

FISHER COLLEGE Magazine
Issue Two / 2020

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE *at* FISHER NOW*

Fisher
Today

DR. MICHELLE MILLER GROVES

FISHER HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. NOW, DR. MILLER GROVES STEPS UP THE PACE AS HEAD OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES.

P. 7

HEROES AMONG US
HOW FISHER'S BEHIND-THE-SCENES COVID-19 HEROES KEEP THE CAMPUS AND STUDENTS SAFE
P. 20

LAW AND ORDER
FISHER LAUNCHES A MASTER'S PROGRAM IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND STUDENTS ARE PROVING: IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME
P. 26

THE BEACON
INSIDE FISHER: CAMPUS NEWS AND NOTES
P. 4

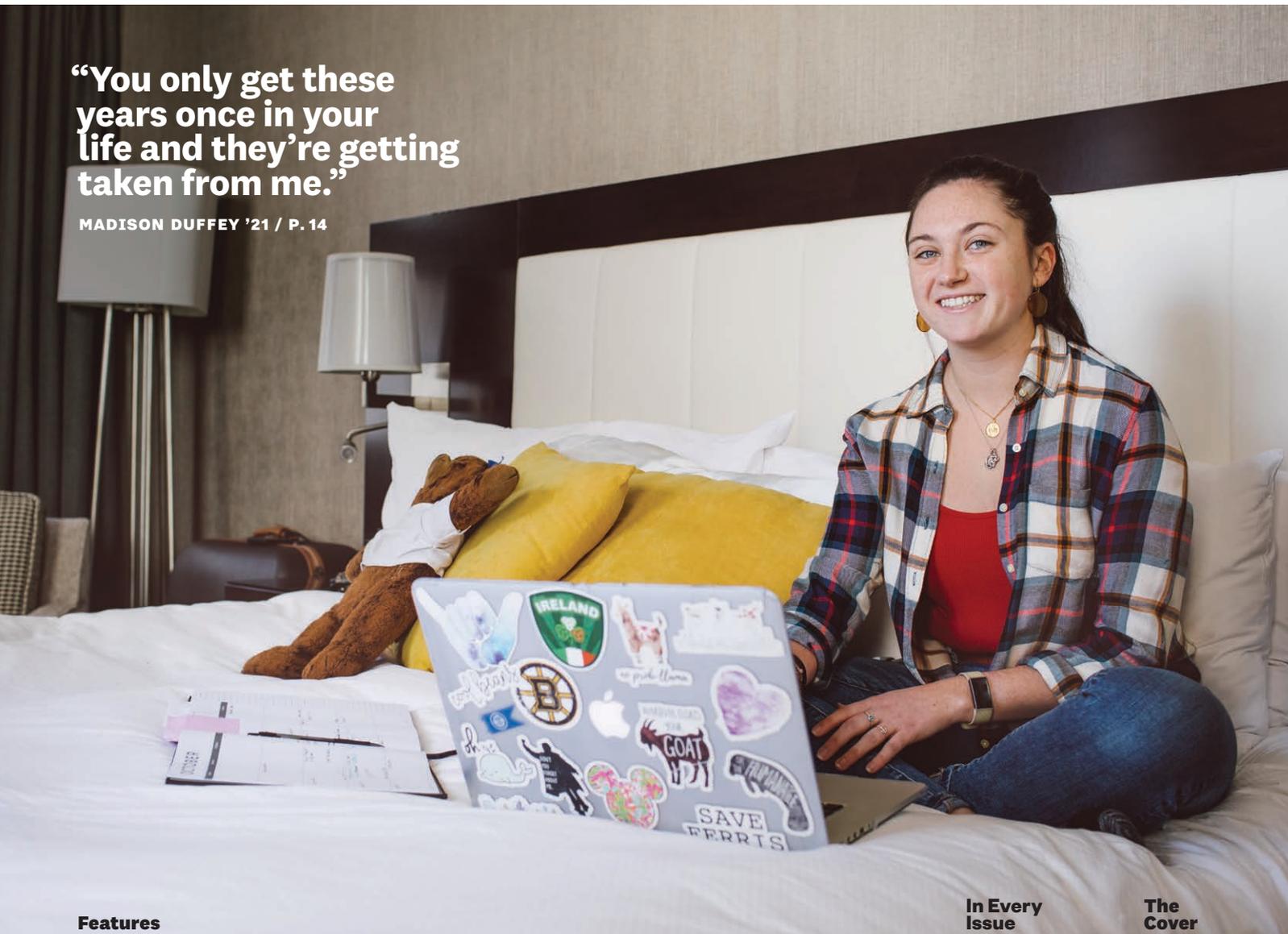
*The 2020 Diary
of Madison Duffey '21
STUDENT,
INTERRUPTED

P. 14

Contents / 2020

“You only get these years once in your life and they’re getting taken from me.”

MADISON DUFFEY '21 / P. 14



Features

14 / Student, Interrupted

Covid-19 has impacted Fisher College students in substantial ways. To illustrate just how substantially, we tell the story of senior hospitality management major Madison Duffey '21 and her year of living flexibly. As told to Maura King Scully

20 / Out of Harm's Way

How Fisher's behind-the-scenes Covid-19 heroes brainstormed creative paths to keep the students, faculty, and campus safe.

By Kirsten Lundberg

26 / Law & Order

Undaunted in a year like no other, Fisher launches an online master's program in criminal justice and students are proving: If you build it, they will come.

By Chad Konecky

In Every Issue

2 / From the Interim President
Steven Rich

2 / Contributors

3 / For the Record
Fisher updates and feedback.

3 / Connect

40 / Artifact
The Beacon, yearbook for the ages.

The Cover

Dr. Michelle Miller Groves is co-chair of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee and committee chair of Diversity Across the Curriculum. She was photographed by Adam DeTour on October 30, 2020, at her Hyde Park home.

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4



26



40



34

Departments

4 / Beacon

Monica Adwani '12 on leadership and career moves.

6 / Fisher Today

Three Quick Questions with Assistant Professor Michelle Miller Groves; Commencement 2020; Boston Mayor Marty Walsh.

8 / On Campus

Jacob LaFrance '21; News + Notes; Student Spotlights.

10 / Falcons

Dr. Katie Shea's Sport Management Program; the athletic advantage.

12 / The Academy

Fisher's successful pivot to online learning; international students.

34 / Beyond

How a Fisher education launched Marianne DiBerto '70 to the top of a new profession; a timeline of the way we were in 1970.

36 / Pursuits

Greg Avila, aka DJ Greg Gatsby; professional basketball player Brandon Rembert '19; the Puzzle.

38 / Advancing Fisher

John McDonnell, Tito's Handmade Vodka International managing director and Fisher College Board of Trustees member; the Student Aid Relief Fund is making significant improvements for students; Spot the Difference.

Foreword



From the
Interim
President

The ‘Fisher Flex’ Way

WHO AMONG US COULD HAVE predicted a year like 2020? As a college, Fisher had to move decisively to keep our community safe from Covid-19. We also had to ensure that the educational fortress we have built so carefully over the past 117 years could weather the economic headwinds of the pandemic and keep our campus functioning.

Fortunately, the times have brought out the very best in Fisher. Because of our characteristic agility and far-sightedness, we were standing at the ready for whatever the invisible adversary could throw at us.

I say this as the person who was Fisher’s executive vice president of finance and administration for nearly two decades before I stepped into the role of interim president in July. Our current preparedness encompasses eighteen years of operational surpluses during which time the unrestricted

“Fortunately, the times have brought out the very best in Fisher.”

ed endowment grew by \$30 million and revenues by \$15 million, and we acquired \$25 million in real estate. We also kept our debt to a minimum.

Those factors, combined with Fisher’s philosophy of fiscal conservatism, have provided, over the years, the means to innovate in the classroom and make strides in academic programming, both of which have been sources of strength during a difficult time for higher education.

As long ago as the 1970s, Fisher recognized the potential of continuing education to attract a new population of students and expand its academic offerings. In subsequent years, we similarly tapped into the promise of new technologies to develop online models of learning by creating the necessary infrastructure and training faculty and staff.

Such initiatives have paid off by enabling the development of graduate degree and professional studies programs, and by allowing for satellite campuses accessible to adult or nontraditional learners. In this way, remote learning became part of Fisher’s DNA long before the pandemic arrived.

As proof of our readiness, Fisher’s enrollment this fall remained fairly steady, as professional, traditional, and international students—some of whom were hampered by travel and visa restrictions—were able to select from a robust menu of hybrid, online, and face-to-face options.

We call this entrepreneurship, the “Fisher Flex” way.

Steven Rich / Interim President

Contributors



**Adam DeTour /
Photographer**

A sought-after portrait and food photographer with a full-service studio in the Allston neighborhood of Boston, DeTour brings a unique eye to his assignments. His meticulous work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Boston Magazine*, *MIT Technology Review*, and many alumni magazines. Even in a time of pandemic, he has captured Fisher’s spirit with his vivid portraits in this issue.



**Maura King Scully /
Writer**

Scully is an award-winning writer who specializes in higher education and is working remotely these days from her new home in Woodstock, Vermont. For this issue, she had the pleasure of meeting Madison Duffey. This incredibly impressive young woman is going places—even if she did miss out on completing her study abroad semester in Italy and interning at Disney World.



**Kirsten Lundberg /
Writer**

Lundberg is a writer and editor in Newton, Massachusetts. After a stint in journalism, she worked for Harvard and Columbia universities as a writer and manager and now runs her own business. Her clients include Harvard, Boston University, and the University of Virginia. In non-Covid times, she is frequently in Boston to enjoy the city’s cultural riches, and has long admired the beautiful Fisher College campus in Back Bay.



