

CLASS NOTES



Anne (Pisarko) Mahalawich '44

'44

Anne (Pisarko) Mahalawich enjoyed her 99th birthday with a virtual celebration that included guests from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Florida, California and even Melbourne, Australia! Anne got to enjoy her favorite hors d'oeuvres, champagne and, of course, birthday cake!

'51

Dorothy and Ralph Young shared a nice note with their annual gift to the Class of 1951 Scholarship. "We may not be 'going strong,' but we are 'going!' We hope to open our summer place on Rogers Lake come spring. In the summer we look forward to a swim each morning before breakfast — it's a great way to 'wake up.'"

'63

Bertram "Bert" Nussbaum serves as president of the Board of Advisors for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Florida Atlantic University. "We are proud that we are the largest institute in the country, of-

fering a variety of non-credit courses in many different fields taught by knowledgeable instructors." While he and his wife Judi lost their beloved cats Oscar and Felix to illness last year, they have since adopted Tina, a five-year-old tuxedo.

'70

A long-time history teacher, Antone "Tony" Andrade still serves as Fairfield Region Coordinator for Connecticut History Day. His favorite memories of Eastern include traditions like Step Singing and watching the North Campus grow with the additions of the "new" science building (now Goddard Hall) and "new" library (now Wood Support Services Center). He also recalled student activism in response to national events like the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War and the Kent State shootings, as well as on more locally focused issues.

'76

Jane Higgins Ph.D. sent the following note upon learning of the death of former Eastern President Charles

Webb: "I was saddened to hear of President Webb's passing, but what a life he must have lived! I remember seeing him walking around campus and 'saving the day' at our senior dance when the band we contracted with didn't show up! He got up and entertained us on the piano! Our paths crossed several years later when I was taking courses at the University of Connecticut for my doctorate in higher education. He was teaching a few courses in the program, representing the best kind of teacher. His 'day job' gave him lots of material to share with us and my fellow students."



Tim Tracy and his wife Penny (Stanley) '76



Hy Reiner '36

Like so many Willimantic State Teachers College alumni, Hy Reiner '36 joined the Armed Forces to defend the United States in World War II. In June 1945, only months before the war ended, Reiner wrote State Sen. Margaret Hurley from somewhere in the South Pacific to support Senate Bill 306. The bill committed \$670,000, along with insurance proceeds, to build a classroom and administration building to replace the original Willimantic Normal School (WNS). Through the efforts of Sen. Hurley — a WNS graduate — Shafer Hall was constructed and opened in 1948 to replace the WNS building, which was destroyed by a fire in August 1943.

"Good luck to you, Mrs. Hurley, and I am as confident of your victory back home as I am of our ultimate victory out here," wrote Reiner at the time.

Reimer returned to Willimantic after the war to become a member of the WSTC faculty in 1946, eventually becoming principal of Noble School, before retiring in the early 1970s.



Fran Geissler

Patrick '70 and Gail '68 Brown

Patrick Brown '70 recounts the days he and his wife **Gail '68** attended what was then Eastern Connecticut State College. “Fran Geissler acted as a part-time bursar in our time. One time we had no money to pay tuition for my wife. We had 4.0 GPAs and tuition was only \$50. We brought in \$50 worth of coins, mostly pennies. He gave us this incredible stare, pushed the change back toward us and said he would pay the tuition.

“Just thinking of the names of faculty and administrators reminds me how they were so indicative of the small, almost “family” experiences that we had at Eastern. We would go out after classes to the Italian Garden bar or out for beers with them. Gail and I were big bridge players in the old commuter lounge and Dr. (Joseph) Narotsky would often play a few hands with us. My favorite non-education teacher was John Dierst who taught history and political science — he made lessons come alive. I left school in 1967 and taught using a temporary emergency provisional, and finished coursework at night or by independent study. My son graduated from Eastern and still teaches in Stamford. My daughter directs before- and after-school programs for a non-profit.”

'77

Tim Tracy and his wife **Penny (Stanley) '76** met at what was then Eastern Connecticut State College and were married a week after his graduation. Tim went on to earn an M.S. in Elementary Education from Eastern in '90. The pandemic forced him into retirement a year early, after a 43-year teaching career; 33 of those years were at Wildwood Christian School in Norwich, CT. Tim is now blogging at www.livingthetransformedlife.com where he posts articles on mental and emotional wellness and spiritual growth.

'80

Randle Wiggins writes “I am enjoying my 17th year of retirement from the Connecticut Department of Corrections.” Randle was a correctional counselor for 20 years and currently works part time for a school in Windsor, CT.

'84

John Parisella has been named the new head coach for the North Haven High School boys varsity soccer team. He has more than 35 years of experience coaching at the high school and youth levels. John has been the North Haven Soccer Club director of coaching for the past 15 years, assistant varsity coach for North Haven High School the

past four years, and was recognized as CJSA Coach of the Year in 2019.

'86

John Plofkin is the new deputy fire chief of the Wilton Fire Department. He previously served as assistant chief in the Westport Fire Department from 1995-2017; prior to that he was chief of the Nichols Fire Department in Trumbull. Plofkin holds numerous state and fire certifications and is a lead instructor with the Fairfield Regional Fire School in its vehicle extrication programs. He earned a B.S. in Business Administration at Eastern and resides in Trumbull with his wife Cheryl.

