

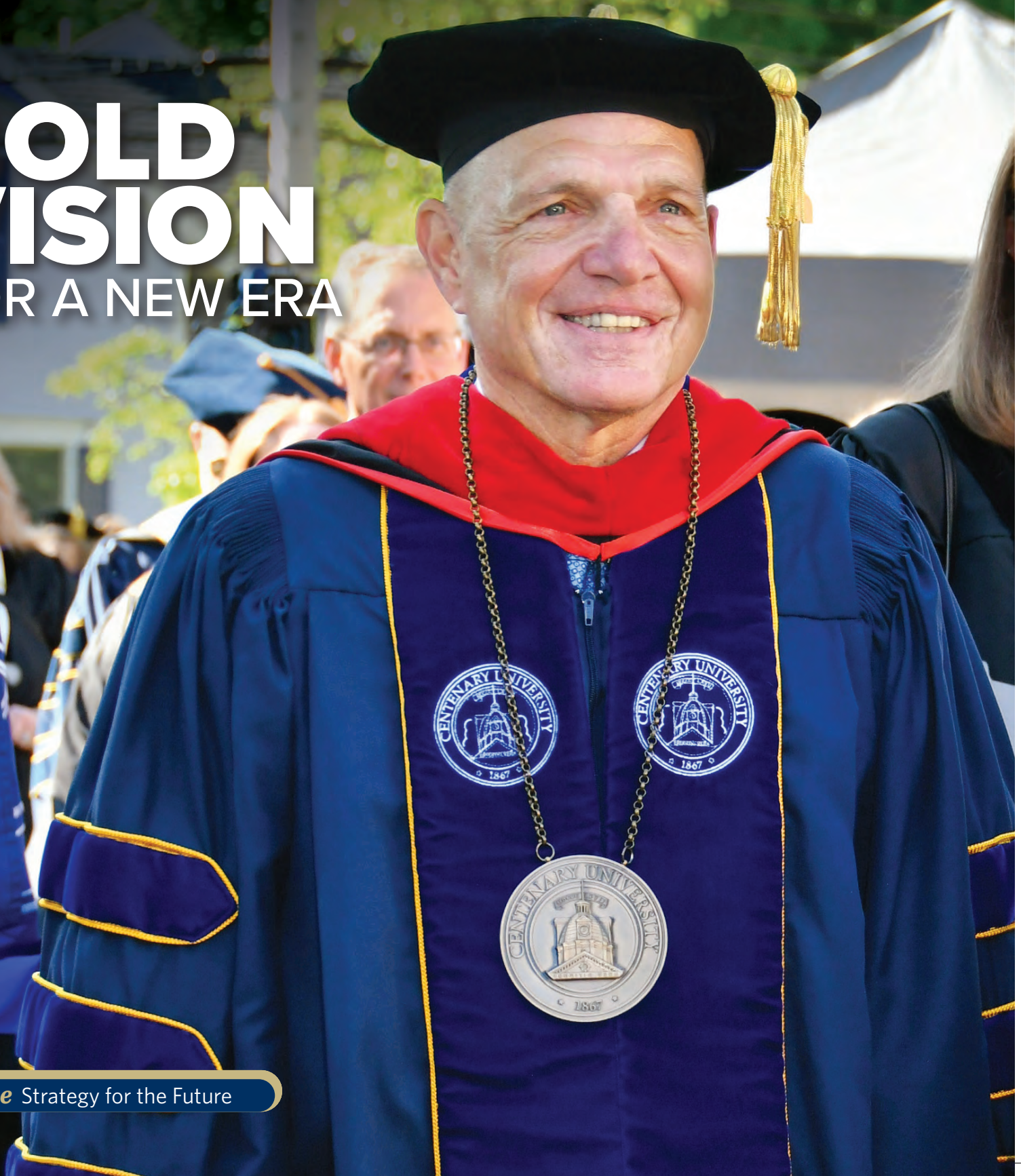


THE MAGAZINE OF **CENTENARY UNIVERSITY**

SUMMER 2026

CENTENARIAN

**BOLD
VISION**
FOR A NEW ERA



Inside Strategy for the Future



Three Cheers!

When Hackettstown High School Principal Kyle Sosnovik earned his Doctor of Education from Centenary University this spring, the entire school turned out to celebrate. Cheering students lined the halls as Superintendent of Schools Debra Grigoletti, Ed.D. '25, escorted Dr. Sosnovik through the building to accept congratulations on this achievement.

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President John R. Schol

HOW TO REACH US

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Vision is the art of seeing possibility, of recognizing not just what is, but what could be. It is not a formula or a step-by-step process. Vision cannot be engineered or forced. Instead, it emerges when we create space for imagination, curiosity, and courage.

There are simple, but powerful, practices that help us see possibility more clearly.

Play is one of them.

In a world that often demands urgency and seriousness, play invites us to loosen our grip on certainty. When we play, we lose track of time and set aside limitations. We allow ourselves to move beyond the immediate challenge and into creativity. Vision does not ignore reality, it expands it.

Dreaming is another.

To dream is to let the mind wander and wonder. Visionaries are often seen as distracted, but in truth, they are engaged in the disciplined work of asking, “What if?” Progress begins with questions that stretch beyond the present moment. Dreaming gives us permission to imagine futures not yet realized.

Listening is essential.

Vision grows in the quiet act of listening, listening to bold, unconventional voices, to practical wisdom, to music, to

“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”

— Helen Keller

one another. True visionaries know when to pause, be still, and absorb what others may overlook.

What do play, dreaming, and listening have in common? They keep us open to new ideas, to fresh perspectives, and even to possibilities that may at first seem improbable.

At Centenary University, we are engaged in serious and important work. Higher education is undergoing rapid change, and like many institutions, we are navigating both challenges and opportunities. As one university president recently noted, “We are living on the edge; things could go either way.” In many respects, that is true for us as well.

But standing at the edge is not a place of fear, it is a place of vision.

It calls us to lean more deeply into dreaming, listening, and yes, even playing. It invites us to reimagine how we prepare students for meaningful careers and lives of purpose. It challenges us to reshape education, so it not only reflects the future but helps create it.

Today at Centenary, we are seeing new pathways emerge, innovative programs aligned with a changing workforce, transformative learning experiences that shape the whole person, and a community energized by purpose and possibility. Most importantly, we are witnessing real transformation in the hearts, minds, and aspirations of our students and our campus community.

The future of Centenary is not something that will simply happen to us, it is something we will shape together.

If your sight is clear, but your vision feels uncertain, I invite you to join us. Join us in dreaming boldly, listening deeply, and embracing the creative spirit that makes new possibilities real. Together, we will not only imagine the future, we will build it, together.

With gratitude,
John R. Schol, D.Min.
President

SPRING INTO SERVICE



At Centenary University, spring break travel isn't all about beaches and parties. Instead, service-oriented and cultural enrichment activities build stronger connections with fellow students, the local community, and world cultures.

In western North Carolina, four Centenary students—accompanied by Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry Rev. Timothy Nicinski, D.Min. '03—traveled to North Carolina to assist those affected by Hurricane Helene at a food pantry, thrift store, and two homeless shelters. Closer to home, another group of Centenary students spent spring break week creating a new campus resource hub to house Cyclone Thrift, a free reuse and recycling center; the Career Closet, providing professional attire for interviews and internships; and Becca's Closet, which offers prom dresses to local high school students. In addition, the Multicultural Club took a cruise that combined cultural exploration, language practice, and community building, while the Cyclones baseball and softball teams traveled to Myrtle Beach to face competition.

"These trips foster empathy, resilience, teamwork, and a deeper sense of purpose—qualities that stay with our students long after they return to campus."

"At Centenary University, spring break experiences give students the opportunity to step beyond the classroom and engage meaningfully with the world around them," said Kerry Mullins, vice president for student affairs. "Whether they are serving communities in need, learning alongside people from different cultures, or interacting with other NCAA athletes, these trips foster empathy, resilience, teamwork, and a deeper sense of purpose—qualities that stay with our students long after they return to campus."



RN to BSN Program Earns Accreditation



Centenary University's Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) program has earned accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), a leading accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education. Launched in 2023 in collaboration with Atlantic Health, the RN to BSN degree creates an academic pathway for nurses to advance to healthcare leadership positions requiring a BSN, as well as branch out into public health and

school nursing careers. The program can be completed in five semesters and is structured in a cohort model to ensure that working professionals build

"Accreditation assures employers and graduate schools that Centenary University graduates have been prepared at the highest level."

a sustainable network as they pursue their BSN. Taking into consideration the time constraints of adult students,

classes are fully asynchronous and many working nurses can complete the majority of the practicum experience at their place of employment.

"Accreditation of Centenary's program is important because it demonstrates the university's commitment to academic excellence, accountability, and continuous quality improvement," said Director of Nursing Rebecca Cooper, DNP. "It is also critically important to our graduates. Accreditation validates the quality of their education, enhances their professional credibility, and supports their eligibility for advanced education, leadership opportunities, and certain employment and tuition assistance programs. In addition, accreditation assures employers

and graduate schools that Centenary University graduates have been prepared at the highest level."

A Best College for Women

Centenary University has been named one of America's Best Colleges for Women in a new ranking by *Newsweek*. Compiled in partnership with Gender Fair, the ranking recognizes institutions of higher learning across the nation that intentionally structure operations to support the education and employment of women. The listing tapped data from the US Department of Education to rank institutions based on their ability to ensure that colleges address gender equality. The final listing is based on data including women in leadership roles on campus, pay parity, campus safety, and opportunities for faculty and students.

In this year's inaugural listing, Centenary ranked sixth among New Jersey's colleges and universities and 186th in the nation, achieving its highest scores in campus safety, leadership, and



pay and policy. The university has been a leader in higher education for women since its founding in 1867.