**Jane Whitehead /
Editor + Writer**

A British-born freelance writer, Whitehead is based in Lexington and New York. Her articles have appeared in the *Boston Globe*, *ArchitectureBoston*, the *Horn Book Magazine*, and many newspapers and alumni publications. Of her pieces in this issue she says: “Every interview gave me new insight into the incredible diversity, commitment, and resilience of Fisher’s students and faculty. And it was especially fun to hear from Maryanne DiBerto ’70 about campus life 50 years ago.”

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For the Record

OpBoxes Become 'Essential' Spaces

Nothing is truer of **Emily Davis '11** than her ability to seize a business opportunity. She was featured in *Fisher's Magazine's* inaugural issue last year talking about founding two companies in 2017: the Portland Container Company and OpBox, both variations on modular units for storage and other commercial purposes. The operations were growing and

the future was looking bright for the young Maine entrepreneur and her brother and business partner, Ben.

Then Covid-19 struck. But there was a silver lining for the Davises. Suddenly, portable, adaptable "boxes" that could serve as pandemic testing sites or drive-thru kiosks for struggling restaurateurs were in demand.

The "boxes" can also be customized and deployed as pop-up shops, trade show exhibition units, even disaster relief housing.

And the siblings are not stopping there. They have just received a grant to grow a new enterprise producing an eco-friendly building material for the next generation of box spaces.

Connect

Update your contact information to stay in touch with Fisher College. To learn how to help build our community, volunteer, or support Fisher, contact the Advancement & Alumni Engagement Office.

EMAIL: alumni@Fisher.edu

CALL: 617-670-4419

VISIT: www.fisher.edu/alumni

Help Build Our Community

There are a number of ways to draw closer to Fisher. Online, you can join the Fisher College LinkedIn page to see what your colleagues are doing professionally and to build your career network. Or follow us on Facebook,

Instagram, or YouTube and share our content with your fellow alumni. Virtual event options are also plentiful and we hope to resume in person in the spring. We invite you to attend or host alumni events, volunteer to be a class correspondent or regional volunteer, or hire alumni for full-time positions.

Provide Career Services

Fisher supports students and graduates in their quest for professional fulfillment. Become part of that endeavor by providing career advice and opportunities. Those opportunities include hiring students for internships, participating

in or sponsoring Mock Interview Day and the Spring Career Fair, or participating in and hosting recruitment and networking events.

Connect with Students

As alumni, you have a lot to offer our students—and vice versa. Get to know each other. Share your know-how by mentoring, speaking to classes, sponsoring learning projects and travel to professional and academic conferences, and becoming a member of one of our Industry Advisory Boards.

Invest in Our Future

Alumni generosity is central to Fisher's

commitment to provide an affordable, quality education to our students. Gifts to the annual Fisher Fund provide support for many of the College's most important needs. Additional options include establishing a Named Scholarship and joining the Staircase Leadership Giving Society.

Lifelong Learning

Advance your career, add to your credentials, or obtain a graduate degree by enrolling in one of our growing number of professional and master's degree programs, taking a workforce training and development course, or participating in customized corporate training.

The Beacon

WHAT'S INSIDE: *Fisher Works* 4 / *Fisher Today* 6 / *On Campus* 8 / *Falcons* 10 / *The Academy* 12

Fisher Works

Straight Talk on Strategy Monica Adwani '12 shares insights on career moves with business students.

BY JANE WHITEHEAD

MONICA ADWANI'S LINKEDIN PROFILE inspired Professor Mike Bejtlich to invite the former Fisher student to speak to his virtual Business Policy and Strategy class this fall. "She struck me as having a passion for leadership, strategy, and giving back," he said.

Adwani, 35, is a rising star in the insurance industry, recognized as Massachusetts Young Agent of the Year in 2019, and newly appointed as director of marketing and sales for Risman Insurance Agencies in Medford. She described her career, answered students' questions, and offered offline follow-up.

As a student at Fisher, Adwani found "an amazing community" of supportive peers and professors, she said. That support was crucial, as, recently arrived in Massachusetts from her native Puerto Rico, she was simultaneously working full-time for Liberty Mutual Insurance, completing a BS in Management, and coping with a high-risk pregnancy.

Since "falling in love with insurance" while working at Liberty Mutual's safety research facility in Hopkinton, alongside scientists studying everything from vehicle

ergonomics to the forensics of arson, Adwani has seen many aspects of the complex industry. She's familiar both with the large corporate environment and the challenges of growing a small independent agency from the ground up, over six years with Southborough-based G&N Insurance.

"Have faith in your ideas and look for organizations that will value your contribution," she told the students. That means asking potential employers, "What do you expect from me?" She advised burnishing transferable skills and critical analysis of the target industry: "Do the research and present yourself as a problem-solver," she said.

After she left the session, compliments multiplied on the student chat: "SO good!" "She was awesome!" "You can tell she was genuine."

Asked later why she is so committed to mentoring, Adwani said: "It's always good to have a person that you can look up to, that you can call and ask for help." Thanks to what Bejtlich called her "rock star" turn in his class, Adwani may become just that person for a whole group of Fisher students.

Adwani also has a new, aspirational podcast, TranscendWithM, which is "intended to promote empowerment." You can find it at Google Podcasts.

"Have faith in your ideas and look for organizations that will value your contribution."

**INSURANCE EXECUTIVE
MONICA ADWANI '12**

Adwani drew high praise from students for her inspiring talk on burnishing skills and impressing employers.



Beacon / Fisher Today



Commencement 2020 Fisher's 116th Commencement was an event like no other in the college's history.

The virtual celebration included musical interludes by Minh Vuong, Anie Marie Severe, and Eugenie Coste and speeches by, among others, Interim President Steven Rich, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, and valedictorians for undergraduates Andrew Folkes and graduate and professional studies Melissa Mendes-Boatwright. A video of Boston landmarks, slideshows of student life, and the naming of each graduate accompanied by his or her picture provided a view of Fisher that was both panoramic and personal. In all, 300 proudly crossed the threshold into promising new lives as Fisher alumni.

Many 2020 students from Fisher's associate, undergraduate, and graduate programs submitted personal commencement photos to accompany the virtual ceremony.

Class of 2020: Strength and Persistence

Graduating from college in 2020 is unlike graduating in any other year, **Boston Mayor Marty Walsh** acknowledged in his remote address to the 300 graduates at Fisher's 116th (and first virtual) Commencement on August 23.

To have lived, worked, and studied together through the global Covid-19 pandemic will forge lifelong bonds among the Class of 2020, he said. Now in his second term as Boston's 54th mayor, Walsh applauded the graduates for persisting through

"one of the most difficult eras in modern history," and predicted that their experience through these tumultuous months "will always unite your graduating class and your generation."

As a truly diverse group with shared resilience forged by adverse conditions, the Fisher Class of 2020 is in a position to make a big impact, Walsh noted. "You've all worked incredibly hard and overcome a lot to make it to this point and you represent the strength of our city and our nation."





3 Quick Questions

Dr. Michelle Miller Groves

Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee Co-Chair and Diversity Across the Curriculum Committee Chair

1 / What are the committees' goals?

We have a large population of students of color and we want to make sure that their voices are included in everything that we're doing. They are why we come to work every day.

2 / What makes you optimistic?

Our hearts and efforts are in the right place. I see in faculty meetings how much effort people put into diversity and inclusion. Our faculty right now is largely white, and we're working to change that. With these committees, students can see they have white allies who want to have these conversations.

3 / What inspires you?

Hope for the future. I'm a mother of small children, so I want to make sure that they're not having these same discussions when they're adults, and that we get this thing under control now and continue moving forward to a better society. **-JW**

Beacon / On Campus

Bring It On Fisher's first official double major, Jacob LaFrance '21, never met a new experience he didn't like.

