

# PINE

The Alumni Magazine of Northern Arizona University  
Fall 2018

## From NAU to NYC

Richard Carranza '97 uses the lessons he learned in Arizona to lead the nation's largest school system

**HOMEGROWN**  
The educators  
of tomorrow  
start here  
Page 8

# IT'S IN OUR DNA TO EDUCATE TEACHERS



“Like other successful NAU alumni, you will likely recall that at least one person who made a difference in your life was a teacher.”

## Talk to us

We want to hear what you think about *Pine*. Tell us what you like and what you would like to see in future issues. It's your magazine.

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NAU first opened its doors in 1899 as a teachers college, with just 23 students, one professor (Almon Nicholas Taylor, also the school president), two sheepskin-bound dictionaries, and an encyclopedia.

With few options to reach students, Frances Bury, the college's second professor, hitched up her horse and buggy and traversed rural northern Arizona to recruit potential students. She knew that education could transform lives.

I can assure you that NAU's proud tradition and commitment to education are as strong today as they were nearly 120 years ago.

Think of all the people who inspired or helped you get where you are today. Like other successful NAU alumni, you will likely recall that at least one person who made a difference in your life was a teacher. That is why NAU is proud of the ways we shape educational leaders who are inspired and ready to reach the next generation.

This edition of *Pine* focuses on our deep commitment to preparing high-quality education professionals—your fellow alumni—who make a difference in the world through educating others. You will be inspired as you learn how the NAU Teachers Academy is working to address Arizona's teacher shortage. NAU is the only university in the state to approach this issue through a partnership with community colleges.

Looking to the future, we recently launched NAU's Strategic Plan. It reflects input from more than 1,700 participants and over 130 sessions made up of faculty, staff, alumni, students, and community members. It captures the essence of NAU's character and sets a vision for how the university will lead the way to a better Arizona and a more sustainable world. You can read the entire plan online at [nau.edu/strategic-plan-2025](http://nau.edu/strategic-plan-2025).

And this year we also have updated our logo, which consolidates our athletics and academic brands and has helped us retire outdated marks.

Thank you for helping make NAU among the best in the nation and for giving my husband, Tom, and me so many reasons to be thankful that we are a part of the Lumberjack family. ▀

Sincerely,

Rita Hartung Cheng, PhD  
President, Northern Arizona University

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**On the cover:** NAU alumnus Richard Carranza (Photo: New York City Department of Education).

**Photography:** Josh Biggs, Ashleigh Bishop, Wyatt Rutt, and Steven Toya. All other photography from the Northern Arizona University Archives and the NAU Alumni Association.

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**Contact us:** *Pine* is published twice a year by the NAU Office of Alumni Engagement. 928-523-3757 • [alumni@nau.edu](mailto:alumni@nau.edu) • Stephanie Smith • Director of Alumni Engagement To get on our mailing list, update your contact information online at [nau.edu/alumni](http://nau.edu/alumni). NAU is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution.

# A hike down memory lane

Since the return of *Pine*, many alumni have reached out and shared some of their favorite Lumberjack memories:

One weekend we hiked down the Kaibab Trail to the bottom of the Grand Canyon. We were chaperoned by the physics professor and his wife. I can still see the ribbon of blue sky above us as we hiked out.

**Norma Jean (Candy) Blair Gilmore** ✉  
BS Education, '56

Thank you for your support and those wonderful years I attended and worked for NAU. We put on some great shows at Ardrey.

**Ralph Scott** ✉  
BS Arts, '86

I enjoyed walking to my classes in all kinds of weather. I loved "living in the moment" as a college student.

**Patty Coolman** f  
BS Education, '88

## Tell us your stories

Peterson Hall (right) was home to countless Lumberjacks during its days as a dormitory. But with NAU's need to expand STEM space, the building once known for its spirited residents will soon be transformed. Help us celebrate Peterson Hall's history by emailing your stories to [alumni@nau.edu](mailto:alumni@nau.edu).

## Letters to the editor

We want to know what's on your mind. Feel free to send us a letter about something you saw in *Pine*. Email us at [alumni@nau.edu](mailto:alumni@nau.edu).

Taking walks between north and south campus in the evening, seeing the occasional fox run through the trees, and seeing the glow of the dome.

**Melody Gromko** f  
BSED Arts and Sciences, '90  
MA Education, '98

I loved being the student assistant for the freshman astronomy class at NAU. The skies were beautiful, the stars and planets easy to see and identify, and the Milky Way and other galaxies were amazing to see in such clarity.

**Stuart Handley** f  
MA Arts, '90

Playing Frisbee in the Walkup Skydome before it opened in 1977.

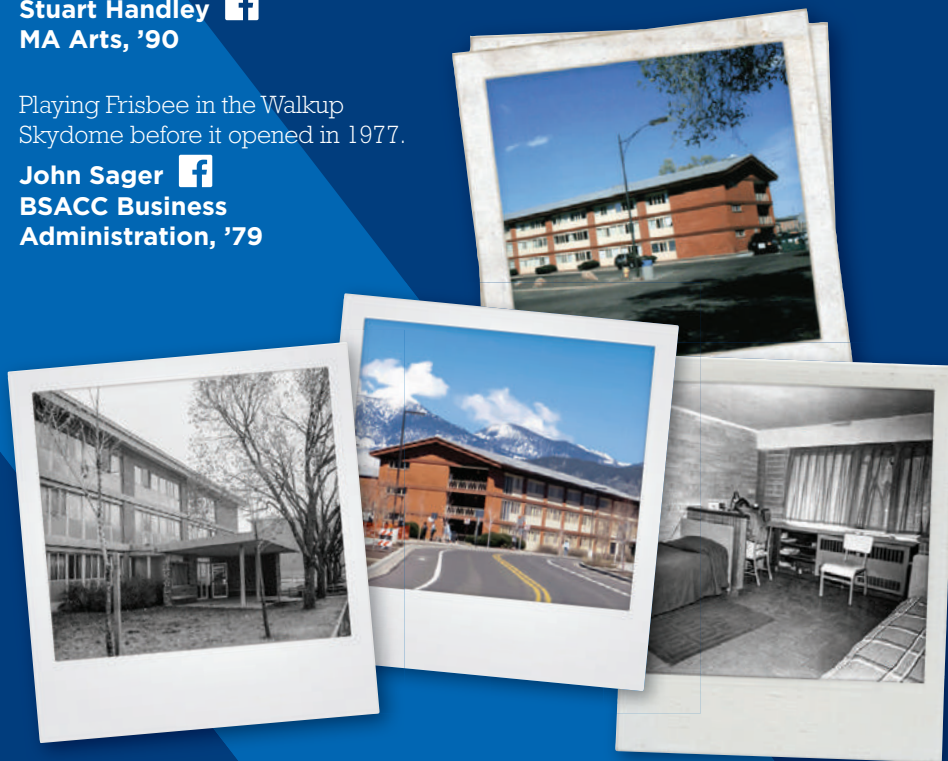
**John Sager** f  
BSACC Business Administration, '79

Thursday night shouting matches between Peterson and Babbitt.

**John Bowers** f  
BS Business Administration, '83

My first choir concert, spring 2010, was such a beautiful production, and I loved sharing my voice with the NAU community.

**Jennifer Ingham** t  
BS Communication, '10



## Join the conversation

Follow the NAU Alumni Association:

- Twitter: @NAUAlumni
- Instagram: @NAUAlumni
- Facebook: facebook.com/NAUAlumni
- LinkedIn: Northern Arizona University Alumni Association
- Snapchat: @NAUAlumni

# KEEPING UP THE GOLD STANDARD

Forty-five graduating seniors were honored in April with NAU's Gold Axe Award, a tradition dating back to 1933. The award is a symbol of the Lumberjack identity, and it recognizes outstanding students for their achievements and service.

At the awards ceremony, seven students also were named Distinguished Seniors by the individual colleges at NAU. Those seven are René Coggins, Essence McClain, Aria Ottmueller, Brittany Peterson, Grant Sears, Ashley Sergent, and Olivia Thomas.

"It is extraordinary how much these students have accomplished and grown during the past four years," NAU President Rita Cheng said. "Each of their experiences is unique and special, and they have all forged their own path. Their passion and commitment to their education, to NAU, and to serving others, are inspiring."



Gold Axe winner Darien Fuller (second from left) is all smiles at the awards ceremony.