"From its founding, Centenary University has believed in the transformative power of educating women to lead with confidence, purpose, and impact," said Centenary University President John R. Schol, D.Min. "That commitment continues to define who we are today and who we are becoming. Being recognized by *Newsweek* as one of the

best places for women affirms the core of our mission: to foster a community where women are challenged to grow, supported to succeed, and empowered to shape their own futures. This honor reflects the dedication and excellence of our students, faculty, and staff, and the inclusive, dynamic future we are building together."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Centenary University has been awarded a \$27,500 grant from the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) to combat food insecurity among students on campus. The university is one of 36 institutions of higher education across the state to share in \$1.2 million in Hunger-Free Campus Act funding, which supports campus-based resources including food pantries and outreach connecting students with programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

"Too often, the serious problem of food insecurity on college campuses goes unseen," said Centenary University Vice President for Student Affairs Kerry Mullins. "Students facing housing instability may also struggle just to get enough to eat—a hardship that can derail academic success and graduation. As an institution committed to student well-being and success, Centenary ensures that every student's basic needs—food, shelter, and dignity—are met so they can truly thrive academically."

This year's funding will support initiatives organized through Centenary's Hunger Free Task Force, a campus organization aimed at eradicating food insecurity within the university

community. A portion of the grant funding will be used to hire a resource coordinator/case manager to assist students in navigating available social services, including the on-campus Cyclone Kitchen and the Swipe Out Hunger Program, which provides confidential meal swipes in the student cafeteria through the university's food service provider, Sodexo. New this year is a program called Cyclone Take Home, which will distribute leftover food from on-campus events to students in need through the Cyclone Kitchen.

"Centenary ensures that every student's basic needs—food, shelter, and dignity—are met so they can truly thrive academically."

In addition, the resource coordinator/case manager will connect students with community-based resources, including SNAP, WIC (Women, Infants, & Children), and related assistance programs such as area food banks. A free courtesy bus—also funded through the grant—is available to drive students to SNAP-participating retailers.

Earth Day: Small Actions, Big Impact

For Centenary University students, Earth Day extended into a full month of planting events to support the environment. On campus, they added butterfly- and bee-friendly plants to the university's Pollinator Garden, which was founded last year to support biodiversity. They also traveled to sites around the community for Earth-friendly service projects.





Fitting In—and Standing Out



Saurelys Escano '27

Saurelys Escano '27 remembers arriving on Centenary's campus as a first-year student and feeling unsure how to get involved. Like many college freshmen, she struggled with taking the first steps to join campus activities and engage with fellow students. "A lot of college freshmen struggle with fitting in," Escano said.

Two years later, the psychology major has lots of friends as a member of the Multicultural Club and first-year leader, helping freshmen and transfer students navigate their first year at Centenary. Escano was also recently one of 12 Centenary students to attend the first New Jersey Statewide Mental Health Summit, a gathering of more than 200 New Jersey college students to help shape mental health policy and awareness across campuses. Hosted by the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE) at Kean University, the summit featured peer-led panels, interactive exhibits, and workshops.

Networking with students from across the state, the

Centenary students shared best practices and discussed ways to improve mental health on campus. Escano's main focus was gathering ideas to improve the college orientation process through stronger emphasis on support services and activities. Later, she brought what she learned back to Centenary, meeting with Vice President for Student Affairs Kerry Mullins and Director of the Counseling Center Mikolaya Nynka, LPC. "We spoke about introducing one-on-one interviews with accepted students," explained Escano. "Centenary presents lots of information at orientation, but students will be more likely to remember what they hear from a one-on-one conversation. This could help students at risk of dropping out of college due to loneliness fit in sooner."

Mullins said attending the mental health summit provided the Centenary students with the opportunity to network with fellow New Jersey college students, bring meaningful input to their own campuses, and gain professional skills and experiences to prepare them for graduate school and the workforce. "We're so very proud of the Centenary students who attended this conference," Mullins explained. "Engaged students like Saurelys are providing us with valuable feedback so we can continue to improve the Centenary student experience."

In addition to Escano, Centenary students who attended the summit are Jessica Rosano, Victoria Hart, Gianna Piccirillo, Gabriela Vasconcelos, Nehemiah Cintron, Dara Frieder, Sara Riccardelli, Grace Sheyhing, Serafina Lopez, and Jayden Pennella.



Hail to the Graduates!

Centenary University renewed a beloved tradition this spring, as commencement returned to the front lawn of the Edward W. Seay Administration Building on May 16. Within the shadow of the building's gold dome, 373 members of the Class of 2026 received their degrees during two ceremonies honoring undergraduates and advanced degree recipients.

President John R. Schol, D.Min., encouraged the graduates to value their place in the history of Centenary University. "Just a short distance from where we gather today, a group of Methodists came together in 1867 with a vision, to create a school that would prepare students for successful careers and successful lives. They called it Centenary," President Schol said. "I don't believe even in their boldest dreams they could have imagined the remarkable Class of 2026 seated here before us on this front lawn today."

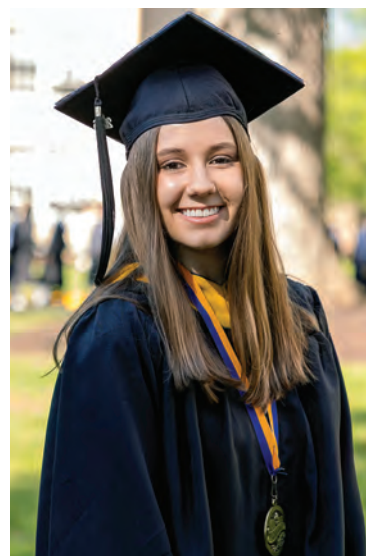
Philadelphia radio veteran Cyndy Drue Smith '75 delivered the commencement address and was recognized with a Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa* (see sidebar). She shared five career and life lessons with the graduates: Pursue the college classes and activities that bring joy; keep an open mind to suggestions from fellow professionals; don't hesitate to pitch

your ideas; focus on what you want, not what you're afraid of; and be true to yourself. "Since I've played rock music for decades on the radio, I've heard many wise lyrics," she said. "My favorite set of words comes from a song that was performed at Woodstock. The song is called *Wooden Ships*. The lyrics say, 'If you smile

at me, I will understand. Because that is something everyone everywhere does in the same language.' Let's all keep smiling."

Tanner Sullivan '26, who earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication: Radio/Television/Film, *summa cum laude*, with a minor in professional writing, is valedictorian of the Class of 2026, graduating with a perfect 4.0 grade point average (GPA). Pondering what's next for the graduates, Sullivan told his classmates, "For all of us, it will be a different story. Through our





different majors, we've been able to accomplish so much, and learn more about these fields we're so passionate about. Whether you majored in business, writing, or were more committed to athletics and extracurricular programs, one key factor is certain: Your passion and love for your medium is what really helps you to shine and stand out."

At the university's Academic and Student Leadership Awards Ceremony in April, Alexis d'Ambly '26 was recognized as the Class of 2026 first-generation valedictorian, while Serafina Lopez '26 earned the Red Knot Award, presented to the graduating transfer student with the highest grade point average. At commencement, President Schol also presented graduates who earned perfect 4.0 GPAs with the President's Academic Excellence Award, including Tanner Sullivan, Alexis d'Ambly, and Serafina Lopez, as well as Emily Gorman '26, Greg Lake '26, Nicole Leonard '26, Jennifer Montiero '26, and Boban Nedelkov '26. In addition, Carie Norcross-Murphy, Ed.D. '26, who earned a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, was recognized with the university's prestigious Alyce Hunter Dissertation Award.

Assistant Professor of Counseling Alissandra Singher, Ph.D., was honored as Centenary University's Distinguished Teacher of the Year, while Adjunct Professor in Fine Arts Joseph Coco received the Joel K. Kobert Adjunct Teacher of the Year award.



Where It All Began

As a Centenary student, Cyndy Drue Smith '75/26 HA hosted a program on the campus radio station, WNTI. That early experience sparked a lifelong love for radio and set the stage for a distinguished career in media. Early on, she chose to use her first and middle names on the radio. In May, she addressed the graduates at Centenary University's 151st commencement.

Dr. Drue Smith became one of Philadelphia's most recognizable voices, gaining wide recognition as the creator and host of WMMR-FM's *Street Beat*, a weekly program that showcased emerging regional bands and became a beloved platform for the city's vibrant music scene. Throughout her career, Dr. Drue Smith has interviewed many of the world's most influential artists, including Rod Stewart, Carly Simon, and Bono, as well as members of bands such as Van Halen, Fleetwood Mac, and Journey. She also created and hosted several television programs in Philadelphia.

In addition to her work in broadcasting, Dr. Drue Smith has enjoyed a long career as an actor and voice-over artist. As a member of SAG/AFTRA, she has appeared in more than 20 films, including *The Sixth Sense*, *Unbreakable*, *Rocky Balboa*, *National Treasure*, *Signs*, and *The Lovely Bones*, as well as television programs such as *Law & Order: SVU* and *Do No Harm*. Today, Dr. Drue Smith continues to share her passion for music and storytelling as a radio personality on Classic Rock 102.9 WMGK in Philadelphia, where she hosts a weekly program and is also the producer of the *ClassicRockArchive* YouTube channel.



"Great Track Record"

As an aspiring veterinarian, Michael Rash chose Centenary for its small class sizes and impressive track record for veterinary school acceptances. Today, he can count himself in that elite group—Rash recently earned his Bachelor of Science in Animal Health, with a minor in biology, from Centenary and will attend Long Island University Lewyt College of Veterinary Medicine.

Since veterinary schools are competitive, Rash made sure his applications stood out. His Honors Program capstone project was published by the American Association of Equine Practitioners, a leading organization for equine professionals, and he also interned with a local veterinarian. "While most schools offer bachelor's degrees in biology, Centenary has an animal health program that's specifically for pre-vet students and a great track record for vet school acceptances," said Rash, a resident of Baltimore, Md. "You also get a lot of experience working directly with horses at the Equestrian Center. Honestly, other schools—especially bigger universities—don't have the hands-on experiences we have at Centenary." 🏆



"Where I Belong"

A first-generation college student, Alexis d'Ambly '26 had no one to guide her when it was time to apply for college and financial aid. Concerned about accruing too much student debt, the Hackettstown resident decided to earn an associate degree from Warren County Community College before enrolling at Centenary University, where she received a generous merit-based scholarship. This spring, she graduated as the Class of 2026 first-generation valedictorian with a Bachelor of Arts in Writing and a minor in English.

