Educational BeneFitZ
Northwestern football coach and SESP alumnus Pat Fitzgerald on leadership
DEAR FRIENDS,
At SESP, we emphasize that teamwork and collaboration are vital to great leadership in every domain. So I’m never surprised—but always delighted—that many Northwestern athletes gravitate to SESP, where they learn how to apply lessons from the playing field to change lives and organizations for the better.

You don’t need a PhD to appreciate why our learning and organizational change concentration—centered around people and their roles within families, teams, nonprofits, corporations, and other organizations—would be especially attractive to students who spend many hours a week working in teams. And our student-athletes help their classmates better understand learning in organizations, because the lessons from sports successes and failures are highly transferable. All SESP students are so connected in their learning and mutual sharing that once our student-athletes take their skills into the world, they often return to campus to share their experiences and wisdom with current students.

At a Reunion Weekend luncheon each year, SESP alumni volunteer to meet and mentor current undergraduates. Last fall’s participants included several former Wildcat athletes: Doreen Maxcy (BS68) from Northwestern’s first women’s golf team; former ‘Cats point guard Vernon Ford (BS68); and football program greats Stanley Davenport (BS88), D’Wayne Bates (BS98), Gerald Conoway (BS99), and Vince Cartaya (BS03)—just to name a few. They shared what they’ve learned about 21st-century literacies such as change management and team dynamics—and how to prepare for success wherever you land, be it in the classroom, boardroom, or courtroom or on the playing field.

We work in teams. We work in families. We work on committees. Everywhere we go, we are destined to work with other people. Making these interactions as successful as possible is part of the essence of SESP.

This issue highlights some of the people—from head football coach Pat Fitzgerald (BS97) and Union College president David Harris (BS91) to startup founders, social justice entrepreneurs, and first-generation college students—who came to SESP to learn not only how to succeed but also how to lead, at Northwestern and in life.

We’d love to hear how you’re using your leadership skills to make lives better. Please email us at sespalums@northwestern.edu or use the #SESPLove hashtag on Twitter.

Go ’Cats!

David Figlio
Orrington Lunt Professor and Dean
No One Is Immune to Fake News

Even when we know we’re getting false, fictitious, or misleading information, our exposure to it can have clear consequences, says David Rapp, professor of learning sciences. We may feel confused or doubt what we previously know, says Rapp, whose article on the consequences of exposure to misinformation appears in the journal Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences.

The article, coauthored by Northwestern cognitive psychology PhD student Nikita Salovitch, builds on Rapp’s previous work suggesting that even when people know better, they often draw on inaccurate or misleading ideas when making decisions or solving problems.

“People show clear effects of that information, whether it comes from listening to news or reading fiction,” Rapp says. The authors add that learning how to critically evaluate misleading statements can improve understanding. So can recognizing that we’re not immune to fake news.

‘New Math’ Strategies for ‘Old Math’ Mindsets

A study of teachers coauthored by James Spillane offers valuable how-tos for getting employees on board with reforms.

Spillane, the Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Professor in Learning and Organizational Change, and his collaborators wondered how school leaders were able to get elementary school teachers to adopt a curriculum that differed from what the teachers had learned. One aim of the study was to determine whether the teachers’ interactions with peers influenced their beliefs about math instruction.

The study found that it took multiple strategies—changing the organizational structure, adopting curriculum that was different enough to nudge teachers to talk to one another, and offering professional development opportunities—to lead a majority of teachers to change their beliefs over time about how to teach math.

The results hold important lessons for other organizations looking to change their members’ behavior, says Spillane, who also has a courtesy appointment in Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management.

“Organizations need to take a holistic approach and think about how various components of their infrastructure shape interactions among employees,” Spillane says. “Peers can be a powerful source for improvement, but leaders have to support, engage, and channel this.”

SESP Names New Dean for Teacher Education

Kavita Kapadia Matsko (MS97), whose research focuses on developing and supporting teachers in urban schools, is SESP’s new associate dean for teacher education, succeeding Miriam Shearin. Matsko was previously director of strategic innovation and research at National Louis University.