**Top 5** These students also received the President's Prize, the most prestigious award NAU offers to undergraduates.



**René Coggins**

**Majors:** Accountancy, Finance, Hotel and Restaurant Management

**Hometown:** Mesa, AZ

**At NAU:** Member of the Honors College, as well as a two-time Academic All-American in basketball



**Brandon Corrales**

**Major:** Fitness Wellness  
**Hometown:** Flagstaff, AZ

**At NAU:** Made Dean's List every semester with a perfect 4.0 GPA; before NAU, he sustained a brain injury while serving in the Army



**Lauren L'Ecuyer**

**Majors:** Political Science, Hotel and Restaurant Management

**Hometown:** Glendale, AZ

**At NAU:** Former NAU Student Body President, now serving as a student regent on the Arizona Board of Regents

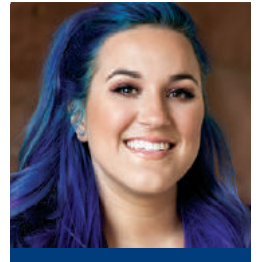


**Étude O'Neel-Judy**

**Majors:** Mathematics, Physics

**Hometown:** Saint Johns, AZ

**At NAU:** One of only three Arizona students to receive a Goldwater Scholarship in 2017 for STEM research

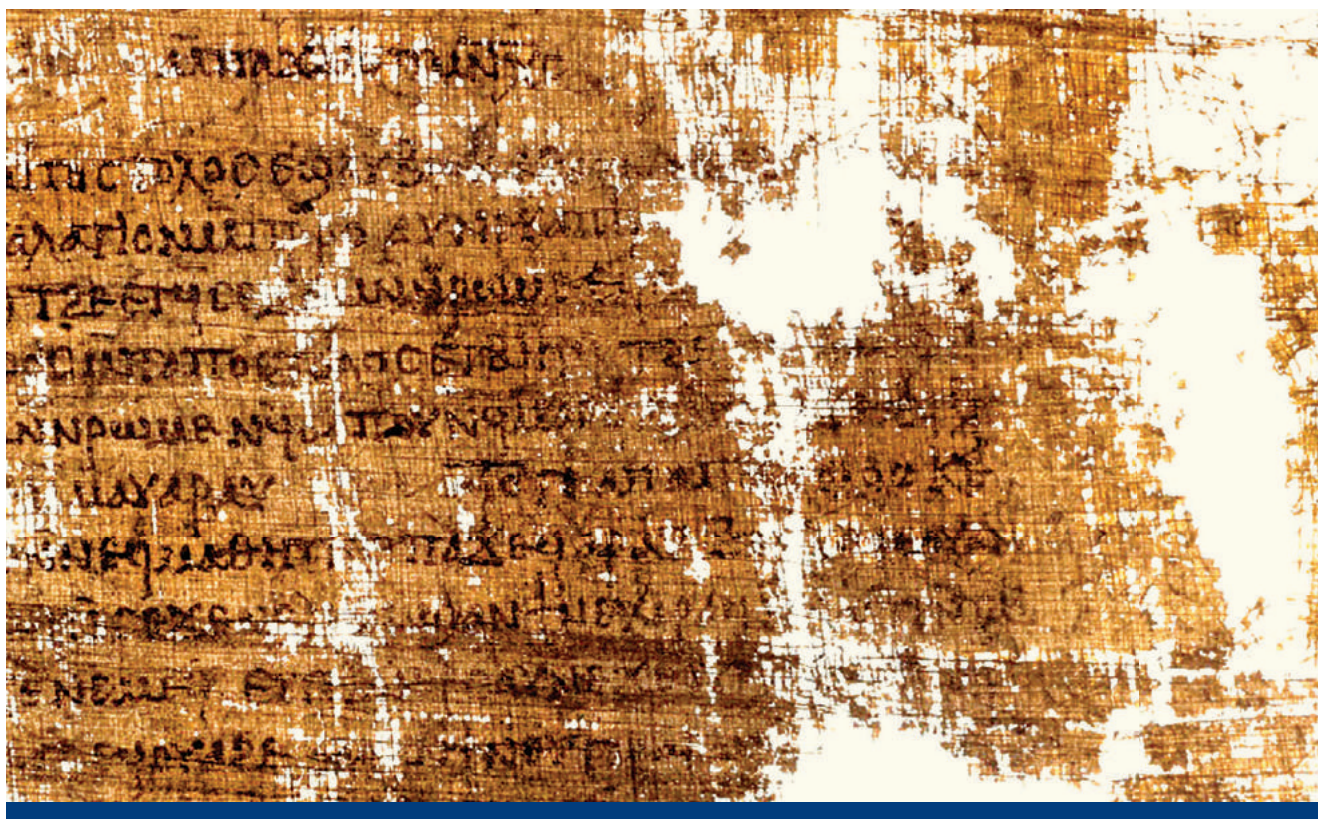


**Celena Wallace**

**Major:** Creative Media and Film

**Hometown:** Phoenix, AZ

**At NAU:** Leveraged her experience as a former foster care child to serve as a peer mentor on campus and volunteer in the community



This ancient manuscript was almost unreadable in 2007 when NAU professor Jason BeDuhn began translating it.

# OLD IS NEW AGAIN

## Professor brings manuscript's stories back to life

Over the past 16 centuries, it's been buried, soaked, looted, shellacked, and nearly destroyed in war.

Its writers, followers of a visionary named Mani, wrote their religion's oral traditions on papyrus. The manuscript, known as the Dublin Kephalaia, was almost unreadable in 2007 when NAU professor of Religious Studies, Jason BeDuhn and two colleagues began translating it.

But this summer, after 10 years of analysis, the manuscript's ancient stories came to life again.

### Filling the gap

Found in Egypt, the Kephalaia manuscript describes a diverse, vibrant society at the crossroads of East and West.

"It's the first Western manuscript that tells us about Iranian culture at that time," said BeDuhn, a

Guggenheim Fellow and National Humanities Center Fellow. "It represents a very cosmopolitan society. At the same time, it tells how one philosopher founded a religious tradition."

Mani was raised in a Jewish-Christian community and considered himself an apostle of Jesus, but his movement incorporated many different traditions.

"He said Jesus, Zoroaster, and the Buddha were sent by God, but they did one thing wrong: they didn't write down their own teachings," BeDuhn said. "Time had distorted their messages. So, Mani said, God sent another messenger to sort it out: him."

### A lost treasure

Now stored in Ireland, the manuscript was written in Coptic, the last form of ancient Egyptian. But translating

it was not a simple matter of just reading the text.

In the 1950s, a conservator used chemicals that preserved the papyrus but obscured the ink. BeDuhn and his colleagues used multispectral and computer-enhanced photographic techniques and viewed the pages in ultraviolet light.

"A lot of our analysis involved sitting in the library, looking at each papyrus leaf from different angles under magnification," he said. "It was painstaking work."

The first volume of the translation reached publication in the summer of 2018. The next three volumes will be published at a rate of one per year.

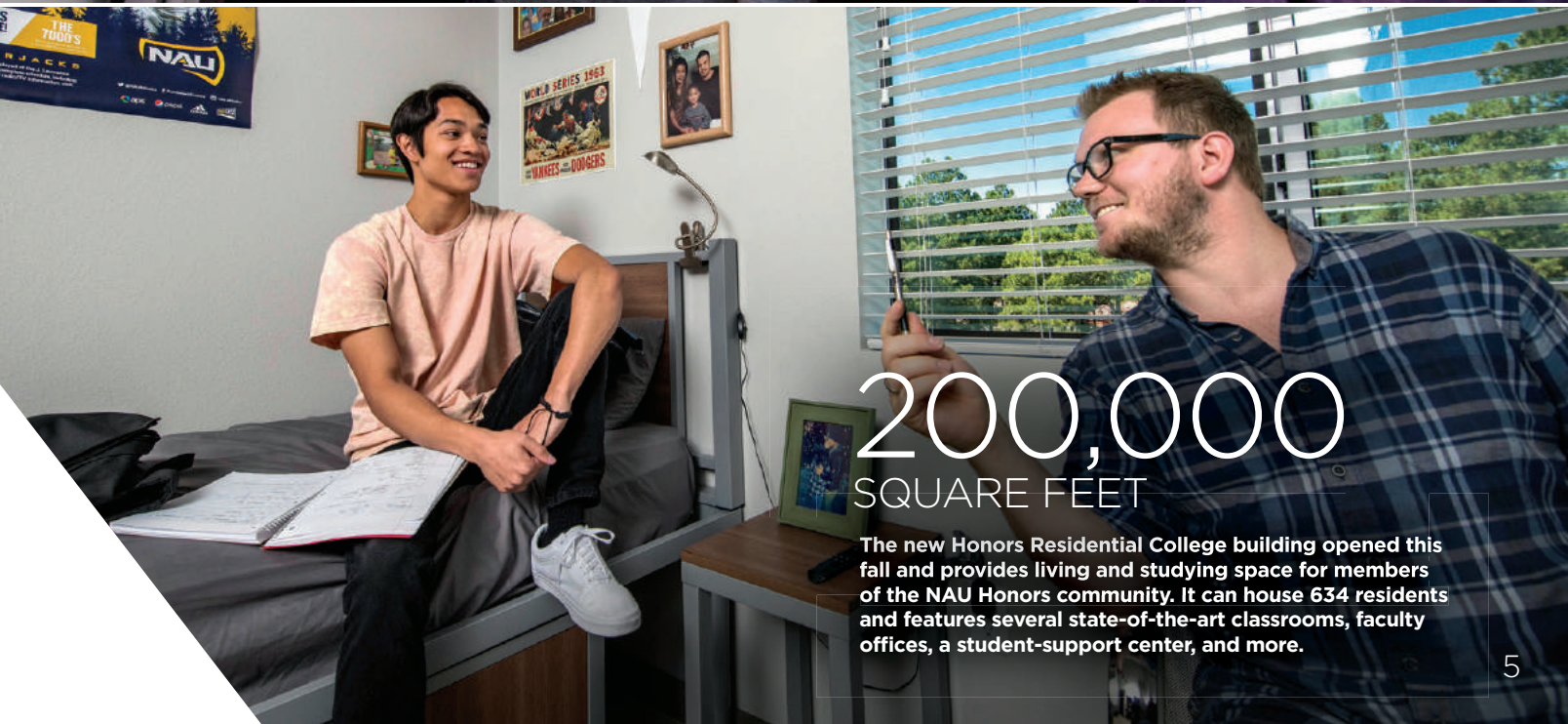
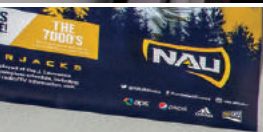
"The Dublin Kephalaia Codex makes it clear that ancient cultures we think of as separate and distinct knew exactly what was going on with each other and were part of a larger conversation," he said.

