

# MAINE CENTRAL INSTITUTE ALUMNUS

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

WELCOME

**DAVID PEARSON**

MCI's 24th Head  
of School



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RENOVATION  
A REALITY**

**A BELLTOWER  
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**HANDS-ON  
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**ALUMNI  
SPOTLIGHT:  
FAMILY AND  
STEWARDSHIP AT  
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MAINE CENTRAL INSTITUTE *ALUMNUS*  
SPRING/SUMMER 2022

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*The Class of 2022 gathered in front of Founders Hall. photo by Wladimir Ortiz*

### ON THE COVER:

Mr. David Pearson is set to begin as Maine Central Institute's 24th Head of School on July 1 (story on page 12)

### INSIDE:

Academic Top Ten for Class of 2022, Maine Teacher of the Year candidate Debra Susi, Spring Sports Update, Dorm Renovations, BBT's Upcoming Show



Dear Alumni, Parents and Friends of Maine Central Institute,

I am winding up my duties as MCI's Head of School. What a pleasure this has been! I cannot imagine a better way to interrupt a retirement. Consequently, I plan to return to the MCI classroom in the Fall to teach an elective class of "Economic Literacy." I suppose that makes me a member of the gig economy.

Traditionally at the end of the spring semester, the remaining weeks of school pass with warp speed and as I write this the days are flying by. A recent BDN Sunday-Saturday edition of the comics recognized this phenomenon with the "Zits" cartoon. Teenager Duncan is racing around a track gaining speed "toward the summer." As he leans into the tape, he hits a brick wall which he labels as "Finals Week." By the time you receive this magazine, our students have (hopefully) navigated around that wall and have made it to summer break!



We will celebrate the achievements of the Class of 2022 at the traditional Senior Chapel and Commencement at the beginning of June. We are proud that our anticipated commencement speaker will be U.S. Senator Susan Collins, the senior senator from Maine. Over her many years of service, she has earned a reputation for bipartisanship. Senator Collins holds the longest perfect voting record in the history of the U.S. Senate – over 8,000 consecutive votes!

We are pleased to have a new Head of School-elect, David Pearson, a veteran of the British Army and most recently over twenty years of secondary education, mostly in Maine. His knowledge of advancement, admissions, and school finance is encyclopedic. David is a master teacher in history; ancient, European and American. Part of his charm is a hint of an accent...no, not Downeast. Dave will take the reins on July 1. I am also gratified to predict that our dedicated team of faculty, staff, and administrators will provide Dave with a warm welcome to MCI, Pittsfield, Burnham, and Detroit.

This summer boys and girls from Taiwan will descend on MCI for a five-week summer camp focused on the sciences. Scott Giallombardo and Artur Fass are hosting our campers with a slate of course work, field trips, college visits, and uniquely Maine activities. In addition, our Bossov Ballet Theatre, under the direction of Natalya Getman and Elizabeth Audet, will hold its Summer Intensive program with a performance of "Giselle" at the end of July at the Collins Center in Orono! If you are in Maine and near the campus over the summer, please stop by and say hello to these MCI and visiting students!

On Friday, August 5 and Saturday, August 6, 2022, the very weekend that our weary campers head home, MCI will host our Annual Summer Reunion! Our Advancement Office and the MCI Alumni Association are planning this gathering and look forward to welcoming all our alumni and friends back to campus.

Warm Regards,

Winn Price  
Head of School





## Senior Leah Dechaine Honored with Prestigious MPA Principal's Award

Senior Leah Dechaine of Pittsfield was selected to receive the 2022 Principal's Award, Head of School Winn Price announced. The award, sponsored by the Maine Principals' Association, is given in recognition of a high school senior's academic achievement and citizenship.

Leah is the daughter of Ken and Nanhee Dechaine of Pittsfield, Maine. In addition to being a member of the golf and tennis teams, she is the Student Council President, a two-year member of the National Honor Society, and a participant in the Model United Nations conference. She is finishing her high school career with a top ten grade point average in the class



*Leah Dechaine '22*

of 2022. Leah earned highest honors in each quarter she has attended MCI, won geometry and science awards, and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

In addition to her many accomplishments, Price said Leah "is a persuasive advocate for her constituents with staff and faculty."

Dechaine, Price and other award winners and their principals participated in a Live Virtual Scholarship Drawing Event on Friday, April 1. Ten \$1,000 scholarships were drawn in the names of former Maine principals and MPA Executive Directors: Horace O. McGowan, Richard W. Tyler, and Richard A. Durost.

The Principal's Award is presented in more than 100 Maine public and private high schools by member principals of the MPA, the professional association which represents Maine's school administrators.

## Valedictorian Yuran Choi and salutatorian Hyeonjee (Elena) Rho Round out Top Ten for the Class of 2022

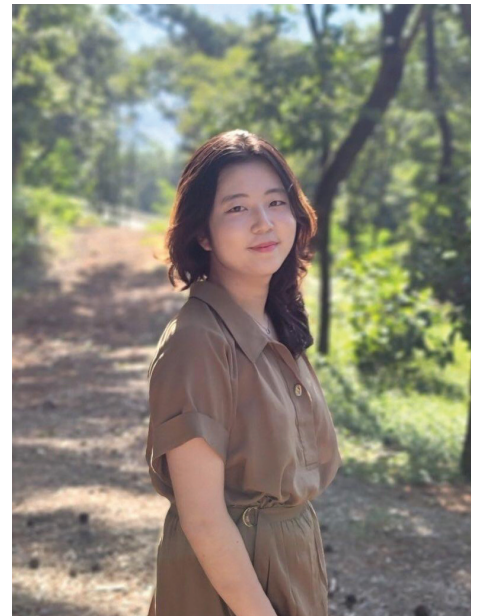


*valedictorian Yuran Choi of Gwangju, South Korea*

**Yuran Choi** is the daughter of Byungyul Choi and Sangeun Bae of Gwangju, South Korea. She has received undergraduate academic awards in Health, Pre-Calculus, Painting, AP Calculus AB, Concert band, Chemistry CP, and AP Language. She also received the George M. Parks Award and the Rensselaer Medal Award. Yuran was a Manson Essay Finalist, an Alumni Hall dorm prefect, a member of the National Honor Society, and a member of Key Club. She has participated in Math Team, Gardening Club, Chinese Club, Aomori Club, and Peer Mentoring Club. Yuran was also a member of the tennis, indoor track, and girls soccer teams. She has served as a student leader in the Student Orientation and Language Immersion program for new boarding students.

**"These ten students are our all-stars, our academic quarterbacks, or our point guards for critical thinking. We are proud of their hard work, for it is long, dedicated hours that often separate the top students."**

**Head of School, Winn Price**



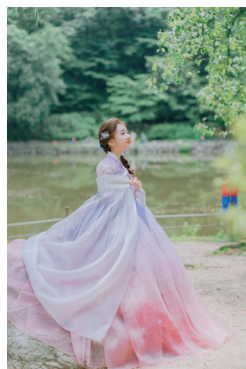
*salutatorian Hyeonjee (Elena) Rho of Daegu, South Korea.*

**Hyeonjee (Elena) Rho** is the daughter of Chang Rae Rho and Eunyoung Park of Daegu, South Korea. Elena received undergraduate academic awards for Intro to Medical Concepts, AP U.S History & AP Language, and Statistics. She was a Manson Essay Finalist and recipient of the Wells College Leadership Award and G.W. Cooke Award for 9th grade math. Elena was also recognized with Honor and Merit awards from Inner View for her many hours of community service. She is a member of Student Council, Key Club, Math Team, and Generational Connections Club. Elena is also an Alumni Hall dorm prefect and a dorm tutor. She has been a member of the golf and tennis teams.





**Taylor Pronovost** is the daughter of Eric and Debra Pronovost of Cumberland Foreside, Maine. She is a four-year participant in Bossov Ballet Theatre, and has received undergraduate academic awards in Ballet, French, and AP US History. She also received the Wells Leadership Scholarship. Taylor is a member of National Honor Society, Model United Nations, Kindness Krew, Student Ambassadors Club, Generational Connections Club, Dorm Council, and Student Council. She is also a dorm prefect in Alumni Hall.



**Sumin Lee** is the daughter of Chang Sub Lee and Young Mi Ryu of Yongin, South Korea. She is a two year member of Student Council and a dorm prefect in Alumni Hall. Sumin is also a member of the National Honor Society and the Golf team.



**Jamie Simeone** is the daughter of Tim Simeone and Kim Griffin of Burnham, Maine. She is a three-year member of the National Honor Society and has received undergraduate achievement awards for Honors English, Honors History, Algebra II, and French. Jamie has participated in Key Club, Art Club, and the Generational Connections Club. She is a three-time varsity letter recipient for girls soccer, softball, and swimming and is a three year captain on the varsity soccer team. She received the Coaches Award for varsity soccer and the

Most Improved Award for swim.



**Hector Bligh** is the son of Adrian and Eleanor Bligh of East Amherst, Nova Scotia. He is a four-year participant in Bossov Ballet Theatre. Hector received undergraduate academic awards in AP US History and AP Language, Earth and Space Science, Piano, and Ballet as well as the Merriam-Webster Book Award. He was a spokesperson at MCI's first virtual open house and traveled with a student leadership group to Washington D.C. Hector is a two-year member of the vocal and instrumental Jazz Ensembles and a dorm prefect in Manson

Hall. He is a member of the Ski club, Volleyball club, Boxing club, and Aomori Club.