Variable Power of Positive Thinking

Searching for a silver lining in a stressful situation can help ease anxiety, particularly for people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, suggests new research by Emily Hittner, a human development and social policy PhD student and life span developmental psychobiologist.

Hittner says that the findings, published in the journal Emotion, “highlight the important role a person’s situation or environment plays in shaping how they deal with their emotions—and how that matters for their health.”

Reappraisal, a strategy of cognitive behavioral therapy, involves finding something positive in a negative situation. Someone who worries about loneliness after a breakup, for example, might seek new passions or rekindle an old friendship.

Hittner and her team, including SESP faculty member Claudia Haase and PhD student Katie Rim, analyzed data from two different sources: a lab-based study of 112 married spouses and a nine-year national survey of more than 2,000 people.

Both studies showed that people who make less money benefit more from reappraising situations than those with higher incomes, possibly because low-income earners have less control over their environment. In both experiments, cognitive reframing began to lose its effectiveness when a person’s annual income rose above $35,000.

STEM FOR PRE-K

During October’s statewide STEM Summit at Northwestern, teachers tried out playful ways to build STEM learning into early childhood education. The ninth annual event was cosponsored by SESP’s Office of Community Education Partnerships.

Turning Ideas Into Action

Graduate students Liz Jackson and Hernando Sevilla-Garcia and undergraduate Christina Parker connected with other changemakers at October’s 11th annual meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative University, a three-day summit designed to engage the next generation of leaders from college campuses around the world.

Hosted by Bill and Chelsea Clinton, CGI U’s main focus is on addressing education, the environment and poverty alleviation, or public health. Overall, 25 Northwestern students joined about 1,500 others from 397 schools and 112 countries at the event, held at the University of Chicago.

Jackson and Sevilla-Garcia, both pursuing their master’s degrees in higher education administration and policy, are building a study abroad program to boost international opportunities for students at Chicago institutions with high-Hispanic enrollment. Parker, a social policy major and global health studies minor, is working with Weinberg College undergraduates to create a community garden program to combat Chicago-area food insecurity.

“ CGI U reinvigorated our commitment to tackling disparities in educational access,” Jackson says. “We came away with resources and connections that will help us put our commitment into action.”

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The School News

Jennifer Zukerman approached CTD with the idea of creating a STEM curriculum for Jewish elementary, middle, and high school students. In 2015, J-STEM founders Michael and Paula Olszewski-Kubilius coauthored the books The Threshold and The Threshold of Statistical Careers for promising leaders in nonprofit organizations and local government agencies in Chicago and Cook County.

CTD Bolsters STEM Education in Jewish Day Schools

The Center for Talent Development is collaborating with Chicago-area Jewish day schools to strengthen STEM education programming and teaching, an effort supported by a grant from the Crown Family Philanthropies. The funding will help CTD review the offerings for high-ability students, make program recommendations, offer professional development to teachers, and facilitate in-school programming for students at four partner day schools. A pilot after-school program at Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School is expanding this spring.

The grant will also help offset costs for Jewish day school students taking Sunday CTD enrichment courses on the Evanston campus.

The collaboration grew from a successful pilot program spearheaded by J-STEM, a nonprofit that provides supplemental STEM curriculum for Jewish elementary, middle, and high school students. In 2015, J-STEM founders Michael and Jennifer Zukerman approached CTD with the idea of creating a Sunday enrichment program to accommodate Sabbath-observant Jewish day school students.

“While supporting the needs of high-ability students,” says CTD associate director Rhoda Rosen, “the Crown funding will also help us strengthen programming and teaching for all students.”

IN BRIEF

Learning sciences faculty members Megan Bang (PhD09) and Shirin Vossoughi received the Alumnae of Northwestern University’s Curriculum Development Award to create a hybrid social justice course for Northwestern undergraduates and Evanston Township High School students.

Social policy professor and Institute for Policy Research (IPR) associate Cynthia Coburn was appointed to the National Academies’ Standing Committee on Advancing Science Communication Research and Practice.