'87

Wendy (Giglio) Fiore is district intervention support specialist for the School District of Lee County in Fort Myers, FL. She had been serving in a similar role at the middle school where she was a reading teacher. “The intervention specialist works with students, parents and classroom teachers, attending to the social, personal and academic needs of students who have been identified as at risk of failing using the Response to Intervention framework. The needs can be academic or behavioral.” In her role, Wendy will be training teachers to hold similar positions in their own schools.

'89

Rob Katko, longtime director of “The Rachel Maddow Show” on MSNBC, had much to celebrate on March 2. “Maddow” finished February as the highest-rated regularly scheduled program across all of cable television for the second straight month. The strong performance of “Maddow” helped MSNBC to finish February as the #1 network in all of cable television, according to Nielsen. Over the summer it was announced that The Rachel Maddow Show was nominated for two Emmy Awards (including one for “Outstanding Newscast”) and a Televisions Critics Association Award.

'90

Mark Bradley gave a virtual presentation about the benefits of belonging to the Greater Hartford Chapter of the National African American Insurance Association to a group of students from the M.A.L.E.S. organization. Mark is a program executive in Claims Sales and Services for The Hartford, and a past president of the ECSU Alumni Association.

The New York State Sportswriters and Coaches Organization for Girls Sports has named **Christia Mohan-Besko** to the New York State High School Softball Hall of Fame. As a pitcher for Arlington High School (Poughkeepsie, NY), Christia threw 10 no-hitters, including a perfect game. At Eastern, she was selected for NCAA Division III

All-America honors three times and was named the 1990 national Player-of-the-Year, leading the Warriors to their fifth national championship. She was inducted into Eastern's Athletics Hall of Fame in 2007. Christia teaches math in Mount Vernon, NY, coaches the Arlington varsity B softball team, and competes in a local women's league.

Kathleen (Janas) Rokavec is medical director for physician advisory services for Hilton Head Hospital in Hilton Head, SC. She had been a physician consultant for several years before taking the new position.

'91

Steve Boskus, a member of Eastern's Athletic Hall of Fame, is completing his 17th year as a guidance counselor at Nauset Regional High School in Massachusetts. He has fond memories of pitching on the 1990 national championship team. His academic mentor was Dan Switchenko. "I still have the dried sweat from sitting in the first row of his exercise physiology class," said Steve. He and his wife, Christie, are the proud parents of Josi, a 10th grader, and Jacob, an 8th grader.

Lauren Perrotti-Verboven is the new senior director of operations at Connecticut Lottery Corporation in Rocky Hill. She also provides human resources business consulting services to CCI, Ltd., a record retrieval, court reporting and process service, where she works collaboratively with the CEO on high risk/exposure human resources challenges. Her son, **Jake Verboven**, is a 2021 Eastern graduate.

'92

Dawn (Walmsley) Brolin, CPA, CFE is the author of "The Designated Motivator: Unlock Your Superpower to Change Your Life, The World and Everyone In It." She defines

herself as a Designated Motivator, an individual who has the passion and ability to give others the gifts of realizing and mobilizing their true potential. "The Designated Motivator" is a detailed roadmap to move yourself and others toward positive actions to make real differences in all areas of your life.

'95

Joshua Bernegger, a 23-year veteran of law enforcement, was sworn in as chief of police in Watertown in January. Chief Bernegger began his career with the Naugatuck Police Department in 1997, earned the rank of sergeant in 2003, was promoted to lieutenant in 2006, and was named deputy chief in 2010. As deputy chief, he promoted police transparency through the early adoption of interview room recording systems and body worn cameras. Joshua moved to the Watertown Police Department in 2019 to serve as deputy chief there prior to his most recent promotion.

'96

Stephen Tavares was recently named Chief of Police at Eastern Connecticut State University after a 26-year career at the Bristol (CT) Police Department.

'97

Duane Mitchell, MBA, DBA has been named manager, investment accounting at SE2, LLC in Topeka, KS. SE2 currently administers nearly two million active policies on behalf of its 25+ clients and has more than \$100 billion in assets under administration.

'98

Aggregate Industries in Saugus, MA, hired **Andrew Seaha** as environmental and land manager. Andy oversees all environmental permit requirements for air, water, hazardous waste and land at more than 20 greater Boston plants. He interacts with plant staff, regulatory agencies and contractors with the goal of achieving 100 percent compliance 100 percent of the time. Before joining Aggregate, Andrew spent nearly 20 years with Montrose Engineering Group, starting as a field technician performing air quality testing and eventually becoming manager of several Montrose offices.

'99

Kathy (Fluckinger) Fischer is associate director of the Women's Center at the University of Connecticut, and president of the University of Connecticut Professional Employees Association.



Yolanda "Yolly" Negrón '99

Yolanda "Yolly" Negrón wore an Eastern t-shirt on her way to get her COVID-19 vaccine, never thinking that she'd wind up in the Washington Post. "My friend tagged me on Facebook, and when I saw it, I almost fell off my wheelchair!"

'00

Mitch Mitchell has a new executive management position at AgeWell New York, a family of health plans offering Medicare Advantage prescription drug plans and managed long-term care plan options.

John Rubano is the new director of sales at Lucid Dx at Lucid Diagnostics. Lucid Dx is a clinical lab consulting organization providing lab management and compliance services to more than 100 high-complexity hospital labs and independent reference labs throughout the United States.