**Ava McCannell** is the daughter of Aaron and Andrea McCannell of Pittsfield, Maine. She received undergraduate academic awards in Spanish, Algebra 2, Biology, and Humanities English and History III. Ava also received the Dual Enrollment Anatomy Academic Award and the Society of Women Engineers Award. She is a member of the National Honors Society and Key Club as well as the Generational Connections Club and Kindness Krew and has participated in outdoor track and field.



**Leah Dechaine** is the daughter of Ken and Nanhee Dechaine of Pittsfield, Maine. She is MCI's 2022 recipient of the prestigious Principal's Award, given yearly by the Maine Principals' Association. Leah is the current President of the Student Council and a four-year member, a two-year member of the National Honor Society, and a participant in the Model United Nations conference. Leah earned highest honors in each quarter she has attended MCI, won undergraduate academic awards for Geometry and Science, and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa in addition to being a member of the golf and tennis teams.



**Gracie Moore** is the daughter of Ellwood and Rebecca Moore of Pittsfield, Maine. She was the Manson Essay Contest Runner Up and received undergraduate academic awards for Anatomy and Physiology, Stage and TV Makeup, and Humanities English/History III CP. She received her varsity letter for field hockey, softball, and indoor track. Gracie is a decorated field hockey player, earning all-rookie, all-conference, and all-state honors while scoring a school record 40 goals. She also received the Most Valuable

Player award for MCI's indoor track team. Gracie is a member of the Key Club and has volunteered all four years in Pittsfield youth sports programs.



**Lillian Verrill** is the daughter of Cory and Jessica Verrill of Pittsfield, Maine. She is a two time winner of the Visual and Performing Arts undergraduate award, a member of the National Honors Society, and a Manson Essay Finalist. Lillian is a veteran of the stage, participating in the Drama Team's fall performances and One-Act Plays for four years. She is also a member of the Jazz Choir, Chess club, and Fencing team and has perfect attendance across multiple semesters. Lillian has also been a member of the track and field team, cross country team, swim team, and rifle team. She has guided visiting students on campus tours and volunteered in the Pittsfield summer track programs.



## Drama Instructor and VPA Chair Debra Susi Recognized as Somerset County Teacher of the Year

Maine Central Institute Drama instructor and Visual and Performing Arts department chair Debra Susi was recognized as the Maine County Teacher of the Year for Somerset County on Thursday, May 12 at the Maine State Capitol in Augusta. In addition to governor Janet Mills, in attendance at the State House were Education Commissioner Pender Makin, Educate Maine Executive Director Jason Judd, State Board of Education Chair Fern Desjardins, 2022 Maine Teacher of the Year Kelsey Stoyanova, and Maine County and State Teachers of the Year Association Co-President Shana Goodall.

"These teachers were nominated by students, colleagues, and parents for the difference they make every day in the lives of their students, for their innovation and leadership, and for their commitment to their schools and communities. You are all true heroes, and the Maine Department of Education (DOE) is so grateful for all you do," said Makin in a DOE media release.

Mrs. Susi has inspired countless students at MCI in her many roles over a 30 year career and continues to spread passion and appreciation for the arts in our school and beyond. A longtime director at the Waterville Opera House and member of the board of directors at Waterville Creates, Mrs. Susi has facilitated numerous opportunities for her students to explore the world of theater outside of her classroom. She has always empowered students by giving them ownership in every stage of the theater production process, and the result has been a highly successful drama program that is perennially recognized at state competitions. Mrs. Susi's students leave her classes with not only an appreciation for theater, but a sense of self esteem and important social skills forged in a collaborative, student-centered environment. We are proud and honored to call her one of our own.

The Maine Teacher of the Year program is a branch of the National Teacher of



*MCI teacher Debra Susi is recognized as the Maine County Teacher of the Year for Somerset County in Augusta on May 12. Seen alongside Mrs. Susi are 2022 Maine Teacher of the year-Kelsey Stoyanova (left) and Governor Janet Mills (right). photo by Scott Giallombardo*

the Year program instituted in 1952. In collaboration with Educate Maine, "a business-led organization working to advance educational attainment and readiness for work among all Mainers," according to its website, the DOE will select a Maine Teacher of the Year from the sixteen County Teachers of the year with the winner being announced in October. The candidate then becomes eligible to be the National Teacher of the Year.

The Maine Teacher of the year program

receives hundreds of nominations for outstanding educators around the state each year. A panel of educators and community members conduct a thorough application process to choose one teacher from each county.

Along with the fifteen educators selected from Maine's other counties, Mrs. Susi will participate in an "intensive Maine State Teacher of the Year selection process throughout the summer," according to the Maine DOE.

Read more about Mrs. Susi, the MCI Drama program, and how their ongoing collaboration with the Waterville Opera House is facilitating hands-on learning opportunities in theater for MCI students on page 22.



## Donor Commits Funds to Refurbish Rowe and Manson Hall

Maine Central Institute (MCI) has already begun making significant improvements in two residential halls and the work will continue over the summer months. A donor has committed funds to refurbish Rowe Hall and Manson Hall, two of the three residential halls on the Pittsfield, Maine campus. Another residential hall, Alumni Hall was refurbished last summer with new bathrooms, and other amenities thanks to the generosity of a donor.

According to MCI's Head of School Winn Price, "these are solid residential halls that were built some years ago, but to our students their appearance is dated. The generosity of this donor will update the look and feel of these facilities while enhancing the student's experience at MCI."

Work on the buildings started during the April break and will be completed before the Fall semester resumes. Construction contractors are working with MCI to ensure the safety of the residents and dorm staff, scheduling work when the buildings will be typically not be occupied.

According to Megan Thompson, Director of Manson Hall, "We know these buildings have provided safe homes and countless memories for many student and faculty residents throughout the years.

Thanks to this generous donor, we can now update and refresh features of both buildings to better accommodate our current and future students."

Refurbishment will include new attractive LED lighting in dorm rooms, stairwells, and halls, new flooring, upgraded stairwells including stair treads, new ceiling tiles, a new multi-tone paint color scheme, window screens, and new laundry machines. In Rowe, along with those improvements, the resident dorm rooms will receive new flooring and trim. In Manson, the improvements will include new sink and cabinets in the common kitchen area.

Within all the hallways, the floor trim will be replaced, all door trim will be painted, and the new color scheme will be applied. Life safety systems will be upgraded in Rowe Hall including new fire/security doors. In Manson Hall, the entrance canopies will be reconstructed.

The student lounge and kitchen spaces will be painted and improved with new furnishings, televisions, and other amenities.

As Thompson envisions the refurbished spaces she predicts, "Our students may not even recognize these residential halls as the same places when they return to campus for the fall semester!"

## Bossov Ballet Theatre to perform "Giselle" on July 29, 30 at the Collins Center for the Arts

This summer, an international cast of 39 dancers, aged 10-early 20s, from Canada, Japan, Mexico, and 9 states will arrive in Maine to take part in Bossov Ballet Theatre's annual summer performance intensive held at Maine Central Institute (MCI) in Pittsfield, Maine. The dancers will present the full classical ballet, *Giselle*, at the Collins Center for the Arts, in Orono, Maine.

Tickets are available for purchase for \$23-33 at the door; by mail at Box Office, 5746 Collins Center for the Arts, University of Maine, Orono, Maine 04469-5746; by telephone at (207) 581-1755 or (800) 622-8499, or online at [www.collinscenterforthearts.com](http://www.collinscenterforthearts.com). Performances will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, July 29th and at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday July 30th at the Hutchins Concert Hall at the Collins Center for the Arts, 2 Flagstaff Road, Orono, Maine.

## Ella Night Showcases Student Prize Speaking Performances, Three Earn "Expert" Scores

On Thursday, April 14, 2022, seven MCI students participated in the annual prize speaking event, Ella Night. Held in the Ella Powell Room in the Powell Memorial Library, the evening featured oral performances by senior Riley Nelson and sophomores Isaac Keresey, Annaleese Singh, Mehmet Berke Baran, Genevieve Ouellette, and Addison Verrill.

Sophomore Isabelle Grard served as Master of Ceremonies, and Humanities teachers Jason Allen and Carolyn Hatch judged the proceedings.

Organized by Humanities teacher and speaking coach Erin Fitts '02, Ella Night is one of many proud public speaking traditions held by the Humanities department. Students are encouraged to choose material from an eclectic range

of interesting topics and genres that hold personal meaning to each of them. At the end of the presentations, judges determine if any of the students qualify as Expert Performers, which will be established using a rubric. If a student does earn this rating, that student will be recognized with distinction.

Receiving Expert recognition this year were Genevieve Ouellette for her self-composed piece "The Laws of Perfection," Addison Verill for her performance of "Galadriel's Opening Monologue" from the movie "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," by Peter Jackson, and Riley Nelson for his rendition of "Address to Those Who Ruined the World" a self-composed performance with excerpts from a speech by Emma Fetzer.

Ms. Fitts and the Humanities department would like to thank the MCI Maintenance staff for their support in setting up the venue and Suzy Morton and The Flower Studio for providing Boutonnieres and Gifts.



from L to R, Annaleese Singh, Addison Verrill, Genevieve Ouellette, Ms. Erin Fitts, Isaac Keresey, Mehmet Berke Baran, Riley Nelson, and Isabelle Grard. photo by Jessica Verrill





## Spring Athletics Update

For the first time since the Pandemic began, MCI returned with a full slate of spring sports in 2022.

At present the MCI Girls Track team has won two of their first two meets of the season, with the MCI Boys Track team staying competitive in those same meets. At a recent Girls' most meet Samantha Martin '22 (Pole Vault), and Emma Burr '24 (200 meter sprint) broke school records.