Human development and social policy faculty member and IPR fellow M axim Destin was recognized by the American Psychological Association for his early-career work on how socioeconomic status affects human behavior.

PhD student Sheridan Fuller was named a 2018 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholar.

Research associate Byål Madison joined the Civic Leadership Academy, a program for promising leaders in nonprofit organizations and local government agencies in Chicago and Cook County.


Uri Wilensky was named the Lorraine Morton Professor of Learning Sciences and Computer Science.

The Threshold

How an unlocked door changed Larry Hedges’s life

Eleven-year-old Larry Hedges was waiting for his mother to finish her shift as a dishwasher in a college cafeteria when he wandered through the open door of a nearby chemistry lab. College wasn’t something for poor families like theirs, Hedges’s mom had told him. But after repeat visits to the lab—and conversations with a friendly graduate student—Hedges began to envision a future he never thought possible. A first-generation college graduate whose father never finished high school, today Hedges is Northwestern’s Board of Trustees Professor of Statistics and Education and Social Policy, Psychology, and Medical Social Science and an Institute for Policy Research faculty fellow—and one of the world’s most influential applied statisticians. He is working to give others the same educational opportunities he received.

His life’s work was celebrated at a December ceremony in Hong Kong, where Hedges was awarded the $3.9 million Yidan Prize for Education Research—the largest prize of its kind—for pioneering the use of meta-analysis. He is using the prize to help launch the Center on Statistics for Education Policy and Practice at Northwestern, which will develop new methods for generating and synthesizing evidence across trial studies and translating it into education policy and practice.

Hedges’s commitment to evidence-based education policy as a tool for social good stems from a central question guiding his career: what if he used his talents in math to help solve gritty, everyday societal problems rather than those conjured up in academia?

“I’m passionate about education precisely because it was life-changing for me,” says Hedges. “I want everybody else to have that chance.

“You can teach any child almost anything that the best students are able to do. We know it’s possible to achieve excellence for all.”

The author of 10 books, he was nominated by President Barack Obama to the National Board for Education Sciences, which he now chairs.

His latest and perhaps most daunting challenge involves figuring out how to organize the education system so that all children excel.

“You can teach any child almost anything that the best students are able to do,” says Hedges. “We know it’s possible to achieve excellence for all. We just don’t know how to make it happen yet.”

By Julie Deardorff
Embracing Identities, Cultivating Leaders

Intense summer program builds bonds and confidence

In summer’s final weeks, when Lake Michigan is at its warmest and Deering Meadow is lush and green, 20 incoming Northwestern students are holed up in a campus residence hall, feverishly preparing for the next morning.

Energy drinks fuel the finishing of essays, research papers, and reading assignments; the clicking of keyboards is constant. The academic year has yet to begin, and already these students are participants in the SESP Leadership Institute (SLI) in 2017 to support incoming students, especially those who come from lower-income backgrounds or are the first in their families to attend college. Over 17 rising sophomore and transfer students, as well as rising sophomores and transfer students, explore identity and equality in education, hone their writing skills, and develop an academic and social support system.

SLI also stresses building community relationships to combat alienation, a strategy that Destin’s research suggests is a key ingredient for academic success. Some students, such as SESP juniors Christopher Mayorga and Veronica Suarez, participated in SLI as rising sophomores and returned as counselors. Last fall, SESP senior Samantha Buresch worked as a resident assistant, helping her younger classmates on everything from meeting 10 p.m. deadlines to finding campus resources.

“Sometimes it seems like everyone at Northwestern graduated at the top of their class, is involved in a million clubs, is double majoring with a minor, has a strong social life, maintains a 4.0 GPA, and gets eight hours of sleep a night,” Buresch says. “It takes some time to understand that each of us is as deserving to be here as the next person. SLI definitely helps students realize they are much smarter than they once thought they were.”

Putting research in action

By all accounts, SLI is intense. With full days of classwork and discussion, along with daily reading and writing assignments, late nights are common. Saturday trips to Chicago landmarks, an improv workshop, and a ropes course help students blow off steam and build camaraderie.