Editor-in-chief of *The Cyclone Chronicle*, d'Ambly has been accepted to the master's program in English, with a concentration in writing, at Seton Hall University, where she will also serve as a teaching assistant. "After earning my associate degree, I chose Centenary because it's local—I already knew that the university has a really good writing program," said d'Ambly, who is planning a career as a university professor and author. "Through the newspaper, I really found where I belong. There's a great campus community here." 🏆



"So Many Resources"

For most NCAA student-athletes, competing in a college sport is akin to holding a full-time job, while juggling classwork and other campus activities. A first-generation college student, D'Ani Morales '26 managed to double that schedule as an honor student competing on the Centenary University women's basketball and softball teams. She recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting.

In addition to athletics, Morales has been active on campus as a member of the EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) and as the event coordinator and leader of academic initiatives for the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). With one more year of softball eligibility left, Morales will return to Centenary in the fall to earn an MBA while playing her final season with the Cyclones. Then, she plans to earn her CPA, and someday, operate her own accounting practice. "I had such a good experience at Centenary," Morales noted. "The business program here is great—there are so many resources to help students succeed." 🏆



"Absolutely Worth It"

As a teenager, George Hamberger '26 was searching for a career enriching people's lives. After working in real estate and banking, he decided on nursing and earned an RN degree from The County College of Morris. "As a nurse, I really enjoy helping people and teaching them about the care they are receiving," said Hamberger, a perioperative nurse supervisor in the operating room at Overlook Hospital.

Three years ago, he enrolled in Centenary University's Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing program to strengthen his leadership and decision-making skills. A recipient of Centenary's Reeves Scholarship, which provides financial assistance to Overlook Hospital RNs who enroll in Centenary's RN to BSN, Hamberger graduated with his Bachelor of Science in Nursing. "Centenary was such a good fit," the Hackettstown resident said. "It's designed for working nurses like me. The environment is supportive and the curriculum is practical—everything I learned could be applied to my practice. It's absolutely worth it." 🏆

“Incredible Experience”

As a college senior, Tanner Sullivan '26 was already a familiar voice to listeners of WNTI and WRNJ, two Hackettstown-area radio stations. For the past three years, Sullivan has hosted a weekly program called *The Ticket Booth*—which explores various aspects of the film industry—on WNTI, Centenary University's streaming station. Last year, Sullivan added *Fresh Popcorn*, a weekly feature on upcoming films, and man-on-the-street interviews to his schedule via an internship at WRNJ. But cultivating an active on-air presence is just one item on his impressive resume. Sullivan recently graduated as the valedictorian of the Centenary University Class of 2026 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication: Radio/Television/Film, plus a minor in professional writing. He earned a perfect 4.0 grade point average (GPA).

A resident of Basking Ridge, NJ, Sullivan originally didn't set out to become an on-air personality. As a high school senior, he sought a university with a strong communication program that was also close to home. Centenary fit the bill—and Sullivan enrolled intending to study film. During his second semester, he met WNTI Director John Del Re, who teaches an audio production class at Centenary, and was tasked with doing a weekly radio show. Despite his initial trepidation, Sullivan took to the medium immediately. Later, he was named WNTI's student programming director, as well as executive managing editor of *The Cyclone Chronicle*, Centenary's student newspaper.

With his Centenary degree in hand, Sullivan is pursuing a career in radio and film: “When I first started college, I didn't know where to start on my career. At Centenary, people introduced me to opportunities that have given me incredible experience. It's been an absolute pleasure to attend Centenary for these four years.” 🎓



Snapshot

Name:

John R. Schol, D.Min.

Title:

President, Centenary University
Bishop, The United Methodist Church

Education:

Doctor of Ministry, Boston University
Master of Divinity, Boston University
Bachelor of Arts, Moravian University

Family:

Married to Beverly Schol; three
children, four grandchildren

Hobbies:

Photography, travel, sports, and design



BOLD VISION FOR A NEW ERA

John R. Schol, D.Min., was named the 16th president of Centenary University last fall. His first priority: To develop a strategic vision—informed by the campus community—to guide the university for decades to come.

Please tell us about yourself.

I grew up in a working class family in Philadelphia where faith, perseverance, and community shaped our daily life. My parents taught me the dignity of hard work and the importance of showing up for others. Education opened doors for me that I never imagined possible, and it has remained a central thread throughout my life.

As I matured, athletics taught me the value of team, collaboration, leadership, and grit. I played football and defensive back from the age of 7 through college. I also ran track—the mile and half mile—and ran in two Penn Relays. I was first team all public high school team in the city of Philadelphia. Those experiences built a foundation for leadership that continues to guide my career.

I was raised United Methodist, which gave me both a spiritual foundation and a sense of purpose from an early age. I chose to devote my career to the church as a pastor, community developer, denominational executive, and bishop. My wife, Beverly, and I have built our family around these values—faith, service, and a deep belief in the potential of every person.

Who inspired your religious career?

My early years were marked by people who believed in me before I fully believed in myself—especially my parents. Pastors, Sunday school teachers, and mentors in my home church also saw leadership gifts in me and encouraged me to explore ministry.

Growing up in a working class community, I saw firsthand how the church could be a place of hope, stability, and empowerment. That experience planted the seed that ministry could be a way to help people flourish, spiritually, emotionally, and practically. Several mentors walked with me, asked the right questions, and helped me discern that calling.

Your ministry has made an impact around the world.

Throughout my ministry, I've had the privilege of leading initiatives that brought people together across cultures, regions, and continents. I've helped strengthen churches, launch new ministries, and support communities recovering from disaster. Internationally, I've worked alongside leaders in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines to expand educational opportunities and develop sustainable programs that empower local communities.



Across the United States, I've led largescale organizational transformations, built coalitions, and guided institutions through complex challenges with transparency, collaboration, and hope.

What moments have been most meaningful?

The most meaningful moments have always been the ones where people's lives were changed—when a community rebuilt after hardship, when a young person discovered their purpose, or when a congregation found new energy and direction. I am proud that 12 people entered pastoral ministry under my leadership; that 330 affordable housing units were built new or rehabbed for families; that I organized or led the training for more than 1,000 sites around the world and more than 7,000 people in community asset planning and engagement that brought hope, healing, and development through congregations and community organizations; and that I was a part of or helped lead racial reconciliation in communities and congregations. Moments of reconciliation, healing, and shared vision have stayed with me.

How will these experiences inform your Centenary University presidency?

Serving as a bishop has given me experience leading complex



organizations, managing large budgets, and navigating diverse stakeholder needs. I've learned how to bring people together around a shared mission, even in times of uncertainty. I've also spent years working with educational institutions, clergy, congregations, and community partners—skills that translate directly to leading a university. Most importantly, being a bishop has taught me to lead with both vision and compassion, to

make tough decisions, and to stay grounded in purpose. This is what it means to be a servant leader.

You have a long history with the university.

Yes, I served as a member of the Centenary University Board of Trustees for 10 years. As a trustee, I gained a deep understanding of Centenary's mission, its strengths, and its challenges. I've seen firsthand the dedication of our faculty, the passion of our students, and the transformative power of a Centenary education. That experience means I'm not starting from scratch—I already know the heart of this institution. I've been part of strategic conversations, accreditation reviews, and longterm planning. That foundation allows me to lead with clarity from day one.

Tell us about your first full semester on campus.

The experience has been energizing. I've spent the time listening—meeting with faculty, staff, students, alumni, trustees, and community partners. I've visited with students, faculty, and staff, and attended athletic events and student gatherings.

One moment that stands out was a conversation with a student who told me, "Centenary is the first place where I felt truly seen." That simple statement captured what so many others have shared—this is a community where people know your name, care about your success, and walk with you. I've also heard faculty speak with pride about their students' achievements and staff share stories of going the extra mile to support someone in need. These stories remind me that Centenary's heart is strong.

What are Centenary's greatest strengths?

Centenary's strengths are remarkable—and give us a powerful foundation for growth. They include:

- A bright, dedicated, and deeply engaged faculty
- A rich mix of students who bring diverse experiences and aspirations
- A nationally recognized competitive student business team
- Equestrian teams that have placed among the best in the nation



Proven Leader

Centenary University President John R. Schol, D.Min., was consecrated as a bishop in The United Methodist Church in 2004 after serving 25 years as a pastor, community developer, and denominational executive. Eight years later, he was assigned to lead The United Methodists in Greater New Jersey, a role he held until his retirement in 2024.

Under his leadership, the conference created new resources for clergy and laity; launched a nonprofit to respond to Superstorm Sandy, recruiting more than 12,000 volunteers and raising \$17 million over five years to repair or build 273 homes; and guided leaders to institute a fundraising campaign to support long-term disaster recovery in Puerto Rico, ministry and a mission site in Tanzania, and a community development organization providing social services, affordable housing, and feeding programs for vulnerable populations.

After his retirement in 2024, President Schol was called to serve as the interim lead bishop of Nigeria to reorganize The United Methodist Church in Nigeria after the former bishop resigned. "Ministry has taught me that leadership is not about titles," President Schol said. "It's about walking with people, listening deeply, and helping them see the possibilities ahead."



- The MA and PhD in Happiness Studies, which prepare students to flourish in life and career
- Strong athletics and a vibrant drama program
- A caring, relational community where students are known and supported

Can you share some early priorities?

My priorities are to position Centenary to be a leader in three areas: Student success, university vitality, and world engagement. I am building relationships, understanding immediate needs, and beginning to address operational challenges. I've also focused on strengthening communication, stabilizing key systems, and ensuring that our teams and departments feel supported and valued. I pride myself in cultivating and coaching people to lead.

How will you accomplish this?

Once I arrived on campus, we immediately began engaging in a comprehensive listening and assessment process. It's a campus-wide effort that includes students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, parents, community residents, and friends of Centenary. These key constituencies gathered in small groups to discuss and identify goals for student success; university vitality; world engagement and transformation; values and principles that will

guide leadership and our work; and strategies to accomplish our goals. We are also reviewing enrollment, financial, and academic data, as well as benchmarking against peer institutions.

This collaborative approach ensures that our strategic direction/imperative is grounded in reality, shared wisdom, and a collective vision. Departments and teams used the strategic direction/imperative to identify their priorities, goals, and execution and budget. The departments and teams completed their work in May. My commitment is that the plan will be transparent, actionable, and shaped by the voices of the Centenary community.

Will you strengthen Centenary's connection with The United Methodist Church?