Jessica Zolciak, adjunct professor of biology at Manchester Community College, received the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Board of Regents Adjunct Faculty Teaching Award. She was selected from among nominees representing all 12 Connecticut community colleges, all of whom have distinguished themselves as outstanding teachers, in addition to promoting instructional improvements for their departments, and conducting exceptional research, scholarly and/or creative work.

'01

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's latest work, "Notes on Grief," is described as "an exquisite work of meditation, remembrance and hope, written in the wake of her beloved father's death in the summer of 2020." The Times writes, "For fans of the famously private Adichie this is fascinatingly intimate. It is also delivered in the most readable, tender bites for any of the many of us whose attention has been shot by the harrowing of this past year."

Corey Holmes is the new provost marshal ASG-J at 1st Theater Sustainment Command, based in Fort Knox, KY. In addition to earning his B.A. in Sociology at Eastern, Corey studied at the Defense Acquisition

University and at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

'02

Jamie Furness was named Paraeducator of the Year by the Stafford Board of Education. Jamie is at Stafford Elementary School, where she works one-on-one with students who need extra assistance with academic or behavioral issues. After graduating from Eastern with bachelor's degrees in History and English, Jamie worked in museums, but began volunteering for Stafford Elementary School when her son was in preschool. She is also treasurer of the Stafford PTO and runs the elementary school's spirit store.

Michael Schaefer is a senior pharmaceutical sales specialist with AstraZenica.

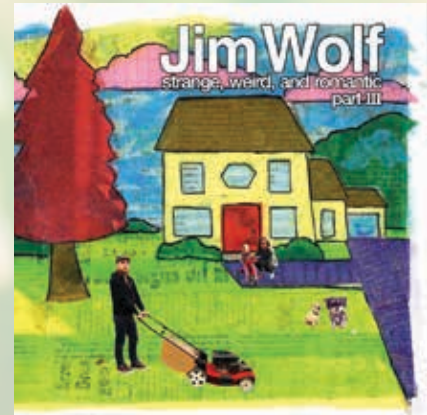
'03

Preferred Property Program (PPP), a subsidiary of Jacobson, Goldfarb & Scott, Inc. (JGS Insurance), and a leading national managing general agency, has named **Dritan Curri** as its executive vice president of information technology. Curri will oversee the development of an IT department that has experienced exciting growth over the past few years. Dritan comes to PPP with 20 years of experience as a multi-skilled insurance professional providing technology solutions to the health-care and business insurance industries. In addition to his bachelor's degree in computer science from Eastern, he holds an M.B.A. from Albertus Magnus College.

Brent Fournier was promoted to the position of director of procurement at OMG, Inc., where he will develop and implement procurement strategies that meet OMG's customer demands. OMG is a leading U.S. manufacturer of specialty fasteners, adhesives, tools and related products

used in commercial and residential construction.

Michael Grabski has been promoted to operations manager at Cintas, where he has worked since 2013. Michael earned his B.A. in Business Economics at Eastern, and he received his M.B.A. from Southern New Hampshire University in 2015.



Jim Wolf '03

Jim Wolf released a new album titled "Strange, Weird and Romantic (Part III)" in May. It is available on all major music streaming services. Jim was the special musical guest performing during "Live from All Over, It's Eastern Saturday Night!" (See story on page 8-9 for the 2021 edition of *Eastern Celebrates*)

'04

In addition to her role as associate director of learning and development and DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging) liaison for Workplace Culture at Yale University, **Dannika Kemp Avent** is a consultant leader at I Follow the Leader LLC, a leadership consulting firm specializing in diversity, equity and inclusion. This past May, Dannika completed a master's degree in Instructional Design at Quinnipiac University. In 2011, she earned an M.A. in Industrial Organizational Psychology-Human Resources Management from the University of New Haven.

'05

Adam Levine lives in Bristol and works as a respiratory therapist at Hartford Hospital. This fall he will run the Virtual Boston Marathon to raise money for the hospital's COVID-19 Fund. "I can choose to run the marathon anywhere I want, so I've decided to run from my house in Bristol to Hartford Hospital, a distance of 26.2 miles." Adam has run marathons in Hartford and Newport, but the Boston Marathon has been a "lifelong dream." Before he ends his marathon at the main entrance to Hartford Hospital, Adam will honor those who have died and his fellow healthcare heroes by passing Bristol Health, John Dempsey Hospital, St. Francis Hospital and Connecticut Children's Medical Center.



Adam Levine '05

'06

Willimantic Police Sergeant **Joshua Clark** was part of a group of police and firefighters who replaced a damaged American flag flying at the Windham Regional Community Council Early Childhood Program building on Valley Street in Willi-



Officers Joshua Clark '06, left, and Michael Haggerty, right

mantic. The new flag was purchased by the Willimantic Police Benevolent Association, of which Sergeant Clark serves as president.

Pedro Pozo earned his Ph.D. in Genetics and Molecular Biology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) in 2018. Since then he has been a postdoctoral research associate at UNC, and a postdoctoral associate and postdoctoral fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

'07

Liz Gorgoglione began a new position in Risk Solutions at Conning, an insurance asset management company based in Hartford.

Tim Hippe was promoted to senior recruiter at Quest Global Engineering in Gainesville, FL. His role provides permanent support to original equipment manufacturers in the aerospace industry.