For Vossoughi, assistant professor of learning sciences, and Destin, associate professor of human development and social policy and psychology, the SLI curriculum offers an opportunity to apply their groundbreaking work in education equity.

One of Destin’s core research findings suggests that helping lower-income and first-generation students express their identities and sense of purpose boosts academic achievement, career motivation, and resilience, even in the face of tremendous challenge and adversity.

“SLI activities explore who the students are, what matters to them, why they are here, and what they want to contribute to the community,” Destin says. “These are the students who may have been undervalued in the past but have the potential to help the University grow.”

SLI reading assignments are carefully selected to expose students to different perspectives and spark insights about how the texts relate to their own lives. Writing assignments blend research with autobiography as students reflect on how culture influences thinking and learning. After Vossoughi assigned Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates, a young black woman in the program wrote an essay on how reading the book in SLI differed from reading it in her predominantly white high school, where she often felt pressure to represent her entire community.

Mayorga, who co-led a discussion of Coates’s work, says reading the book helped him find his own writing voice.

“Shirin also talked about her own experiences, which opened us up to talking about ours,” he adds. “That led to really good discussions.”

Those talks continued in the daily Leaders Lab, led by Destin, where conversations ranged from what leadership looks like in practice to ways of building community and overcoming challenges.

“We spent time thinking about what leadership meant for us and what each of us contributes to the collective group,” Suarez says. “I realized that even though I’m pretty quiet and don’t often speak out, I can still be a leader and make a difference in my own way.”

Mayorga, too, tapped into newfound leadership skills. Feeling more confident on campus, he is part of a task force on diversity and equity and cofacilitated a SESP town hall. “I’m leading events, reaching out to people, and being more vocal in meetings,” he says. “I’m really out here doing things and making an impact. I attribute a large part of that to SLI.”

By Clare Milliken
At Northwestern, entrepreneurship is about more than launching a product; it’s about a process. Classes like Designing for Social Change, startup resources like The Garage, and alumni connections create an atmosphere that promotes resilience, teamwork, risk-taking, design thinking, and other qualities innovators need.

“Entrepreneurship complements other student interests, such as the maker movement, civic engagement, leadership in organizations, and social advocacy,” says SESP dean David Figlio. “Our approach is intentionally flexible—with a definition that emphasizes activating knowledge.”

SESP’s entrepreneurs come from a wide variety of backgrounds, interests, and experience levels. One thing they all have in common is what first attracted them to SESP: a desire to create positive change in the world.

Kristin Sanders
Creator of People6

When Kristin Sanders couldn’t find a decent paid summer internship, she did what any budding entrepreneur would do: started her own business.

The company, People6, is a student-led digital marketing agency that provides everything from branding and web design to research. Since the company’s April 2018 launch, People6 has completed more than 16 projects for clients ranging from local schools to corporations.

Prior to the launch, Sanders was awarded a winter-quarter residency at The Garage, which supported her venture’s incubation phase. Those 10 weeks culminated in the company’s campus debut at Wildfire Demo Day—and a $2,000 third-place prize for Sanders.

Born and raised in Southern California, Sanders came to Northwestern determined to study economics. When she realized she didn’t love the field, she sought out SESP adviser Caitlin Burnett to learn more about the school’s learning and organizational change concentration.

“Months later I returned, and right away Caitlin remembered my name, which really set the tone for the kind of place SESP is,” Sanders says. “I took my first LOC class and loved it. I knew I was in the right place.”
Sanders appreciates the flexibility of the SESP curriculum and says her LOC classes bolster her entrepreneurial aspirations. At one point she was managing more than 30 students in various People6 projects while also keeping up with her coursework. “SESP gave me the courage to think differently,” she says. “And that’s not something you can get at other places.”

A first-generation college student, Sanders expects to graduate in June. She plans to continue growing People6 and to pursue a teaching career “to create more entrepreneurship programs for students, especially those of color and those who may not have the same opportunities as Northwestern students.”