Both MCI Girls and Boys Tennis teams are near the top of the Class C North standings. Both teams will be regional championship contenders in the coming weeks. Several individual members of both teams have made the state single tournament, which will get underway on May 7th. Our thanks go out to Skowhegan Savings Bank, Bangor Savings Bank and Meridian Lodge 125 for their collective donation of a tennis backboard for the courts at Manson Park. This gift will benefit our tennis programs, our students and the entire Pittsfield community.

The MCI Baseball and Softball teams are developing young talent and competing well against teams with more experience. Both teams are playing on fields that have received significant upgrades thanks to the Manson Park Committee. Our thanks go out to this committee for these improvements.

Sports photographers: Cory and Jess Verrill, track teams, Ben Yarbrough, boys tennis, Kattie Ouellette, lacrosse teams, Nick Miller, baseball, softball, girls tennis







## FOUNDERS CAMPAIGN NEWS

A GIFT FROM an anonymous donor will complete a twenty-year-long renovation and rehabilitation of historic Founders Hall on the Maine Central Institute (MCI) campus. This gift, which is the largest in MCI's history, has been made to complete all the restoration work already begun on Founders Hall this past spring.

The Trustees of MCI had originally planned to raise the funds necessary for a phased renovation and rehabilitation construction plan for the Founders Hall over several years, working during the non-academic portion of each MCI school year. However, returning students and faculty to the building for only for a short time, before again asking them to vacate the building for the next phase of construction was not the best answer to the challenge. A mindful MCI donor realized that completion of the building renovation and rehabilitation in its entirety without pausing the construction process would be the least disruptive and most cost-effective strategy for the school.

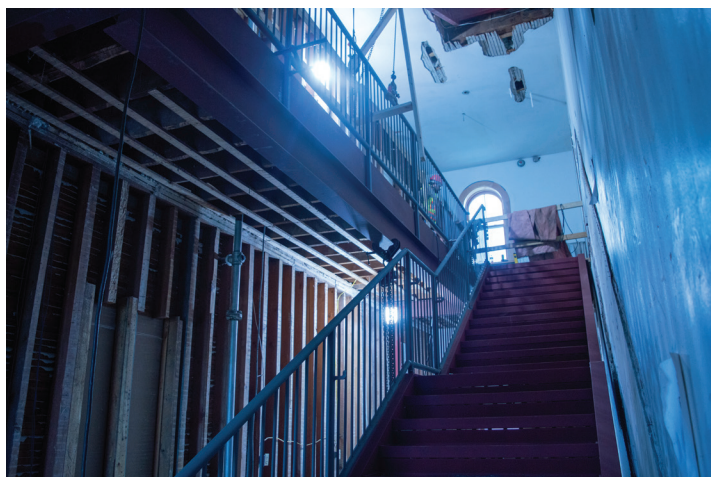
The modernization of Founders Hall began earlier in 2021, and these efforts involve upgrading many requirements within the historic building to comply with current building codes and universal access. Now aspects of the renovation and rehabilitation of the building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, will be completed during this construction season with students and faculty scheduled to return to the classroom building in the Fall of 2022.

"There is a lot of history in this building, and I think you will be surprised and excited by the level of work that is going on in Founders Hall. I look forward to inviting you back to campus for a ribbon-cutting and tour, in the Fall of 2022 as I am certain you will be proud of the final product," says Tim Archibald, MCI '84, Trustee and Architect for Founders.

## Included in the Renovation and Rehabilitation of Founders Hall:

- Rebuilding the north and south stair halls with new steel stairs, new entrances, new interior doors and fire-rated corridors allowing egress
- Restoration of Powers Hall and installing Stage AV & Lighting
- Reconfiguration of all offices and public spaces in the first floor Core
- Installation of an elevator linking all floors including basement
- New ADA accessible entrance to the building
- Upgraded life safety features
- New air-conditioning in the Core and Powers Hall as well as improved ventilation in all classrooms
- New and accessible restroom facilities;
- New energy-efficient lighting
- This work will mean the exterior metal "fire escapes" will no longer be required, and the building will be accessible from the basement to all classroom floors including a new building entrance ramp. Improvements will include upgrades to electrical service and fiber optic telecommunications to accommodate future needs.


*Thanks to an anonymous donor, renovation to the Founders Hall interior, including new steel stairs and railings, is scheduled to be complete by the fall of 2022*



*A newly installed elevator links all floors of Founders Hall including the basement. Renovations including new ramps and entrances have made the building ADA accessible*







# MAINE CENTRAL INSTITUTE WELCOMES DAVID PEARSON AS 24th HEAD OF SCHOOL

STORY AND PHOTOS  
BY JOEL CRABTREE '03

**THOUGH IT WAS** first stated roughly 2,500 years ago, Greek philosopher Heraclitus's observation that change is the only constant in life continues to prove as true as ever. Though his point was really hammered home at the beginning of 2020 as COVID-19 reared its ugly head, the landscape of education at all levels has, in fact, been rapidly shifting for decades. From technology and communication to demographics and career outlooks, each generation – and as we move forward, even each graduating class – faces a whole new set of challenges unlike those faced by their predecessors.

With so many variables becoming increasingly unpredictable year after year, helming a private institution with a public interest like Maine Central Institute may seem like an overwhelming endeavor. Continuing to find success, however, begins with one key word: Teamwork.

“Teamwork is the essence of success,” says David Pearson, who on July 1, will become the 24th Head of School in Maine Central Institute’s history. Pearson has previously served as Assistant Headmaster of Kents Hill School, President and Chief Executive Officer of Carson Long Military Academy in Pennsylvania, and Executive Director of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics in Limestone. “Every institution benefits from a shared consciousness and purpose, where everyone involved is moving together in the same direction. Maine Central Institute is looking for a strategy for the future – to be relevant and sustainable, continuing to deliver an education that propels our students into meaningful lives filled with happiness and purpose. And that’s what I want to do.”

Pearson, who has dual U.S. and British citizenship, has ample experience with teamwork, serving 12 years as an infantry officer with the British Army. During his time in the military, he completed multiple counterterrorism tours in Northern Ireland, served in Bosnia and Iraq, and helped train the Royal Jordanian Army. He even became an instructor in mountain and arctic warfare, making him a certified winter mountaineer. It’s quite possibly one of the reasons Pearson has embraced his adopted title of a full-fledged “Maine-iac.” Not only is he comfortable in cold climates, since moving to Maine in 1999, Pearson

quickly found himself enjoying hunting, fly-fishing, mountain biking, hiking, gardening, and all things photography. Pearson often finds there’s a misperception about military service, with people assuming it’s all “yes, sir” and “no, sir.” Through his experience, Pearson explains that it’s more than simply following orders. Mission analysis, he says, flows through every level of the military, and each member within an operation is a thinking and empowered individual.

“Everyone understands the mission at their level, and they have the ability and skills to interpret and act on that using their training,” Pearson says. “Thinking critically, leading by example, encouraging and supporting teamwork, these are military skills that are directly transferrable to any institution, corporation, or business.”

Since accepting the role, Pearson has been meeting with board members, faculty, staff, and chatting informally with residents within the region, and getting a firsthand look at the communities of Pittsfield, Detroit, and Burnham. In the days leading up to becoming Head of School, Pearson is beginning to learn about the environment which will help identify challenges and problem statements, that in turn will help inform inclusive strategies with an objective of positioning MCI for continued future success. “It’s really an exciting proposition,” adds Pearson. “This is a great school with great history and great people. Every interaction has been entirely positive, the people have been super friendly, and I’m excited to be coming on board and joining such a strong and purposeful community.”

### **DAVID PEARSON’S EDUCATION AT A GLANCE:**

**Background doctoral research:** Complex Adaptive Systems: Operational Design in United States National Strategy.

**University of Aberdeen, Scotland.** Master of Philosophy (M.Phil): International Relations

**University of Gloucester, England.** Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE). National (UK) and European Union (EU) recognized Qualified Teacher Status (QTS): History/ Geography/Information Communication Technology

**United Kingdom Joint Service Command and Staff College**

**School of Infantry, Warminster**

**Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (Queen’s Commission)**

**University of Aberystwyth, Wales.** *Bachelor of Science and Economics (BScEcon): International Politics and Strategic Studies.*



# THE MAN BEHIND THE BELL

The next time MCI students step into Founders Hall, they will be greeted with a modernized version of the old Institute building. The extensively renovated interior is nearly ready to serve 21st century learners as work approaches completion, but the building's most iconic feature remains as recognizable today as it was in 1877. Despite its place in MCI lore, little was known about the man who donated the Founders Hall bell until now.

BY DAVID '70 AND SUE '73 ENGLAND

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**BELLS HAVE LONG** been used as a means for bringing people together. The belfry atop Founders Hall is home to a magnificent bell that has been in place since 1877. For 145 years the bell has been used to summon students to campus and classes, to welcome alumni to the campus for the August Reunion, and to signal joyful reminders of athletic event victories. With the Founders Hall renovation project nearing completion it seemed fitting to look into the history of the school bell.

A trip to the belfry by Bill Cunningham '70 provided photographs of the bell. An inscription on one side of the bell tells that it was cast in 1877 by Meneely & Kimberly of Troy, NY. On the opposite side of the bell is inscribed the following:

MAINE CENTRAL INSTITUTE  
1877  
PRESENTED BY  
H. WARREN LANCEY  
KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER THAN GOLD

Little was known about H. Warren Lancey. He was not one of the MCI founders, however given his last name, it appeared in all likelihood he was related to the Lancey family who settled in Hartland and Pittsfield in the 1800's. The Mary Ann Lancey Manson Park, the famous former Lancey House hotel and Lancey Street all bear the name of this prominent local family.