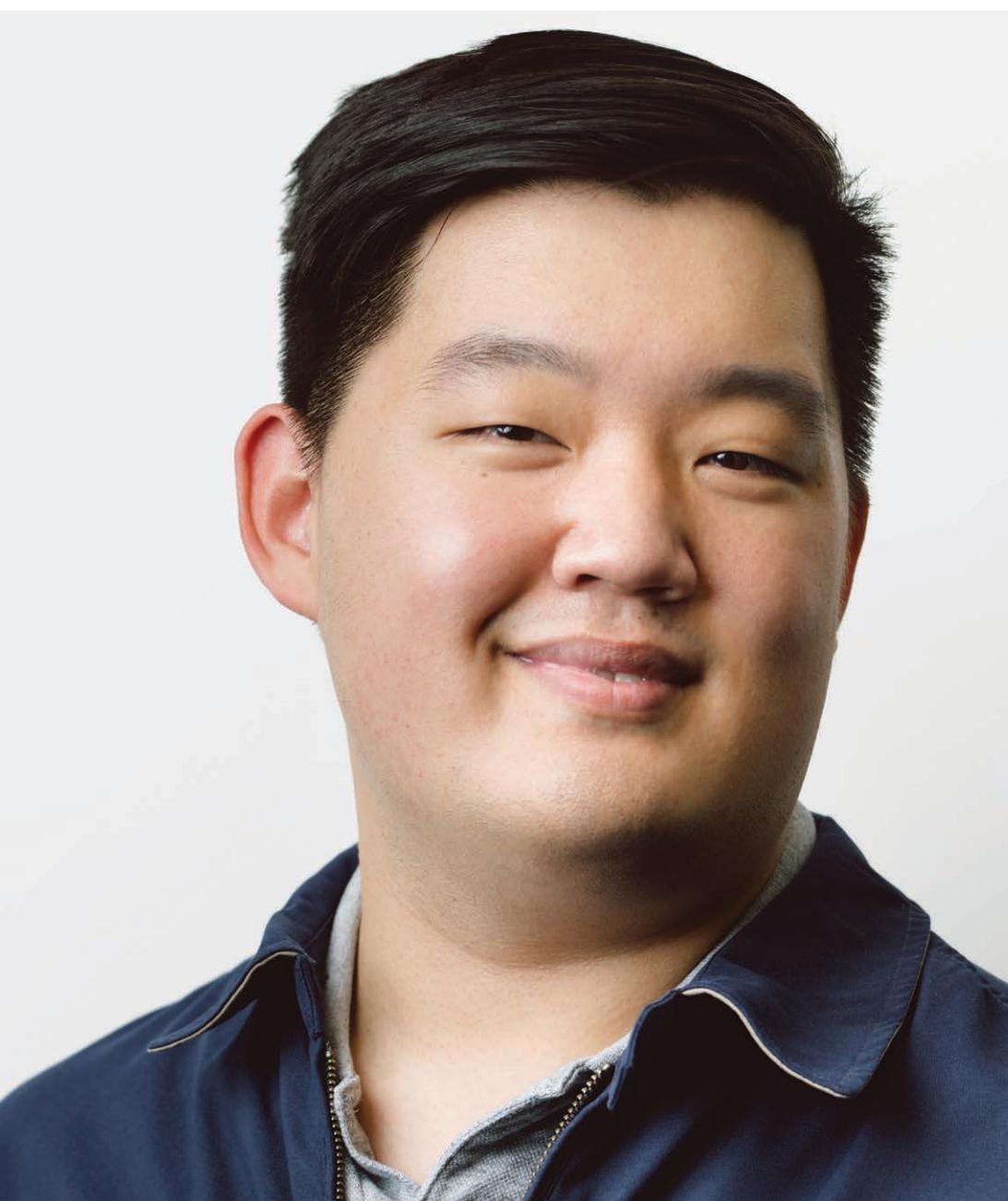
BY JANE WHITEHEAD

As a teaching assistant in Fisher's Common Experience program for incoming freshmen, Jacob LaFrance tells newcomers, "Get involved on campus. Forcing yourself out there, through a club or job, can be very rewarding." He's speaking from the heart.

Self-deprecating and a tad on the shy side, LaFrance, who goes by Jake, has racked up a whole series of firsts during his time at

Fisher. From his first ever stage appearance with the drama club to house construction work for Habitat for Humanity on a Spring Break service trip to North Carolina to leading campus tours for prospective Fisher students, he's frequently dared himself to try new experiences.

One momentous first that LaFrance didn't plan was an ambitious academic path leading to a double major: a BA in Communication and Media Studies and a BS in Marketing. As a sophomore communications major, he took a marketing class, was intrigued, checked out the degree require-



"I've always understood that it's not what you look like that determines who you are—it goes so far beyond that."

JACOB LAFRANCE '21

Photograph by
Adam DeTour

ments, and worked out with his honors advisor Professor Danielle Herget that he could fit in both courses before graduation. “They tie very closely together,” he says. As for scheduling a double work load on top of his volunteer and work commitments, he says, “I just know what I have to do and I’ll find a way to get it done.”

“Jake is fantastic—one of the most serious, intelligent students we have had at Fisher,” says Honors Program director Herget. “He’s also one of the wittiest, kindest human beings I know. He has a hilarious, dry sense of humor and will go out of his way to

help friends and strangers alike, in whatever way he can,” she says.

LaFrance’s friendliness to people from all backgrounds likely comes from his family. Adopted as a baby from South Korea, by white parents from Massachusetts, and with two adopted siblings, a younger brother, also from South Korea, and little sister from Ethiopia, he says: “I’ve always understood that it’s not what you look like that determines who you are—it goes so far beyond that.

“I guess everything worked out for the best with me,” LaFrance adds brightly, “because [my parents] went and got two more!”

News + Notes

Commission Highlights Fisher’s Strengths

In the words of an evaluation team from the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE), Fisher College’s mission “is compelling and the transformation Fisher has experienced in the past decade while implementing a strong record of financial achievement is noteworthy.”

The NECHE also found: **1** / A clear and compelling mission to improve student lives through knowledge and skills. **2** / A highly personal student experience from the point of first contact through admissions, to academic and career advising experiences, and throughout student coursework. **3** / A strong culture of strategic and financial planning that has positioned the College...to expand academic program offerings in new online graduate and post-traditional student markets.

Briefs

Diversity Initiative The Center for Teaching Excellence in November launched the first installment of its Art & Activism Series. Titled “Social Justice, Race, and Gender Equality: An America Story,” it featured four artists who use their work for activism.

More Degrees In January, the Master’s in Criminal Justice Program welcomed its first class of students, and in August, the Master’s in Psychology Program graduated its first class. A Bachelor’s of Science degree was approved this fall.

New Faculty Dr. Patrick Kearns, who holds a PhD in microbiology from Northeastern University and has been a lecturer at Boston University and UMass Boston, joined Fisher, after a nationwide search, as assistant professor and director of the Biology Program.

Passages

Rest in Peace Jonathan Bartsch, director of information services at Fisher for 19 years, passed away suddenly of natural causes on Feb. 23. He was a beloved member of the community, an avid reader, a lover of astronomy and model railroads, and an energetic presence. A native of San Diego, Bartsch was in the gifted program at La Jolla High School and attended Brandeis University and the University of California at Santa Cruz, where he studied computer engineering. The former husband of Fisher Board of Trustees Chairwoman Alexandra Bartsch, he also leaves a daughter, Anastasia, and family throughout the country.

Next Chapters Dr. Nicholas Siciliano retired in May after 24 years teaching psychology. “Dr. Nick,” as he was known, was famous for his “rules” that were often repeated around campus as affirmations for success. He was generous with his time—often seen talking with students in the dining hall—and with his heart. Over the years he generously supported the cast party for the Drama Club presentations. Colleague Ellen Lyons said, “He has had a lasting and positive impact on thousands of students.”

Phyllis Soares retires in December after 36 years. “Phyllis has been faithful to Fisher’s mission and her contributions have been instrumental in long-term success of the New Bedford site,” said Richard Potter, director of graduate and professional studies. “Her smile, positive attitude, and dedication to any task will be greatly missed.”



Jonathan Bartsch



Student Spotlights

1 / Carla Guerrero ’21 Moving between Mexico and the U.S. as a child, Guerrero faced prejudice early. Fisher has given her courage to seek leadership roles and encourage others to “step out of the dark and start doing something they enjoy.” The Black Latin Student Association president and psychology major tells students: “To create change, you have to unapologetically believe in yourself.”

2 / Cameron M. Pearson ’21 As an intern with Fisher Falcons Baseball Operations Administration in Fall 2019, Pearson helped the team prep for Spring 2020. When Covid-19 cut the season short, after 14 wins in 18 games, the sport management major and outfielder from Florida, was disappointed but is looking forward to “a full spring baseball season” in 2021.

3 / Hajar El Khalfaoui ’22 Eyeing a legal career, the liberal arts major took an internship with Cambridge-based Faneuf Law. The Moroccan-born Arabic speaker also fits in peer mentoring and captaining the cross-country team. “Days are longer than you think,” she says, laughing.

4 / Joel Bailey ’22 “Hard work is everything to me, and it brought me to where I am,” says Bailey, a psychology major and a soccer team member. He traces his fierce work ethic to his experience as an orphan from Cameroon adopted at 14 by an American family. His roles at Fisher include financial aid assistant, resident assistant, sports team driver, and Drama Club treasurer. “Being busy is one of the wonders of life!” he says.

Sporting Chance

Professor Katie Shea built a winning Sport Management Program with assists from Boston's top pro teams.

BY JANE WHITEHEAD

DR. KATIE SHEA warns every student who signs up for the Sport Management major: Success in this field takes much more than a passion for sports. “I tell them, it takes a lot of tenacity—you have to go above and beyond what other people are willing to do to be successful in the sport industry,” she says. Not put off by the prospect of long hours and a brutally competitive environment, most students stick with the program because “they want to be immersed in sports for the rest of their lives,” Dr. Shea observes.

As a former competitive rower with a PhD in Sport Management from Indiana University, Dr. Shea shares that drive. She also knows that it's critical to students' success that they form a realistic view of the hard work that undergirds sports at all levels. Since Fisher hired her in 2015 to develop Sport Management as a stand-alone degree, she has built a network of industry supporters and mentors, from administrators to sales and services executives.

Fisher alum Jae Holland '08, senior manager of fan services at the Boston Red Sox, was a crucial early contact, along with Matt Tieri, a senior Red Sox group sales executive. Both regularly participate in virtual and campus classes and serve on Dr. Shea's five-person industry advisory board; the students take the historic tour of Fenway Park every year.

With Boston Celtics senior sales executive Erin Lewis, Dr. Shea devised an experiential learning

project in Fall 2020. Students in her Sales class competed to sell Celtics tickets, Celtics sales professionals made class visits, and students with the most sales had a chance to interview for an internship with hiring executives. Exposure to the sales side of the industry is key, says Dr. Shea, as “the majority of jobs for entry-level employees are in sales.”

Links with professional sports teams and visits to storied venues inject a thrill into the program, but Dr. Shea also opens students' eyes to the many opportunities outside of professional sports. Outreach to Harvard Athletics led to class tours of the school's facilities, staff participation in teaching in the Sport Management Program, and a senior internship last year for one of Dr. Shea's students.

“The growth of our program reflects the growth of the industry,” says Dr. Shea. With 46 students now enrolled in the major—up from 16 in its first full year, 2016-2017—she sees more expansion ahead, with the planned introduction of one new minor and a new degree concentration in 2021, in Sport Coaching and Fitness, an area of “explosive growth.” She's reaching out to owners of local gyms and fitness centers and college coaches to make the contacts that will bring a real-world focus to the new offerings, and extend the scope of the program she has designed from the start to give students “every opportunity in the world to successfully enter the sport industry.”



The growth of Fisher's program reflects the growth of the industry. With 46 students now enrolled in the major—up from 16 in its first full year, 2016-2017—Dr. Katie Shea sees more expansion ahead, with the planned introduction of one new minor and a new degree concentration in 2021.



The Athletic Advantage

Over a nearly twenty-year career at Fisher, **Head Baseball Coach and Interim Athletics Director Scott Dulin** sees striking parallels between his athletes' performance on and off the field. "The best teams I've had have also been the best teams in the classroom," he says.