Lucas Philips
Cocreator and chief growth officer of BrewBike

Founded in 2015 by SESP’s Lucas Philips and Brammy Geduld, BrewBike is Northwestern’s first student-owned and student-run coffee venture. The company has generated more than $45,000 in funding. Then expanded to other campuses.”

An early turning point for BrewBike came when Philips took a call during English class telling him the company had made the finals of the New Venture Challenge at the University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business.

“I just walked out and started cheering. It was just the best moment ever,” Philips says. “We received $45,000 in funding. Then we placed second at Northwestern’s VentureCat competition—that was more validation. We got another $20,000, and with that we were able to raise an $850,000 seed round and start expanding to other campuses.”

As part of a resident team at The Garage, Philips has gleaned advice from colleagues and entrepreneurial alumni, including Neal Sáles-Griffin (BS09) and Claire Lew (BS11), who team-teach the Engineering and Entrepreneurship class. Inside Annenberg Hall, meanwhile, the SESP administration allowed BrewBike to open its first retail location in the lobby.

Now BrewBike’s chief growth officer, Philips offers this advice to other young people launching a business: “Do less. Focus on fewer things and do them really well.”

Isabel Benatar
Cocreator of Bossy Chicago

Isabel Benatar (BS18) grew up in Palo Alto, the epicenter of California’s Silicon Valley, with an entrepreneurial father. At the dinner table, she often heard about his experiences as CEO of a fast-growing startup.

Those conversations fed Benatar’s own entrepreneurial inclinations, which first led her to study learning and organizational change at SESP and, three years into her degree, to apply to The Garage’s Wildfire Pre-Accelerator Program. During that program, she and engineering major Samantha Letcher created Bossy Chicago, an online directory that connects local women-run businesses to feminist consumers wanting to leverage their purchasing power.

In cocreating Bossy, Benatar conducted user and market research and attended entrepreneurial workshops. She hired and managed team members and fostered relationships with business owners. In the pitch contest at the end of the accelerator program, Bossy received funding and placed second out of 11 teams.

“I learned how to go out and talk to people and actively network—just for the connection,” she says. “In classes, you’re given a prompt and instructions and so much guidance. But with a startup, you’re doing it because you’re passionate about it.”

Benatar recently joined Plaid, a financial services startup in the Bay Area. As its recruiting coordinator, she says she is drawing on the “great combination” of her entrepreneurial experience and her SESP learning and organizational change major.

Entrepreneurship requires “believing in yourself enough to create something completely new,” Benatar says. Co founding Bossy exemplifies it, but so does joining a tech startup rather than a big corporation. That’s because for Benatar, “it’s all about impact.”

Chuck Friedman
Corporate vice president at Microsoft

It was 2013 when senior leaders at Microsoft asked Chuck Friedman (BS88) to head the team that would revamp the Windows “shell”—the part of the software consumers actually use. A self-described “startup kind of guy,” Friedman says the opportunity was a “fascinating entrepreneurial moment.”

Rather than reworking the existing framework, Friedman began researching what users actually wanted from the operating system. He assembled a racially, culturally, and organizationally diverse team to speak with consumers about how they used their computers.

In the end, curiosity, empathy, and diversity were key elements in the successful Windows 8 redesign. Friedman says, “Everyone brings their own skill,” he adds. “Mine is that I’m a good listener and can work well across groups and the company.” His learner’s mindset is also big plus. “Too often, people hear ‘Why did you get that wrong?’ instead of ‘What did you learn?’ I don’t need to be right all the time—I just need to get us to the right outcome.”

After graduation, Friedman joined and became a partner at Specialized Systems in Software, a startup founded by Kellogg School of Management faculty member Troy Henikoff. They built the company and sold it to Medline Industries. Friedman came to Microsoft in 1997.

He sees an entrepreneur as a creator of something others don’t think is possible. “There are two minds—one that says, ‘We can do it’ and the one the lawyers have, telling you all the reasons it can’t be done,” Friedman says. “You actually need both. But it’s that core optimism that defines entrepreneurs.”