Absolutely, and with other faith traditions and community organizations as well. Centenary's United Methodist heritage is a source of strength—rooted in education, service, and the belief that every person is of sacred worth. Also, other faith traditions add to the campus as a whole. Strengthening these connections does not mean narrowing our reach; it means deepening our identity. We will continue to welcome students of all backgrounds that enhance our academic rigor, compassion, and social engagement.

Experienced Leadership

When Centenary University President John R. Schol, D. Min., arrived on campus last fall, he set out to build a strong senior leadership team with the experience needed to support our core purpose: Student success, university vitality, world engagement, and long-term sustainability. To advance this aim, President Schol has appointed Andy Cobb as chief financial officer (CFO), Michael Iris, Ed.D. '07, as vice president for advancement and communications, and Treacy Stewart as chief human resources officer.



Andy Cobb

Cobb oversees all financial operations of the university, including financial management, resource allocation, and planning to develop strategies that align operations with institutional priorities for growth. He has had a distinguished career in strategic finance, operational transformation, and collaborative leadership. Over 20-plus years with AT&T—most recently as assistant vice president—Cobb was recognized for his ability to stabilize challenged operations, build trust across stakeholder groups, and translate complex financial realities into clear, actionable strategies. His work has spanned turnaround environments, customer-facing organizations, and large-scale service operations, experience that aligns directly with Centenary's current priorities. A graduate of Susquehanna University, Cobb earned a Master of Business Administration, Finance, and Management Accounting from Rutgers University.



Michael Iris, Ed.D. '07

Dr. Iris brings a wealth of higher education experience, as well as extensive institutional knowledge, to his new role at Centenary. During a 14-year career at Berkeley College, and as an adjunct instructor at Centenary, he led in roles of development, alumni relations, and communications. He has also taught marketing, social media, and graphic design. He plans to tap this deep experience and knowledge to strengthen Centenary's communications, fundraising, and relationships with alumni and community partners.

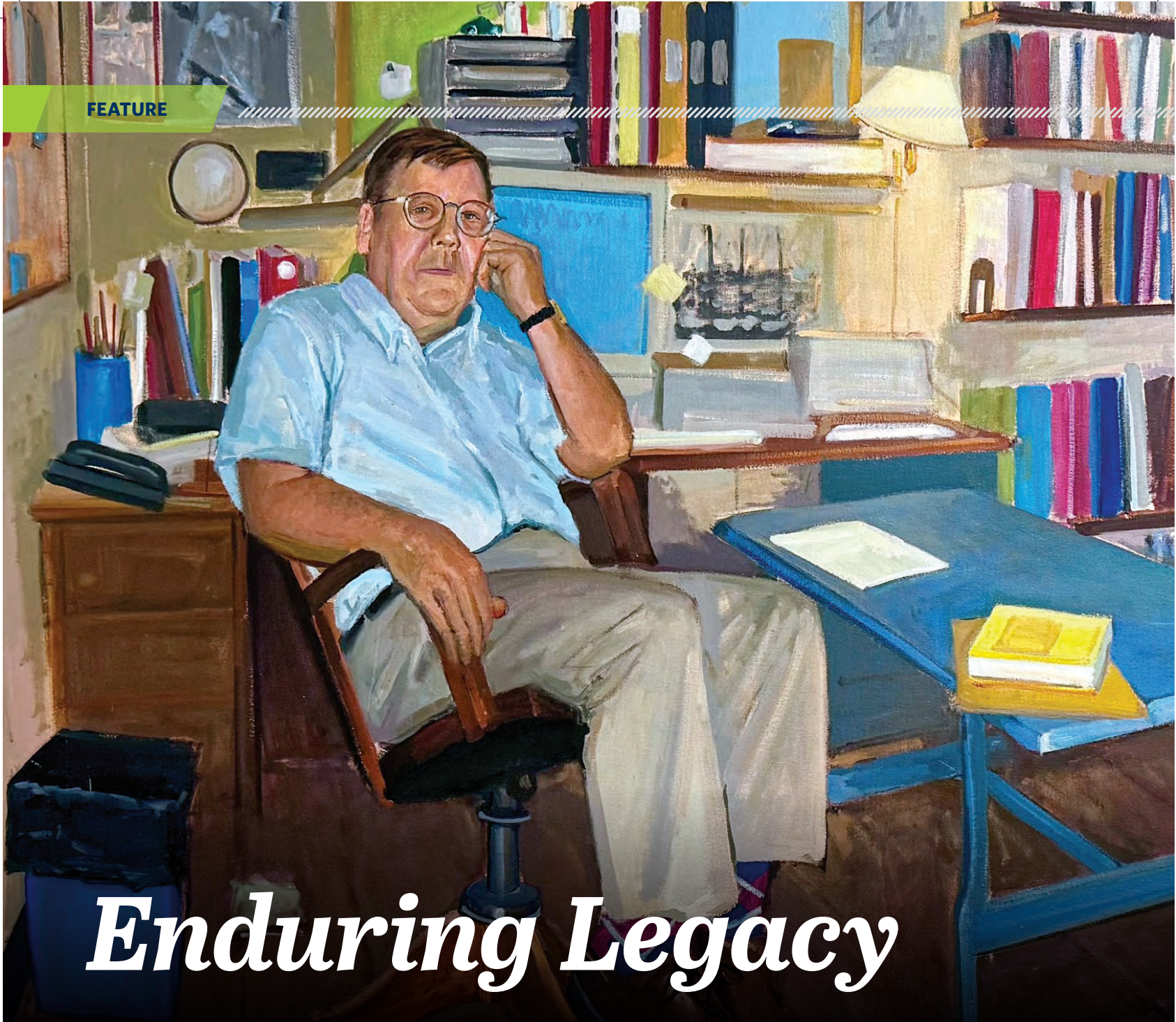
Dr. Iris was honored for professional achievement with the Centenary University Distinguished Alumni Award in 2022 and was recognized in the 2024 NJBIZ Forty Under 40 listing honoring professionals who are "shaping the economic future of New Jersey." He earned a Bachelor of Science in Marketing and Management from Centenary University, a Master of Science in Graphic Communications and Technology from Kean University, and a Doctor of Higher Education Leadership from Saint Elizabeth University.

[See page 18 to learn more about Dr. Iris's plans to re-engage Centenary graduates.](#)



Treacy Stewart

Stewart leads institutional human resources strategy at Centenary, with a focus on building a high performing, people-centered culture aligned with the university's organizational goals. Her professional experience spans global, regional, and local organizations across industries ranging from consumer packaged goods and hospitality to banking and financial services, human capital management systems, and marketing. Prior to joining Centenary, Stewart spent more than a decade with Mondeléz International in progressively senior leadership roles, most recently as director of people capability. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a strong track record in talent management, leadership development, performance management, culture and engagement, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Stewart holds a Master of Business Administration in Human Resources Management from Fitchburg State University and a Bachelor of Arts from Thomas Edison State University.



Enduring Legacy

Raymond Frey, Ph.D., admits that he almost blew his job interview at Centenary. It was 1990, and Professor Harry Strickhausen had just asked Dr. Frey if he'd consider teaching a course in western civilization. Dr. Frey's response: "I think that's the dumbest course in Centenary's curriculum."

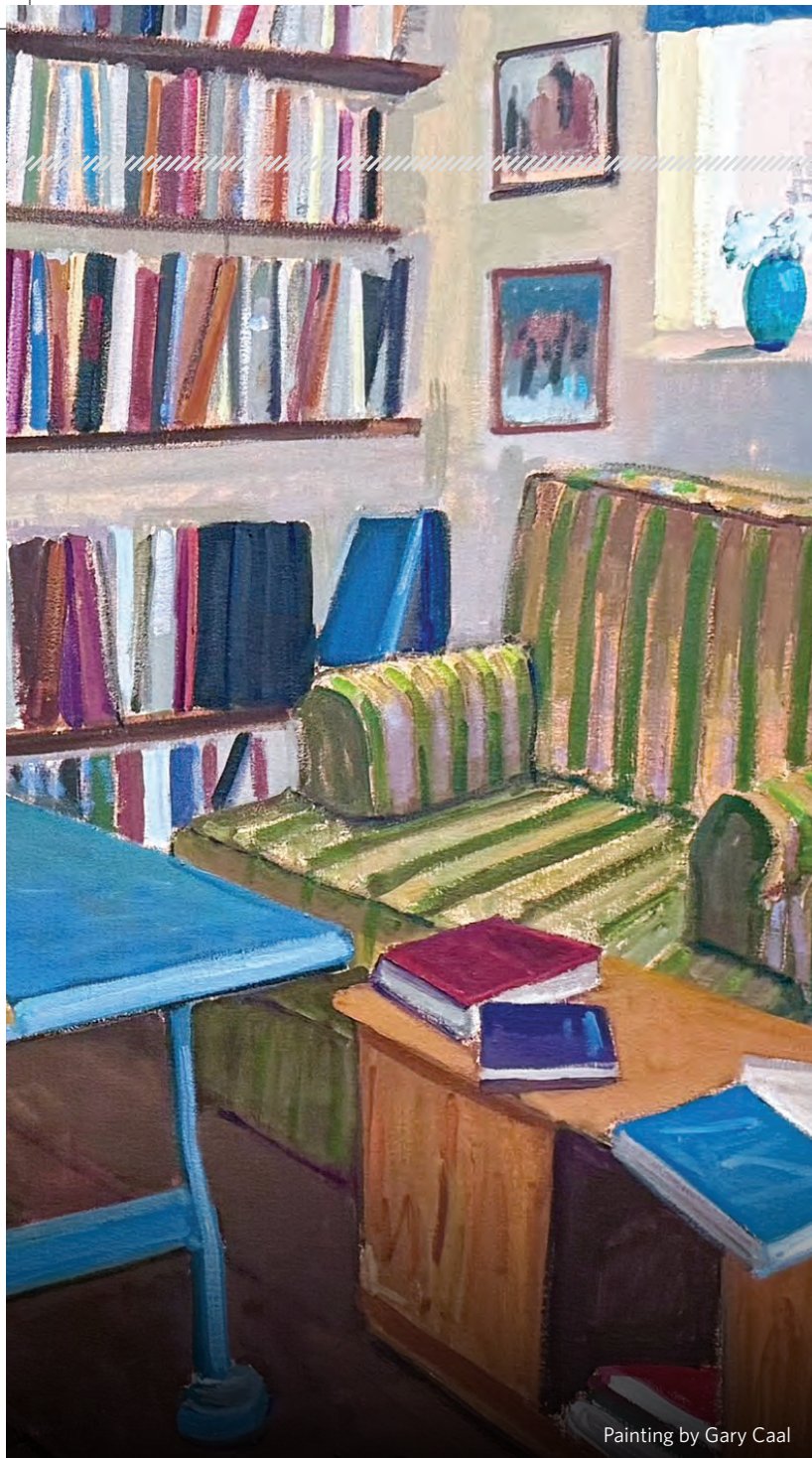
"Everyone in the room kind of paused and I thought, 'Oh my God, I don't believe I just said that,'" Dr. Frey chuckled. "I went on to explain that teaching 10,000 years of history in 16 weeks was impossible. Harry said, 'You know, I believe you're right.'"

