A. '69)**

**Ralph F. Mrowka (B.F.A. '69)**

**Kevin Blochl (B.S. '80)**

**Anthony August Grecco (B.S. '80)**

**Dennis Wallace Reichardt (B.S. '80)**

**Harwene Tyee (B.T. '80)**

**Rich Imperatore (B.T. '82)**

**William Pietruszewicz, Jr. (B.S. '82)**

**Michael Guttenberg (D.O. '97)**

**Richard Dibble, Ph.D. (faculty)**

**Rohitkumar Patel (M.S. '17)** joined CRC Associates as a design electrical engineer and worked to redesign the electrical system of the Marine Parkway Bridge in Queens, N.Y. He writes: "It's been a great experience to work on a vertical lift bridge, where the 90-foot bridge lifts 4 million pounds of weight and [needs to be] balanced within an accuracy of one-sixteenth of an inch."

After completing his master's in communications, **Matthew Santamaria (B.F.A. '17, M.A. '18)** was hired as the communications coordinator for the Huntington's Disease Society of America. Santamaria oversees the communications effort for 54 chapters and affiliates in eight regions of HDSEA throughout the United States. [hdsa.org](http://hdsa.org)

Electrical and Computer Engineering graduate **Nency Desai (M.S. '18)** remembers her time at NYIT fondly. "I lived my dreams to explore New York and study in

New York," she writes. "Thank you to NYIT for giving me the chance to live my dreams."

**Weiyuan Lu (B.F.A. '18)**, general manager at Lesso Factoring, gave a speech to the members of Guangdong Factors Association.

**Mario Mendieta (M.S. '18)** is a software engineer for the New York Police Department and a co-founder of a software consulting company called Mapa.

**Randall O'Shea (B.S. '18)** recently accepted an internship-to-hire position at Société Générale, a French investment bank, where he'll be working in the division run by Alumni Board Association member **Fred Harris (B.S. '08, M.B.A. '10)**, head of Cybersecurity Risk, Data Risk, and Information Technology Risk. Read more about O'Shea, including how he transitioned from serving in the U.S. Air Force to college life and his involvement in the founding of the Student Veterans Organization. [bit.ly/RandallOShea](http://bit.ly/RandallOShea)

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