Rachelle (Parenteau) Kaman, MBA is the new director of finance and administration at Jaroop, the leading end-to-end provider of business and technology solutions to stand up, operate, optimize and scale insurance distribution. She is also owner of RK3 Consulting, LLC, which supports startups and non-profit organizations through innovative and efficient business and accounting services, specializing in strategic planning, accounting and marketing

solutions to enhance operations and increase clients' revenues.

'08

Carrie Robinson is the new head of the Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of New Haven. Robinson earned a B.S. in Health and Physical Education, and a M.S. in Counseling in Student Development and Higher Education from Central Connecticut State University. She worked at Eastern as a residence hall director and in the Pride Center, before moving on to positions at Fairfield University, and most recently at Trinity College, where she served as director of LGBTQ+ Life in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. "I want to make sure that the Myatt Center is still a place where students feel safe, like it's their home," Carrie said.

'09

Jeremy Maheu is a pharmacy account executive with Cigna. He serves as a consultative partner and subject matter expert regarding Cigna Pharmacy benefits and affordability-based solutions. He has been with Cigna since 2014.

Andrew Powaleny has been promoted to senior director of public affairs

at PhRMA in Washington, DC, where he leads the organization's scientific communications. PhRMA represents the country's leading biopharmaceutical research companies and supports the search for new treatments and cures. His article "Report: More than 1,300 medicines and vaccines in development to help fight cancer" recently appeared in the PhRMA blog The Catalyst.

Anthony Rosati is the assistant athletic director for facilities at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He recently gave a virtual presentation to Eastern Professor Charlie Chatterton's class in design, construction and management of sports facilities. Anthony shared his personal insights from the field and discussed the challenges he has faced during the pandemic.

'10

Andrew Bass started a new position as a licensed realtor at eXp Realty.

Dave Ciccalone and a partner launched Yankee Construction LLC, a general residential and commercial contracting company in North Hampton, NH. He was previously principal hydrogeologist for Roux Associates in Woburn, MA. Dave is a licensed environmental professional in Connecticut and a licensed professional geologist in New Hampshire and Maine.

Brian Clark is the director of operations for the Raleigh Convention and Performing Arts Complex in North Carolina. He recently gave a virtual presentation to Eastern Professor Charlie Chatterton's class in design, construction and management of sports facilities. He provided students with his personal insights into the field and talked about the challenges of managing a facility during the pandemic. Brian graduated from Eastern with a B.S. in Sport and Leisure Management.

Brian Duffy is a senior business consultant with Agilent Technologies, which manufactures an array of

technical instruments and measuring devices, many with medical assessment applications. Brian earned an M.B.A. from the University of Massachusetts Boston in 2018.

Jeremiah Elliott Jr. is an employee relations specialist with Indianapolis Public Schools, as well as a self-employed yoga instructor. Jeremiah earned an M.B.A. in Corporate Innovation at Post University in 2015 after majoring in Spanish at Eastern.

Brajin Vazquez was promoted to global packaging development manager for Unilever in Trumbull. He has been with Unilever for more than a decade.

'11

The Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) has named **Rebecca Allen**, MPH as director of recovery advocacy. Rebecca has worked in behavioral health and addiction services for more than 20 years, most recently as CCAR's director of recovery support services. After graduating from Eastern, Rebecca received her M.P.H. from the University of Connecticut in 2015. As Rebecca explains, "The values of equity and fairness are close to my heart, but they are also extremely important when we're talking about supporting people in recovery."

Curtis Darragh IV completed his sixth year with Danbury Schools, and his second year as an adjunct professor at Western Connecticut State University. He is collaborating with EF Education First to travel abroad with students to conduct educational research.

Gregory Phillips is a project engineer in the Shelton office of Belcan, a global engineering, technical and consulting services company.

Jim Schult started a new position as senior associate at RSM US LLP, the fifth largest accounting firm in the United States. Jim recently became engaged to his girlfriend Jade, and

he still plays in the Greater Hartford Twilight baseball league.

'12

Angela Fournier M'12 was appointed to serve as human services director for the Town of Windham by the Windham Town Council. Angela had been serving as Windham's school readiness liaison.



Kira Holmes '12

The Windham Textile and History Museum — "The Mill Museum" — has named **Kira Holmes** as executive director. She volunteered at the museum for a decade after taking a class at Eastern on public history (taught by James Eves, her predecessor at the Mill Museum). As a volunteer, Kira has curated exhibits, archived, coordinated fundraisers and served on the museum's board of directors. Kira earned an M.A. in Public History from Central Connecticut State University, and has worked with several nonprofits, including the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society where she is vice president, Mystic Seaport Museum and the Springfield Preservation Trust.

Sean Keefe is an environmental consultant with HRP Associates in Derby. An Environmental Earth Science major, Sean earned a master's degree in Environmental Science from the University of New Haven in 2017.



Chase Anthony Balestracci

Ashley Pereira has been included in Marquis Who's Who for her work in STEM education and career readiness as a teacher turned entrepreneur. She earned an M.S. in Secondary Education, with teaching certifications in biology and agricultural education from Eastern and has since pursued science education as a career. She taught high school science at Connecticut River Academy in East Hartford, was an educational research associate and a STEM curriculum developer. In 2012 Ashley founded a small business to address the acute and ongoing shortage of skilled STEM workers.