Dr. Frey was hired, beginning a 35-year career at Centenary as a respected history professor, department chair, dean of faculty, and university historian. Along the way, he's written several books, achieved recognition on campus and statewide—

and most importantly—shaped the intellect and character of countless Centenary students.

The beloved professor and historian retired from the university on Dec. 31. During the spring semester, Centenary's Board of Trustees voted to bestow a new title, professor of history *emeritus*, on Dr. Frey, and at the annual scholarship gala on June 10, the university recognized his enduring legacy with its highest honor, the Gold Dome Award.

A graduate of William Paterson University, Dr. Frey earned a master's degree from Fordham University and a doctorate from Drew University. He held adjunct teaching roles at several colleges in the New York metro region until his wife, Andra Harris Frey '76/79, urged him to apply to Centenary. While his



Painting by Gary Caal

course content has spanned the globe, Dr. Frey holds a special place in his heart for the university's rich history. "I've always wanted my students to know they're part of a larger community," said Dr. Frey, the author of *Centenary College, New Jersey* (Arcadia Publishing, 2012), which explores the university's past. "In my classes, we spoke about the architecture of campus buildings, the fire of 1899, the president's house fire in 2015, the sundial...I wanted students to understand that they are now part of Centenary's legacy."

Through the decades, Dr. Frey sought to equip Centenary students with the critical thinking and communication skills that remain vital across the workplace. "Studying the liberal arts gives you a breadth that other people simply don't have,"

Dr. Frey explained. Noting that artificial intelligence (AI) can't replace original, critical thought, he added, "As you enter the workplace, you need to know how to write well and speak well. You need to know how to analyze material and do effective, accurate research. If you're using AI, it's coming from a computer—not from your heart and your soul."

"I've always been so proud of Centenary—our faculty members really go out of their way to help students. There's a real community feeling here. Centenary is a very special place."

Dr. Frey also modeled for his students an abiding spirit of volunteerism. When Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast in 2005, he led several teams to New Orleans to assist with the rebuilding efforts. The experience was so deeply moving that today, he remains in touch with the former students and faculty who worked alongside him in the storm-ravaged state.

A cancer survivor, Dr. Frey was recently certified as a counselor for the Cancer Hope Network. He has also logged more than 2,500 volunteer hours at Newton Medical Center. This spring, Atlantic Health selected Dr. Frey as the recipient of a REACH Award for assisting with an emergency birth—the first volunteer to receive the honor. He said, "I've spent my life volunteering, so working at the hospital has been a good transition into retirement. It's been very meaningful to volunteer at the hospital that treated my cancer."

Dr. Frey's scholarship has extended far beyond Centenary's campus to encompass broader state and national narratives. He is the author of *New Jersey, A Journey of Discovery* (Gibbs Smith, 2004), a text used by schools throughout the state that won an award from the New Jersey Historical Commission. His first book, *William James Durant: An Intellectual Biography* (Edwin Mellen PR, 1991) chronicled the life and work of the Pulitzer Prize winning historian and philosopher, who grew up in New Jersey. In 2009, Dr. Frey received the New Jersey Governor's Award for Distinguished Achievement in History and Civics.

Reflecting on his career at Centenary, Dr. Frey said, "I've always been so proud of Centenary—our faculty members really go out of their way to help students. There's a real community feeling here. Centenary is a very special place."



Welcome Home



The keys to Centenary University's Edward W. Seay Administration Building hold deep symbolism for Michael Iris, Ed.D. '07. As an undergraduate, he held a work-study position in the Advancement Office. Today, after building a career in higher education, Dr. Iris has returned to Centenary to lead that very same area

as vice president for advancement and communications.

"Those keys are a symbol of responsibility that is deeply meaningful to me," said Dr. Iris. "To me, the Seay Building keys represent trust, stewardship, and continuity. Seay is part of Centenary's history, and having those keys reminds me every day that I am not just coming to work. I am helping to care for a legacy."

After earning a Bachelor of Science in Marketing and Management from Centenary, Dr. Iris went on to earn a Master of Science in Graphic Communications and Technology from Kean University and a Doctor of Higher Education Leadership from Saint Elizabeth University. He built a 14-year career at Berkeley College, serving in leadership roles in development, alumni relations, and communications. In 2024, he was named to the NJBIZ Forty Under 40 list, which honors professionals who are helping to shape the economic future of New Jersey.

Yet, despite his professional accomplishments, Centenary remained close to his heart. Through the years, Dr. Iris returned to campus as an adjunct professor and was honored with the Centenary University Distinguished Alumni Award in 2022. Last year, he expressed interest in serving the university as a member of the Board of Trustees. President John R. Schol, D.Min., saw another opportunity, one that aligned closely with Dr. Iris's



experience, passion, and deep connection to Centenary.

In February, Dr. Iris returned to his *alma mater* as vice president for advancement and communications. Five months later, he still marvels at the path that brought him back to Centenary, where his sister, Macey Sommariva '28, is now studying psychology. "It's really full circle for me," he explained. "This campus is where I fell in love with higher education. It's where I realized that I wanted to commit my life to working in academia. Professionally, I understand how important this work is to the future of the university. Advancement and communications are about connecting people to purpose, sharing the impact of a Centenary education, and building the support needed to help future students succeed."

"Advancement and communications are about connecting people to purpose, sharing the impact of a Centenary education, and building the support needed to help future generations of students succeed."

Since returning, Dr. Iris has focused on re-engaging Centenary alumni across generations. Through social media posts celebrating the university's history and traditions, alumni have enthusiastically shared memories, reconnected with classmates, and expressed excitement about returning to campus. In addition to events such as Alumni and Family Weekend this fall, Dr. Iris plans to create more opportunities for graduates to reconnect with one another and with the



university, including virtual alumni gatherings and expanded alumni engagement programs.

As President Schol moves forward with his strategy to position Centenary for the future, Dr. Iris has also worked to strengthen relationships with alumni, community partners, corporations, and foundations. These connections are helping to build philanthropic support for students, academic programs, and the long-term future of the university.

"To return now, as an alumnus, and serve in this leadership role is humbling," Dr. Iris said. "It feels like a full-circle moment, but it also feels like a responsibility. I know what Centenary can mean in a student's life because I lived it. I know how powerful this community can be when people believe in the mission and come together to support it."



A GOLDEN NIGHT

Centenary University feted distinguished leaders, educators, and community partners at the annual scholarship gala, A Golden Night of Excellence, on June 10. Held at David's Country Inn in Hackettstown, the event shines a spotlight on the importance of donors to the university's mission. This year's recipients of the Gold Dome Award—the university's highest honor—are Atlantic Health, Community Leadership & Partnership; New Jersey Sen. Douglas Steinhardt, Public Service & Advocacy; Raymond Frey, Ph.D., Distinguished Historian & Educator; and Michael Dowling, Excellence in Equine Education.

"This gala is always one of the most meaningful ways our community can invest directly in Centenary University students," said Vice President for Advancement and Communications Michael Iris, Ed.D. '07. "The scholarships funded through A Golden Night of Excellence help make

college attainable for talented students who might otherwise have to pause—or abandon—their education because of cost. We're deeply grateful to our sponsors and guests and we're proud to celebrate this year's honorees for the leadership and service they bring to Centenary and the State of New Jersey."

A native of Warren County, Sen. Steinhardt represents New Jersey's 23rd Legislative District, a post he has held since December 2022. He currently serves on the state's Joint Committee on the Public Schools, the Budget and Appropriations Committee, and the Labor Committee. In his legislative role, Sen. Steinhardt joined Assemblyman John DiMaio last year to secure a \$1.5 million grant from the State of New Jersey for Centenary University, which was one of seven independent New Jersey colleges and universities to share more than \$9.2 million in special state appropriations.

Atlantic Health is at the forefront of medicine, setting



standards for quality healthcare in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the New York metropolitan area. Powered by a workforce of 25,000 team members and more than 5,667 affiliated physicians dedicated to building healthier communities, Atlantic Health serves more than half the state of New Jersey at eight hospitals and 26 urgent care centers, as well as through the Atlantic Medical Group physician enterprise, Atlantic Visiting Nurse, and Atlantic Health Virtual Visits. The health system has partnered with Centenary University on its RN to BSN degree, as well as several other initiatives.

Raymond Frey, Ph.D., is professor *emeritus* of history at Centenary, retiring in late 2025. During his 35-year tenure at Centenary, he served as dean of faculty from 2000 to 2003. A prolific writer and recognized scholar of New Jersey history, he is the author of a textbook for middle school students that is used around the state. In 2009, he received the New Jersey

Governor's Award for Distinguished Achievement in History and Civics. (Read more about Dr. Frey's remarkable career on page 16.)

Michael Dowling has dedicated more than three decades to the equine industry as an accomplished trainer, educator, and mentor. A longtime leader within Centenary University's renowned Equine Studies program, he serves as IHSA hunt seat team co-coach and ANRC team co-coach, helping shape one of the nation's most respected collegiate riding programs. Under his leadership, Centenary has earned multiple national championships, along with numerous reserve national finishes. He has also coached four Cacchione Cup National Champions. After completing studies at Fairfield University and Lancaster University, Dowling founded Windham Hill, a premier training and sales operation based in Far Hills, NJ, and Wellington, Fla.

Honoring Legends



Centenary University Athletics recently inducted five alumni and one team into the university's Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2026. Held in Reeves Gymnasium on the Centenary University campus, the event honored an outstanding group of Cyclones whose excellence helped elevate Centenary athletics to new heights across multiple sports.