Dulin uses the Dean's List as the benchmark to gauge athletes' academic success. Though athletes comprised just over one-fifth of Fisher's student body in 2018-19, they accounted for nearly one-third of Dean's List students, a pattern he's seen over the last eight years.

So what explains student athletes' apparent academic edge, according to Dulin?

- 1 /** Fisher's sports coaches' proactive approach to forestall potential problems.
- 2 /** Weekly updates on class attendance for all athletes.
- 3 /** Mid-term warning grades that alert staff to students who are struggling. ("Then we're able to get them set up with the help they need.")
- 4 /** Habits formed by dedication to any kind of sport. ("If you're practicing pretty much every night, you have to be structured and disciplined to get all your work done before you get to practice.")

Sport management program director Dr. Katie Shea agrees: "Students who do well are well organized—they're committed to their academic success as much as to their athletic success—there's a kind of symbiotic relationship between the two."

Beacon / The Academy

The Pivot

Twenty years of experience with online learning gave Fisher a critical edge when Covid-19 came to town.

BY JANE WHITEHEAD

WHEN COVID-19 brought business to a near standstill in March, Fisher's leadership already had a plan in place to move classes online after Spring Break.

"We extended Spring Break by a few days to give everybody time to get up to speed and feel comfortable with the transition," said Dr. Janet Kuser, vice president for academic affairs. In making the switch, Fisher had key advantages: 20 years' experience in delivering online education through the Graduate and Professional Studies Division (GPS); an integrated online component on the Boston campus; and college-wide use of the Blackboard learning management system, which helps manage and develop blended and virtual classes.

"We weren't starting from scratch," said Dr. Heidi Hendershott, director of the Center for Teaching Excellence. "Even for a regular class, we keep grades in Blackboard," so faculty and students have familiarity with the platform.

Still, Hendershott said, "For about half the faculty, this was something really scary." So the day after the college announced the

shift to online teaching, Hendershott rolled out the first of eight training sessions for faculty, and two for students.

"Our biggest fear was students falling through the cracks when we went online," said Hendershott. From loaner laptops to information on accessing free internet services, the Information Services team made "Herculean efforts to make sure our students had technology," she said. With the library closed, another challenge was access to textbooks. Here again, said Kuser, Fisher was ahead of the game. Faced with the high cost of textbooks, "we'd already transitioned some of our classes to free open access resources," she said, and during the pandemic, more faculty switched to using them.

On the Boston campus, 60 per cent of classes now are still fully online, with 40 per cent blended courses that meet in person one or two days a week. Kuser predicts that the Spring 2021 semester will look similar, and that in future, the college may offer 20 percent of campus-based classes fully online, double the pre-pandemic level.





Dr. Heidi Hendershott, director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, left, and Dr. Janet Kuser, vice president for academic affairs, led Fisher's initial response to Covid-19.



World Class

IN A PANDEMIC, INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE STILL ATTRACTED TO FISHER.

Worldwide lockdowns. Travel restrictions. Visa delays. International students seeking a U.S. education suddenly faced many hurdles.

In the face of such Covid-19 challenges, Fisher's international enrollment remained robust in Fall 2020, says **Nancy Pithis**, dean of international academic operations and curriculum development. Fisher's ability to offer a full range of online classes tailored to multiple time zones "was attractive to many who could not secure the necessary documents to study in person," she said.

With 103 students hailing from 42 countries, this year's international cohort forms 16 percent of Fisher's total enrollment. Thirty-five of the international students are studying on campus this fall. Another 13 are in the U.S. but taking all of their classes online, with the remainder studying remotely from outside the U.S.

Pithis attributes the college's pulling power in part to the admissions-to-graduation "high-touch advising and counseling" by the Center for International Programs and Services.

Agnese Palumbo '21, a criminal justice major from Bari, Italy, decided to stay on campus this fall, rather than return to her country. The college's individualized mix of virtual and in-person options for international students, plus the provision of an on-campus Covid-19 testing center, gave her confidence that "Fisher is really making an effort to keep this whole situation under control," she said. **-JW**

STUDENT, INTER-

MADISON DUFFEY'S ODYSSEY IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC.

Covid-19 has disrupted everything: jobs, vacations, family get-togethers—life. It has also impacted Fisher College students in substantial ways.

To illustrate just how substantially, we tell the story of senior hospitality management major **Madison Duffey '21** and her year of living flexibly.

AS TOLD TO MAURA KING SCULLY PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM DETOUR

RUPTED



To meet dormitory safe-distancing protocols, Duffey was among students assigned to a hotel room in Boston.

I'M A PLANNER.

I decided I wanted to go abroad in middle school when I went to Europe with my Girl Scout troop. I fell in love with Florence, Italy, right away. I planned my whole college experience around studying abroad in Florence. I saved my electives so I could take them in Italy. I applied to a program through CIS Abroad in August of my junior year and was accepted in September. I spent October doing the paperwork for the program, plus getting my passport and visa. Then Thanksgiving, Christmas, and—I'm going.

JANUARY 25, 2020 I love airports. I always feel a sense of adventure and freedom. When my mom dropped me off at Logan, I gave her a hug and actually felt bad I didn't feel more sad about leaving. I got to Dublin, Ireland, at 4 a.m. and was sitting alone at the gate for my connecting flight to Rome. My adrenaline was pumping. I thought, "This is it. This is happening."

FEBRUARY 7, 2020 I finished up my first week of classes in Florence. I absolutely love it here. I love my teachers, and I've made so many friends. I am also really excited because I had a phone interview this week for an internship at Disney World. Working at Disney is my dream job. And I got the internship! I'll spend the fall semester in Orlando working at the resort hotels.

FEBRUARY 23, 2020 There have been some cases of Covid-19 reported in Northern Italy. I don't know what to believe—the news here is all over the place. CIS sent everyone an email, giving us the option to do our classes online. But they said they wouldn't refund any money for people who went home. I really want to stay.

FEBRUARY 24, 2020 I was walking home from grocery shopping when my dad called. He heard Milan had gone into lockdown and wanted to know if I was alright. "I'm comfortable staying," I said. "OK," he said. "Update me every day about what's happening." Then my mom called. She's a critical care nurse. She wants me to come home.

People at Fisher were really great. Over the next few days, I heard from Assistant Registrar Jesse Ford, Dean of Students Shiela Lally, and Danielle Herget, my honors program advisor. They were all checking in to see how I was doing.

FEBRUARY 29, 2020 Now there are reported Covid-19 cases in Florence, and I'm getting nervous. I'm leaning toward going home when I get another email from CIS, announcing all classes are now remote and that everyone should go home. Everyone is crying. I can't describe how crushed I am. This has been the happiest five weeks of my life.

MARCH 5, 2020 I'm flying home and the airports are so calm—it's surreal. In Dublin, they just asked if I had been to China. No one screened us or took our temperatures. It was really disappointing. If everyone has to go home, why aren't they making a bigger deal of this?

MARCH 6 TO MARCH 19, 2020 I'm home in Leominster, quarantining by myself at my mom's. She stocked me with groceries and went to stay with a friend. Being alone isn't new to me—I'm an only child—but being stuck in one place is hard. There's a walking trail that passes through our backyard. Sometimes, I go out at night to walk when no one is around. I've gotten into yoga, which is something new for me. I find it very calming—it quiets my mind. For the first time in my life, I'm finding that I have to focus on my mental health.

APRIL 2020 I'm still doing my remote classes from Italy. It's not great. I like learning in person much better. In my Italian class, the language isn't sticking. When I was in Italy, I loved being immersed in Italian, going to the grocery store and trying out new words. That's not happening anymore.

JUNE 2020 There are no summer jobs to be had here. I've decided to go down to Plymouth and stay with my aunt and

Everything's changed. Duffey outside her substitute dorm, the Loews Boston Hotel; a masked meeting with her advisor; and lunch in the plexi-screened cafeteria on the Fisher campus.



“I’ve been back at school a couple of weeks now. It’s different. It’s very subdued. The dining hall is normally bustling. I used to settle in at a table with 10 friends and do homework. Not anymore. Most of my classes are remote.”





cousins. My aunt is immunocompromised; I'll be able to help her with grocery shopping and errands so she doesn't have to go out. It will be good to be around people. Besides, I'm leaving for my internship at Disney in six weeks!

JULY 29, 2020 I was waiting for my housing assignment from Disney, checking my email constantly. Late this afternoon, Disney emailed saying the internship program was suspended indefinitely. My heart just shattered. Now what am I going to do? I haven't registered for any classes. Will I even be able to live on campus? I had been a resident assistant before I went to Italy...would that even be an option?

I email my advisor to start figuring out my classes. A few days later, the dean of students calls and asks if I would be interested in being a resident assistant at Loews Boston Hotel on Berkeley Street. The college has rented two floors to reduce the number of people in the dorms. I say yes right away; then I ask her if she could talk to Loews about me potentially doing an internship there. She says she'll see what she can do.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 I've been back at school a couple of weeks now. It's different. It's very subdued. The dining hall is normally bustling. I used to settle in at a table with 10 friends and do homework. Not anymore. Most of my classes are remote. The one I'm enjoying the most is the

independent study I'm doing for my honors thesis on sustainability in the hotel industry.

Being an RA at Loews is OK. It's mostly seniors and graduate students, so they know the drill. It does have its perks. I have a king-size bed, plus my own bathroom, a big TV, and a nice desk I actually use. Sometimes, though, I feel like I'm stuck in a box and just need to get out and go for a walk.

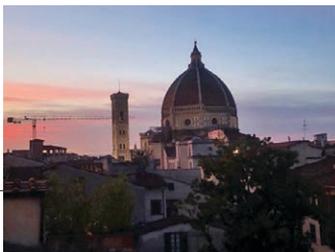
OCTOBER 14, 2020 I just found out I'll be starting my internship at Loews this weekend. I'm going to rotate around the hotel in different positions: front desk, accounting, the restaurants. It should be good. But this is nothing like I expected my senior year to be. Classes and clubs are all virtual. Everyone's wearing masks. In online classes, you don't get the same interaction and energy that you do when you're in person.