BY BONNIE MILLER RUBIN
ILLUSTRATED BY SERGE BLOCH
Fitz’s Playbook: A SESP Education

Just days after the Northwestern Wildcats celebrated their 2018 Holiday Bowl victory, head football coach Pat Fitzgerald has four hours of meetings scheduled with the defensive coaching staff in a single day. Back at his desk in the Walter Athletics Center, he resumes his usual pace, devoting each minute of the day to advancing Northwestern football.

A two-time All-American linebacker with the ‘Cats in the mid-1990s, Fitzgerald played a key role in that era’s dramatic turnaround of Northwestern’s football program. Back then, the student-athlete who went by “Fitz” was likened to Chicago Bears great Dick Butkus—but with a style “more brainy than barbarian,” as Sports Illustrated observed. Two decades later, Coach Fitz is known as a gifted motivator who stresses education—and whose players have made nine bowl appearances in 13 years.

What may be news to many fans is that the School of Education and Social Policy is where Fitzgerald (BS’97) laid the foundation for his future, studying how people and organizations develop and thrive.

With small classes fostering a team mentality and family atmosphere, along with a transdisciplinary curriculum emphasizing leadership, SESP is particularly appealing to student-athletes who, in the Fitz mold, want to guide others and inspire change on and off the field. Eleven of the football team’s 21 SESP students earned Academic All–Big Ten honors last fall; overall, the football program earned a record and Big Ten–best 60 honors.

“As an undergraduate, Fitzgerald studied learning and organizational change (then called organizational studies), the SESP concentration that centers on people and their roles in families, teams, nonprofits, corporations, and other organizations. “My classes focused on how to build genuine relationships, work with others, and find common ground when you don’t agree,” Fitzgerald says. “They also stressed what is particularly relevant in football: how to create a culture, a vision, and a set of values that everyone stands for and lives up to.”

Since becoming head coach, Fitzgerald has helped build and grow Chicago’s Big Ten team in part by giving players a voice and letting them elect a 12-member leadership council. He meets weekly with the council to discuss everything from locker-room issues to uniforms for the next game.

“That core group gets a lot of trust,” says director of player development Jacob Schmidt (BS’11, MSHE’14), who has worked for and with Fitzgerald for 12 years, first as a player and now as...
a staff member. “Their job is to be the connection between players and coaches. They have a ton of ownership, and it’s paid off.”

Preparing student-athletes for life after football is no less important to Coach Fitz than inspiring them to excel on the field. SESP sophomore Jeremy Larkin knows this from experience: after receiving a diagnosis of cervical stenosis, he was forced to retire from the game in 2018. Heeding Fitzgerald’s advice, he stayed with his football family as a mentor on staff.

“I’m focusing on leadership and teamwork skills that you learn at SESP as well as those shown by Coach Fitz,” Larkin says. “He helped me throughout the process. It was a true testament to what he says during recruiting: you’re important as a person, not just as a football player.”

That’s also why Northwestern football runs an individual mentoring program, which pairs every sophomore on the team with a former player. The two stay together for at least three years, but in many cases the relationships are much longer. Now in its 11th year, the program includes 25 players and nearly 100 football alumni.

“It’s a way for our alums to truly have an impact,” says Schmidt, who landed a position in labor relations at General Motors immediately after graduation. Now he is a GM human resources manager, dealing with benefits, hiring, firing, and other issues for some 4,300 employees.

“SESP emphasizes building relationships, understanding people from different walks of life, learning to talk with them, and getting your point across,” Schmidt says. “You learn flexible ways of thinking and you work in groups, which teaches you how to collaborate.”

SESP sophomore Jonathan Sun spent most of the luncheon in conversation with Bates and Conoway. That night he wrote three takeaways in his journal: Trust the process. Working in education makes other things possible. And his favorite: don’t regret your past—I has created the person you are today.

To join other SESP alumni and students at the 2019 Reunion Weekend luncheon, contact Shelena Johnson at shelena.johnson@northwestern.edu.