This year's inductees are Meagan Madsen '14, a softball standout and one of the program's most decorated players; Chris Burdge '14, an All-American wrestler and cornerstone of Centenary's nationally recognized wrestling legacy; Jessica Sikora '05, one of the most dominant players in the history of

Centenary women's soccer; baseball star Nigel Archibald '05, whose leadership and production were crucial in establishing Centenary baseball as a conference powerhouse; and the 2005 Centenary Baseball Team, which captured the conference championship and became just one of two Cyclones teams ever to advance to the NCAA Regional Tournament.

"Exceptional athletes and coaches make the whole team rise. Their leadership, their determination, their great talent, and their skills all help the whole team to do better."

In addition, Fred Mangione '93 received the Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing his remarkable professional success. A member of the Centenary University Board of Trustees and 2015 honorary degree recipient, Mangione is the chief business officer for the FIFA World Cup 2026 New York New Jersey Host Committee. His post-graduate achievements exemplify the values of leadership, excellence, and commitment the university instills in its student-athletes.

Centenary University President John R. Schol, D.Min., emphasized the spirit of excellence that Cyclones student-athletes have cultivated on campus. "Centenary University is a place that launches students into successful careers and successful lives. We focus on student success, university vitality, and world engagement to make a difference," President Schol said. "Exceptional athletes and coaches make the whole team



rise. Their leadership, their determination, their great talent, and their skills all help the whole team to do better. And so tonight, we recognize those persons who help the whole team to rise."

During presentations to honorees, the newest members of the Athletic Hall of Fame discussed the importance of support from family and teammates as they progressed from youth and high school sports to compete at the NCAA Division III level. Describing

herself initially as timid and self-conscious, Madsen recalled a lifetime of support from her parents, including pitching lessons with her father: "My parents discovered that sports helped me to overcome these difficulties. Ultimately, softball became an outlet where I was able to find myself, my voice, and my confidence." Of her family, Sikora said, "I thank my family for being so incredibly supportive. I think about all the sacrifices my mom and dad made. My family constantly sacrificed so I could chase my dreams."

Recalling how Coach John Garriques built a wrestling program culture that has produced countless All Americans, Burdge noted, "My junior year, we went to nationals as a team, and we had a lot to prove. Everybody was looking at us, like who's Centenary? We went down there and took third as a team—in the entire country." Archibald lauded late Cyclones

baseball coach Dave Sawicki for instilling a can-do attitude in his team: "When I said 'I can't', Dave told me to remove that word from my vocabulary...he had a vision for us, and it was really beautiful to watch. Dave had a way of inspiring people. I'm truly blessed to have met him."

The final honoree, Mangione discussed his journey to a successful career in sports management for employers like the New York Islanders, New York Jets, Brooklyn Nets, and FIFA. "Everyone here came to Centenary for the love of the game, and they stayed here for the game," Mangione said. "It's all about the people who love you, the people who follow you. That's what makes Centenary different. So be proud of who you are and that you come from Centenary University."



Support the Cyclones!

The grit, the teamwork, and the thrill of victory—those Cyclone moments remain long after you hang up your Centenary University jersey. Now, it's time to support the next generation of Centenary student-athletes, who are making their mark on the Atlantic East Conference and the NCAA.

Your gift to the Athletic Fund pays for essentials—like equipment and travel—that support the competitive dreams of our student-athletes. More importantly, your generosity will set a strong foundation for the future of Centenary Athletics.

Show your Cyclone Pride by scanning the QR code and making a gift today!





For the Record Books

Two Centenary basketball players have officially joined the ranks of 1,000 point career scorers. For the women's team, Vatiyah Davis '27 topped the mark on Nov. 13, scoring 25 points against Penn State Abington. Davis ended the season with 1,466 points and sits at number four on the university's all-time list. On the men's side, Kenneth Rankin '27 surpassed 1,000 career points on Feb. 14 in a win against Immaculata. With 1,066 points, Rankin is eighth on the all-time list and was an Atlantic East Conference (AEC) First Team All Conference selection.

Meanwhile, the Cyclones men's basketball coaching staff was named the AEC Coaching Staff of the Year for the second consecutive year. Coach Chris LaBelle '21 and his staff led the Cyclones to a 9-5 record in conference play, earning the third seed in the post season.

ACADEMIC CHAMPS

3.18

cumulative
Athletic
Department
GPA



Cyclones
are all-stars—
on the field
and in the
classroom.

**This year,
every
Centenary
NCAA team
achieved a
GPA of 3.0
or higher.**

Wrestlers Make National Mark



The Cyclones men's and women's wrestling teams continued to represent Centenary nationally—both on the mat and in the classroom. Both Danny Haws '26 (133 lbs) and Jack Thode '26 (125 lbs) wrapped up their Centenary careers at the NCAA Division III National Championships in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in March. During the tournament, Haws earned his 101st college career win.

On the academic side, Thode, Joey Innamorato '26, Reece Smith '28, Kayla Melsky '29, and

Elizabeth Galladay '28 represented the Cyclones as recipients of the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Scholar All-American Awards.

STANDOUT SEASON

Centenary University's baseball team had a season to remember, accomplishing more in the Atlantic East Conference (AEC) than any team in program history. The Cyclones stormed through conference play, earning the outright regular season championship with a 12-6 record in the AEC. Entering the conference playoffs as the top seed, the team came up one win short of a conference title, but picked up three AEC playoffs victories—the first in program history. The Cyclones also

became the first team in school history since joining the AEC to host the Atlantic East Championship Tournament.

The team's incredible season earned Head Coach Andrew Romanella and his staff Atlantic East Coaching Staff of the Year honors. The AEC also named Cyclones Dominick Chiego '27, third base, and Joseph Frei '27, centerfield, First Team All Conference, and Myles Castillo '27, shortstop, Second Team All Conference.



Let us know what's new!

Send us your news and keep up to date with classmates: alumni@centenaryuniversity.edu. Class News and Notes are edited to reflect Centenary's guidelines.

1950

Gloria Blake Kehler recently celebrated her 95th birthday in the front parlours of the Edward W. Seay Administration Building. Family, including her six children, and friends gathered for the celebration, which included posing for photos in front of the Class of 1950 graduation plaque displayed in the hallway.



1955

Nancy Franklin Cunningham writes: "Having lived on Hilton Head Island since 1973 and selling my childhood home in Margate, NJ, in 2003, I rarely visit up north anymore. I am still a working real estate broker with the Sea Pines Company. Coincidentally, both my daughters, Sunny Nolde and Amy Nolde, are also real estate agents here on the island, which is much fun for us! I now have three great-grandchildren: ZoeyRose DeZeeuw, 6, in Ashville, NC, and her cousins, Baker Ford, 4, and John Thomas Ford, 2, in Durham, NC. Happily, these precious family members love to come to the beach. Any alums who would like to come to the beach are welcome, too!"

1971

Maritza de Lima Lowinger recently visited the Centenary University campus with her son. She was delighted to see how much the university has grown, while still recognizing many familiar places from her student days. Maritza shared fond memories of her time at Centenary, where she was active in the Theatre Department, worked in the Language Department, and was a proud member of Delta Sigma Sigma.



1975

The 50th reunion of the Class of 1975 included a screening of **Cyndy Drue Smith '75/26 HA's** short documentary, *Cyndy Drue For the Record*, in the Little Theater. The film includes video interviews Dr. Drue Smith did with Bono of U2, David Lee Roth of Van Halen, and more, during her more than 50-year career in radio. It also mentions Centenary, since that's where she got her start in radio. That morning, Dr. Drue Smith was a guest on Centenary's own WNTI. Today, Dr. Drue Smith works at Classic Rock 102.9 FM-WMGK in Philadelphia, where she is on the air Saturdays from 11 am to 4 pm. Classmates can listen online at www.WMGK.com.



Cyndy Drue Smith '75/26 HA with Kinnet McSweeney Ehring '75, Karla Roulette Rauch '75, and WNTI Director John Del Re.

1998

Dr. Jaeme T. Schwartz is a leading clinical neuropsychologist who specializes in creating a safe and confidential environment that encourages personal growth and transformation with ketamine assisted therapy. The cornerstone of her mission to heal and transform lives is her humanistic, client-centered approach and commitment to integrity. The recipient of two doctoral degrees, Dr. Schwartz is a dedicated mom, volunteer, minister, and ambassador to Congress for mental health.



2001

Amy Stevens has been named Sussex County Teacher of the Year. Amy teaches English language arts at Byram Intermediate School in Byram Township. Since joining the school district more than 30 years ago, she has also served as a student council advisor, cheerleading coach, and eighth grade advisor. Amy earned a Master of Arts in Instructional Leadership from Centenary.

2002

Tim Delovich was awarded The David Peterson Perpetual Trophy at the Capital Challenge Horse Show. The honor recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional dedication and commitment to the well-being of horses.



George J. Milonas is serving as secretary of the County College of Morris Board of Trustees. An accomplished corporate compliance and risk management leader, he has extensive experience working with multinational companies specializing in the strategic design, implementation, and oversight of global regulatory compliance and enterprise risk management programs.

2003

Calvin J. Mitchell Jr. '03/05 recently concluded his tenure as deputy assistant secretary for acquisition at the US Department of Education, where he served as a senior executive service leader overseeing enterprise-level acquisition strategy and stewardship of critical federal programs. In January, he began a new chapter in the private sector as senior director for strategic acquisitions and engagement at General Dynamics Information Technology. In this role, Calvin brings his deep experience in federal procurement, mission delivery, and public-private partnerships to support government customers and advance solutions that strengthen the outcomes for agencies, industry partners, and the communities they serve.



2003

Rev. Timothy Nicinski, D.Min., delivered the invocation at an event during which Warren County Prosecutor Jessica L. Cardone took the ceremonial oath of office. Rev. Nicinski is the pastor of Sussex United Methodist Church and the director of Campus Ministry and the Center for Spiritual Renewal at Centenary University.