I turned 21 just before I left for Italy. But you can't go to bars now. I feel bad for the freshmen who are starting college out this way. I feel bad for everyone. You only get these years once in your life and they're getting taken from me.

I'm used to going, going, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day. Now, I have time on my hands. I don't know what to do with myself. I wonder, will we ever go back to normal? Will we always wear masks? I've been a person who's always planned ahead. Nothing could have prepared me—or anybody—for this.

Below, photos from Maddy's all-too-brief study abroad trip to Florence, Italy.

"I finished up my first week of classes in Florence. I absolutely love it here. I love my teachers, and I've made so many friends."



"...I get another email from CIS, announcing all classes are now remote and that everyone should go home. Everyone is crying. I can't describe how crushed I am. This has been the happiest five weeks of my life."

How Fisher's unsung Covid-19 heroes brainstormed creative paths to

HERO

keep the students, faculty, and campus **OUT OF HARM'S WAY.**

OFES

Profiles by
Kirsten Lundberg

Photographs by
Adam DeTour

The Covid-19 pandemic has given new meaning to the terms “essential workers” and “frontline heroes.” In a college setting, facilities and policing staffs and student services and human resources administrators suddenly found themselves thrust into vital, life-protecting roles. It was hard work, possibly harder than anything they’d ever done before. And yet, as these four Fisher stars have demonstrated over and over again in the past eight months, there isn’t anything they wouldn’t do to keep the community healthy and functioning optimally.



HEROES

Shiela Lally DEAN OF STUDENTS

With a job description that stretches from health services to housing, student activities, and student conduct, Shiela Lally knows student life. When the pandemic hit in March, “all my areas were involved in some aspect of Covid-19,” says the dean, who holds both master’s and law degrees • First, she and her team shut down the college—and sent stranded belongings to hundreds of students who had left on Spring Break intending to return. They spent the summer—“we never had a summer”—making contingency plans for reopening. • Lally became an impromptu public health expert, learning how to trace contacts; institute optimal testing and quarantine protocols; and select an online health tracking app. • “I had to undo the entire housing lottery,” recalls Lally, and reassign no more than two students per room—plus rent local hotel space for the overflow. When school reopened at Labor Day, the vast majority of students chose to return. • But, says Lally, with only nine confirmed Covid-19 cases to date, “we’ve done a really good job” at keeping the community healthy.

Brian Perrin

CHIEF OF POLICE

After 27 years as a Winthrop policeman and the lieutenant colonel directing the Massachusetts Environmental Police, Brian Perrin—a lawyer with a bachelor's in criminal justice—was ready for a change. In 2018, he took over Fisher's nine-person security force, practicing a hands-on public safety function. "We're a service industry here, not just policing in the traditional sense," he says. "We are the front line for student problems." But Covid-19 upended the usual pattern of campus patrols, drug/alcohol offenses, and dorm disputes. In April, Perrin was asked to head a "return to campus" planning team. Often working 12-hour days, seven days a week, they found answers to tricky questions such as how many students could safely be in a classroom or a dorm room, how to ensure air quality, and what routes to use to enter/exit buildings. Since students returned in September, Perrin's security team has manned entrances, checking that each individual's symptom-tracking app registers green for entry. "Our goal," he says, "is to get through the semester safely."



Ellen Lyons

DIRECTOR OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

Little in Ellen Lyons' previous career running a small trucking company and an eviction defense clinic prepared her for Covid-19. Except, perhaps, the resourcefulness she developed. As with the rest of the college, the pandemic hit the Human Resources department hard. Nearly overnight, Lyons and her team had to transition all staff—except police and facilities who, as essential workers, continued to come to campus—to work remotely. “Lots of us were not computer savvy,” she recalls, “and our younger staff were not office savvy.” Plus the IT director had died suddenly in February.

Nonetheless, within two weeks all had safe, secure online access to the workplace. “I didn’t think we had it in us,” she says wryly. “But when change is thrust upon you....” To maintain connections among staff, Lyons formed 10 teams with weekly, online meetings, joint skills training, and other bonding activities. As the early emergency mindset morphed into a long haul, Lyons continued the work of keeping stress at a minimum by modeling her mantra: “Be gentle with each other.”



HEROES

Paul McBrine

DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

There's very little that Paul McBrine cannot fix or make. Lucky enough to play semi-professional hockey as a young man, McBrine later settled into a career as a general contractor. Fisher first engaged him in 2001 to do carpentry and painting; within months, it made him director of facilities. But Covid-19, when it first hit, stymied even McBrine. • "No one knew how to handle it," he recalls. But in short order, he chased down scarce personal protective equipment (PPE), including respirators; scheduled Covid-19 training for himself and his crew; doubled the cleaning staff; marked off new entrance/exit routes to all 12 campus buildings; and created new cleaning protocols. • "There's no room for conjecture on this Covid-19 cleaning," he notes. McBrine credits the college leadership team for keeping the school abreast of evolving pandemic best practices—"the research they did was phenomenal." • Modestly, he notes that "they kept the pressure off of me" but, in truth, they would say he did the same for the entire Fisher community.





LAW & ORDER

UNDAUNTED IN A YEAR
LIKE NO OTHER,
FISHER LAUNCHES
AN ONLINE MASTER'S PROGRAM
IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND
STUDENTS ARE PROVING:

IF YOU BUILD IT,
THEY WILL COME.

THE FISHER WAY

BY CHAD CONECKY

Illustration by KEITH NEGLEY
Photographs by ADAM DETOUR

“DRUG DEALER MILE” bisects the top half of New Bedford’s historic South End peninsula and it’s a routine patrol for Officer Ricardo Gomes. Nosing a cruiser around the enclave, where 17 alleged distributors and traffickers of heroin, fentanyl, crack, and other hard drugs lived within a mile of one another as recently as 2019, is a policing tactic known as a “directed patrol.” The idea is to **STOP CRIME BEFORE IT HAPPENS.**

“When I go to work every day, the supervisors remind us to do our directives and highlight the areas we need to go,” says Gomes, 50, a 20-year veteran of the NBPD. “You look around the room and guys will roll their eyes. They’ll say, ‘It doesn’t work. I’m still dealing with the same problems out there. Why do I have to spend allotted time there?’ Now, because I’m in the graduate program at Fisher, I know that data and evidenced-based research say the exact opposite. Directed patrols reduce crime. It might be theory in a classroom, but out here, it works.”

The anecdote is music to Kathy Ehlers ears. As Fisher’s vice president for online, graduate, and professional studies, Ehlers has played an integral role in developing the school’s new Master’s of Science in Criminal Justice, a fully online degree program that launched in January, 2020.

“Does it get any better than the classroom experience that Ricardo conveys?” asks Ehlers, 52. “Here’s a guy who’s been on the job for a long time before going back to school and now, all of sudden, he’s in the classroom thinking about the what, when, where, and why of what he does in a new context. He’s taking an academic perspective and applying it to his real-world experience. That’s 100 percent a home run in terms of what we thought this program could be.”

The new MS program is uniquely suited to professional people on the go, be they inside or outside the law enforcement and criminal justice system. Scheduled to provide maximum access, courses roll out across six, eight-week cycles every calendar year to accommodate an accelerated timetable for earning the degree. The program is fully online with no requirement for synchronous learning, and students can begin the program at the start of any of the six cycles throughout the year. A bachelor’s degree in criminal justice or work experience in the field are not prerequisites.

“Our goal has been to build the foundation of a program

that satisfies the needs of all criminal justice professionals as well as those aspiring to enter the field across a broad range of disciplines,” says Dr. Peter Cassino, director of the new degree program and an assistant professor. “We needed to design it so working professionals can succeed at it without sacrificing their professional or family life. But what separates our program from the rest, in my view, is leadership. The curriculum is reviewed by an advisory board made up of local thought leaders and game changers in the criminal justice realm.”

The advisory board masthead does, indeed, read like a who’s who of New England law enforcement—more on that later—but the breadth of prospective students the program can accommodate and the number of pathways into the field it opens represent its lifeblood.

“We can serve anyone from a law enforcement individual who’s drawn to the mission and mindset of the degree program or students who are ultimately looking to get into a police academy or interested in pursuing forensic science or any of countless other routes into the field,” says Ehlers.

ADVICE AND CONSENT

Fisher College graduate Grace Roach ’20 grew up in a town so small it makes Mayberry of fictional sitcom fame look like a metropolis. Hutchinson, Minnesota, boasts a population of fewer than 15,000 and all that’s missing from its main street is a DeLorean fitted with a flux capacitor. Collegiate soccer is what lured Roach, 22, to the Boston area, but on the career front, she’s been pretty sure for a while that she wanted to be a cop.

“Originally, I was hoping to end up in a canine unit,” explains Roach, who earned her BS in criminal justice in May and is playing out her final season of collegiate eligibility with the Falcons this fall. “However, the more I learned



“Our goal has been to build the foundation of a program that satisfies the needs of all criminal justice professionals as well as those aspiring to enter the field across a broad range of disciplines.”

DR. PETER CASSINO
DIRECTOR OF
THE NEW DEGREE
PROGRAM IN
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

A close-up portrait of a woman with long, dark hair, smiling slightly and looking off-camera to the left. She is wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored blouse. The background is a dark, neutral color.

“We can serve anyone from a law enforcement individual who’s drawn to the mission and mindset of the degree program or students who are ultimately looking to get into a police academy or interested in pursuing forensic science or any of countless other routes into the field.”

KATHY EHLERS
VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ONLINE, GRADUATE, AND
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

about the criminal justice system and all the different options for making an impact, the more I wanted to learn more. For me, the design of the program was ideal because I work during the day and have soccer obligations in the evening. Having the flexibility to work on my own time was really appealing.”