UNDERSTANDING PEOPLE MAKES ANYTHING POSSIBLE—JUST ASK A COUPLE OF CATS

D’Wayne Bates (BS98) was one of several former athletes among the record turnout of SESP alumni at the school’s Reunion Weekend luncheon last fall. A former wide receiver with the Chicago Bears and Minnesota Vikings, Bates earned a graduate degree after retiring from football and is passionate about lifelong learning and working with youth. Since 2015 he has been assistant principal for athletics at Glenbard East High School in Lombard, Illinois.


Also attending the lunch was Gerald Conoway (BS95), a teammate of Pat Fitzgerald during the Wildcats’ 1995 Rose and 1996 Citrus Bowl seasons.

Conoway was drawn to psychology and teaching and majored in human development and psychological services, the SESP concentration that explores how people are influenced by family, group, and organizational dynamics.

That knowledge translated to the football field and later to the workforce, says Conoway, who landed a position in labor relations at General Motors immediately after graduation. Now he is a GM human resources manager, dealing with benefits, hiring, firing, and other issues for some 4,300 employees.

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Understanding people makes anything possible—just ask a couple of Cats

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Barbara Talbott (BS73), president of the NU Club of Atlanta, retired after a 30-year career with IBM. She interviews high school seniors applying to Northwestern and also volunteers on several boards in Atlanta, including Big Ten Alumni, Alpha Phi Alumni, and the Atlanta International School. In addition to Talbott, the NU Club of Atlanta’s board includes Brianna Castle (BS14) and SESP advisory board member Edith “Ede” Bostic (BS74).

80s

Drew Miles (BS86) was named vice president of global brand partnerships for Variety Content Studio and now works out of Variety’s New York City office. He has been a sales and marketing executive for several leading media brands, including Advertising Age, the New York Times, Oprah.com/OWN, and the Huffington Post.

Kathy Juan-MacLean (BS87, PhD96) of Baltimore is national faculty ministry director for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, an interdenominational campus ministry on 700 campuses across the US. Her son Ren is a first-year SESP undergraduate studying social policy.

Maryellen Spore Krammer (BS88) was appointed to the Berwyn (Illinois) Public Library board of trustees.

Marianne Jirgal Ariyanto (BS88) of Jakarta retired after a 45-year career teaching dance. Ariyanto originally came to Indonesia to study Balinese dance at Bali’s College of Performing Arts on a Fulbright scholarship in 1977 and has lived there since 1985.

90s

Timothy Simonds (BS99, MBA08) became CEO of Merrick Park Cafe in 2016. Previously, he was chief marketing and engagement officer for Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management. His niece Elise Lamarre enrolled at SESP in the fall.

Mark Loretta (BS93) was named the new Chicago Cubs bench coach. He spent the last nine seasons with the San Diego Padres after retiring as a professional baseball player in 2010, most recently serving as special assistant to baseball operations.

April Peters-Hawkins (BS93) is associate professor and associate chair of educational leadership and policy studies at the University of Houston’s College of Education. She received a 2018 service award from the University Council for Educational Administration.

Grace Hong Duffin (BS95) is president and CEO of Kenneth Young Center, a nonprofit provider of personalized behavioral health and older-adult services in Chicago’s northwest suburbs.

Ryan Rockalia (BS98) of Chicago, a Spanish teacher and mentoring coordinator at Deerfield (Illinois) High School, is president of the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

00s

Melissa McGonegle (BS03) founded Stellar Collegiate, a K-5 public charter school serving primarily low-income English language learners on Milwaukee’s South Side, in 2016.

Holly Palin (BS04) of Chicago celebrated the five-year anniversary of her business venture CrossFit CE.

Jordan Latham (BS06) of Pearland, Texas, is an attorney/senior consultant at EY (Ernst & Young) who recently launched Soul Sweet Fighters and Survivors.

Andrew Tingaro (BS09) joined Waystar, a Bain Capital portfolio company, as director of strategic initiatives and chief of staff to the CEO. Emily Machado (BS09) is assistant professor of language, literacy, and culture at the University of Washington’s College of Education. The Seattle resident studies writing pedagogies in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms and teaches literacy instruction courses for preservice teachers.