The research for this article led to Petrolia, Ontario. The following history was adapted from an extensive article about H. W. Lancey from the Petrolia, Ontario Historical Society.

"Henry W. Lancey was born April 5th, 1826 in Pittsfield, Maine. The son of William and Susannah (Wheat) Lancey, Henry lived in Pittsfield until he was 31 years of age. In 1857 he married Miss Lydia Emmeline Drummond of Bangor Maine and moved to Portland, Maine where he owned and operated a successful wholesale hardware business. During that time he and his wife had two daughters, Ella and Emma Lancey.

In late 1865 Henry moved his family to Petrolia, Ontario having been attracted by the growing oil boom in Canada. He utilized the money he had made from the sale of his hardware business in Portland and invested heavily in land and oil production. H.W. Lancey would quickly become one of the area's largest oil producers.

In the late 1860's Lancey reinvested a portion of his money as a shareholder in an English oil syndicate called the Western of Canada. This investment proved substantially prosperous for Lancey. 12 years after investing in the syndicate, he sold his holdings at a considerable profit. He received \$250,000 for his share, which would roughly equate to \$5.8 million in the 20th century for just one of his businesses. Henry Lancey invested his money back into Petrolia. He helped fund the Consumers Oil Refining Company, which was one of the town's first oil refineries. Lancey would remain president



*photo by Bill Cunningham '70*



*H. W. Lancey. courtesy of the Petrolia Historical Society*

of the refinery until just before his death. He was also the Chairman of the Mutual Oil Association, which was one of several Petrolia based oil cartels.

In July of 1871, Lancey purchased the assets of the Crescent Petroleum Association, a local oil producer that was having trouble. The company's assets included 190 acres of land. Using some of that land, Lancey decided to create a high-class housing subdivision in the style of his New England birthplace. He called his development Crescent Park after the Crescent Petroleum Association. He purchased the land in 1872 and by 1874 there were 13 homes built in the Park. Henry used the names Lancey, Henry and Warren as well as other family names when naming the streets. In Crescent Park Lancey built himself a beautiful timber frame house with colonial styling and named it Lancey Hall.

In 1881, Lancey decided to build a massive brick store block in Petrolia's west end even though the majority of development in Petrolia was taking part in the eastern side of the community. Skeptics laughed at H.W. Lancey, claiming him to be a fool for wanting to build such an expensive structure so far from the business district of the east end. One man claimed that the plan "would be pure

folly". Lancey brushed aside the criticism and mockery and built his block anyway. In a show of wit Lancey named his store block "Lancey's Folly", carving the name into a keystone on the front for all to see. The store started such a building boom on the western side of town that within a few short years the focal point of the town had migrated from the eastern side to the west. Lancey's mockers could do nothing but watch as other large brick buildings went up along Petrolia Street. "Lancey's Folly" housed a general mercantile store, operated by Henry W. Lancey himself, as well as the Scarsbrook General Store. Later a creamery, run by son-in-law William English, would operate on the main floor while the Masonic hall met on the second floor.

Henry W. Lancey showed very little interest in the political affairs of Petrolia. He was more interested in the business affairs of the town, helping to promote economic growth wherever possible. Lancey was always known to be an honorable, honest and upright man that demanded equal honesty and justice from others.

On August 15th, 1891 Henry W. Lancey passed away. All stores in the town of Petrolia closed from 1pm to 4pm for Mr. Lancey's funeral. Mrs. Lancey died on November 5th, 1899.

The Lancey family made great contributions in the business and commercial planning of the town of Petrolia. While his brick building was torn down in the 1960's, the other brick buildings that were built because of Henry Lancey's business sense and risk taking currently form the Victorian downtown. Crescent Park, his subdivision, remains intact and well preserved. The original street names and homes are still present and well-kept by their 21st century owners."

The Lancey bell and the belfry have long been a landmark and one of the most prominent focal points of the MCI campus. While it is not known why H.W. Lancey donated the bell to MCI one can perhaps assume that his family connection to Pittsfield was his motivation. His sister, Mary Ann Lancey Manson, was the wife of Dr. John Manson, who was an important benefactor to MCI. His brother, Issac built the famous Lancey House hotel that for years was the centerpiece of Pittsfield's Main Street. Perhaps while visiting one of the numerous Lancey Family reunions, held each summer at Great Moose Pond, H.W. decided that the bell-less belfry had been empty for too many years. Whatever his reason, H. W. Lancey's gift is a fitting and long lasting reminder of this one man's generosity and his belief that "knowledge is better than gold."

*Footnote: Thanks go to Martin Dillon of the Petrolia Historical Society and current owner of Lancey Hall and Bruce Fowler of the Hartland Historical Society. Their contributions made the history of H. W. Lancey possible.*



# REUNION 2022

## FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2022

### Alumni Association Golf Scramble

8:00 am registration

9:00 am Golf

JW Parks Golf Course, Pittsfield

*rain or shine!*

Join MCI alumni and friends for an 18-hole golf scramble. Space is limited; reservations honored on a first come, first served basis. Arrange a foursome, or we can create a team for you. Spouses and friends are welcome to play.

**\$65 per person (includes cart and lunch)**

### Coffee (and Tea) with the Head of School

Alumni House

8:00 am – 10:00 am

No fee

### Tours of Campus

10:00 am and 11:00 am

No fee

### A Look Back and Ahead

A display of historic Maine Central Institute Memorabilia featuring our special reunion classes and Maine Central Institute future plans Parks Gym

10 am – 4:30 pm

No fee

### Hard Hat Tours of Founders Hall

(Must sign up in advance)

Because this is an active construction site, participants must sign up in advance, hard hats, and safety glasses will be required.

10 am, 10:30 am, 11 am & 11:30 am

No fee, but sign-up needed

### Tours of Campus

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

No fee

### Hard Hat Tours of Founders Hall

(Must sign up in advance)

Because this is an active construction site, participants must sign up in advance, hard hats, and safety glasses will be required.

1:00 pm, 1:30 pm, 2 pm, 2:30 pm and 3 pm

No fee, but sign up needed

### Awards Celebration Registration

Trustee Student Center

4:00 pm

### Annual Awards Celebration

Savage Family Dining Room in the Trustee Memorial Student Center – Bill Carr's Famous Small Plate Hors D'oeuvres (enough for a meal) and dessert selections! Cash Bar available.

4:30 pm

\$40 per person

### Party for Alumni and Friends – AZTEC TWO STEP 2.0 LIVE IN CONCERT

Aztec Two Step 2.0 will be live in concert Featuring Rex Fowler '66, Dodie Pettit, and the band! Tables for eight people may be reserved (must be reserved in advance) with a suggested donation of \$200, individual tickets may be reserved with a suggested donation of \$25 per person. Cash Bar available.

Boutelle Savage Lawn – Front Campus Under the Tents

7:30 PM



Scan this QR code with the camera mode on your smartphone to register online, or use the attached form seen on the next page

# SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2022

## Reunion Registration

Student Trustee Center  
8:00 am – 11:00 am

## Tours of Campus

9:00 am and 10:00 am

## Hard Hat Tours of Founders Hall

9:00 am, 9:30 am, 10:00 am, and 10:30 am

Each person must have timed ticket – hard hats and safety glasses will be provided

No fee, but sign-up needed

## Reunion Breakfast

Savage Dining Room

8:30 am – 10:30 am

\$15 Adult/\$10 Children under 13

## A Look Back and Ahead

A display of historic Maine Central Institute memorabilia featuring our special reunion classes and Maine Central Institute future plans

Parks Gym

9:00 am – 12:00 noon

## Welcome New Head of School and Alumni Association Annual Meeting

Parks Gym

11:00 am – 12 noon

## Reunion Registration Continued

Boutelle Savage Lawn, Front Campus – Under the Tents

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

## Reunion Luncheon

“Paul Bertrand’s Chicken BBQ and all the fixins”

Boutelle Savage Lawn, Front Campus – under the Tents

1:00 pm – 3 pm

\$35 Adult/\$15 Children under 13

Cash Bar will be available

## Class Gatherings

Various Locations

3:00 pm

SPECIAL REUNION CLASSES '2 and '7 – and other classes -

Check with your Class Agents or call the Alumni/Advancement Office at 207-487-5915 for more information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest/Children name(s) - include ages of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (required): \_\_\_\_\_

Event	Fee	# Attending	Subtotal
Friday: Alumni Association Golf Scramble	\$65		
Friday: Awards Celebration	\$40		
Friday: Party for Alumni and Friends	\$25 or \$200/table (suggested donations)		
Saturday: Reunion Breakfast - Adult	\$15		
Breakfast - children (12 and under)	\$10		
Saturday: Reunion Luncheon - Adult	\$35		
Lunch - children	\$15		
On-site Accommodations	\$35/night per person or \$50/night couple		
Friday Hard Hat Tours (Circle preferred time): 10am/10:30am/11am/11:30am			
Friday Hard Hat Tours (Circle preferred time): 1pm/1:30pm/2pm/2:30pm			
Saturday Hard Hat Tours (Circle preferred time): 9am/9:30am/10am/10:30am			
Please include a donation to the <b>MCI Annual Fund</b> Contributions support students, Reunion, Homecoming, and advancing MCI's mission			
<b>Total</b>			

## Payment

\*Please make checks payable to Maine Central Institute

\*Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV code: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## DR. JOHN C. MANSON (1830-1885)

John Colby Manson was born in 1830 in Meredith, New Hampshire. He graduated from the University of the City of New York Medical School (now New York University) in 1853 and was the first regular physician to locate in Pittsfield around 1855. He married Mary Ann Lancey of Pittsfield, and the couple welcomed their daughter, Kate, in 1860. Kate would go on to attend and teach at MCI. Their son, John William Manson, was born in 1862.