The Midwesterner is already hooked.

“Classes are relatively small so it’s really interesting to have the breathing room to see all these different points of view come together,” says Roach. “There are a lot of really intelligent people in the degree program and they’re coming from all walks of life. People who’ve been in the field for years, people just coming to the field, and people like me exploring it a bit deeper.”

Roach adds that she draws powerful insights from periodic synchronous class meetings that take place via Zoom as well as the class-wide, asynchronous discussion boards on which policies, research, problem-solving approaches, and key learnings are deconstructed by the group.

Though she began her first term of graduate school this fall, Roach gained practical experience as an undergraduate, completing an internship with the Fisher College Police Department under the supervision of Chief Brian Perrin. The chief also played a key role in helping to build out the new MS program’s impressive professional advisory board.

“It’s definitely an All-Star cast,” confirms Chelsea Police Chief Brian Kyes, 56, who says he’s humbled to serve on the board with fellow members like Steven DeMarco, deputy chief of the MIT police department, and Charles Wilson, Boston police superintendent at the Bureau of Intelligence and Analysis. “I think the reputations and the input of everyone on the board is incredibly important. Fisher is lucky to have that whole team in place.”

“There’s no question this program is all about the people behind it,” agrees Ehlers. “Our board is continually trying to explore how we can evolve and diversify the curriculum to be optimal for our students.”

Kyes (pronounced Ka-eyes) also teaches in the new MS program and has served as the instructor for the fall term’s Ethics in Criminal Justice course. He, like Roach, appreciates the intimacy of the learning environment, in spite of the courses being taught remotely.

“You build that connection where you really feel like you know these individuals on a personal level,” says Kyes, a 34-year veteran of law enforcement. “Not just from the video back and forth, but from interaction on the discussion boards, emails, offline phone calls regarding a question or a follow-up. You really feel an investment with and from these students.”

PLATO’S POTATOES

Gomes, who grew up in Plymouth, Massachusetts, says he became a police officer because he wanted to “serve people, help people, make a difference, and make a change.” His

“There are a lot of really intelligent people in the degree program and they’re coming from all walks of life. People who’ve been in the field for years, people just coming to the field, and people like me exploring it a bit deeper.”

GRACE ROACH '20
STUDENT

approach to both his job and his graduate studies reflect that, particularly in his role as a department training officer.

It is exactly this outlook that now has Gomes thinking about virtue ethics while he’s peeling potatoes for a family dinner.

“When you’re talking about Socrates and Plato and utilitarianism, those might seem like tough concepts, but they relate to the focus you need to bring to the job every day,” he says. “It’s never easy to define in a given moment, but you have to do the ‘right thing’ and what you feel like should be done—the good thing—even if ... no, *especially* if no one is watching you.

“I’m always taking things away from class and I find myself telling just about everybody,” he continues. “When you find something you’re learning to be fascinating and it’s a new perspective, you wonder what other people think about it. Ask my wife. I bring this stuff up around the house.”

That’s the bullseye, according to Dr. Cassino.

“By learning about the social science and research aspects of this field, a student like Ricardo can apply those lessons in how to be a critical thinker when he’s making decisions in the *actual* field,” says Dr. Cassino. “A big part of our target audience is the mid-career police officer who can take these lessons to the job. That said, I love that we’re just as much of an opportunity for students who want to do anything under the large umbrella of criminal justice—juvenile justice, advocacy, you name it.”

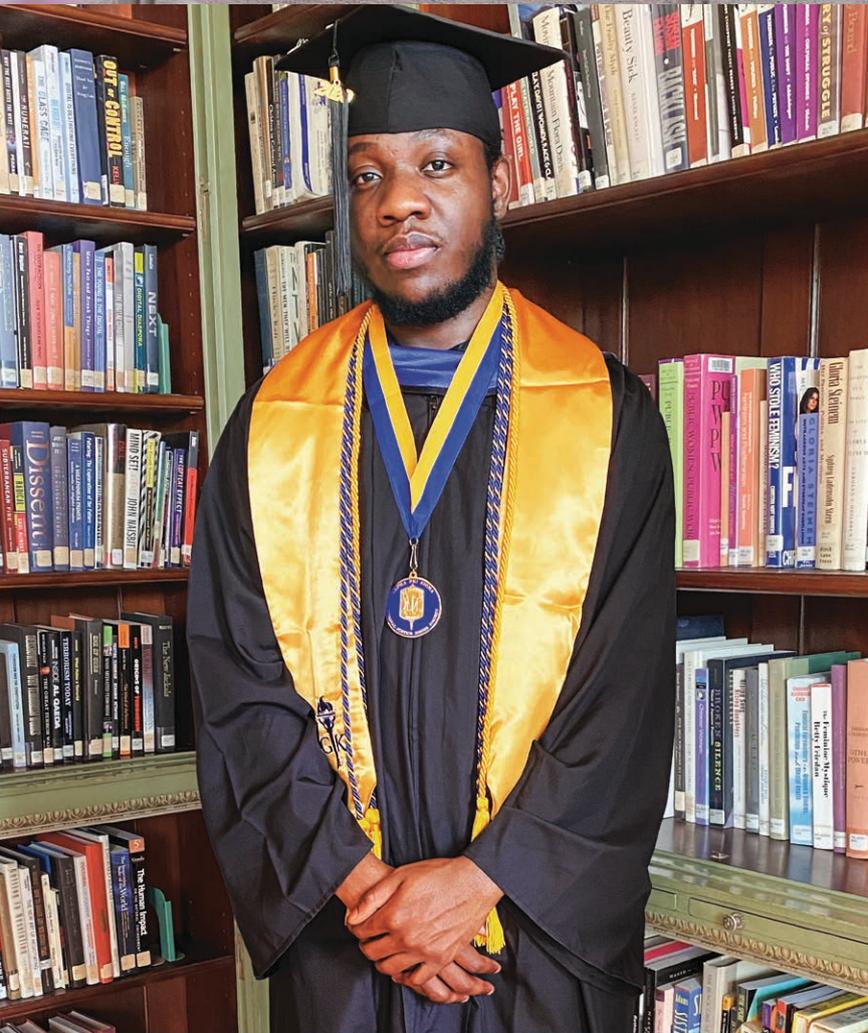
With enrollment in the program steady and robust, Ehlers says discussions are already under way for build-outs in terms of the program’s scope and the addition of a scholarship opportunity for law enforcement professionals. Students like Roach, meanwhile, are eligible for the Fisher for Life Scholarship Program, which offers reduced tuition rates for students pursuing sequential degrees at the school.

Be that as it may, it’s the overall value proposition of the program that has Roach sold.

“I’m learning how to analyze, consider, and come to a conclusion using all kinds of case studies and hypotheticals,” she says. “We’re being taught how to think critically. I’ve always been interested in the system and related policy, but I’m now more so than ever. There are some really important questions out there in criminal justice, so it’s ideal to be learning with and from people in the field right now.”



FISHER COLLEGE



HELP A FA

"I would like to thank Fisher College, along with all it's wonderful faculty and staff, for giving me the opportunity to challenge myself and grow over the last four years.

Additionally, I would like to extend my highest appreciation to everyone who has directly or indirectly lent a hand on my road to success."

ANDREW FOLKES '20

**Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, Valedictorian,
Fisher College, Boston Campus**

To make your gift online, visit our secure payment form at www.fisher.edu/give.



The past few months have made it incredibly clear just how important each and every member of the Fisher community is, how important your voice is, and how important we all are to each other.

We know now, more than ever, that when we work together, we are stronger. As we continue to navigate the pandemic and the upheaval in our country, we see even more clearly the value of a Fisher education.

Your support today allows us to not only redouble our efforts to provide a rich academic experience, but also to expand our commitment to creating a more equitable community where all students can thrive.

Please consider making a gift to Fisher that will directly impact our students, our faculty, and our programs. Your experience, your generosity, and your partnership all play a role in defining the future of our college.

FALCON SOAR! WITH YOUR GIFT TO FISHER

GIVING LEVELS

- Falcon Friends \$100-\$249
- Brownstone Club \$250-\$499
- Beacon Street Club \$500-\$999
- Staircase Society \$1,000-\$2,499**
- Back Bay Society \$2,500-\$4,999
- President's Circle \$5,000-\$9,999
- Founders' Circle \$10,000 and above

AREAS OF IMPACT

- ★ Greatest Need
- 📖 Academics
- 🎭 Student Clubs/Drama
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- 👤 Faculty
- 💰 Financial Aid
- ⚖️ Fund for Social Justice
- 🦅 Falcon Hope Fund
- ⚙️ Technology

Give a Falcon Wings

In response to the current challenges facing our community, Fisher has established two important funding opportunities.

Falcon Hope Fund

This fund will support Fisher students and families facing significant hardship and will increase our emergency financial aid resources in order to ensure that all of our current students can continue their educational journeys at Fisher.

Fisher Fund for Social Justice

This fund will provide annual grants to projects in four broad categories: student research, activism and internships, campus-wide events and speakers, and long-term programs with community partners.



Thank you for giving to the Fisher Fund! All gifts are welcome. Every gift counts.

FISHER COLLEGE



Maryanne DiBerto '70 is an internationally recognized expert on environmental, health, and safety auditing.

BEYOND

Alumni News

Her Brilliant Career How a Fisher education launched Maryanne DiBerto's rise to the top of a new profession.

BY JANE WHITEHEAD

THE SOCIAL CHANGE heralded by the Swinging Sixties and the Summer of Love was slow to reach Fisher College. “You wore gloves and dresses, and the worst offense was to smoke a cigarette in your room or violate curfew,” remembers Medford native Maryanne DiBerto '70, president of her senior class.

Now an internationally recognized expert on environmental, health, and safety auditing, DiBerto's key to a stellar career was her rigorous training at Fisher as an executive secretary. At her very first job interview, she aced the typing test and landed a secretarial post with Boston-based international management consulting firm Arthur D. Little (ADL).