Tade Mengesha (BS14) is a healthcare consultant for Navigating Consult and a member of the Cook County Health Foundation Associate Board, which engages young professionals through volunteering, fundraising, networking, and advocacy opportunities.

Laura Bidreau (BS11) of Naples, Florida, directs fundraising and events for Collidor Child Care Resources, a nonprofit that serves families and early-learning professionals.

Zoe Goodman (BS13) joined UfLabS Learning, a nonprofit that brings financial coaching to work-force-development nonprofits across the country. The Brooklyn resident is in her second year as copresident of the NU Club of Greater New York.

Eric Johnson (MSLOC13) is an executive director for Open Books, a nonprofit that provides books, supplies, and innovative literacy and reading assistance to Chicago students.

Daniella Moshiri (BS13) directs partnerships and program innovation for Omalogo-Chicago, a nonprofit that enlists and trains educators to teach underperforming high school students how to apply to and persist through college. She is earning her MBA at Kellogg.

Refugee Rights in Focus

Sara Blair Winter-Rosenberg (MS12), an instructor of Spanish for Heritage Learners at Mundelein (Illinois) High School, received a coveted 2019 Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Lauren Barke (BS10), a history and social studies teacher at Evanston Township High School, received a $5,000 grant to develop a new world history course.

Kelly Ross (BS14) of Milwaukee is the associate director of the Milwaukee Film Festival, overseeing marketing and programing.

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Observe a Plant, Help a Scientist

It has never been easier for nonscientists to help the pros study climate change. Simply find and observe a native plant, wildflower, tree, or other flora in your backyard or neighborhood, and record your notes online.

This nationwide citizen science initiative, called Budburst, generates exposure to how changing seasonal temperatures are affecting plants, including when they bud, bloom, or drop their leaves. Jennifer Schwarz Ballard, whose affiliation with the botanic garden began in the final year of her SESP studies, says the project’s data—on how changing seasonal temperatures are affecting plants, including when they bud, bloom, or drop their leaves—will help build on the data and eventually become his dissertation.

Karen Cross has been a respected teacher, scholar, and faculty leader at Chicago’s John Marshall Law School for nearly 25 years. But upon hearing the school would be merging with the University of Illinois at Chicago, she jumped at the chance to assume daunting new responsibilities. Currently John Marshall’s associate dean for administration, Cross is playing a leading role in the creation of Chicago’s first public law school.

Synergies on both sides make the UIC–John Marshall union a natural fit. Both schools have diverse and inclusive student bodies. Their campuses are geographically close. Still, the John Marshall faculty and staff are facing a big cultural shift, as the school has functioned as its own entity for almost 120 years. “Becoming part of a larger structure can limit spontaneity and the ability to do things quickly,” Cross says. “But with compliance being paramount, the infrastructure and institutional knowledge that are in place at UIC will help.” So will Cross’s master’s degree in higher education administration and policy, which came with internship experience in the compliance and provost’s offices at Northwestern. As cochair of the merger’s academic integration working group, she is working with UIC to get Illinois Board of Higher Education approval for proposed degree program revisions—including some that will incorporate legal education into engineering, social work, and health sciences courses. The reconfigured law school, to be called UIC John Marshall Law School, will be up and running by this fall.

Karen’s curiosity drew her to SESP to get the big picture of the higher education landscape, which includes law and ethics, history and philosophy, and budget and finance, as well as student development,” says Lois Trautvetter, director of the MSHE program. “We affectionately label her a lifelong learner.”

Harmonizing ‘Synergies on Both Sides’ of a School Merger

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We thank the following alumni, friends, foundations, corporations, and institutions for making gifts to the School of Education and Social Policy during the year that ended August 31, 2018.

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When drawing scientists, US children now depict female scientists more often than ever, according to Northwestern University research that analyzed five decades of Draw-A-Scientist Test studies conducted since the 1960s. The study, coauthored by David Uttal, a professor of education and psychology, suggests that stereotypes linking science with males have weakened over time, consistent with more women entering science fields and more depictions of female scientists in children's television shows, magazines, and other media.