2006

Elizabeth Delfino-Chiappelli '06/16/25 transferred to Centenary after earning an associate degree from Sussex County Community College, attending college while raising a family and working two

part-time jobs. While at Centenary, she participated in service projects including helping families rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. As an undergraduate, she also had the opportunity to study political science in Russia and attend a session of the Canadian Parliament. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Education, she gained employment as a kindergarten teacher, and later, returned to Centenary to earn a Master of Arts in Special Education in 2016 and a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership in 2025. She also began teaching at SCCC as an adjunct professor in the Education/Child Development Department. Now retired from her public school teaching position, she is a clinical field supervisor at William Paterson University, where she guides and mentors new teachers.

2009

Donna Picciuto was named the 2025 Sussex County School Counselor of the Year for her work with fourth- and fifth-graders at Lounsberry Hollow School in Vernon. The honor recognizes recipients for their ability to deliver an effective school counseling program focusing on academic development, career counseling, and personal/social support.

Dave Vargo is an assistant baseball coach at Kean University. He started his coaching career as a volunteer baseball coach with the Centenary Cyclones. Since then, he's coached on the community college, DII, and DIII levels. Last year, he helped lead Kean to a Super Regionals Championship and a bid to the College World Series, where the team had a good run. At Centenary, Dave majored in business with a concentration in sports management. He and his wife, **Amber Vargo '10**, have a daughter.



2010

Jodi Dolan McCarthy is the founder and owner of Bloom & Grow Coaching LLC, a trauma-informed, strengths-based life coaching and mentoring agency serving New Jersey communities. The agency supports youth, young adults, and adults in developing life skills, emotional regulation, career readiness, and long-term stability. Since 2022, Bloom & Grow Coaching has served more than 400 individuals, including system-impacted youth, justice-involved young adults, and individuals facing barriers related to education, employment, and life transitions. Jodi's work is grounded in dignity, accountability, and the belief that people are more than their circumstances. A veteran who earned a degree in psychology from Centenary, Jodi says, "My education laid the foundation for a career centered on advocacy, resilience, and helping people rewrite their stories. I am proud to turn my Centenary education into meaningful, community-level impact and to continue creating pathways for growth, healing, and opportunity."

Caitlin M. Smith, CPA, recently attended the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) 2025 Leadership Academy. Caitlin was one of just 36 professionals in the nation selected for the academy, which took place Dec. 8-11 in Durham, NC. A partner at SKC & Co. CPAs, LLC in Boonton Township, she supports clients in areas ranging from tax planning and operational structure to long-term growth and profitability. Caitlin graduated from Centenary with double majors in accounting and mathematics.



2012

Anthony Segarra is pleased to announce the upcoming release of his second novel, *Creator: Guardians of Life Series (Book 2)* in April. The novel continues the epic fantasy saga that began with his debut book, *Destroyer:*

Guardians of Life, which is currently available online and has received strong praise from readers. Barnes & Noble in Ledgewood recently hosted Anthony for a book signing for *Destroyer: Guardians of Life*. The *Guardians of Life* series follows James, a reluctant heir bound to an ancient elemental legacy, as he uncovers truths that threaten to unravel the balance between light and dark forces. In *Creator*, buried truths erupt to the surface, destinies collide, and the world stands on the brink of transformation as the elemental war deepens. The story blends mythic lore, family legacy, and moral conflict within a richly built fantasy world. Anthony also appeared at Centenary University's CycloneCon on April 11. Find out more about Anthony on TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram under Anthony Segarra Books or go to www.anthonysegarabooks.com.

Kelsey Walter '12/15 is the owner of Greene's Beans Café, which has locations in Hackettstown and Sparta. Kelsey earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration: Management and Marketing and an MBA from Centenary. She has also served the university as an adjunct professor and is a former Cyclones head women's volleyball coach.

2014

Gene Perry is a candidate for a First Ward seat on the Bayonne City Council. A lifelong Bayonne resident, he earned a degree in business administration with a minor in finance from Centenary University.



2015

Jessie Curtis and **Anthony Bailey '17** met during their years at Centenary and have been together since 2016. As a student, Jessica competed for two years of soccer and four years of softball, before graduating in May

2015 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a minor in fashion design. Anthony was a four-year member of the Cyclones basketball team and earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in May 2017. In October 2024, Anthony proposed in Beach Haven on Long Beach Island, and the couple were married in Basking Ridge in May. They incorporated meaningful nods to their Centenary experience throughout their celebration. Jessica's former roommates and teammates—her closest friends—served as her "something blues," a subtle tribute to Centenary's navy color, while Anthony's groomsmen included many of his college roommates and friends. Their reception also featured fun, school-spirited touches, including a college pennant reading "The Baileys" as their guest book and a signature cocktail aptly named the Cyclone Spritz, among many other fun surprises honoring the place where their story began.



Christopher Hartnett was recently appointed the regional administrator for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region II. His career has spanned more than 35 years across federal, state, and private-sector emergency management, including strengthening readiness for hurricanes and other hazards as FEMA's Caribbean area coordinator and as the federal coordinating officer for the US Virgin Islands after Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Prior to FEMA, Hartnett directed New Jersey's Hurricane Sandy Recovery Office, helping to steer major rebuilding and public assistance operations. Christopher earned undergraduate degrees in criminal justice and sociology from Centenary.



2016

Centenary University's iconic Edward W. Seay Administration Building was the site of a magical marriage proposal for **Christopher D. Ruoff** and **Gina M. Oriolo '18**. The pair first met in 2015, when Chris was a lead resident assistant who attended to Gina's move into Lotte Hall. They quickly became friends, but saw little of each other after Chris's graduation from Centenary. Yet, they stayed in touch, and in 2022, began dating. Three years later, Chris planned a magical surprise for Gina at Centenary, where their story began. Gina recalls, "Chris got down on one knee and asked if we could spend the rest of our lives together. We have always felt Centenary had a special place in our hearts, but now Centenary has a whole new meaning to us!"



2018

Rebecca Clinebell Rader married Blake Rader on July 2, 2023. A teacher for the past eight years, she has been working as a basic skills instructor and reading interventionist. Rebecca also teaches the third and fourth grade class at her church on Sundays, noting, "My deepest joy is teaching about the Bible and God's plan of salvation in sending Jesus to earth." She teaches country line dancing in Warren and Hunterdon counties and has started Christian Line Dancing events through the organization, Community Blend, in Washington, NJ. Her collaboration page on Facebook called Christian Line Dancing has grown to over 2,000 members worldwide. Salutatorian of the Class of 2018 and a first-generation college graduate, Rebecca received the Centenary University 30 Under 30 alumni award last October and is working on her first children's book.



Jaimee Villas, Esq., was recently sworn in as an assistant prosecutor with the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Office. Jaimee, who previously served as a legal intern with the office, is admitted to the New Jersey Bar. She earned a bachelor's degree from Centenary University and a law degree from Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University.



2019

Michael Andrade was the winner of the 2025 WHCR Developing Pro Challenge at the Capital Challenge Horse Show, which showcases the best riders in the sport. At Centenary, Michael participated on the IHSA and ANRC teams, winning the IHSA Cacchione Cup and ANRC Nationals for two consecutive years.



Jack Winters is a social studies and business teacher at Don Bosco Prep in Ramsey, and is also the head varsity baseball coach at Fair Lawn High School. Previously, Jack served as a graduate assistant coach at Centenary University, and later, as an assistant coach at New York University and Bergen Community College. He earned an MBA from Centenary.

2020

Jessica Albanese recently assumed a new role as a residence hall director at Stony Brook University in Stony Brook, NY.

2022

Kayla Morales was sworn in as a detective with the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Office. Kayla recently completed training at the New Jersey Department of Criminal Justice Academy and previously served as a victim witness advocate with the prosecutor's office.



Anthony Ranaudo is a conservation officer for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection in the Fish and Game Marine Division. While at Centenary, Anthony was captain of the baseball team.



2024

Julia Campen is head coach of the Bergen Community College softball team. A former Cyclones softball player, Julia picked up 22 wins while pitching for Centenary and was named second team All-Atlantic East during her junior year. As a Centenary freshman, she was an All-CSAC honorable mention and the Cyclones' Athletic Female Rookie of the Year.

Miron Miller has been named a graduate assistant coach for the Alcorn State University baseball team. His role includes working with the team's infielders and assisting with player development and daily operations of the program, which is located in Lorman, Miss. A former Cyclones baseball player, Miron previously served as an assistant coach at Georgian Court University and the Phillies Baseball Academy Junior RBI Team, where he supported youth player development and mentorship.



2025

Aaron J. Llanas and **Zaria S. Moore '26** were recently married in an intimate ceremony, surrounded by friends made at Centenary, including many members of their wedding party and faculty/staff such as Associate Professor of Theatre Arts Stephen Davis and Associate Director of the Educational Opportunity Program Eunice Boyd. Both first-generation college students, the couple met in their hometown of Perth Amboy. Aaron was captain of the Centenary men's wrestling team and graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice. He is pursuing a career in law enforcement.

Zaria is the recipient of the university's Grace Y. Bissett and Louise Monez Hill Scholarship, which provides a four-year scholarship covering the full cost of attendance at Centenary, including tuition and fees, room and board, books, transportation, travel, and miscellaneous expenses. She graduated in May with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration: Management and will begin her Master of Business Administration through Centenary's 4+1 program. Zaria says, "At Centenary, we were able to grow as individuals furthering our careers, and also further grow our relationship. Aaron proposed to me in Lotte 208—a beautiful and private moment I will cherish forever. We built a family at Centenary and I would love to give back, for my four-year scholarship and to help future college students in the same way I was helped."



Nicole Tagliareni is working with the Bureau of Criminal Investigation with the Somerset County Sheriff's Office. In announcing the position, Nicole posted, "This opportunity means a great deal to me, and I'm grateful for the chance to contribute to work that supports public safety and the criminal justice system. I'm looking forward to continuing to learn, grow, and take on new challenges in this role."



Alumni & Family Weekend

Oct. 9-11, 2026
10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Join us on campus for a fun-filled day celebrating Centenary.

Tour our beautiful campus and equestrian center, reconnect with old friends, and tailgate before cheering on your favorite Cyclones teams.

Plus, enjoy presentations by Centenary faculty and the Enactus team, afternoon tea in the Seay front parlours, wine and chocolate at the President's House, and much more!



Congrats!

A bridal shower was recently held for Associate Director of Athletics and Senior Woman Administrator Juliana Balar. Juliana is engaged to Cyclones Baseball Coach Andrew Romanella.