DiBerto arrived at the firm a few years before the rise of a new specialty in environmental management consulting: environmental health and safety auditing. Her potential was clear from the start to analytical chemist John Funkhouser, who became head of ADL's Environmental Practice, for whom she worked as secretary and then administrative assistant, before he nominated her to the professional consulting staff. As a stenographer, she struggled with chemical terminology, and would hand over the results of his dictation saying: “This is a game of fill in the blanks.” But shorthand shortcomings

aside, “we had a good relationship and he was a wonderful mentor,” she said.

As a member of ADL's Environmental Health and Safety Practice for more than 25 years, DiBerto worked with major corporations and the EPA to help them develop best practices in the fast-growing field.

Many people have forgotten the disaster in Bhopal, India, in 1984, said DiBerto. But the accident at the Union Carbide pesticide plant that released poisonous gas and killed some 3,500 people, was a landmark in industrial safety regulation. DiBerto was a key player in the ADL team that helped Union Carbide develop a “second to none” safety audit program to avert future catastrophes.

As the new head of ADL's Auditing Practice in 1992—and a new mother—DiBerto took over leadership of the company's safety oversight of a historic project closer to home: Boston's Big Dig, the multi-billion-dollar Central Artery/Tunnel that reconnected downtown to the seaport. Site-specific safety plans and full-time safety personnel were among the innovations adopted by what was then the country's largest public works project, noted DiBerto.

By 2000, having reached the position of vice president and managing director of ADL's Global EHS Auditing Practice and president of ADL, Canada, DiBerto joined the Boston Environmental Group (BEG), founded by her husband Stephen Poltorzycki the previous year. “We were really tired of traveling,” she said, “and we wanted to be in control of the projects we worked on.”

These days, DiBerto has cut back her hours but still takes on large-scale projects. These include a two-year auditing assignment in Hawaii, which, thanks to the pandemic, is “a kind of virtual or hybrid audit” involving intense supervision via Zoom of local subcontractors acting as her eyes and ears on the ground.

The Way We Were: 1970

AT FISHER

Sanford L. Fisher retires as president of Fisher Junior College.

ANNUAL TUITION: \$3,000 for residential students; \$1,300 for day students. **DEGREES:** 2-year Associate of Arts and Associate of Science.

POPULAR CLUBS: Horseback Riding and karate.

IN BOSTON

60,000 protest Vietnam War on Boston Common.

First Boston Gay Pride events.

Aerosmith debuts.

IN AMERICA

First Earth Day observed.

EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) created.

Vietnam War student protesters killed by police at Kent State and Jackson State.

PBS (Public Broadcasting Service) begins operations.

Jimi Hendrix and Janice Joplin die of drug overdoses, aged 27.

Chicago 7 trial ends.

Voting age lowered to 18.

Apollo 13 makes safe emergency landing after lunar mission aborted.

IN THE WORLD

The Beatles break up.

Women's Liberation protestors disrupt London's Miss World pageant.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ratified.

United States invades Cambodia.

World's population hits 3.63 billion.

We Want to Hear From You

CALL FOR CLASS NOTES Talk to us! Did you get a promotion? Get married? Move to a new country? Meet up with your old classmates? Graduate (again)? We want to hear from our alumni. Share your updates. Your news may appear in our Class Notes section. *Send notes to alumni@fisher.edu.*



Meet the Great Greg Gatsby

Greg Avila is a Billboard-charting electronic dance music producer, writer, and publisher.

BY JANE WHITEHEAD

Until the Pandemic struck in March, 2020 promised to be a banner year for Billboard-charting electronic dance music producer, writer, and publisher Greg Avila, aka Greg Gatsby. Back-to-back club and festival bookings from Miami to Virginia, and gigs in New Zealand, Italy, Sweden, and Asia vaporized in the face of Covid-19. “It was brutal,” says Avila.

With the brakes slammed on his hectic travel schedule—in the last few years he’s played over 300 shows at 90-plus venues across North America, Europe, and the Caribbean—Avila, now based in Los Angeles, reflected on his early career.

Fisher played a crucial part, he says. As a freshman in 2006-2007 he played on the college’s hip-hop-loving, championship-winning basketball team. Avila fit right in with teammates who made and mixed their own music, something he’d done from childhood, and a roommate introduced him to his first professional music studio. From the Fisher dorms it was a straight shot across Boston Common

to Felt, a club that gave Avila his first taste of event promotion and DJ’ing. Over the next ten years, under the stage name Greg Gatsby, he was a key player in Boston’s nightlife, hosting the city’s taste-makers and entrepreneurs at clubs like Royale and Prime.

Avila’s currently working on a new album of his own songs, “Before I Go,” in a genre he calls “cinematic, electronic pop.” He’s also mulling projects with a bunch of singer-songwriters for release on his label, Rorschach Music Group. After the pandemic-enforced lull, he promised: “We’ll get cranking pretty soon!” *Follow Avila on Instagram (@greggatsbymusic).*

Against the Odds

As a kid growing up in Camden, New Jersey, one of America’s most dangerous cities, **Brandon Rembert ’19** dreamed of playing professional basketball. He was a standout player on Fisher teams in his junior and senior seasons, and through determination and skill he’s achieved that goal, in the face of multiple injuries and setbacks. Now a free agent, he’s weighing offers to play in Kazakhstan, Iceland, Georgia, and Australia, after a successful 2019-2020 rookie season with the Tirana-based Albanian team, Kamza Basket.

Of his time in Albania, Rembert says: “I enjoyed the good and the bad while I was there—I’m grateful for it all!” His enjoyment of the Albanians’ tough, physical

style of play, traveling round the country, learning the language, and meeting young fans after games more than offset experiences with random power cuts, spotty WiFi, and packs of stray dogs roaming the streets. He respected his teammates as “real go-getters” who “grind for everything,” make no excuses, and push through pain and fatigue to make it to every practice and every game.

Off the court and back in the states, Rembert is developing his own sportswear brand, launched in November 2019 on his website brandonrembert.com, and planning a youth summer basketball camp. He’s passionate about inspiring young people “who feel like their only option is to give up.” He tells them: “I just hope my story shows you can make it out of any situation.” **—JW**



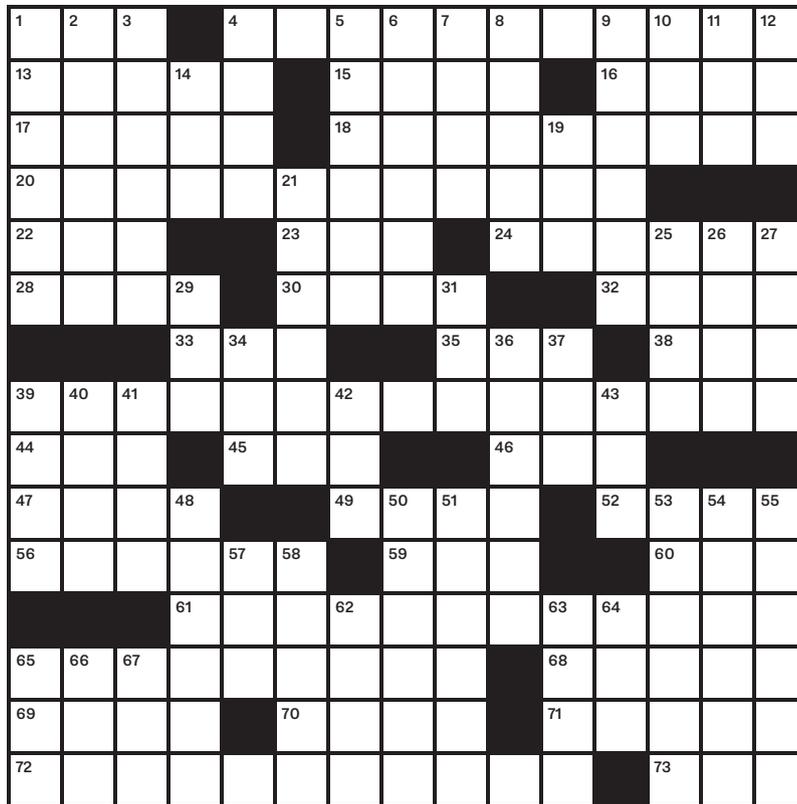
The Puzzle*

Good Sports

The Fisher College Falcons and the Sport Management Program are proud to be in the City of Champions.

BY DONNA HOKE

*For solution, go to fisher.edu/fishertoday.