Molly Rathbun completed her second year as Trinity College's head softball coach, although her first spring season ended prior to the first game due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to joining Trinity, Molly served as head coach for three seasons at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA. Molly was a four-time All-American pitcher at Eastern, leading the Warriors to three Little East Conference championships, four NCAA Tournament appearances and two national top-five finishes. Molly also holds a master's degree in sport and exercise psychology from Springfield College. She was inducted into the Eastern Athletics Hall of Fame in October 2019.

Ariana White was promoted to senior director of publicity at Atlantic Records. She recently celebrated her first anniversary as a homeowner, and is living in Elizabeth, NJ.

'13

Tom Balestracci and Melissa

(Groccia) Balestracci '13 married in June 2018, and their son Chase Anthony was born on March 5, 2021. Tom and Melissa met as first-year students on the same floor of Mead, and they're looking forward to sharing their story in "Matches Made at Eastern." Tom manages new student orientation at Fordham University. He writes that it's been a challenge to manage orientation during the COVID-19 pandemic, "but we keep plugging along and helping out our students the best we can." Melissa is marketing operations manager at Strategic Insight in Stamford.

David Carney completed his master's degree in geosciences with a concentration in paleontology at East Tennessee State University. His thesis focused on combining geographic information systems (GIS) and vertebrate taphonomy — the study of what happens to animals after death and burial. After graduating from Eastern, David joined the National Civilian Community Corps, worked as a naturalist with the Forestry Service in Bozeman, MT, and volunteered with the Museum of the Rockies. David won three awards for his work from the annual Tennessee Geographic Information Council: Best Student Map Submission, Best Interactive Map and Viewer's Choice.

Rob Kavaler has been promoted to senior graphic designer at RCN Capital, a nationwide, private direct lender providing short-term fix and flip financing and long-term rental financing for real estate investors. Rob continues to own and operate his own freelance business, RDK Design and Photography, designing logos, advertisements, collateral materials, apparel and websites, and photographing events, performances and engagements.

Burhan Kaya recently began a new position as scrum master at Eze Software (SS&C Eze, a unit of SS&C

Technologies). Burhan explained that "scrum master is like a project manager in Agile Framework." He earned a B.A. in Political Science at Eastern.

Jennings Mansfield is a business analyst with 121 Ventures LLC in Brooklyn, NY.

Kelsey Oleyneck works for Kite Pharma as a senior research associate.

Dagmarie Rosario is a preschool teacher at Pequenin Children Multicultural Readiness Academy in Hartford. She was a double major in Spanish and Sociology at Eastern.

Brittany Roy is project coordinator for Guardian Energy Management Solutions in Marlborough, MA.

Lauren Sposato raised \$3,000 for the Animal Rescue Clinic at Mystic Aquarium through their "Arctic Splash 2021: Freezin' for a Reason" campaign. Lauren submitted an online video and was among the top three fundraisers for the event. She is a lifelong resident of Westerly, RI, and is a corporate officer and associate director of marketing at Dime Bank. She has served as president of the Ocean Community Young Professionals Network for several years and as an Incorporator of Westerly Library and Wilcox Park since 2019.

'14

Elizabeth Allen is a postdoctoral research associate at Brown University. She earned her Ph.D. in Cell/Cellular and Molecular Biology at the University of Massachusetts.

Alex Bieniek is an air traffic controller at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago.

Rachel (Junga) Bieniek is senior associate at Heidrick & Struggles, a Chicago-based provider of senior-level executive search, culture shaping and leadership consulting services.

Judy Bloom is a medical and scientific associate with Chameleon Communications International, a New York

City medical communications firm working in partnership with health care organizations. Judy earned her Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences, Neuroscience at the University of Connecticut Health Center in 2020.

Pearson Davis, assistant general manager of the XL Center in Hartford, recently spoke to Eastern Professor Charlie Chatterton's Introduction to Sport Management and Sport Science class. He discussed his career path and his responsibilities at the XL Center.

Andrew "Drew" Deane virtually visited Eastern Professor Charlie Chatterton's Introduction to Sport and Leisure Management class from Bates College in Lewiston, ME. Drew discussed his career path from Eastern where he earned his degree in Health and Physical Education with SLM and Health minors. He also earned his M.S. in Organizational Leadership from Western New England University. After graduating from Eastern, Drew traveled to England from 2014-15 and was the university development officer at Leeds Beckett University (Premier 1). In 2018, he became assistant men's lacrosse coach at Bates College.

Cortnie Fleury is a health coach with Noom, a program for achieving weight loss through lifestyle and eating habit changes. She is also a counselor at the Center for Discovery in Fairfield, an organization that treats eating disorders in women. Courtney earned an M.S. in Counseling Psychology from Chaminade University of Honolulu in 2018.

Jennifer Green has been a communications specialist with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture in Las Cruces since December 2019. She earned her M.B.A. from New Mexico State University in 2019.

Rebecca King joined Tolmar Inc. as a QC analyst III at the company's facility in Windsor, CT. Tolmar specializes in developing products to address urology, oncology and dermatology ailments. Rebecca was previously a scientist with Alcami Corporation.

Jacqueline Lagasse joined Tolmar Inc., as technical services scientist II.

Lauren Lamourine joined MassBiologics in Fall River, MA, as a VMC associate II in January. Lauren had previously worked at Ashland Specialty Ingredients in Freetown, MA.