# POPPING UP ON CAMPUS

NAU's Flagstaff campus has seen some big changes over the past few years. If you haven't been back lately, here is a quick look at some recent updates.

## 8-5-3-5

Students in the College of Education can now sharpen their teaching skills in a new technology-enhanced classroom. The room features eight screens, five TVs, three projectors, and five microphones—all to help new teachers bring technology to their future classrooms.



## 200,000 SQUARE FEET

The new Honors Residential College building opened this fall and provides living and studying space for members of the NAU Honors community. It can house 634 residents and features several state-of-the-art classrooms, faculty offices, a student-support center, and more.

## Fulbright Scholars making their mark in Greece and Laos

Two recent NAU alumnae will spend a year abroad after receiving international grants from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program.

Alexandra Huff (BS Geology, '16) will conduct research at the University of Athens to help produce the first complete geologic map of a volcano in the Aegean Sea. Huff's Fulbright experience will transition into a master's degree in volcanology and doctoral study in planetary mapping.

Margaret Wood (MA Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), '18) will be an English teaching assistant in Laos. Wood will use her Fulbright experience to further her qualifications to become an English-as-a-foreign-language university professor in Southeast Asia. Her future plans include earning a PhD in the Applied Linguistics program at NAU.

## Scholarship winner to serve Navajo Nation

For the second year in a row, an NAU student has received a prestigious Udall Scholarship. Danielle Curley, a senior majoring in social work, has been selected as a 2018 Udall Scholar in Native Health Care. She will receive a \$7,000 scholarship for educational expenses and membership in a network of changemakers.

A member of the Navajo Nation, Curley plans to dedicate her professional life to serving her community, focusing her career on the development of child health and social service systems.



Microbiology major Amalee Nunnally presented her pathogen research at NAU's 10th annual Undergraduate Symposium this year.

# THIS IS WHERE STUDENTS SHINE

More than 700 students presented their research in April to faculty, guest judges, alumni, and community members at the 10th annual Undergraduate Symposium.

Over the years, thousands of students have taken part in the event, but one thing has remained constant: the Undergraduate Symposium is where Lumberjacks shine.

### Hands-on research

Amalee Nunnally, a senior microbiology major, took part in this year's event to present the research she has done in NAU's Pathogen and Microbiome Institute. She worked there to detect a common pathogen, *Clostridium difficile* (often called *C. diff*), in the Flagstaff soil.

By gene sequencing the pathogens in soil samples from 50 locations across the city, Nunnally can now match them with those found in Flagstaff hospital patients—and trace the source of *C. diff* in those patients.

It was an opportunity she never imagined possible for an undergraduate.

"I always envisioned that, as an undergraduate, I'd only be somebody's research assistant, washing dishes and taking out trash and doing those kinds of things," she said. "But the opportunity they give us here is unreal. I am working with very expensive reagents and very important samples."

### 'A premier event'

NAU students aren't the only ones taking part in the symposium. In fact, the event couldn't exist without the help of alumni, donors, and guest judges.

Paul Begovac (BS Biology–Zoology, '78) has helped fund the event, and he looks forward to it each year.

"The symposium is a premier event showcasing NAU's commitment to undergraduate education," he said. "As an annual judge, I'm always impressed and inspired by the students' passion and enthusiasm for their research projects."

## FACTS & FIGURES

#1

Best Colleges Online (nation), 2018 *Affordable Colleges Online*

#1

Online College in Arizona, 2018–19 *OnlineColleges.com*

#2

In awarding master's degrees in education (nationally) to Native American students *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*



# A DEDICATED DOZEN

## President's Alumni Award Winners



**Richard Carranza '97**  
College of Education

Carranza, who began his career as a teacher in Tucson, is now chancellor of the New York City Department of Education. An accomplished musician, he's also a member of the Mariachi Hall of Fame. (Read more about Carranza on pages 13-15.)



**Bill and Jana Harper '90**  
College of Arts and Letters

These two members of the Class of 1990 met on the stage of an NAU production of *West Side Story*. Over the years the Harpers have established two scholarships at NAU, while also supporting the theatre department financially and with their time and expertise.



**Kipyego Cheluget '84**  
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Cheluget earned his PhD in political science from NAU before becoming a diplomat for Kenya and a leader of international organizations. He is now the assistant secretary general of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.



**Tim Kinney '82**  
College of the Environment, Forestry and Natural Sciences and College of Engineering, Informatics and Applied Sciences

A member of the NAU Foundation Board, Kinney is a longtime donor and university volunteer. He received the university's Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award in 2017.



**Scott Coor '76**  
The W. A. Franke College of Business

Coor has played a huge role in the growth of NAU's business program. In 2007, he helped secure a \$25 million contribution from Bill Franke, and he continues to connect the college with potential supporters today. He also is a volunteer with the NAU Foundation.



**Nicolette Teufel-Shone '76, '79**  
College of Health and Human Services

Teufel-Shone has spent nearly 30 years working with Native American communities in the Southwest to improve public health. She is associate director of the Center for Health Equity Research and a professor of health sciences at NAU.

## Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award Winners



**Stacey Brechler-Knaggs**  
BS Recreation and Leisure Services, '84

Dwight Patterson  
Alumni of the Year



**Gary Watson**  
BSBA Marketing, '72

Dr. Cliff Harkins  
Distinguished Citizen of the Year



**Victoria Fimea**  
BS Communication, '83

Jeff Ferris  
Volunteer of the Year



**Paige Lund**  
BS Hotel and Restaurant Management, '93

Joe and Marie Rolle  
Spirit of NAU Award



**Shay Butler**  
BSBA Finance and Management, '10

Excellence in Achievement by a Recent Graduate Award

To read more about the alumni awards or to nominate a deserving Lumberjack, visit [nau.edu/alumniawards](http://nau.edu/alumniawards).

# HOMEGROWN EDUCATORS



**The Eastburn Education Building is home to NAU's College of Education, the university's largest school.**

# NAU leads the way in preparing Arizona's next generation of teachers

"You need strong teachers, principals, and administrators because education is the foundation for everything," says Ramona Mellott, dean of NAU's College of Education. "And that's where we come in."

NAU began as a teachers college, and those roots remain deep. Today, the College of Education is NAU's largest school, with more than 3,300 students and 52,000 alumni around the world.

A quick glance of NAU alumni reads

like a Who's Who in Education: the 2015 Arizona teacher of the year; county teachers of the year; superintendents and community college presidents; and the head of the entire New York City Department of Education (see pages 13-15).

Read on to see what NAU is doing to recruit tomorrow's educators and grow them into leaders of increasingly diverse classrooms, schools, and school systems.

## BUILDING A PIPELINE FOR K-12 TEACHERS

What's the best way to tackle the shortage of K-12 teachers in Arizona?

Take NAU's stellar teacher training to the places where potential educators live.

Research shows that most teachers work in schools within 20 miles of where they grew up. So rather than bringing future teachers to campus, the College of Education is going to them—with the new NAU Teachers Academy.

### A common mission

In 2017, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey called on the state's three public universities to each create a teachers academy. The institutions were free to design the programs however they saw fit, but the academies all had to have the same mission: to produce quality teachers without burdening them with excessive debt.

The NAU Teachers Academy answers Ducey's directive on two fronts. First, by expanding the university's existing Grow Your Own program, which partners with community colleges and K-12 school districts in Arizona. Students in this program attend community college for two years and then transfer to one of NAU's campuses across the state to earn a bachelor's degree.

Over the years, the Grow Your Own program has expanded to include more rural areas, where the need for K-12 teachers is especially urgent. "And we'll keep expanding as long as we have the need and resources," Mellott said.