Across

- 1. George Gershwin's brother
- 4. FALCON
- 13. Do the ring thing
- 15. "Milord"
- 16. "___ silly question..."; 2 wds.
- 17. About birds
- 18. George Gershwin's brother, e.g.
- 20. FALCON
- 22. *A Bug's Life* character
- 23. "Unagi" at the sushi bar
- 24. Likely to burn the tongue
- 28. *A Face in the Crowd* actress Patricia
- 30. Bottom of Britain?
- 32. FALCON COLOR
- 33. "www" address

- 35. Big size, for short
- 38. One pushup, say
- 39. FALCON
- 44. *Gorillas in the Mist* extra
- 45. *Bill ___ Saves the World*
- 46. Making your website easy to find, for short
- 47. FALCON COLOR
- 49. "Hamiltons"
- 52. "Listen to Your Heart" singer in *Young Frankenstein*
- 56. Exists
- 59. "Take Good Care of My Baby" crooner Bobby
- 60. "Bobby Hockey"
- 61. FALCON
- 65. What an IOU doesn't have
- 68. FALCON COLOR
- 69. "Money for Nothing" ___ Straits

- 70. Landed
- 71. Comforter filling

Down

- 1. "The Falcons? Love them!"
- 2. Canyon cousin
- 3. Aretha Franklin's label
- 4. "...auld lang ___"
- 5. "Fraternal twin," in chemistry
- 6. End-of-semester exams
- 7. "Beau" modifier
- 8. Gasp, say
- 9. "9 to 5" singer
- 10. "General" of Chinese cuisine
- 11. Approves
- 12. Dorm supervisors; abbr.
- 14. Cheer from the Falcon stands

- 19. Affectionate sound
- 21. "Are you serious?"
- 25. *Plenty* playwright
- 26. "Back to you," in CB speak
- 27. "Ducking," often, e.g.
- 29. Adore, informally
- 31. Credit card abbr.
- 34. *Even Stevens* character
- 36. *Children of a ___ God*
- 37. Admissions req. for some grad programs
- 39. Amahl's visitors
- 40. Auto financing figs.
- 41. Act like a startled horse
- 42. "Collect them all!" focus
- 43. "Polloi" preceder

- 48. Affirmative votes
- 50. "Just supposing..."
- 51. Adjoining
- 53. "Grownups only" restriction
- 54. *Hansel and ___*
- 55. Major thoroughfare
- 57. Abbr. in a military address
- 58. Aloha State island
- 62. Math class after trig, often
- 63. Was in the red
- 64. "...sweetheart of Sigma ___"
- 65. Big letters in recent news
- 66. Texas tea
- 67. *America's First Freedom* publisher



Events

December 2020 / Boston Pops Holiday Show

January 2021 / Young Alumni Yoga, Night at the Movies

February 2021 / GPS Alumni Social, Night at the Museum: National Museum of African American History & Culture

February 14, 2021 / Giving Day

March 2021 / Washington, DC, Alumni Happy Hour

April 2021 / New York Alumni Happy Hour

May 2021 / Senior & Young Alumni Coffee Hour

May 15, 2021 / Commencement

June 2021 / Reunion Class of '70 and '71

October 2021 / Hall of Fame, Homecoming

For details, contact the Alumni Office by email at alumni@fisher.edu or phone 617-670-4419.

Donor Profile

John McDonnell

Tito's Handmade Vodka International Managing Director; Massachusetts Convention Center Authority Board Chair; Fisher College Board of Trustees Member

What got you involved with Fisher? Our daughter Erin [Class of 2015] fell in love with the college. The thing that stood out for me and my wife Catherine was the care and attention she received there; that enabled her to be successful after struggling with standardized testing through her whole school career. She's now studying for her master's in psychology at Fisher.

How do you connect with Fisher students? They invite me every semester to talk to the MBA students about business and life. Sometimes students call me and I have coffee with them and give them career advice. That's what I find most fulfilling. If you can help put a young person on the right path, that's more rewarding than a paycheck.

What's the best advice you give the students? Stop hiding behind email. Pick up the telephone and talk to somebody!

What motivated your most recent gift to the college? My wife and I pledged in September 2020 to support a scholarship for students from Boston majoring in psychology. The cost of a college education is getting out of control, and endowed scholarships go a long way to help students meet tuition fees. I really call on others who're in a position to help to follow suit.

—Jane Whitehead



“Sometimes students call me and I give them career advice. That’s what I find most fulfilling. If you can help put a young person on the right path, that’s more rewarding than a paycheck.”

JOHN McDONNELL

The Impact of the Student Aid Relief Fund

In response to the pandemic, Interim President Steven Rich established the Student Aid Relief Fund (SARF) at Fisher with the goal of raising an unprecedented \$200k. The emergency funds, which are supported by donors ranging from foundations to alumni and other individuals, are part of a broad effort to respond to the unexpected hardship faced by many of our students and families. Thus far, grants have been disbursed for, among other

things, countless laptops and to pay down tuition so students could reenroll.

Fisher has also been able to support members of the community with economic assistance provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which was enacted by Congress in March to protect the American people from the public health and economic impacts of Covid-19.

Through these offers of generosity, the College has been able to move swiftly to soften or alleviate some of the difficulties our community has faced over the past nine months. Fisher offers thanks to all of those who have contributed.

Falcons Rise
To learn how you can contribute, contact us by email at alumni@fisher.edu or call 617-670-4419.



Spot the Difference*

Stairway to Heaven?

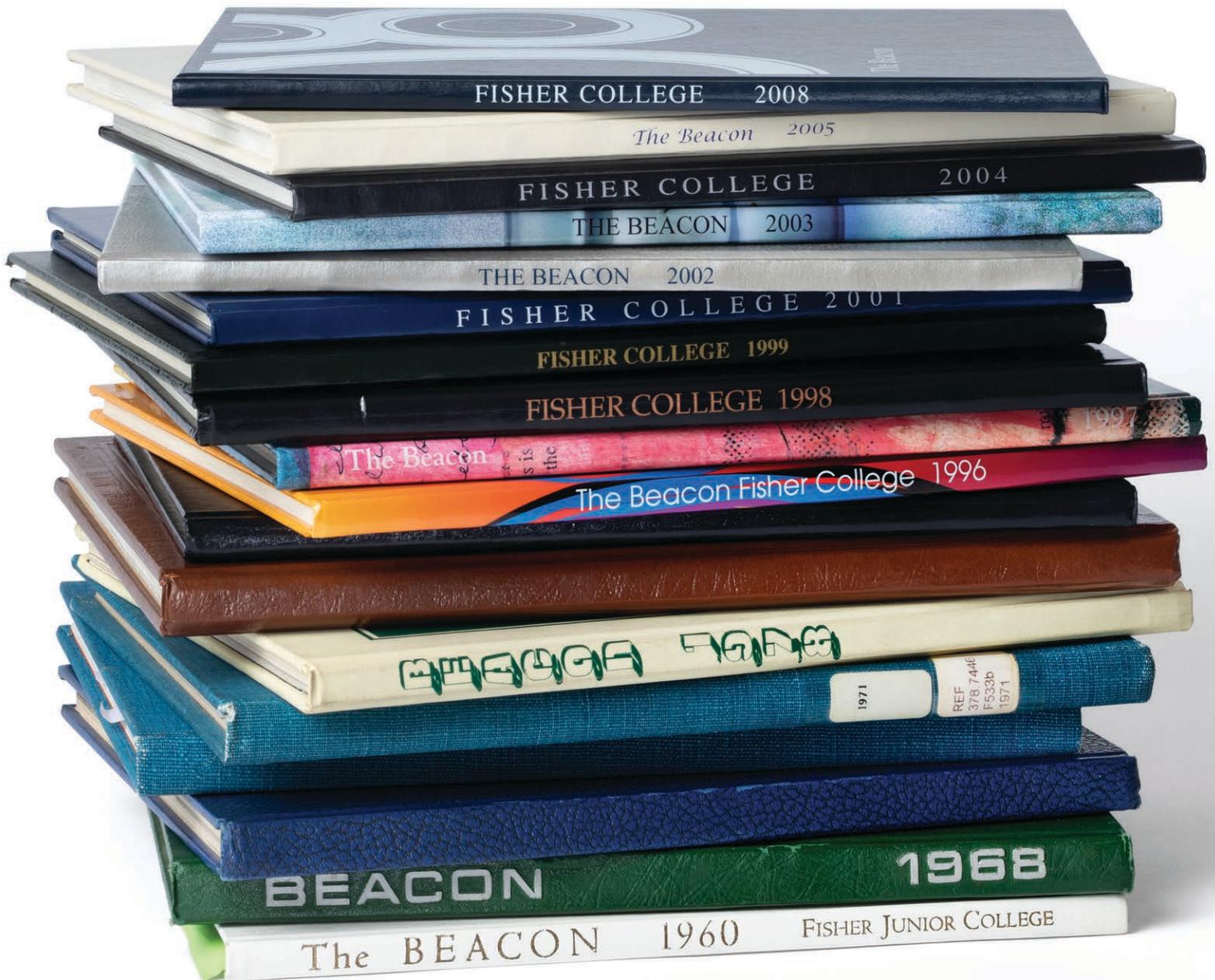
Look closely at this 105-step climb in Fisher's 118 Beacon Street building. It's likely that nearly every student who ever attended the college would like to forget it.



No, this is *not* the fabled grand staircase at 118 Beacon that welcomes visitors with its gracious swoop designed for grand entrances and exits. This is the back way, the exhausting, five-story flight that students have trod up and down to classes for eight decades. Ah, the price one pays for attending college in a historic Back Bay brownstone! **See if you can spot the eight changes with a second look at the stairwell.**

*For solution, go to fisher.edu/fishertoday.

Artifact



THE BEACON, YEARBOOK FOR THE AGES

Every college class has a distinct personality, and nothing captures that better than a yearbook. From the 1940s to the 2000s, Fisher's yearbooks offered a glimpse into students' lives and aspirations. As the college grew from a small

business school into a multifaceted institution, notebooks yielded to computers, musical tastes went from swing to rap, and hair and fashion styles changed from prim to, er, what exactly? The Class of 2005 edition of *The Beacon* described it this way: 53 percent preppy, 29 percent hip hop, 18 percent skater influence. Postscript: *The Beacon* ceased publication in 2008. —Vicki Sanders

How Fisher's first yearbook in 1944 got its name, *The SEMMA*.*
S / Sanford Fisher. E / Edmund H. Fisher. M / Myron C. Fisher. M / Myron C. Fisher Jr. A / Albert Fisher.

*The yearbook was later renamed *The Beacon*.



Visionary.



Innovator.

The college that **Myron and Edmund Fisher** founded in 1903 was ahead of its time. These men were innovators, visionaries with a clear sense of purpose.

The Fisher brothers believed that everyone deserved an education, which is why immigrants, women, and legions of others flocked to the regal brownstone on Beacon Street with a beautiful staircase.

Solidify this legacy—and make your own—by naming Fisher in your will or estate. Create the scholarships, research opportunities, and facilities that will endure into Fisher's next century.

**You can shape the future of Fisher.
Be a visionary.**



For more information about making a bequest to Fisher, please contact **Brenda Sanchez**, Vice President of Advancement and Alumni Engagement, at **617-236-8859** or **bsanchez@fisher.edu**, or visit **fisher.edu/plannedgifts**.



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