Krysta Valerio recently spoke virtually to Eastern Professor Charlie Chatterton's Introduction to Sport Management and Sport Science class. She discussed her current position at the University of Connecticut in the Department of Athletics as an academic counselor for the men's basketball team. Receiving her M.S. in Sport Administration from the University of Louisville in 2015, Krysta has also held professional positions at the University of West Virginia, University of Massachusetts and now currently at UConn.

Derek Werner was promoted to production supervisor for ImmunoReagents in Raleigh, NC. He has been with the company since 2018.

'15

Alyssa Anderson joined Hartford Hospital as a registered nurse after having worked for two years at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center. She earned a B.S. in Biology from Eastern and went on to earn a B.S. in Nursing and her registered nurse certification from Quinnipiac University in 2018.

Richard Bergman is a data associate at Joyn Bio in Boston.

Alexandra Cafferty is a human resource specialist at Alliant, a provider of audience-based marketing services in Brewster, NY. She was recently recognized by the Society for Human Resource Management as an "Emerging Professional Champion" in the next generation of human resource leaders. She earned her SHRM-CP and her M.S. in SHRM from Sacred Heart University.

The New Haven Museum and the International Festival of Arts and Ideas recently hosted "Dawnland

Voices," a panel discussion featuring indigenous writers of Connecticut. Representing the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation, **Natasha Gambrell** served on the panel. Natasha has traveled to schools and colleges in the Northeast speaking on behalf of the tribe and has participated with the Archaeology Field School Collaborative with the University of Massachusetts Boston, beginning in 2008. In 2017, Natasha was elected tribal councilor and is currently serving a second term.

Rachel (Russi) Karrar is a senior scientist with Pharmaceutical Product Development and has been with the company since 2018. She earned her B.S. in Biology from Eastern and her M.A. in Biomolecular Science from Central Connecticut State University in 2017.

Amanda Lamoreaux has joined Editas Medicine in Cambridge, MA, as a senior research associate.

Laura Markley is a waste and plastics researcher and Ph.D. candidate in civil and environmental engineering in the College of Engineering and Computer Science at Syracuse University. She studies plastics, water pollution and perceptions of the general public on environmental and sustainability issues. In addition to her B.S. in Environmental Earth Science from Eastern, she earned a master's degree in earth and environmental science at Lehigh University. When she's not in the lab, Laura writes about the science of sustainability — including her own research — and shares insights on practical ways the common consumer can reduce waste.

Ian Morander is a mortgage advisor in the East Providence, RI, corporate headquarters of Province Mortgage Associates. Prior to his current position, Ian worked for five years at Solidifi Title and Closing as a closing specialist.

Robert Scheim has a new position as sales account manager at Topgolf, a technology-enabled global sports and entertainment community. He is also planning to be married in

October 2021. As an Eastern undergraduate, Rob served an internship in the Office of Alumni Affairs.

Richard Squires is an optometrist at the VA Medical Center in Perry Point, MD. It is part of his fourth year of clinical rotations for the OD program at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Since March 2020 **Victoria Szamocki** has been an environmental scientist with CDC Consultants in Natick, MA. She previously held a similar position with Northeast Water Solutions in Rhode Island.

'16

Lee Cattanach has been promoted to senior manager II, merchandising operations at Walmart.

Michael Freilich is the assistant men's basketball coach at SUNY Oneonta. While at Eastern, he majored in Sport and Leisure Management and minored in Coaching and Sport Performance. "Eastern opened so many doors for me. I was a member of the men's basketball team for four years as a manager. This led to my current career." Mike also met his fiancé, **Megan Harris '16** at Eastern. Megan graduated with a degree in

Psychology and Early Childhood Education. "We are both extremely proud alumni."

Walter Leo is an ecological data scientist with the National Ecological Observatory Network in Boulder, CO. His job involves developing cellphone apps used in the field for ecological data collection to increase efficiency of fieldwork and improve the quality of data. In addition to his Biology degree, he earned a master's degree in Ecology and Environmental Biology at the University of Glasgow in 2018.

Leopoldo Navarro is a Spanish teacher in the Miami-Dade County Florida Public Schools. He taught in the New London public school system from 2016 to 2019. Leopoldo earned a master's degree in Secondary Education and Teaching at Sacred Heart University in 2017.

Jesusa Nicholson is a district leader for Primerica Financial Services and a tax analyst for H&R Block. She earned undergraduate degrees at Eastern in Accounting and Finance.

Brianna "Brie" Passero has been promoted to auditor II by the Office of the State Comptroller, Connecticut Auditors of Public Accounts. She joined the Auditors of Public Accounts as an auditor trainee in 2017.

Tiffany (Pfeiffer) Sabia is in her third year teaching a diverse fifth-grade class at Seven Oaks Elementary School in Odenton, MD, and serves as the chair of the fifth-grade leadership team. Earlier this year, Tiffany's students worked on a college research project that aligned with the fifth-grade writing curriculum. The students researched universities of their interest and composed informative essays and projects that were presented to other classes. Tiffany used Eastern and Eastern's website as a modeling and guided practice for the unit.

'17

Jacob Castillo is the media coordinator for Strong Foundations, a Vernon organization that provides special services for children with Autism, Asperger Syndrome and other learning challenges.

Jessica Dastous is CEO and founder at Wildflower Creative LLC. She offers business to consumer marketing and branding for the ski/snowboard industry, outdoor industry, consumer packaged goods, luxury resorts, entertainment, dining, retail and gaming industries. Jessica resides in Vail, CO.