The second part of the NAU Teachers Academy is the Teacher Intern Preparation Program. Students in this program take classes at night and earn a master's degree in elementary education with certification—making it attractive to those with an undergraduate degree who are switching careers, Mellott said.

### An affordable option

Whichever program they are in, students in the Teachers Academy get another benefit: NAU covers any balance of tuition and fees after all of their other financial aid has been applied. In exchange, teachers commit to teach in an Arizona public school for at least one year for each year they received the scholarship.

With so many Grow Your Own students staying close to home, some end up working at the same schools they attended when they were younger, Mellott said.

"NAU has always been the university that helps the whole state, not just Flagstaff," she said. "We've been offering education programs across Arizona for years, and the Teachers Academy is continuing that legacy." ▲

**Learn more at [nau.edu/teachersacademy](http://nau.edu/teachersacademy).**

# A PARTNER FOR NAVAJO NATION EDUCATORS

NAU has a long history of educating Native American students and helping them succeed in college. But if those students don't receive a quality K–12 education, they can struggle when they come to campus—and their chances of earning a degree can plummet.

That's why NAU partnered with multiple school districts and the Department of Diné Education to create the Diné Institute for Navajo Nation Educators (DINÉ).

An offshoot of the Yale National Initiative, which strives to strengthen teaching in public schools across the country, DINÉ works in the Southwest to provide professional development seminars for K–12 teachers in schools serving Navajo youth.

## Teachers take the lead

DINÉ is different from many other teacher development programs because the teachers themselves are the ones making key decisions and driving the curriculum, said Angelina Castagno, planning director of DINÉ and a professor in NAU's College of Education.

"It's not a top-down model where the state or a university decides what the teachers should be learning," she said. "We work under the assumption that teachers know what's best for their students. So the teachers determine which subjects they would like to study."

DINÉ is part of NAU's effort to become the leading university serving Native Americans, Castagno said. NAU faculty members from several departments lead DINÉ seminars, which run the gamut from the humanities to the sciences. There are currently a dozen K–12 teachers from



DINÉ Fellows also can attend seminars at Yale University. Credit: ©2018, Yale National Initiative, Yale University, All Rights Reserved.

Arizona and New Mexico in DINÉ, many of whom are NAU alumni. Next year, the institute will serve 40 to 50 teachers.

## Shared expertise

Fifth-grade teacher Jolene Smith (BS Education, '95; MEd, '99) was one of the first educators from the Navajo Nation to take part in the Yale National Initiative. After attending seminars there for several years, she approached NAU in 2016 about bringing the program to Arizona.

"Establishing a local institute on the Diné Nation is important because we're embedding the culture and language into our classrooms," Smith said, "and we're trying to sustain that knowledge within our children so they can keep it as they grow up."

At the end of the program, teachers develop a curriculum unit to teach in class and publish online for other educators to access. That, Castagno said, is one of the biggest benefits of DINÉ.

"We know that many teachers don't have access to meaningful culturally responsive curricula," she said. "DINÉ changes that." ▀

Support DINÉ at [nau.edu/dineinstitute](http://nau.edu/dineinstitute).

## Notable alumni

The Arizona Educational Foundation has honored several NAU alumni. Among them: • **John-David Bowman** (MEd, '07; Honorary Doctorate, '15): 2015 Arizona Teacher of the Year • **Michael Vargas** (BS, '00): 2016 Ambassador for Excellence • **Chrissy DeBono** (BS, '05; MA, '09 & '17); **Lori Lyford** (MEd, '07); and **Jena Phillips** (BA, '96; MEd, '99): 2017 Ambassadors for Excellence

## The Maricopa connection

Nearly half of the 10 Maricopa Community Colleges are led by an NAU graduate. • **Paul Dale** (EdD, '92): President, Paradise Valley Community College • **Steven Gonzales** (BS, '96; MA, '00): President, GateWay Community College • **Christina Haines** (MEd, '01; currently working on doctoral degree): Interim President, Scottsdale Community College • **Teresa Leyba-Ruiz** (MEd, '94): President, Glendale Community College

# MORE THAN READY TO TEACH



**ALY LICHTAS**  
Elementary education major

Aly Lichtas had a teacher in seventh grade who changed her life. Now Lichtas is paying it forward by studying to become a teacher herself.

"I still remember Ms. Aken and the joy she brought to the classroom," said Lichtas, an NAU senior majoring in elementary education. "With her, it was all about exploring the world and seeing what the world had to offer. I loved that idea, and it made me realize I had a passion for teaching too."

Lichtas found even more inspiration at NAU, including in her math methods class taught by assistant clinical professor Michelle Novelli. "She encouraged us to not rely just on worksheets, but to come up with interesting lessons to teach our students," Lichtas said. "She also volunteered her own time to observe us and give feedback, which is a huge help."

Thanks to NAU's practicum partnerships with several Flagstaff schools, students get a wealth of experience observing and teaching. Lichtas is on track to spend more than 400 hours in local elementary school classrooms. "It's allowed me to spend time with students and really explore what I want to do as a teacher," she said. "Not many programs offer that."

This fall will be Lichtas's third semester at Cromer Elementary School, where she'll work with K–5 students who need extra help in reading. She's also spent a semester in a fourth-grade classroom and a semester with first-graders. At each stop, she's taken on more responsibilities, from working with a handful of students to developing lesson plans to teaching an entire class.

## Adding up the hours

Although the state of Arizona requires only 45 hours of student teaching, NAU requires all future teachers to log at least 135 hours at a partner school—and that's before they even begin their "official" 45 hours of student teaching.

In the spring, Lichtas will officially become a full-time student teacher. And she'll go into the classroom knowing that NAU has prepared her to excel.

"I've learned so much during my time at Cromer," she said. "I'm a much better teacher than I was after my first semester there." ▀

# 'IT'S ALL WORTH IT'

Life comes at you fast when you're a new second-grade teacher.

You have to set up your classroom, create lesson plans, master multiple subjects, deal with the occasional meltdown—and then find a way to capture the attention of a roomful of restless

children. All while working long hours for little money.

But Chelsea Schoech wouldn't have it any other way. "There are times when I ask myself, 'What have I gotten myself into?'" said Schoech (BS Education, '18), who started this fall at Fort Mojave Elementary near her hometown of Bullhead City, Arizona. "Then you see your students start to understand the lesson and you realize it's all worth it."

Growing up, Schoech always enjoyed helping her younger siblings and volunteering with children at her church. As it became clear that education was her calling, she chose NAU for its reputation for preparing outstanding teachers.

Affordability was important too—and Schoech received a full-tuition Lumberjack Scholars Award, plus three other awards from the College of Education to help cover her remaining expenses.

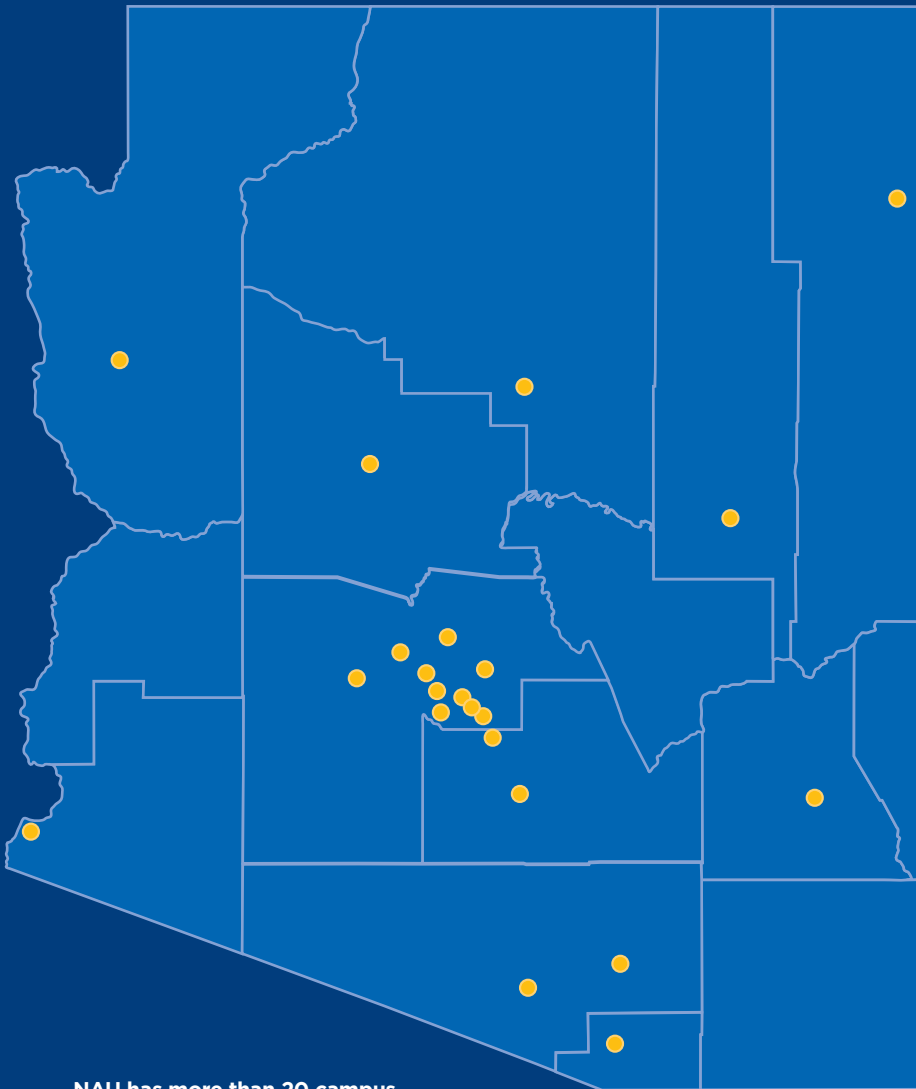
Schoech credits NAU with teaching her how to become a teacher who makes a lasting difference. "I learned that education is a lot more than just teaching two plus two equals four," she said. "It's about building relationships with the children—because it all starts with that connection." ▀