Manson began his Civil War service as a surgeon with the 24th Maine Regiment in 1862 before being honorably discharged for medical reasons several weeks later.

Upon returning to Pittsfield, Manson resumed his role as the town's doctor.

He served as an MCI trustee, and in 1871, made his most lasting contribution to MCI with the donation of funds for what would become the renowned Manson Essay Competition. The funding was to be used for a \$10 prize (roughly equivalent to \$200 today) each to the boy and girl student for "original compositions rendered orally."

The Manson Essay remains one of MCI's proudest traditions. The competition has happened annually for more than 145 years and has evolved into a competition

between the entire junior class in which students complete a university-level research paper and then give a speech on the topic. A select few are given the title of "Manson Essay Finalists" and are chosen to perform their speeches in front of the community at the Annual Manson Essay Contest. Only one student achieves the coveted title of "Manson Essayist."



*photo credit: Maine State Archives*

## JOHN W. MANSON (1862-1941)

John William Manson graduated from MCI in 1877 before going on to receive his bachelor's degree from Bowdoin College in 1881 and his law degree from the Boston University Law School in 1884. Upon graduation he returned to Pittsfield to practice law.

Manson joined the MCI Board of Trustees in 1905 and served for many years. His financial support for the school included a \$5,000 gift



*photo credit: Pittsfield Historical Society* for Alumni Hall in 1928. He also served as the president of the Pittsfield National Bank for over twenty-five years in addition to practicing law. Manson was a member of the Maine Legislature in 1903 and 1904 and was the president of the Somerset County Bar Association and a director of the Main bar Association. He was also one of the founders of the Sebecook Power Company, which was the first power service for Pittsfield and built the Burnham dam on the Sebecook River.

Upon his death in 1941, Manson bequeathed to MCI one fourth of his estate, which went to the school's endowment. His home was also given to MCI to serve as the residence for the school's headmasters. The Manson House remains the home of MCI Heads of School today.

In 1926, Manson donated land to the Town of Pittsfield for the Mary Ann Lancey Manson Park, in memory of his mother. His will provided a trust for park maintenance, stating, "I desire it to be improved, beautified, and, if necessary, enlarged, to be used somewhat, not principally, as a sport field to which the students of Maine Central Institute shall be welcome; to be used especially as a garden, walk, and playground for all the people who desire to use it."

Manson made his father's Manson Essay prize permanent by giving the school a \$1000 bond in 1921 to be used to continue the essay contest in memory of his father.

*Biographies of John C. Manson and John W. Manson are from the 2016 Sesquicentennial Issue of the Alumnus magazine, which features research from "Local and Legendary: Maine in the Civil War," a year-long collaborative project conducted by Jane Woodruff '64 and others.*

## ROBERT “BOB” KNOWLES ’52



A member of the Class of 1952, Robert “Bob” Knowles is the husband of the late Rae Jean Knowles, a former trustee of Maine Central Institute, and is the grandfather of Randall Starbird ’21. After graduating from MCI, Bob went on to lead a highly successful career in the medical imaging field as the owner and president of Maine X-ray Equipment, one of New England’s largest distributors

of X-ray film and chemicals (located right here in Pittsfield), eventually serving as the president of White Mountain Imaging, a X-ray chemical manufacturer that serves medical facilities across the northeast. During this time, Bob led his companies through the industry shift from chemical-based imaging to include Digital Radiography and X-ray Generating Equipment. He has also been the director of X-ray Marketing Associates, Inc. as well as the director of Merrill Bank.

While Bob has worn many hats, he is perhaps best known in some circles for his contributions to stock car racing in Maine and beyond through his and his family’s ownership of Unity Raceway. Bob inherited the Unity track from his father, Ed, in 1960 and ushered in an era of prosperity and growth for the family raceway. As owner and operator for over 20 years, Bob oversaw renovations including new grandstands, the transition to a paved track, an enlarged pit area, and new fencing. Following in Ed’s footsteps, Bob was inducted into the Maine Motorsports Hall of Fame in 2008. His influence extended beyond Unity as well. He was hired to promote Bangor’s Speedway 95 as “Thunder Speedway,” founded and constructed Spud Speedway in Caribou, and famously struck a deal with Richard Petty at the 1967 Daytona 500 to advertise Unity Raceway across his rear fender.

Bob has been an active member of the Unity Rotary Club and Anah Temple Shriners.

## COL. MICHAEL WYLY

Michael Duncan Wyly is a native of Kansas City, Missouri. He took the oath as a Marine Private in 1957 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant of Marines on June, 6 1962 upon graduation from the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis. His request to specialize as an “Infantry Officer” was granted.

Col. Wyly went on to serve a long and decorated career as a rifle platoon commander, Psychological Warfare Officer, Captain of Marines, and Commanding Officer, and moved through the ranks as a major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel. He served two tours in Vietnam and three in the Western Pacific, receiving the Purple Heart Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat “V” for valor, the Defense Superior Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit. He toured at home in Quantico, Virginia and in The Pentagon, and published frequently in military journals during post-war service while teaching in Marine Corps Professional Schools. He earned a Masters Degree in Russian and Military History from The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. in 1983 and was the first Vice President of the Marine Corps University, a school based on a concept proposed by Col. Wyly himself.

After retiring in 1991, Colonel Wyly moved to Maine and founded Bossov Ballet Theatre, a pre-professional school and performing company devoted to classical ballet and formed around Russian Ballet Maestro Andrei Bossov, formerly a principal with Kirov Ballet, St. Petersburg, Russia. While in this capacity he has continued to publish in professional journals on modern war and lecture occasionally at military schools.

Colonel Wyly resides in Pittsfield, Maine, where he and his late wife, Linda raised their two daughters, Laura ’99 (PhD) and Summer ’00, graduated from Maine Central Institute.





## REX FOWLER '66



The story of Rex Fowler and his band Aztec Two-Step is intertwined with the history of folk/rock music in America. Originating from a chance meeting at an “open mic night” in Boston in 1971, then taking their name from a poem by beat poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Rex and his music partner Neal Shulman went on

to record four albums on Elektra & RCA Records, helping to usher the music of the 60's into the 1970s and beyond. The duo performed worldwide, was critically acclaimed in major U.S. newspapers, reviewed in *Rolling Stone* magazine and appeared on numerous radio and TV shows including The King Biscuit Flour Hour, World Cafe and David Letterman.

With a career built on progressive FM and college radio, and non-stop touring over five decades, the duo appeared in concert with such notable artists as The Band, Bruce Springsteen, Bonnie Raitt, Donovan, Judy Collins, Jackson Browne, Carly Simon, Heart, The Beach Boys and many more.

Now that Neal has retired, and performing primarily as a 5-piece band, Rex continues to expand his musical legacy alongside his wife Dodie Pettit, an accomplished musician and an original member of The Phantom of the Opera. Rex and Dodie first met during a recording session in 1979, then miraculously re-connected, fell in love, and married in 2018. Together, as the heart and soul of Aztec Two-Step 2.0, they continue to impress audiences with their dazzling musicianship, intelligent songwriting, and soaring two and three-part harmonies.

## LEON “LEE” SOUTHARD '64

A member of the class of 1964, Leon (Lee) Southard was a four year member of the baseball team, basketball team, and Key Club during his years at MCI. He served as his class secretary and was its vice president as a senior, and was the manager for the post grad football team. However, it was Southard's four-year involvement as a member of the school band and his appearance playing trumpet in “Spotlight on Youth” that would portend his future achievement: a 50 year career as a one-man band from Maine to Florida with a strong, loyal following.

Southard was one of the best high school pitchers in central Maine during his MCI baseball career, and he went on to set several pitching records at Thomas College in Waterville.

While we all had childhood dreams of what we wanted to do when we grew up, very few of us realized them. Southard's dream of some day pitching for the Red Sox didn't happen but his alternate dream of a career in music did. Being well known from Maine to Florida, his heart remains in Pittsfield, as echoed in his song “Highway to My Hometown.” He performed as the opening act in “Campus Capers, Alumni Style” sponsored by the MCI Alumni Association and held at the Pinnacle Ski Club in Pittsfield. These were held in the early 90's and since then Lee has performed during reunion weekend at J.W. Parks Golf Course in Pittsfield.



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BOSSOV BALLET THEATRE  
AT MAINE CENTRAL INSTITUTE





# All<sup>the</sup> World's a Stage

WHY THEATER AT MCI  
IS ALWAYS MORE THAN  
JUST A CLASS

by Nick Miller '09

AFTER A TWO-YEAR hiatus from the competition stage, the MCI Drama team finally donned costumes and ditched their masks to perform “The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane” at the Maine Drama Festival on March 25th. MCI took second place at the Ellsworth High School regional site during competition weekend, which featured over 50 schools from around the state competing across eight locations. While the Drama team had performed in masks before the student body, the festival was a chance to put their theater skills on display for a public audience and for their peers from around the state. The “One Acts” are the culmination of the spring competition theater season for the Husky cast and crew. But thanks to a longstanding relationship with a local theater, it’s far from being the only high-stakes performance they’re involved in.