Dajoun Jones is a relationship banker at Bank of America.

Jessica Mason joined the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, MA, as a medical technologist II in October 2020. A Biochemistry major at Eastern, Jessica previously held a similar position with ReproSource in Marlborough, MA.

Daniel Mueller has a new position as human resources assistant at Sheffield, which specializes in executive search, executive selection, interim management, and leadership and organizational development. Some of Daniel's responsibilities include recruiting, Hubzone data keeping and benefits administration. "Never stop learning, never stop asking questions, and use your resources. I am constantly researching new ways to do my job better."

'18

Kassandrah Banks is a customer experience specialist with Brooks Brothers.

Tiffany Gooddall started a new position at the University of Massachusetts Amherst as a student success advisor. While pursuing her M.S. in Counseling/Student Development in Higher Education at Central Connecticut State University,



Michael Freilich '16 and Megan Harris '16

Tiffany served in Eastern's Division of Student Affairs as a graduate intern for student orientation and leadership programs.

Cooper Goslin has a new position as senior auditor at CLA (Clifton-LarsonAllen), an accounting firm providing industry-focused wealth advisory, outsourcing, audit, tax and consulting services through more than 120 U.S. locations.

Stefanie Dominguez is teaching preschool special education and working on her master's degree in special education. She writes that she never would be where she is today without her Eastern education.



Stefanie Dominguez '18

"Eastern helped me to form connections not only within the University, but beyond. Having studied the social and emotional development of dual language learners as part of my thesis has been really helpful as a preschool teacher where so many of my students speak different languages at home!"

Daniel Klune is a water treatment operator with Connecticut Water in Clinton. He has been with the company since July 2018.

Relja Nedeljkovic is a process development associate at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, a biomedical and genomic research center in Cambridge, MA.

Katherine O'Rourke earned her M.Ed. in College Student Personnel Administration from James Madison University, and recently began a new



Katherine O'Rourke '18

position as coordinator of off-campus student life at Old Dominion University. "Eastern helped me by offering me countless opportunities to get involved in student affairs by joining committees so that I was well equipped to go to graduate school for student affairs." Katie is looking forward to gaining additional experience and hopes to return to Eastern someday to work in the Student Activities Office.

Melody Slater is a pharma research operations specialist with Caris Life Sciences in Maricopa, AZ.

'19

Eumir Abela is the coordinator of promotion, planning and scheduling for HBO in New York City.

Devin Belenski has been named the new manager of the Norwich Sea Unicorns. Since graduating from Eastern, Devin spent two seasons working with the University of Connecticut baseball program, most recently as director of player development and analytics. The Sea Unicorns will play in the eight-team Futures League, a summer collegiate wooden bat league, for the first time this summer.

Jennifer Croteau joined INSPIRE Environmental in Newport, RI, as a staff scientist in June 2020. INSPIRE is a consulting company that specializes in sediment profile imaging technology to study the

recent history of the ocean floor for applications to environmental issues. During summers while at Eastern, Jennifer worked as a naturalist for the Watch Hill Conservancy in Rhode Island, patrolling a globally recognized nesting area for migratory shorebirds.

Taylor Danielczuk is a sciences and healthcare recruiter at Actalent.

Chanler Florian is an environmental scientist with TRC Companies in Windsor. He was previously with Eagle Environmental in Terryville.

Nicholas Hanley is a registered representative at Equitable Advisors.

Jen Porpora is a financial services consultant at TIAA and has relocated to Charlotte, NC.

Anayancy Ramos is a medical laboratory technician with Diagnostic Solutions Laboratory in Alpharetta, GA.

Jonathan Rappi is a research associate at Halda Therapeutics in Branford, where he has worked since July 2019.

Thanoustone Sourignamath is an account representative and automotive photographer at Xcite Automotive. Prior to graduating, he was a social media intern in Eastern's Office of Alumni Affairs.

'20

Natnael Belay is program manager, R&D, for PTC, a computer software company based in Boston. Natnael interned with PTC in 2019, in addition to spending two years as a web development assistant in the Office of University Relations at Eastern.

Allison Noel Brown is a legislative intern at Episcopal Church Public Policy Network, where her work centers on policy research and writing news briefs and letters concerning policies that align with the Episcopal Church's mission to help communities. While at Eastern, Allison served internships with the Institute for Sustainable Energy and with the Connecticut State Senate Democratic Caucus and Senate Environmental Committee.

Madeline Colegrove is a digital marketing coordinator in the Shelton, CT, office of Really Good Stuff, LLC, a retail company that provides educational products to teachers. Madeline served a social media internship in Eastern's Office of Alumni Affairs.

Isabel Orbe is a research assistant at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington.

Nicole Reinschmidt has been promoted to the position of advocate at Safe Futures in New London. Safe Futures' mission is to save lives, restore hope and change the future for those impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and trafficking. Nicole earned a B.S. in psychology and minored in mental health counseling.

Crystal Vicente was promoted to assistant laboratory supervisor with Wren Laboratories, a medical testing service company in

Branford. Crystal joined Wren as a laboratory technician in June 2020, shortly after receiving her degree in biochemistry.

'21

New Britain Bees third baseman **Luke Broadhurst** was named the Futures League Player of The Month for May and June. At the time of his nomination, Luke had posted a .524 slugging percentage with a .341 average, with 18 RBIs and six stolen bases.