**CHELSEA SCHOECH**  
Second-grade teacher

# STATEWIDE

To meet Arizona's evolving needs, NAU is offering new programs throughout the state in high-demand career paths—business administration, computer information technology, education, engineering, health sciences, and many more. Get details at [nau.edu/statewide](http://nau.edu/statewide).



NAU has more than 20 campus locations to make higher education accessible to students wherever they are.

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## By the numbers

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20+

Campus locations in Arizona

---

200+

Programs offered, from certificates to doctoral degrees

---

2,200+

Students enrolled in NAU's statewide campuses

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## Fast facts

- In the late 1980s NAU faculty members began traveling by car, train, and plane to serve students across Arizona. Since then, thousands of students have earned an NAU degree from one of the university's statewide campuses.
  - NAU has a long-standing partnership with the Maricopa Community Colleges. The university has programs, faculty, and staff on each Maricopa campus—ensuring that diverse populations have the opportunity to earn college degrees.
  - The Native American Nursing program at NAU's School of Nursing is the only reservation-based BSN degree in the country. The program has graduated more than 150 Native American nurses since it began in the 1990s.
-

A professional portrait of Richard Carranza, a man with dark hair and a goatee, wearing a dark brown suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a blue patterned tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a dark, neutral color.

EDUCATOR,  
MUSICIAN,  
PROUD  
GRADUATE

**An NAU degree and  
a love of music help  
Richard Carranza shape  
students' lives in NYC**

Photo: New York City  
Department of Education

# R

ichard Carranza, chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, has described himself as “a mariachi masquerading as a superintendent.” In reality, he has excelled at both.

Born in Tucson, Carranza spoke Spanish exclusively until he entered kindergarten. The support and programming he received as an English language learner allowed him to flourish, and it would help shape his view of the role of education. He went on to thrive at Pueblo High School before becoming the first in his family to attend college.

Initially, Carranza (MEd Educational Leadership, '97) planned to study engineering. He found his passion, however, by sharing his musical skills while working his way through college. He had played with mariachi bands from an early age, and he continued performing at weddings and quinceañeras. When he also started giving guitar lessons to children, he discovered he was a natural-born teacher.

“I loved being able to teach complex things to kids and break it down and make it understandable,” he said. “And their thrill of accomplishment—to see them master a skill—was also a thrill for me.”

He soon found himself looking forward to those classes more than his studies. “And it led to the epiphany that maybe I wanted to be a teacher,” he said. “It was really just that simple.”

## FIGHTING FOR CHANGE

Carranza changed majors, graduated with a teaching degree, and went back to his home community and high school alma mater as a teacher in social studies and bilingual education. And he kept playing in mariachi groups.

When students found out that he was a musician, they asked for guitar lessons. “I couldn't say no,” he said.

Carranza started with seven students, but word quickly spread and soon he was running an informal after-school guitar program. Students began to ask why it couldn't be an official class at Pueblo High School. “So I helped them write a proposal, and together we presented it to the principal,” he said.

There was pushback. Some parents didn't see the value of teaching guitar over other subjects. “The experience made two facts abundantly clear,” Carranza said. “First, creating change sometimes means making enemies. Second, even if you're not itching for a fight, you should always be prepared for one.”

The program eventually got the green light, and from it emerged an award-winning ensemble, the Mariachi Aztlán de Pueblo High School. The experience had a personal impact as well: it convinced Carranza to pursue an advanced education degree so he could go beyond impacting a single classroom to improving an entire system. He was ready to become a school administrator and a greater champion for teachers and students.

## NAU'S INFLUENCE

To do that, Carranza enrolled at an NAU community campus in Tucson. “I had a lot going on in my life at the time,” he said. “I was teaching full time and working with the mariachi program, and I had recently become a new father. I really appreciated the fact that NAU tailored its program for working professionals.”

Even more important, he met a mentor: Dr. John Pedicone, who had served as superintendent for the Tucson Unified School District and for 22 years worked in the Flowing Wells Unified School District as a teacher, assistant superintendent, and superintendent.

“Dr. Pedicone was able to marry theory and practice and really keep the entire education grounded,” he said.

Carranza graduated from NAU in 1997, and his career quickly took off. He became assistant principal and then principal at Pueblo High School. He realized that the after-school guitar program he had started there five years before could be about more than enrichment—it could play an important role in student achievement and retention.

He expanded it to encompass three skill levels and





“Every experience I’ve had in my career has absolutely connected to my education at NAU. Everything I learned was applicable in every position I held. It’s not an exaggeration.”

**Richard Carranza is not your typical school administrator—he’s also a member of the Mariachi Hall of Fame.**

**Photo: New York City Department of Education**

close to 300 students. The results: students in the advanced level had a 98 percent graduation rate.

From there, he was hired as a principal at a high school in Las Vegas, then a regional superintendent in the same district where he oversaw a range of schools, from the very wealthiest to those struggling for resources. “I learned about differentiating needs and how to move resources to where they’re needed the most, in the most equitable way possible,” he said.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AT WORK

A move to San Francisco came next, with the title of deputy superintendent for instruction, innovation, and social justice. “The social justice distinction allowed me to push instruction in a very different way—one that is meaningful to the individual communities including the most underserved,” he said. “You have to make the education culturally relevant to make it significant.”

His promotion to superintendent in San Francisco prompted Marc Benioff, the CEO of Salesforce, to make a multimillion-dollar pledge in support of the schools. Then Houston came calling. Carranza’s work there, including a much-praised response to schools hit by Hurricane Harvey (which also garnered another sizeable gift from Benioff), fueled his national reputation.

And in each posting, mariachi music was as much his signature as education transformation. While in San Francisco, he was even inducted into the Mariachi Hall of Fame.

## THE OFFER OF A LIFETIME

In April, Mayor Bill de Blasio named Carranza chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, responsible for 1.1 million students in more than 1,800 schools—the largest school system in the nation. The challenges are enormous. Many communities are seeking solutions for their underperforming schools. An estimated 110,000 of the city’s elementary students are homeless.

Carranza said the lessons he learned at NAU are still helping him today.

“Every experience I’ve had in my career has absolutely connected to my education at NAU,” he said. “Everything I learned was applicable in every position I held. It’s not an exaggeration.”

“I remember taking a class on organizational change theory that defined the difference between building a culture and changing a culture. I use those lessons every single day.”

And he still has the heart of a mariachi.

“If I’m asked to sing, chances are I’m going to sing,” he told *The New York Times*. “If I’m asked to play, chances are I’m going to play. And if I’m not asked to sing or play, chances are, I’m going to sing and play.”

In fact, in May he wowed a crowd at a Harlem middle school with his rendition of the classic tune “El Rey.”

“It’s about more than the music,” he said. “It’s about reaching kids where they are and teaching them to belong to something bigger than themselves, to inspire in them a passion to never give up.”



NAU's Cherisse Kutzyreff (second from right) and Dr. George Hershey (right) help an injured football player.

# IN GOOD HANDS

## For NAU trainers, the athletes always come first

As the assistant athletic director of sports medicine for NAU, Cherisse Kutzyreff (MEd, '10) leads a team that keeps about 400 Lumberjack student-athletes in peak condition. And the best way to do that? Take a proactive approach and prevent injuries from happening in the first place.

"We are very much on the forefront of preventive and corrective exercise," Kutzyreff said. "We see our student-athletes almost every day, and we use advanced techniques and technology to help them and hopefully keep injuries to a minimum."

It's a philosophy echoed by Mike Nesbitt, who spent 36 years as NAU's head athletic trainer before retiring in 2006. "If you can prevent it," he said, "you don't have to treat it."