Under the guidance of MCI Drama instructor and Visual and Performing Arts department chair Debra Susi, MCI technical theater students take one field trip each semester to the Waterville Opera House where they participate in hands-on workshops led by Opera House personnel. These workshops mainly involve building sets and occasionally making costumes to be used in upcoming shows. While students get to learn the ropes of set design and construction from theater veterans, Opera House staff get important helping hands, often during crunch time leading up to a show.

Susi said, “It’s been a wonderful opportunity. We go twice a year, in the fall and in the spring, to work on whatever, whether it’s a straight show or a musical. Every single show has different needs. Lately they’ve been going down to paint, but a couple of



my students went to the shop and helped build, which is super because I can only do so much here (in the classroom)."

In addition to the Festival Theater Ensemble (or Drama team) MCI offers four levels of technical theater courses that provide students with a hands-on approach to stagecraft. Students build sets, learn scenic painting techniques, and create costumes and makeup designs for MCI Drama productions. They also serve as the run crew for MCI Drama productions and learn stage management techniques as well as lighting and sound design and operation.

Working on sets for Waterville shows has been a gratifying experience for MCI senior Jackson Leonard, and one that he said he felt fully prepared for. "It's really nice to know that a lot of people are going to see the work that we do," he said. "Pretty much everything here at MCI for drama is student-made and student-run. So when we go to Waterville, it's pretty refreshing because we already kind of know what we need to get done."

Student ownership in everything from costume and set production to the performance itself has long been a hallmark of MCI Drama under Susi. A 20-plus year veteran of directing Opera House shows, Susi is now in her eighth year as a member of the board of directors at Waterville Creates, the non-profit organization that encompasses the Opera House, the Maine Film Center and Railroad Square Cinema, and Ticonic Gallery and Studios. Her extensive theater knowledge and deep connection with the Opera House allow her to provide real-world experiences for her students at MCI that most high school drama programs simply can't replicate.

MCI English teacher and Drama co-director John Buys, who has been a presence on the Opera House stage since moving to Pittsfield eight years ago, said that MCI students gain a unique perspective through their work on larger productions outside the

*Senior Jackson Leonard performs as "Bull" in the spring one-act production of "The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane."*

*Leonard is a four-year member of the Drama Team and Technical Theatre classes. He has also performed in the Waterville Opera House production of "Suessical the Musical." photo by Nick Miller '09*



classroom. "You have all of these kids who maybe would never see themselves building sets or costumes or designing makeup for these productions doing it at school, but then also at a community wide level," he said. "The kids have a really intimate and firsthand knowledge of the professional pathways that they can have. I think that's really impactful because it also changes how you think about it. It's never just a high school production, right? It's never just what we're doing in class. They've got a really clear sense of how it can apply to post secondary opportunities."

Leonard said the exposure to Opera House productions have also helped him bring MCI performances to another level. "Working at Waterville, I got to talk with people who design the set and kind of the process they go through. I asked them things like 'how long does it take you to work out painting renders,' or 'what do you use for something like that?' When it comes to my role in tech theater here at MCI, I get to take what they know and apply it to here to make this more like a professional level production."

Working on the set of a larger community theater production is a considerable responsibility for teenagers, but that's precisely why the experience is so meaningful. "The Opera House does a really good job of making it a safe and supportive community, which is why so many of the kids are finding themselves excited about this," Buys added. "It's an immense amount of trust for them to say, 'okay, yeah, these kids are going to help costume us, these kids are going to come in and work backstage and perform with us. There's a level of professionalism, even at the community level, that everybody brings out.'"

The Opera House staff also gets a boost from MCI's tech theater workshops. Michelle Sweet, Executive Director of the Waterville Opera House, said "We are a very small staff of about five people in various positions. So when we're heading towards a large musical, or even a hefty straight show, there's definitely more work than we can fit in the amount of hours that we have available to us. So it's been tremendously helpful to have the students be able to come down," adding, "It's also just been a really nice re-

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*previous: MCI Technical Theatre students work on the set of "Tuck Everlasting the Musical" at the Waterville Opera House in March for the semester one Tech Theatre workshop. photo by Debra Susi*





*MCI seniors Will Newschafer and Lillyana Marcello prepare to take a bow after performing in "The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane" for the student body this spring. photo by Nick Miller '09*



*MCI English teacher and Drama co-director John Buys portrays Christopher Wren in the Waterville Opera Production of Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap." Buys has been a regular on the Opera House stage since coming to MCI in 2013. photo by John Meader, Waterville Opera House photographer*

minder for us as a staff as to the impact that the arts can really have on young people."

**THE COLLABORATION THAT** Susi has facilitated between MCI Drama and the Waterville Opera House doesn't end with technical theater workshops. "In one way, shape, or form, MCI students have been going down to the Opera House and helping and being part of that theater community for a long time," said Susi. In her early days in Waterville, she would recruit her son Mike (class of '01) and his friends on the football team to work the old pin rail fly system that raised

and lowered scenery on the Opera House stage prior to renovation.

More recently, members of the MCI Drama team have been recruited to work the run crew on Opera House productions or, in some cases, take a role in the show. During last year's Opera House production of "Clue," Leonard and fellow MCI senior Will Newschafer worked on the run crew, which entails quickly moving set pieces on and off the stage among other important production jobs.

They also performed as extras in "Newsies" as sophomores, an experience Newscha-

fer said he cherishes. "Mrs. Susi approached me and Jackson, and she was like, 'hey, we need more actors, and you guys would love this.' We were all over it. We were on board," he said. "It was really fun to act on a stage in front of a real audience who paid to be there. And to transfer what we knew at the time from high school level into an actual theater setting—it was just completely new and different."

It was a transformative experience for Leonard too, both in the magnitude of the performance and the depth of learning. "I got to be in a dressing room and learn what the etiquette is around stuff like that, and I got to learn a bunch of stage directions, which we didn't use in high school production," he said. "I also got to feel this experience of going out in front of a really big audience. In high school performances it feels sometimes a little bit forced. But this audience is not just coming to see their friends or their family. Some of them are, but most of them are coming to see the show. And so when they enjoy it you can really feel that, and I feel like it's an experience like none other than I've had in high school. It's just addicting."

Sweet said, "It's been a nice opportunity for those students that have been able to take part in the backstage pieces to really learn a tremendous amount about what it means to be part of that theater team in bringing the magic to the stage. I know that they have for sure gotten a huge amount of gratification from knowing that they were part of making that magic happen."

Susi's students have even done the costuming for Opera House productions before. Sweet said, "I was a little bit nervous about the idea of having these high schoolers who are going to actually be doing the costuming and wasn't sure how exactly I felt about that, but they absolutely shone through for that experience and put on a tremendous showing. That was a delight to watch on stage, and it was bright and vibrant and youthful and all the things that you would expect when you have a young team working together to bring something like that to fruition."

**WHILE SUSI SAYS** it's not her primary goal for her students to move on to careers in the-





*Debra Susi is the Maine Central Institute Drama Director and Visual and Performing Arts Department Chair. She has directed shows at the Waterville Opera House for twenty years and served on the Waterville Creates board of directors for eight. On May 12, 2022, she was recognized as a Maine County Teacher of the Year for Somerset County. photo by Josh Veilleux*

ater, the MCI Drama experience has paved the way for many students to do just that. Buys said, “There are so many students who are excited and interested in going into career fields related to performance and production that happens as a direct result, not just of the classes Deb’s offering, but the fact that they’re experiencing and seeing it in such a professional context.”

Next fall, Newschafer has plans to attend a new program in comedic writing at Emerson College in Boston. “I think theater for me has definitely opened a lot of pathways into what I can do with my life later, because I am interested in theater and acting as a profession,” he said.

For those who don’t go on to a career in theater, the life skills imparted by participating in drama are invaluable. Susi said, “When you leave my classroom, yes, you’re going to learn about the greater things that art and theater and music all of these things have to offer you in your everyday life. The other thing you’re going to take away is ‘hey, I can work with somebody I don’t know very well and I can build a set or I can create a costume’ or ‘hey, look at the props we made.’ You know, we can work together.”

Along with essential skills for post-sec-

ondary life, Susi’s students leave MCI with a deep appreciation for the arts. Newschafer said, “I think it provides a way to take away from problems that people are having. I think you can go somewhere and enjoy an hour or two and leave feeling better, feeling happy that you saw this amazing show. I think that benefits the audience and the people who performed for the audience is kind of like a mutual give and take.”

Leonard echoed his sentiments, saying, “For the audience, being able to walk away and feel completely different from when you walked in it—it’s incredible. And it gives you so much emotional awareness as to what’s going on and how that story changes you. I feel like it’s essential to have stuff like theater arts.”

“What I’m looking for is for them to develop an appreciation for the arts, right? They’re living moving pieces of art,” said Susi. “Theater is a living, breathing, moving piece of art. It encompasses visual arts, scenic painting, it encompasses music, there’s dancing, all of that stuff is incorporated in theater. So when they leave here, I want them to understand that art is all around us.”



*students Jackson Leonard and Spencer Dyer paint set pieces at a tech theatre workshop at the Waterville Opera House. photo by Debra Susi*



*Tech theater students working on set at the Waterville Opera House  
photo by Debra Susi*



from the  
BELL TOWER  
to WEDDING  
BELLS

*Maine Central Institute Alum Jessika  
Brooks-Brewer's French's Point a  
Dream Wedding Destination*

story by Joel Crabtree '03

Though Jessika Brooks-Brewer '96 grew up in Pittsfield, she spent summers staying in a family cottage just down the road from an oceanside summer camp and church retreat in Stockton Springs. While helping out during the church's events and weddings that took place there, there was a spark that was ignited within Brooks-Brewer, as she began to develop a passion for working with people and the hospitality industry. Little did she know all those years ago that she would one day return to the retreat to become its owner, developing it into one of Maine's leading wedding venues.