Breakthrough Season

In just the second season of competition, the Centenary University equestrian team is making its mark on the NCEA level. The Cyclones were selected by the National Collegiate Equestrian Association—the sport's NCAA equivalent—as the Sportsmanship Team of the Year, picking up four wins during the season, including over then-No. 1 Dartmouth. Coached by Michael Dowling and Heather Clark, the team began competition during the 2024-2025 academic year, joining the university's highly successful IHSA (Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association), IDA (Intercollegiate Dressage Association), and Hunter Jumper teams.

In addition, Phillip Williamson '16 was named the NCEA's Single Discipline Coach of the Year. Director of Equestrian for the University of Lynchburg, Williamson guided his team to a 12-2 regular season record and a perfect 4-0 in postseason play. This is his third NCEA coach of the year nod. An accomplished IHSA rider at Centenary, Williamson previously served as the assistant IHSA coach at Sweet Briar College.



Cyclones Make An Impact

The Hackettstown BID (Business Improvement District) recently honored several Centenary University alumni at its annual Business Appreciation Awards Dinner. The awards recognized the tremendous impact recipients make on the local community. From left: Centenary University Vice President for Advancement and Communications Michael Iris, Ed.D. '07; Kelsey E. Walter '12/15, owner of Greene's Beans Café, Collaborator of the Year; Joshua Belverio '12, Classic Ballroom Dance Studio, Community Partner; Dr. Theresa A. Rintz '94, acupuncturist and owner of Center Point Wellness, Business Person of the Year; and Centenary University President John R. Schol, D.Min.

Scholarship Sweep



Seven Centenary University students—including members of the Class of 2026—earned scholarships to support research excellence through Schering-Plough and the Independent Colleges and Universities of New Jersey (ICUNJ), an organization representing the state's 13 nonprofit, private institutions of higher education. The students presented their independent research at ICUNJ's recent Undergraduate Research Symposium attended by student-researchers from Centenary and other New Jersey independent colleges and universities.

Centenary's School of Natural, Health, Social, and Behavioral Sciences offers small class sizes and personal attention from faculty to encourage students to participate in opportunities like undergraduate research,

professional internships, and other initiatives to prepare for graduate school and careers. This year, the Centenary students worked under the supervision of Assistant Professor of Biology Yeon Lang Cha, Ph.D., to prepare for the ICUNJ Undergraduate Research Symposium.

"I am so proud of Centenary's students," said Dr. Cha, who also served as a judge at this year's symposium. "We may be one of the smallest universities in the state, but I believe we send one of the greatest number of students to this symposium. Centenary students are passionate about science—that passion showed when we swept four scholarships."

The Centenary University students presented with scholarships at this year's ICUNJ Undergraduate Research Symposium are Kayley Besbris '26, Angelina Glaskey '26, and Jillian Ulanowski '27, Schering-Plough Undergraduate Research Endeavors (SURE) Scholarship; Luke McGovern '28, Johnson & Johnson Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship; Adrianna Sterling '26 and Jayson Morton '27, Novartis Science Scholars Program Scholarship; and Joshua Scialom '26, Nokia Bell Labs Scholarship for Advancing Opportunities to Engage in Research.



Top One Percent

Ryan Keena '26 ended his Centenary University academic career with a splash, earning induction into the New Jersey Collegiate Business Administration Association (NJCBA) Honor Society during a ceremony emphasizing academic excellence and leadership. Considered one of New Jersey's most prestigious business accolades, the honor society is composed of an elite group representing the top one percent of business students from NJCBA member institutions. Keena was joined at the event—held in the New Jersey State House in Trenton—by Frank Longo, associate professor of business. Keena earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration: Finance at Centenary University's 151st commencement on May 16.

She Really SHINES!



Centenary University Professor of Psychology Christine Floether, Ph.D. '87, was recognized as the 2026 S.H.I.N.E. Educator of the Year by Child & Family Resources, a Morris County nonprofit that serves low-income families through Morris County's Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. A resident of Rockaway, NJ, Dr. Floether

was named the Higher Education Awardee at the organization's S.H.I.N.E. Gala on March 19.

The S.H.I.N.E. (Serves, Helps, Inspires, Nurtures, and Excels) award was created to honor educators who work long hours, inspire and motivate their students, and make personal sacrifices to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed. "Through

this award, we proudly celebrate these educators as essential partners in strengthening families and supporting the health development of children," said Kayla Gieger, associate director of Child & Family Resources. "The evening was a meaningful celebration filled with community connection, inspiration, and recognition of the vital role educators play in Morris County."

In addition to her role as professor of psychology at Centenary, Dr. Floether is coordinator of the University's undergraduate program in psychology. She earned a Master of Arts in Psychology from Fairleigh Dickinson University and a doctorate from Capella University. Dr. Floether has also served as a member of the Centenary University President's Advisory Council, a role that recognizes her deep commitment to the University and its students.

"I am deeply honored to receive this recognition from an organization that does so much to uplift children and young adults throughout Morris County," Dr. Floether said. "Child & Family Resources embodies the belief that when we invest in families and education, we strengthen entire communities, and I am grateful to share their commitment."

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Noah Haiduc-Dale, Ph.D.



Centenary University lost a beloved faculty member on Sept. 4, when Noah Haiduc-Dale, Ph.D., passed away after a seven-year battle with cancer. A Centenary history professor and university archivist, Dr. Haiduc-Dale is remembered as a respected scholar, professor, historian, outdoorsman, and especially, devoted father and husband.

In his eulogy for Dr. Haiduc-Dale, Centenary University Senior Dean for the School of Education & Humanities Robert Battistini, Ph.D., called his friend “an intellectual and scholar of international significance.” Referencing Dr. Haiduc-Dale’s meticulous research for his book, *Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine*, Dr. Battistini said, “This is a man who went across the world and back, who committed to long days of research and writing, to give voice to the complexities of lives lived between...The international community of scholars has lost a unique, essential, brilliant voice.”

Centenary University Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry Timothy Nicinski, D.Min., '03, was a close friend of Dr. Haiduc-Dale’s. He said, “Noah was sick for quite some time before he passed. With that time to reflect, Noah shared a valuable lesson about the meaning of life. He told me, ‘I am not afraid to die. I enjoy living so much.’ This encapsulates a man who lived beautifully, enriched the lives of everyone he met, and truly enjoyed every minute of his life.”

A native of Vermont, Dr. Haiduc-Dale spent 12 years at

Centenary sharing his love for history with students through his courses and as advisor to the History Club. As the university archivist, he chronicled Centenary’s experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic by partnering with his history students to collect artifacts and record interviews related to the global crisis. Thanks to his foresight, the materials are now preserved in the university archives for future generations.

Dr. Haiduc-Dale also often taught summer courses that immersed Centenary students in the history and lives of people in New York’s Adirondack region. Through the courses, Dr. Haiduc-Dale shared his love of the area—where his family has owned a cabin for decades—and introduced students to the diversity of thought that occurs when the interests of full-time residents, business leaders, environmentalists, and summer visitors collide. In 2024, Dr. Haiduc-Dale told a reporter, “This course really got Centenary students to think about other points of view in a very philosophical way. To me, that’s what higher education is all about: learning to appreciate other perspectives. That’s becoming a lost skill in public discourse today.”

A graduate of Hope College, Dr. Haiduc-Dale earned a Master of Arts in English Language and Literature from Central Michigan University and a Master of Arts in Near Eastern Studies from the University of Arizona, as well as a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies from New York University. He leaves his wife, Michelle; children Maia, Asher, and Ethan; parents Wendy and Steve Dale; brothers Seth and Isaac; and many loving in-laws, nieces, and nephews.



Wolfgang Gstattenbauer '84/13 HA

Centenary University mourns the passing of Wolfgang Gstattenbauer '84/13 HA, chair *emeritus* of the Board of Trustees, who passed away on April 17. Dr. Gstattenbauer's legacy is one of integrity, leadership, and lasting impact. His contributions to Centenary University will be felt for generations to come.

His connection to Centenary began in 1979 as a nontraditional student. He earned his Associate of Science in Business Administration in 1984, launching a lifelong relationship with the institution. A United States Navy veteran, he served two distinguished terms on the Board of Trustees from 1990 to 2005 and from 2008 through 2020. Upon his retirement as board chair in 2021, Dr. Gstattenbauer was named chair *emeritus*.

During his tenure, Dr. Gstattenbauer played a vital role in shaping Centenary's governance, including contributing to the original construction of the university's constitution and guiding its evolution over time. As chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, he championed initiatives that strengthened curriculum, faculty governance, and academic quality.

Professionally, Dr. Gstattenbauer spent 29 years with M&M/Mars International, rising to operations director and retiring in 1997 as personnel director overseeing eight manufacturing plants across the United States. He was also deeply committed to his community, serving with the Hackettstown Chamber of Commerce, the Warren County Economic Development Committee, and as former chairman of the Sussex County American Cancer Society, among other roles.

Dr. Gstattenbauer leaves his wife of nearly 61 years, Phyllis; son-in-law, David Bloch; granddaughter, Abby Bloch; and many dear friends. He was predeceased by his parents, brothers, and daughter, Michelle Bloch.



In Memoriam

Cynthia Harry Bedell '57	6/1/2025
Sally Lovell Brainard '61	4/24/2026
Anne McNeill Brower '56	5/5/2025
Kayla Burnett '25	3/4/2026
Joan Salley Daly '51	8/20/2025
Mary Stecko Fellows '52	2/18/2025
Charlotte Arpin Fleming '44	2/23/2026
Audrey Weiss Gates '50	11/14/2025
Wolfgang Gstattenbauer '84/13 HA	4/17/2026
Neva Hickman '60	10/8/2025
Laura Smith Horta '82	5/30/2025

Joan Musick Irwin '59	5/16/2025
Shirley Demerath Kealy '44	1/17/2026
Louise Parker Lang '60	3/17/2025
Lisa Loth '79	11/13/2025
Edith Vanderveen Martin '62	3/7/2026
Jane Murray McCoy '63	5/18/2025
Pamela Bruce McKenna '69	4/26/2026
Ann Hanson Perkins '50	1/28/2026
Sara Carter Saplin '58	5/31/2025
Andrew Williams '94	9/28/2025
Mary Ann Crowley Williams '66	2/7/2025



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