James Callaghan is a recreation specialist at the Westover Job Corps Center in Chicopee, MA.

Jackson Delaney is a public relations assistant at Susan Oliver Consulting, an independent consultant specializing in strategic communications and helping clients define powerful messages for top-tier media placements.

A Business Administration graduate, **John Ferrara** has been named media consultant at the Daily Hampshire Gazette in Northampton, MA. In his role, John will implement print and digital media plans, including social media marketing, website management, and various digital strategies. At Eastern, John interned with the Windham Chamber of Commerce.

Tyler Madden is a multimedia journalist at WTOV News 9 in Steubenville, OH.

Josh Vincent is a pitcher for the Alpine (TX) Cowboys, one of 14 independent teams in the Pecos League of Professional Baseball Clubs. In his senior year at Eastern, he was voted Little East Conference Pitcher of the Year and posted a 6-2 record with a 1.72 earned run average. He also was an All-New England selection and D3baseball.com third team All-American.



(left to right) Matt Mocker, Brendan Tew, Bryan Guetens, Jake Sullivan, Eddie Melton and Russell Kwakye

Bryan Guetens '21 was the organizer and leader of a group of Eastern alumni and students who completed a 600-mile bicycle trip from Greenwich, CT, to Duck, NC, to bring attention to mental health awareness, and to raise money for the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Connecticut. Joining Bryan's team as riders were roommates **Matt Mocker '22**, **Jake Sullivan '22**, and **Brendan Tew '23**, while **Eddie Melton '21** and **Russell Kwakye '22** served as support drivers. *Find out more on Instagram @thevalleyboyside.*

IN MEMORIAM

- Carolyn (Piecnyk) Tanajes '44*
Killingly, CT
Jan. 15, 2021
- Teresa (Lemieux) James '49*
Mystic, CT
Dec. 11, 2020
- Elizabeth (Ashton) Levey '52*
Greenville, NC
Feb. 15, 2021
- Audrey Mae (Hale) Goodhue '53*
Old Saybrook, CT
July 19, 2021
- Carol (Cerina) Hunsinger '53*
East Calais, VT
June 25, 2021
- John Ferguson '58*
Rocky Hill, CT
May 23, 2020
- James Zito '59*
Waterford, CT
Dec. 10, 2020
- Karen (Pierson) Gaucher '59*
Columbia, CT
Feb. 24, 2021
- Beverly (Bellavance) Anthony '62*
Willimantic, CT
Oct. 29, 2020
- Ann (Garrison) Bailey '62*
Storrs Mansfield, CT
Oct. 16, 2018
- Norma (Balcom) Hawkins '64*
Brooklyn, CT
July 9, 2020
- Richard Griffin '66*
Garden City, NY
April 1, 2021
- Ilene Frank '70*
Glastonbury, CT
June 25, 2021
- Kathleen Munday '71*
Old Lyme, CT
Feb. 7, 2021
- Celeste (Dessureault) Jakubowski '72*
Scotland, CT
March 28, 2021
- John Distasio '76*
Mystic, CT
July 9, 2021
- Prudence (Wood) Schifley '78*
Vernon Rockville, CT
May 12, 2021
- Kathleen (Nault-Rowley) Socha '79*
Bolton, CT
Dec. 27, 2020
- Stephen Rorick '79*
Canton, CT
April 4, 2021
- Paul Person '81*
North Windham, CT
June 7, 2021
- Jean (Vetrano) Myers '86*
Waterford, CT
June 23, 2021
- James Tucker '88*
Newington, CT
Jan. 12, 2021
- Julia (Vetrano) Jenkins '90*
Chaplin, CT
March 18, 2021
- Thaddeus Weaver '90*
Wethersfield, CT
April 5, 2021
- Lisa (Michaud) Sullivan '91*
Cromwell, CT
Jan. 6, 2021
- Donna Pitts '93*
Portland, ME
Jan. 12, 2021
- Edward Savino '94*
Malvern, PA
Feb. 16, 2021
- William Clayton '95*
Manchester, CT
Dec. 2, 2020
- Patricia Guy '97*
Scotland, CT
Feb. 28, 2021
- Deborah McIntosh '00*
Ashford, CT
April 27, 2021
- Christina Dibala '02*
Willimantic, CT
April 28, 2021
- Angela Skelley '05*
Pomfret, CT
Feb. 11, 2021
- Kristopher Johnson '09*
Former Assistant Men's
Basketball Coach
Colora, MD
March 20, 2021
- Alex Moshier '13*
Hampton, CT
Dec. 7, 2020
- Joel Blain*
Friend and donor
Riverside, CA
Aug. 3, 2020
- Jeffrey Bogue*
Friend and donor
Charlottesville, VA
Nov. 24, 2020
- Lura Dillow*
Friend and donor
Kensington, MD
Jan. 6, 2020
- Ruth Haddad*
Former food services staff
Willimantic, CT
Nov. 30, 2020
- Eileen Heinonen*
Women's swimming volunteer
and donor
North Windham, CT
Dec. 26, 2020
- Nicholas Messina*
Director of Media Services
Mansfield Center, CT
March 14, 2021
- Ramon Pantoja*
Landscape Technician
Norwich, CT
April 22, 2021
- Kathleen Waitte*
Former adult education counselor
Griswold, CT
Jan. 13, 2021