Though her summers were where she cut her teeth in hospitality, Brooks-Brewer first came out of her shell at Maine Central Institute.

"I was timid as a kid," says Brooks-Brewer, who now



hosts thousands of visitors a year and works alongside leaders in the wedding industry. "I always loved people, but I had a hard time finding words and my place in the crowd. MCI was small enough, so I wasn't lost in a mass of 1,500 students. That helped give me the confidence that I needed to be able to do the work that I'm doing now."

While at Maine Central Institute, Brooks-Brewer tried her hand at several extracurricular activities, some of which she wasn't even all that interested in, but knew she could learn from the experience. From bike team, soccer, drama to managing the softball team, to student athletic training, Brooks-Brewer was willing to give almost anything an honest effort to find her interests. After she graduated from high school, she studied at the University

of Vermont, transferred to the University of Rochester, then Trinity College in Ireland, Stirling University in Scotland, before ultimately finishing her degree in Rochester.

Pursuing a career in social work in the early 2000s, Brooks-Brewer moved from Rhode Island to Florida, unsure of when she would have the opportunity to return to Maine. However, she received a fateful phone call from her father, that set her on the path to French's Point. "He said: 'The retreat's up for sale,'" she recalls. The church had approached her father to help steer the retreat's sale, knowing he cared so much about the property. When his efforts failed to find the right buyer for the beloved property, he had another pitch for Jessika: "I think we have to become the steward to save it."

French's Point, is a peaceful 15-acre property with three large homes and event space for private gatherings. Guests, most of whom are taking part in a wedding or family milestone celebration, get to take in some of Maine's most scenic views while the French's Point team works alongside some of the state's renowned vendors to deliver unforgettable moments that create memories, to be cherished for a lifetime.

"Family is the center of everything for me," says Brooks-Brewer, who has four children of her own between the ages of 8 and 14. "We love to see families reconnect, or new families form and come together over the course of a wedding weekend. That has been this property's purpose since it was first settled, and we're continuing to carry on that legacy."

*For more information or to take a virtual tour of French's Point, visit [fjmaine.com](http://fjmaine.com).*



this page: Emily Delamater Photography



## CLASS OF 1952

**Alvah Wyman** recently moved and is now living with his daughter. He is getting settled and will be in touch with you soon. Would like to see many of you at Reunion August 5 and 6. If you have any questions, contact the Alumni Office at 207-487-5915 or email [alumni@mci-school.org](mailto:alumni@mci-school.org).

**Alvah Wyman**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1959

**David Pattee** wrote: I retired from a paying job one and a half years ago, but not from volunteer jobs. I am the chairman of the local Conservation Commission that also is the Wetlands Commission. I am also the Conservation Commission's representative on the local Water Pollution Control Commission that oversees the operation of a small wastewater treatment plant in the commercial section of Redding, CT. I am a member of the town's Democratic Town Committee and will be a delegate to this year's Congressional, State Senator, and State Representative conventions. Last year I bought a kayak that I use on Long Island Sound when conditions are good. I hope to make it to this year's Alumni Weekend and hope to see some of my classmates.

**Donna Richardson Glenn** wrote: My family in Arizona is fine. We have a second grandbaby due in July. They give us much happiness and joy. The 80's are great!!! A little more pain here and there but we are grateful to be here. I still have great memories of MCI.

**James MacMichael**, Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1963

**Patricia Rodgers Skaling** wrote: My husband Mike and I celebrated our 54th wedding anniversary in April, though it seems like it couldn't possibly be that long ago we were married in Pittsfield and honeymooned in Quebec during a cold April week. We are happily living in Camden where we both volunteer for town committees and enjoy life on the coast. I keep busy with the town's

Historic Resources Committee work and assisting individuals research the history of their older houses and manage the town's Historic House plaque program. I am also deep into family genealogy and find it fascinating and challenging to uncover relatives in the 18th century.

We have recently traveled west to visit children and grandchildren and especially enjoy skiing and hiking with them. We attended our first grandchild's high school graduation last June in Anchorage. He was valedictorian of his class and is now finishing his freshman year at Stanford. Next month, in June, we'll be in Salt Lake City for our granddaughter's high school graduation. She was recently recognized for her academic achievements as a Cum Laude scholar (a designation often used in independent schools in place of the traditional academic recognition designations). She will attend Davidson College in North Carolina.

Last spring we bought a small boat and now enjoy trips to the nearby islands and boating on a local lake. We spend a lot of time outdoors exploring the many hiking trails in the area and way too much time taking care of our yard! We look forward to returning to museum visits and cultural

events as we become more comfortable being in enclosed venues again. We wish everyone a wonderful summer.

**Marcia Sprague Hodson** writes that she returned to the Pittsfield area in February to attend her sister's "surprise" 80th birthday party. Great to see family and friends. **Jan Viger Bryant** joined her at the party. She commented that coming up from Florida, winter was colder than it used to be.

**Janet Viger Bryant**  
**Marcia Sprague Hodson**  
**Wayne Pinkham**  
Class Agents

## CLASS OF 1966

From **Dalen Mills**: **Norby '66** and **Chris Young** and **Liz** and **Dalen Mills '66** got together in April for a Viking cruise from Los Angeles, to San Diego, to Santa Barbara (weather forced us to bypass Santa Barbara where we were going to get together with Pete Susi '65 (not seeing Pete sucked), then San Francisco, then to Astoria, Oregon, then to Victoria, BC then to Vancouver. Then our flights to Daytona Beach and Portland had us



*Dalen Mills '66, Liz Mills, Christine Young (seated), and Norbert Young '66*

parting company in Seattle. We had two days in LA and this picture was from the lunch area in the Getty Museum which was incredible. We also went to the Getty Villa as well. One of the many highlights of the two days in LA was getting together with **Greg Patterson '69 and wife Elaine** for a wonderful dinner and great conversation. Overall the trip was very tiring with a lot more walking than was expected for us old people but we were all troopers. None of us had gone much of anywhere during Covid and this was kind of a starter trip for us all and sharing time with the four of us was great. Norby is a great tour director in La and we saw things that we weren't going to likely do without his foresight.

**Vicki Boetsch** wrote: Today is Mother's Day as I script some news from Rockport, Maine. Weather's improving, not so the issues around Covid numbers. I'm proud to say, although I'm officially retired from the ranks of the nurses' in those difficult positions around the state & county, the Knox County Nurses' Guild (I am head of the scholarship committee), just awarded 4 local students in nursing schools & universities with scholarships and support. Also today, my brother **Chris (class of '67)** and I did some cemetery cleanup and flagpole repair in memory of our Mom who pushed us out of the nest into MCI so long ago it seems.

Speaking of "long ago...", **Dalen Mills**, asked me to put the push on for a new MCI Alumni Directory. The last official directory was done in 2000 (22 years ago) and he believes the only other one (we remembered) was around 1985. The Advancement Office has also eluded to the need for something of this kind as well. Class mates and fellow Alumni, is this something that could be done? Let me know your feelings about this as it would be a rather large & possibly costly project.

**Kathy Sweet Waugh** tells me she's been cautiously walking her dog and using those great hiking sticks throughout the late winter months. She continues to assist her husband Charles with his writing and publishing books. As I remember, many of them are about animals.

**Norby Young** and his wife hosted Peter



*Members of the Class of 1968 and friends gathered on the coast of Maine*

and me for a lovely weekend in Southwest Harbor for my 74th birthday in April. We were fortunate to be taken to a Judy Collins live concert at the Criterion Theater in Bar Harbor as well as eat at the Havana Restaurant. It was fairly quiet on most of the trails in Acadia National Park then.

As the school gears up for Alumni Reunion Weekend in August, please let me know what's going on in your life. Or you can send your news directly to the Advancement Office via the MCI Link. I look forward to seeing classmates there then.

**Vicki Boetsch**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1968

**Sharon Ringuette** wrote: **Dawn (Peterson) and Jesse Cox** spent a couple of months on Unity Pond last summer and report it was lots of fun. Something Dawn has wanted to do for a long time. Together with their daughter, **Lindsay, Kathy (Starbird) and Paul Warburg, Dora (Barrett) and Steve Miles, Rose Ann and Ellery Hathorn**, and me, we took a day trip to the coast. Along the way we stopped at the Penobscot Narrows Bridge for a ride to the top and a spectacular view. Then down into the Fort Knox Historical Site to explore some history and some very interesting architecture. From there it was

a drive down to Deer Isle and then over to Belfast for pizza, beer, great conversation and laughs.

We strive each year to get together if possible. As time passes, we realize how precious our friendships are. We do our best to stay in touch throughout the year and hope a few of us can gather again this summer at MCI Reunion and perhaps another fun day trip. If you are in the area at that time, please reach out and join us for our own little reunion. Please send any updates or information you would like to share with the class. Do hope you are all doing well. Next year - '55!!!

**Sharon Hanson Ringuette**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1975

**Bud Ingraham** writes: I hope this finds you all well and getting out this summer, as it has been a while for most. We are looking forward to seeing you at Alumni Weekend, August 5th and 6th, 2022. Look for the schedule and get signed up early for the events on campus or the golf scramble, as we are expecting a great turn out!

Some notes as to what classmates may be up to are far and few between, but I do stay in touch with quite a few. I am enjoying retirement and loving the business of real estate. Doing a little kayaking on the Kennebec and am having my knee replaced



on May 30th, so maybe I can play in the golf tournament!