### Decades of dedication

When Nesbitt started at the university in 1970, he was the only athletic trainer on staff. Over the years more were added, and today

### What's in a name?

Former head athletic trainer Mike Nesbitt made a lasting impression at NAU. The university's training center is named after him, and there is also the Michael E. Nesbitt Scholarship—one of the few fully endowed athletic training scholarships in the country. You can support the fund at [nau.edu/giving](http://nau.edu/giving).

NAU has four full-time trainers plus six graduate assistants. Also on staff is Dr. George Hershey, who started one year after Nesbitt and will be retiring in 2019 after 48 years as team physician.

During their time together, Nesbitt and Hershey helped transform the NAU training staff into the powerhouse it is today. The two men are among the most recognized names in sports medicine in the country, and both are members of

the NAU Athletics Hall of Fame.

But for them, it was never about the accolades or recognition. It was always about the student-athletes. "The athletes come first in our book," Hershey said, "and we don't let them compete unless they are physically and mentally prepared."

### Looking to the future

Kutzyreff is now leading the storied training program into its next chapter. NAU is conducting a feasibility study to look at potential upgrades to its athletic facilities—including a high-performance training center for student-athletes that would keep the Lumberjacks strong in the Big Sky Conference.

And at the center of it all will be Kutzyreff and her team, doing what they have been doing for years: putting NAU's student-athletes first.

"Everyone here is passionate about what we do," she said. "It's truly a calling, and I can't imagine doing anything else."

# A SWEET SWEEP

NAU swept the 2017–18 Big Sky Conference All-Sports Trophy awards, the fifth time the Lumberjacks have taken home both the men's and women's honors in the same year.

NAU women won conference championships in four sports: cross country, tennis, and indoor and outdoor track and field. The All-Sports Trophy is the eighth overall for the Lumberjack women and their second in a row.

On the men's side, this is the fifth straight All-Sports Trophy and 15th overall. Men's teams won three Big Sky Conference championships this year: indoor and outdoor track and field, and cross country—which won its second straight NCAA title.

Overall, five men's teams finished third or better in the conference standings.



**Andersen**



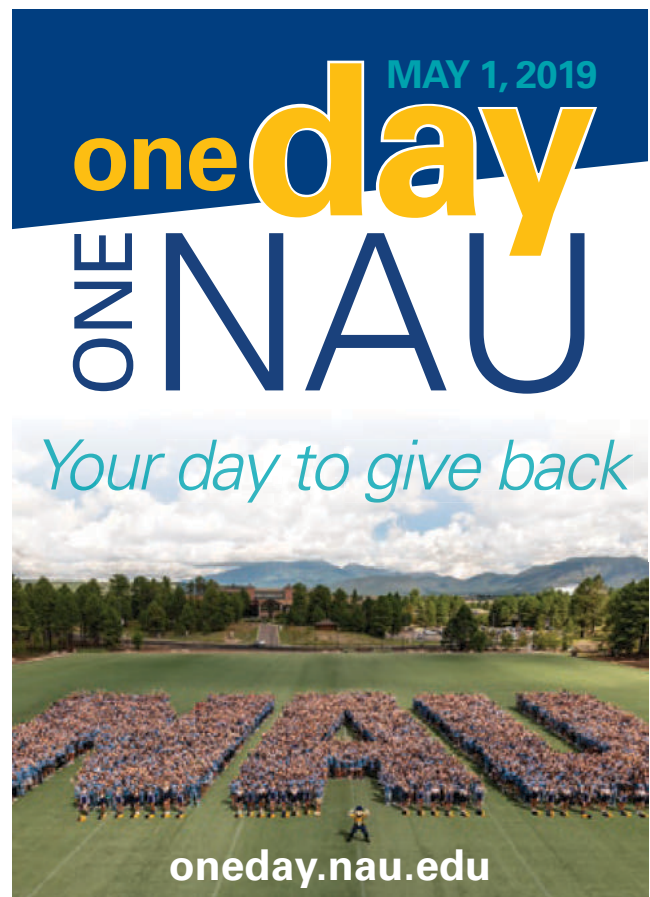
**Baxter**

## BIG SKY HONORS TOP SCHOLAR-ATHLETES

Standout athletes Brooke Andersen and Matt Baxter were NAU's recipients of the Big Sky Scholar-Athlete Award for 2017–18. The university nominated the pair based on their athletic and academic performances for the year.

Andersen (BS Environmental Sciences, '18) is one of the most decorated track and field throwers in school and conference history, and she holds the sixth-best outdoor hammer throw ever in the NCAA. She is working on her master's degree at NAU in climate science and solutions.

Baxter (BS Criminology and Criminal Justice, '17) is in the master's degree program for applied criminology at NAU. He was a key member of the cross country team, earning All-American honors in 2016 and 2017.



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*Your day to give back*  
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**Steve Templin**  
**BS Forestry, '78**

A practicing forester with more than 40 years of experience, Templin has recently been selected

for a Society of American Foresters Presidential Field Forester Award. The award recognizes foresters who have dedicated their professional careers to the application of forestry on the ground using sound scientific methods and adaptive management strategies. As an SAF-certified forester and fellow, Templin has served on the executive committee of the Louisiana chapter of the society, and is past state chairman of the Association of Consulting Foresters. He is also a member of the Louisiana Forestry Association board of directors.

**June Harris**  
**BS Education, '62**

After completing her MA in English at University of the Pacific, Harris received a PhD in Education from the University of Arizona. She has published three novels and is currently working on two more. She retired from teaching in 2009.

**Carrilee Abernathy**  
**BS Psychology, '65**

Abernathy recently retired from her role as president of Edrio Oil Company and is currently enjoying summers in Colorado and winters in Oklahoma.

**Susan Stevens**  
**BA Arts and Sciences, '74**  
**MA Arts and Sciences, '89**

Stevens taught high school English for the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Navajo reservation, followed by English and literature at Yavapai College, Eastern Arizona College, Austin Peay State University, Georgia Military

College, and Augusta State University. She also published three poetry books and has retired, after 25 years of service, from the federal government.

**Kathrine Page**  
**BS Art, '78**

After seven years as gallery director at Roberts Wesleyan College and two years as owner of Spencer Hill Gallery, Page is now the Gretchen Hupfel curator of contemporary art at The Delaware Contemporary in Wilmington, Delaware. Her recently curated large-scale exhibition, *The Figure: The Indicative and the Allusive*, was featured in the June issue of *American Art Collector* magazine.

**Peggy Kennedy**  
**BS Ecosystem Science and Management, '79**

A pioneer in the Women's Professional Basketball League, Kennedy has been inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2018. During

her time with the WBL, Kennedy played for the Chicago Hustle and the Milwaukee Does.

**Denise Mills**  
**BS Dental Hygiene, '80**



Mills received her DDS degree from UCLA and has been elected to the board of directors of Esperança, an organization working to improve the health of impoverished communities around the world. A faculty member of Midwestern University, College of Dental Medicine-Arizona, Mills also is a member of the Black Board of Directors Project. This leadership organization empowers its members as leaders through focused work on economic advancement, public policy, and institutional change.

**Gregg Polinsky**  
**BS Education, '81**

Polinsky has been named director of player personnel with the NBA's Detroit Pistons. Polinsky previously worked with the Brooklyn Nets for 19 seasons and will be leaving his most recent role with the organization as the director of college scouting.

**Paula Burnstein**  
**MA Education, '90**

Burnstein has been honored by the International Association of Women as a 2018-19 Influencer of the Year. She was recognized with this prestigious distinction for leadership in entrepreneurship. Burnstein has been practicing law for more than 20 years and started her own law firm in 2002 to serve clients throughout Maricopa County.



**Ron Mann**  
**BS Education, '72**  
**MS Education, '79**

Former NAU track and field and cross country coach Ron Mann has been named to the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association 2018 Hall of Fame induction class. The honor recognizes coaches who have brought great distinction to themselves, to their institutions, and to the sports of cross country and track and field. Mann led the Lumberjack track and field and cross country programs for 24 years

and helped guide NAU to a total of 58 Big Sky team championships. He was recognized with 56 Big Sky Coach of the Year awards and has been inducted into the NAU Athletics Hall of Fame on three occasions. Mann served as the 2008 U.S. Olympic men's middle-distance coach in Beijing and was the coach of the 2005 U.S. Men's World Outdoor Championships team. He has mentored NCAA national champions, Olympians, and a pair of Boston Marathon champions. Mann currently resides in Louisville, Kentucky, and is a personal marathon coach.

**Amy Reichgott**  
**BS Arts Management, '92**

Reichgott has been appointed director of philanthropy at Habitat for Humanity in Tucson. She strives to change lives by bringing people together to build homes, community, and hope.

**Jeff Meilbeck**  
**MPA Public Administration, '93**

Meilbeck has been honored with Arizona Transit Association's Transit Individual of the Year award. Meilbeck has been the face of Flagstaff transit for more than 20 years and currently serves as the CEO of Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority. Meilbeck has served in leadership positions at state and national transit organizations and has become a leading voice for small urban transit systems. He plans to retire in November.

**Lee Kloos**  
**BS Business Administration, '94**

Commander of the 388th Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base, Colonel Kloos is a command pilot with more than 2,100 hours and 240 combat hours. He has served as instructor pilot, standardization/evaluation flight examiner, weapons officer, functional check flight pilot, and operational test pilot. Kloos commanded the 58th Fighter Squadron, Eglin AFB, and served as vice commander of the 53rd Wing, Eglin AFB.

**Phil Crawford**  
**BS Business Administration, '96**

Crawford leads Godiva's integrated technology and digital innovation efforts as the company's newly appointed chief technology officer.

**David Barnett**  
**BSBA Marketing, '97**



Barnett has recently accepted the director of sales and marketing position at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Westlake Village, California.

He was also appointed to the board of directors for the Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce and serves on the board of Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International, Los Angeles Chapter.

**Jennifer Boomgaarden**  
**MM Music, '99**

Boomgaarden has recently been named President and CEO of the

**Wayne Ranney**  
**BS Geology, '80**  
**MS Geology, '88**

Ranney is the recipient of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists in the Media Award. The award recognizes notable journalistic achievement which contributes to public understanding of geology, energy resources, or the technology of oil and gas exploration. Ranney, past president of the Grand Canyon Historical Society, has also recently been presented with the Pioneer Award, an honor awarded to individuals who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the understanding of, and knowledge about, the Grand Canyon and Colorado River. Ranney leads NAU Geology alumni educational rafting trips through the Grand Canyon.



Omaha Symphony. In recent years, she served as Executive Director of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra. She received the Omaha Public Schools A+ Advocate award in 2009 and the Nebraska Governor's Emerging Leader in the Arts award in 2010.

**Justin Newman**  
**BST Engineering, '99**

Newman, a building industry veteran, joined Hardison/Downey Construction as vice president and chief operating officer. Newman assumes a leadership position as the company expands its footprint as part of the Kitchell family of companies. His experience ranges from alternative energy and public works to criminal justice and high-end residential projects.

**Josh Aldred**  
**BSE Civil Engineering, '03**

Lieutenant Colonel Aldred has received the Meritorious Service Medal for his many accomplishments during his past two years in the U.S. Air Force and has been promoted to lieutenant colonel, taking command of the 364th Training Squadron, Detachment 1, at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

**Tabatha Shipley**  
**BS Education, '03**

Shipley has recently published her debut book, *Breaking Eselda*, the first in a projected series. The book takes place in the fantasy world known as the Kingdom of Fraun.

**Joanna Gick**  
**BS Arts, '04**

Gick co-owns J & J Design Group in Scottsdale, Arizona, and has been featured in *HGTV Magazine*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *People*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Fit Pregnancy and Baby*. Gick most recently appeared on Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman's crafting competition show, *Making It*.

**Shari Lopatin**  
**BSJOU Communication, '05**



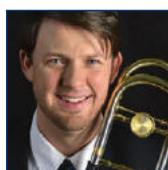
Lopatin has released her debut novel, *The Apollo Illusion*, a science fiction and dystopian suspense book with a setting close to home, Flagstaff, Arizona.

**Submit a Class Note**

Find your way back to Lumberjack country and into the hearts of fellow classmates. Submit your personal and career updates, celebrations, and successes. Visit [nau.edu/alumni](http://nau.edu/alumni) to share your story and see what fellow Lumberjacks are doing.

Continued from previous page.

**Justin Cook**  
**BS Music-Instrumental**  
**Performance, '06**  
**BS Music Education-Instrumental, '06**  
**MA Music-Instrumental Conducting, '08**



Cook completed his PhD in Musical Arts Trombone Performance at the University of North Texas. Cook is an assistant professor of trombone at the University of Central Arkansas. He has recently been named festival manager of the International Trombone Festival and finished his first solo recording, *Trombone Connections*.

**Jordan (Higley) Steele**  
**BS Communication, '08**

Steele was recently awarded the Northwest Anchor-Weather Emmy for his work as a meteorologist for King 5 in Seattle. He also has won the 2011 award for Best Weathercast presented by the Associated Press.

**Andrew Seese-Bieda**  
**BS Mechanical Engineering, '08**

Seese-Bieda works at Northrop Grumman in Chandler, Arizona, as a member of the liquid upper stage mechanical engineering team. A rocket scientist, he works on cryogenic propellant lines and packaging of secondary structures for the company's new Omega launch system.

**Nickolaus Bruno**  
**BS Mechanical Engineering, '09**  
**MS Mechanical Engineering, '11**

Bruno has accepted a tenure-track faculty position at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. His research is dedicated to gaining an understanding of why multifunctional and multiferroic materials exhibit fascinating behaviors.

**Danielle Casey**  
**MA Administration, '10**

Casey has accepted the position of executive vice president for the Greater Sacramento Economic Council. She previously served as the economic development director for the City of Scottsdale.

**Elizabeth Thomas**  
**BS Nursing, '10**

Thomas served more than six years as an active duty Army nurse. She still serves in the reserves and has accepted a nursing management position with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Pilar Wolters**  
**BS Natural Sciences, '10**  
**MS Natural Sciences, '17**

Wolters, a fisheries biologist with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, conducts research on the hybridization of flannelmouth suckers with the endangered razorback sucker in the Grand Canyon.

**Lopez Lomong**  
**BS Hotel and Restaurant**  
**Management, '11**

NAU Olympian Lomong recently won the USA Track and Field 10K championship. He is the only man to win both 1,500-meter and 10,000-meter USATF titles. Lomong qualified for the 2008 Summer Olympics in the 1,500 and was the flag bearer for the United States during the 2008 Summer Olympics opening ceremony.

**Stayson Isobe**  
**BSED Natural Sciences, '11**  
**MED Education, '13**

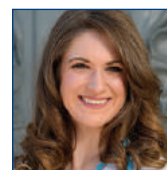
An assistant director for NAU Athletics communications, Isobe was named the finalist and winner of the 2017-18 American Volleyball Coaches Association Grant Burger Media

Award in the social media category. This honor recognizes members of the media who have been involved in the advancement of the sport through consistent coverage in all media.

**Jeremy Petak**  
**BSE Mechanical Engineering, '12**  
**MS Engineering, '14**

Petak has been a project manager for NASA's Parker Solar Probe. He is responsible for the design, manufacturing, qualification testing, delivery, and installation of the third-stage actuators, which help steer the spacecraft in flight. The Parker Solar Probe began its landmark mission to the sun on August 12, 2018.

**Madison Skelton**  
**BS Biology, '14**



Skelton has completed her doctorate in veterinary medicine at Midwestern University. Dr. "Madi" Skelton is the newest addition to the Scottsdale Ranch Animal Hospital. She is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Arizona Veterinary Medical Association.

**Shelby Irons**  
**BS Hotel and Restaurant**  
**Management, '15**



Irons was selected as the 2017 Leader of the Year for the Fairmont Washington, DC, Georgetown hotel. Irons recently relocated to Austin, Texas, and began her new role as the learning and development manager at the Fairmont Austin.

**Jonathan Yellowhair**  
**BA International Affairs, '16**  
**BS Applied Indigenous Studies, '16**

Marine Corps veteran and member of the Navajo Nation, Yellowhair has been selected to join the 2018 class of Tillman Scholars. He is currently working on an MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Georgia State University and aspires to develop culturally tailored programs for veterans on the reservation.

**Jill Broussard**  
**MED Education, '17**

Broussard serves as the Pinal County superintendent and has been appointed by Governor Doug Ducey as the newest member of the Arizona State Board of Education.



**Rebecca Rose**  
**BFA Arts, '01**

An award-winning sculptor and art jeweler, Rose has recently produced *Sculpturings*, a hybrid of small sculpture and wearable art. Her work has been featured in shows across the country and her bronze works are at the Andy Warhol Museum. She also serves as a volunteer for the American Red Cross and was awarded the Governor's Medal of Unity for her response efforts after the Pulse tragedy in Orlando.

## IN MEMORY

### **Wendi Kirsch** **BS Education, '79**



Kirsch passed away on June 1, 2017. Upon graduation, she taught at Buckeye Union High School and Fowler Elementary School in Arizona. Kirsch later

returned to Ohio and taught for Urbana City Schools and the Greene County Career Center. She spent 38 years teaching and impacting thousands of lives, and she was honored multiple times for her community and civic involvement. Besides Tom, her husband of 37 years, she leaves behind two children, Matthew and Katie, and eight grandchildren.

### **Margaret Grant** **BS Education, '84**

Grant passed away on August 5, 2018, at the age of 85. Born in Morton, Pennsylvania, she was a homemaker most of her life until furthering her education at NAU. After graduation, Grant was a teaching assistant and later became a certified elementary

special education teacher. She enjoyed camping, swimming, and traveling, often cross country, picking up family members along the way. She is survived by her children, Margaret J. "Peg" Reed, Henry and Sue Grant, John and Brenda Grant, Andrew Grant, Robert and Caroline Grant, Mary and Rafael Lynch, 20 grandchildren, and 25 great-grandchildren. Grant is also survived by her two sisters, Ethel Rementer and Linda Christopher, a brother, Alfred Huber, and several nieces and nephews.