I have a granddaughter that is almost 2 and one due on May 20th – very exciting times at the Ingraham's!

I do see **Brian Duplisea** when he is up. He and his wife Lisa have moved to Stuart from Miami and have a beautiful place to watch the air show from. Brian is doing very well after a bout with cancer.

I see **Mike Susi and Deb** from time to time. They are very active and it's always good to see them.

I heard from **Ruth Dutting White**, and she is busy with grandchildren as well.

**Kiti Rogers Trudell and Dennis Mitchell** are living the dream. Have a beautiful spot by the water in NH, and enjoy time in their RV. Grandchildren are in the Carolinas and they get there quite often.

I attended a concert at the Waterville Opera House with **Rusty Hall, Matt McGowan and Pat McGowan**. Sitting right behind us was **Roxanne Rollins**!

**Bart Kelleher** is back home and retired from his life away in NYC, Miami and Colorado. He did an around-the-world trip when he left Miami, and had quite the time!

**Suzie Quint** stops by, and it's always good to see her catch up.

Well, I hope to see as many of you as I can for Alumni Reunion. There are tons of things to do, and so much fun! Please come and enjoy. Oh, **Rex Fowler '66** and his band, Aztec Two-Step 2.0, will be playing under the tent on Friday night.

**Bud Ingraham**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1976

**Colleen Dunphy Martin** wrote: I retired from SAD #53 after working between three of the schools for 40 years. I now have three granddaughters. We just moved again into our 4th new home right on number 9 green at the golf course. My husband **Stephen (Class of 1973)** is slowly beginning to retire after many years. Still working but no more house building for him. My oldest son **Kory (class of 2001)** and his family live in Pittsfield and my

youngest son **Bradley (Class of 2003)** lives in Manchester New Hampshire. Keep me updated on any festivities.

**Mickey Young** wrote: I am still in Detroit living with my husband, and in June we will have been married for 45 years. I have three grandchildren, Jenna age 20, Alex age 10, and Abe is 3. Grandchildren are great. They come and visit and then they can go home with Mom and Dad. I have been retired for 2 years now. That is wonderful. The old saying, "I don't know how I got anything done before retirement" fits me. That is pretty much it in a nutshell.

**Charlie Tryder** wrote: I am happy to serve as the class rep for '76. I hope to hear from you all in the coming months and years. Fill us in on what is happening in your life! After 38 years of classroom, coaching, and administrative ventures in the education field, I retired. I have a home in Lovell, but my wife Helen's business is in Portland, so we recently moved there. Although retired, I have been subbing regularly at Waynflete in Portland while assisting with the girls' basketball team and coaching middle school baseball. My two children and three step children have all graduated college and all but one lives in the Portland area. (I am working on the other). With one grandchild and another on the way, I feel blessed. If you are in the Portland area, I would love to get together. Please reach out. Hope to see you all in August.

**Charlie Tryder**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1979

**Phil Hendricks** wrote: Ellen and I live in Augusta and enjoy our 11 grandchildren. We run our company Gerrick Enterprises and enjoy life to the fullest.

**Anthony Edith** wrote: Bonnie and I are still enjoying life in Richmond Virginia. The pandemic has slowed life down a bit but we still enjoy a simpler life here in our Backyard Paradise (BYP). We welcome you all to come hangout with us! We also look forward to the next time ...

**Kathy Kelly**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1980

From **Belinda Laflamme**: I hope everyone is doing well. It has definitely been difficult the past few years for everyone. We are strong and will keep moving forward. I can't believe how the years are passing so fast. So get out and do what you enjoy in life. Do not wait. I have so enjoyed the small class gathering the past 2 years. It was great!! Thank you to **Stacy and Tina Fitts** for providing the location. I started a Fairy Garden at camp two summers ago. This has been attracting young children to come down with their parents to visit frequently when they are visiting. They play "I spy." One little girl left a note for the fairies. I continue to collect items to add that is ok for them to play with. I have enjoyed this so much. My family has had a lot of changes. My brother Lee passed away several years back, but he has two beautiful grandchildren. My mom lives with me now. She has Dementia and, having experience with dementia in the medical field, it has been a game changer when it's your own mother. We are making the best of what we have. I am still loving my job at RFGH—definitely a lot of changes.

**Belinda Lawrence Laflamme**  
Class Agent

## CLASS OF 1985

From **Hope Tormey (Roberts)**: Hope and Paul just celebrated their 26th anniversary in Jamaica. Their kids are grown and doing well. Abby is a Deputy sheriff in Silverton CO. Michael graduated with a dual degree in Civil engineering and economics and then won a scholarship to study in London for two years which he is just finishing up. He will start a full time job in London this fall. Hope and Paul just moved to Texas after a lifetime in Maine, bought a house, found new jobs and love living in the South.

**Karen Rollins Fraser**  
Class Agent

## Class Agents

1950 - Virginia Coolbroth Landry  
 1951 - Robert Hutchinson  
 1952 - Alvah Wyman  
 1953 - Catherine Doyle Mooers  
 1955 -  
 1956 - Forest Frost  
 1959 - Jim MacMichael  
 1960 - Joan Basford Bradley  
 1960 - Marilyn Nash  
 1962 - Preston Carter  
 1963 - Janet Viger Bryant  
 1963 - Marcia Sprague Hodson  
 1963 - Wayne Pinkham  
 1964 - Barbara Vigue Day  
 1965 - Lawrence Yeaton



Scan this QR  
 code with camera  
 mode on your  
 smartphone to  
 see what your  
 classmates have  
 been up to now  
 and in previous  
 issues of the  
*Alumnus*

1966 - Vicki Boetsch  
 1967 - Sheilya Cookson Voter  
 1968 - Sharon Hanson Ringuette  
 1969 - Susan Furbush Ryman  
 1970 - William Cunningham  
 1970 - David England  
 1970 - Martha Lloyd  
 1971 - Jeffrey Knights  
 1971 - Laurie Fitts Loosigian  
 1973 - Susan Smith England  
 1974 - Vera Lloyd Bryant  
 1975 - Ralph Ingraham, Jr.  
 1976 - Charlie Tryder, Jr.  
 1978 - Robert Stackhouse  
 1979 - Kathy Kelley  
 1980 - Belinda Lawrence LaFlamme  
 1981 - Suzanne Lynch Guild  
 1982 - Cheryl Pareson Austin  
 1985 - Karen Rollins Fraser  
 1986 - Tammy Reynolds George  
 1986 - Lisa Nickerson  
 1987 - David O'Brien  
 1988 - Chris Mitchell  
 1988 - Loren Lavalie Martin  
 1989 - Nancy MacGown Monteyro  
 1990 - Thomas Bertrand  
 1991 - James Richards  
 1992 - Sean Callahan

1993 - Kristin McCaughey Gagnon  
 1993 - Jennifer Kuhlmeier Lebo  
 1994 - Courtney Cianchette Harvey  
 1995 - Frances Oviatt Rogers  
 1996 - Heather Gray Csontos  
 1997 - Terri-Jean Grant Wilkinson  
 1998 - Jared McCannell  
 1999 - Natalia Mayhew Hall  
 2000 - Hillary Stevens  
 2000 - Michael Thompson  
 2001 - Daniel Flaherty  
 2002 - Donna Russo Sawtelle  
 2003 - Ashley Holt Morency  
 2004 - Melissa Hussey Stinson  
 2005 - Sarah Frost Robertson  
 2006 - Andrew Moody  
 2007 - Brittanee Holt Smith  
 2008 - Tyler LePage  
 2009 - Brandon Wilson  
 2010 - Aaron Kirouac  
 2011 - Cody Thies  
 2012 - Michaela George  
 2013 - Courtney Fowler  
 2014 - Shane Hathaway  
 2017 - Carter Pearl  
 2019 - Kendrah Willey  
 2020 - Bartianna Brown

## The Advancement Office was notified of the passing of these members of the MCI family:

Shirley Bryant  
 Claton Corriveau  
 David Flanagan  
 Marilyn Graham  
 Evelyn Monti  
 William Richardson  
 Arlene Updyke  
 Floyd James '41  
 Charlotte Mitchell Murtha '44  
 Desmond Fuller '47  
 Charles London '48  
 Leroy Pinkham '48  
 Robert Vance '51  
 Robert Benoit '52

Sandra Hmphyre Carson '52  
 John Page '53  
 Priscilla Foss Rende '53  
 Leona Cross Lovely '55  
 Vincent Trincia '55  
 Marvis Bryant Chambers '56  
 Ruel Dutton '57  
 Lloyd Quiet '57  
 Donna Donaldson Moore '59  
 Harold Small '59  
 James Cole '60  
 John Doty '62  
 Linda Cregnoles '63  
 Jozef Tara '63

James McConnell '66  
 David Robb '66  
 Robert Ashe '67  
 Patricia Rollins Roberts '67  
 Sally Cunningham Wheelden '71  
 Terry Bishop '73  
 Raymond Ferris '73  
 William Glencross '73  
 Donald Hallenbeck '76  
 Annette Bouffard '79  
 Gregory Lasselle '85  
 Lisa Wright Irish '87  
 Dylan Dahlbergh '15  
 Brooke McGowan Talbot '00

*Our deepest condolences go out to the families and friends of those who have passed on. The Advancement Office tries its very best to record accurately the names of the alumni/ae and friends who have passed away. Please contact our office at (207) 487-5915 or [alumni@mci-school.org](mailto:alumni@mci-school.org) about the passing of alumni/ae or friends of MCI.*





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**Planning for your future  
can be planning for ours.**

Learn more about MCI's Heritage Society by contacting  
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