### **Kathleen Clark-Couey** **BSE Engineering, '85** **MED Education, '08**

Clark-Couey passed away unexpectedly on July 8, 2018, at the age of 55 in Tempe, Arizona. Clark-Couey spent most of her life in Arizona. She graduated from Washington High School in Phoenix and received a mechanical engineering degree from Northern Arizona University. She represented NAU as a student serving on the Arizona Board of Regents 1983-84. After leaving Flagstaff, she earned an MS in Materials Science at

the University of Texas, Austin. She worked as a materials science engineer in the aerospace industry with a detour to raise her sons, Benjamin and Christopher, with her husband, Paul. Later, she returned to NAU to receive a Master of Education and taught eighth-grade science in Phoenix.

### **Pierre "Pete" St. Amour** **MED Education, '91**

St. Amour, a retired educator and financial consultant, passed away unexpectedly on July 28, 2018, at the age of 66. St. Amour was born on January 22, 1951, in Long Beach, California. During his time at NAU, he met his wife, Kathryn, and they later had four children together. He is survived by his wife, his children James and Victoria, and his grandchildren, Aria and Devlin St. Amour. He is predeceased by his children Marquez Paul and Alicia Nicole. St. Amour was a devoted father and a charitable soul. In his retirement, he enjoyed caring for his grandchildren, volunteering his time with the Knights of Columbus, and teaching English as a second language.



"My son, Aaron, opened the door to my lifelong devotion to NAU. After Aaron passed away, I wanted to honor him in a meaningful way that would change the lives of NAU students."

## Thank you, J. Douglas Macy

1945 – 2017

*In recognition of his generous gifts to honor a beloved son and share the collection of a lifetime.*

Doug Macy was a world-renowned landscape architect who created many of the most beautiful urban spaces in Oregon and Washington through the Portland, Oregon, firm that bore his name. Doug was a friend, a mentor, a philanthropist, and a great example of a life well-lived.

Doug's devotion to NAU dates back to when his son, Aaron, was a student here. Aaron, who graduated with a degree in fine arts and specialized in pottery, passed away in 1999. To honor his son, Doug created the Aaron Macy Scholarship Endowment in 2004, and made plans to increase it with a generous estate gift. His gift also included his lifetime collection of pottery and art, which will beautify our campus and inspire students.

*The Heritage Society is composed of NAU alumni and friends who have included NAU in their will or estate plans. To find out how you can provide long-lasting support to NAU while enjoying financial benefits, visit [naugiving.org](http://naugiving.org).*

# PAVING THE PATH

Every great Lumberjack is inspired by a mentor. Today's NAU students are tapping into our powerful alumni network to help enrich their academic journeys and propel them on their career paths.

This spring, nearly 100 alumni mentors volunteered in our Student-Alumni Networking Series to meet with students and provide insights into their professional experiences.

Here's a list of NAU partners who helped students and alumni become better, stronger Lumberjacks:

- Associated Students of Northern Arizona University
- Black Student Union
- Latino Student Union
- Lumberjack Alumni Ambassadors
- Office of Inclusion and Multicultural Student Services
- Office of Native American Initiatives
- Veteran Success Center

## In their words



"Participating in the networking events allowed me to connect

with the leaders of tomorrow. Students connecting with professionals is a great formula for success."

**Jimmy Jayne**  
*BA International Affairs, '91*



"I've built long-lasting relationships with alumni on this campus. Networking

has been a huge highlight in my college career, and I'm glad it started at Northern Arizona University."

**Divina Velasquez, senior,**  
*Criminology/Criminal Justice*



The Associated Students of Northern Arizona University networked with alumni in April.

## How you can get involved

The Student-Alumni Networking Series will soon expand to cities outside Flagstaff. Below are preliminary dates and locations for upcoming events. For more details—and to learn how you can become a mentor—visit [nau.edu/alumni](http://nau.edu/alumni).

**November:** Careers in education and public service, Flagstaff

**January:** NAU-TEN recent graduate networking event, Phoenix

**February:** Networking event, Yuma

**March:** Careers in science and health, Flagstaff

**April:** Networking event, Flagstaff



The Lumberjack Alumni Ambassadors helped connect past and current students in March.





## We're in Denver now

Denver's faithful Lumberjacks came out in force this summer to launch the latest *NAU Near You* alumni chapter. It joins current Alumni Association chapters in Flagstaff, Phoenix, Portland, Prescott, Washington, DC, and Yuma, as well as our Native American Alumni Chapter. Next year, we'll be launching even more chapters—one in San Diego in January, and another in Dallas over the summer. If you're interested in finding a chapter near you, contact us at [alumni@nau.edu](mailto:alumni@nau.edu).



## YOUR LUMBERJACK CONNECTION

From Facebook to Instagram to Twitter—and now Snapchat—the NAU Alumni Association is everywhere on social media. So no matter which app you use, you can connect with other NAU graduates around the world. Follow @NAUAlumni on any platform to continue the Lumberjack conversation.

### It's a golden opportunity

Time changes everything—except True Blue friendships. It's never too late to return to NAU and reconnect with your classmates. Next year, members of the Class of 1969 are invited back to campus to celebrate their 50th class reunion on May 10 and 11.

Find more information at [nau.edu/alumni/reunions](http://nau.edu/alumni/reunions).

### We're here for you

Whether you live near or far, it pays to be a Lumberjack. With a variety of resources and discounts available for NAU alumni, we've got you covered for a lifetime.

Visit [nau.edu/alumni](http://nau.edu/alumni) for details.

**GIVE**  
**TRUE BLUE**

**Louie's heart is True Blue.**  
**Show us yours is too.**

You still have time to be part of the Witzeman Family Challenge, a matching gift opportunity just for NAU alumni. Learn more on the enclosed envelope, and make your gift today!

[nau.edu/giving](http://nau.edu/giving)

# HOW WILL YOU PAY IT FORWARD?



“I invite you to join me, and the entire NAU community, on May 1, 2019, for *One Day, One NAU*—an entire day devoted to giving back.”

## Stay connected

Rekindle your love for NAU by following us on social media.

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## Visit us online

To learn more and to update your contact information, please go to [nau.edu/alumni](http://nau.edu/alumni).

My fondest memories from my time as an advertising major at NAU were the years I spent working on the student newspaper, *The Lumberjack*. I still recall the late nights spent preparing the weekly paper for print. My NAU experience taught me more than curriculum—I learned life skills. Since graduation, I've held multiple positions in the newspaper industry, and every step in my career ties back to my time with *The Lumberjack*.

Now, as the economic vitality director for the City of Flagstaff, I value being involved at NAU as an alumna. I am a more successful community leader because of this connection. But my proudest moments as a Lumberjack have been watching my children begin their own NAU journeys. My son is enrolled in CCC2NAU, studying information technology, and my daughter is a freshman dental hygiene major at the Flagstaff Mountain Campus.

*Heidi Hansen is the new president of the Alumni Association. We wish to thank Marissa Graves '09 for her leadership over the past two years. You can contact Heidi and the rest of the Alumni Association Board at [alumni@nau.edu](mailto:alumni@nau.edu).*

All of us have our own Lumberjack stories and moments that have made us who we are today. Our stories are unique, but they also bind us together as one community. I often hear from alumni, like you, who want to ensure future Lumberjacks have the same opportunities at NAU we did—access to great classes and faculty, the ability to afford an education, and a student-centered experience. This is what makes NAU special. It's why I choose to continue my NAU story and pay it forward to leave a Lumberjack legacy. I give back to NAU by serving as your alumni association president, mentoring current students, and giving back financially to help students reach their full potential. I want our future alumni to write their own NAU stories.

As alumni, we have always been better together, and I believe in the collective power of our impressive alumni family. That is why I invite you to join me, and the entire NAU community, on May 1, 2019, for *One Day, One NAU*—an entire day devoted to giving back and paying it forward. This spring, let's unite as One NAU and show the world what it means to be Lumberjacks. To find out how you can get involved, visit [nau.edu/OneDayOneNAU](http://nau.edu/OneDayOneNAU). ▀

With Lumberjack pride,

Heidi Hansen '91  
Alumni Association President

THEN & NOW

# GLORY DAYS

Lumberjack pride is strong at NAU, and the cheers become louder with every season. The NAU Archives recently acquired a substantial transfer of artifacts from NAU Athletics. These treasures still need to be arranged and described before they are made available to the public.

In the meantime, take a look back to see our Lumberjack athletes in action. And if you've got a historical photo from an NAU game or sporting event, we'd love to add it to our collection. To share your memories and to see more historical material, visit [nau.edu/special-collections](http://nau.edu/special-collections).



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