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FISHER COLLEGE Magazine
Issue Seven / 2025

Future Ready

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Photograph by Christopher Churchill

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Giving Back: gifts of appreciated stock can fund your charitable giving goals.

Foreword



From the President

Building on Success

THIS HAS BEEN A YEAR of remarkable momentum for Fisher College. From record international enrollment to national recognition in athletics and esports, our community continues to achieve at the highest levels.

Enrollment has rebounded strongly, with increases across our undergraduate, graduate, online, and international programs. Twenty-eight percent of our traditional student body now comes from outside the United States—the highest percentage in Fisher’s history. With demographic shifts reducing the number of domestic high school graduates, broadening our international reach has been both timely and essential. Partnerships with organizations such as Kings Education have been vital to this success.

Our five-year strategic plan is bearing fruit, with many goals already achieved. We’ve expanded degree offerings to meet student and workforce needs, adding a STEM M.B.A. and a Masters in Education with a concentration in Early Childhood Education. We’re also ahead of the curve

offering a minor in Artificial Intelligence, and a concentration in A.I. within the Information Technology program.

Athletics and esports are also thriving. Fisher now fields the largest number of student-athletes in our history, thanks in part to roster growth on our women’s teams (“The Game Changers,” page 26). Our Esports program has gained national prominence, with many of our teams ranking among the top three in the country and even defeating Texas A&M. For a small college, these accomplishments speak volumes about the dedication of our students and coaches.

Fisher’s greatest strength, however, is its sense of community, a spirit embodied in Arthur Asbury, Director of the Academic Advising and Support Center, who retired after 22 years of service (“Good Advice,” page 14). Arthur’s tireless dedication, especially to students facing the greatest challenges, helped countless Falcons graduate. His legacy is a reminder of the personal attention that defines Fisher College.

As we honor Arthur’s contributions, we also look ahead. We welcome two new trustees: Ruben P. Sança, a higher education leader in career counseling, and Ed Palleschi, a business consultant and former cabinet member under Governor Charlie Baker (“News + Notes,” page 9). Their expertise and connections will strengthen our board and guide Fisher’s future.

Finally, Fisher remains financially strong. We continue to operate with a surplus, our endowment is at its highest level ever, and S&P has reaffirmed our BBB+ rating with a stable outlook.

Thank you to our alumni, faculty, staff, and friends who help us build on this momentum. Together, we are shaping a future of strength, opportunity, and connection.

Steven Rich, P’21 / President

Contributors



Christopher Churchill / Photographer

Churchill is a documentary photographer whose work has been shown internationally and is held in private and public

collections including The Corcoran Gallery of Art, The J. Paul Getty Museum, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Smithsonian. His clients include *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Architectural Digest*, Bank of America, Google, and Volvo, among others.



Bob Curley / Writer

Curley is a freelance writer based in Rhode Island who writes about travel, food, culture and health and wellness for publications including

New England Home, *Caribbean Journal*, *Newport Life*, Fodor’s, and Healthline. He is also the author of *100 Things to do in Rhode Island Before You Die*, *Secret Rhode Island: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure*, and *Rhode Island Off the Beaten Path*.



Bob Gulla / Writer

Gulla is a veteran writer who began his adventure in journalism in Boston where, boosted by a love for music, he began writing

for the city’s many fanzines. Since then he has broadened his range to include sports, travel, and business. He has taught college courses in writing and communication, published a small handful of books, including *Icons of R&B and Soul: An Encyclopedia of the Artists Who Revolutionized Rhythm and Guitar Gods: The 25 Players Who Made Rock History* and written for many publications, including *People*, *Rolling Stone*, and the *Boston Globe*. He now lives in Newport, Rhode Island, with his family.



Maria LaPiana / Writer

Maria LaPiana is a writer and editor who has a special interest in architecture, design, and higher education. She has a master’s degree in

Magazine Journalism from Syracuse University and has held senior writing and editing positions at both regional and national magazines. A regular contributor to *New England Home*, she is currently freelancing from her home in Connecticut.

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For the Record

Worldwide Reach

Fisher College continues to expand its reach to students across the globe. For the fall 2025 semester, the College welcomed 87 new international students representing 26 countries. In total, 28 percent of Fisher's undergraduate students now come from outside the United States—the highest proportion in the school's history. To strengthen its presence in one of its fastest-growing markets, Fisher recently appointed Norresca Pereira as Regional Recruiter for India. "We have a growing commu-

nity of Indian students—about eight undergraduates and fifteen graduate students this term—and the number rises each year," Pereira says.

Among Indian students, she says, popular programs include Management, Information Technology, Psychology, Health Sciences, and the M.B.A. "Fisher stands out for its personalized attention, an inclusive community, and a strong academic foundation that helps our international students adjust, grow, and thrive," Pereira adds. "With its location in the heart of Boston, Fisher also provides excellent internship opportunities that connect theory with real-world experience."

Connect

Stay in Touch

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: 617-236-8822

VISIT: fisher.edu/alumni

Help Build Our Community

There are a number of ways to connect with 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. 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 for them. Those opportunities include hiring students for internships, participating in mock interviews and the Spring Career Fair,

or 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 estate gifts, gifts of stock, wire transfers, 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 or certificate by enrolling in one of our growing number of professional and master's degree programs, taking a professional studies course, or participating in customized corporate training.

The Beacon

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

Fisher Works

Dressed for Success Runway ready, the Fisher Fashion Society hosts another winning show.

BY MARIA LAPIANA

Making it in the world of fashion is no easy task. It's fast-paced, ever-changing, and demands a diverse skill set, from creativity to business acumen. That's why the Fashion Merchandising program at Fisher puts a premium on hands-on learning. "Our annual Fashion Show is a perfect example," says Catherine Murphy, Assistant Professor, Program Director, and Advisor to the Fisher Fashion Society. "And this year's show was outstanding."

The Fashion Society welcomes members from all disciplines, from Sport Management to Marketing, Murphy says. And its students literally run the show, from finding the venue to deciding on a theme to choosing the ensembles that will be featured on the runway. They're responsible for rehearsals, publicity, and social media.

"Because we're a merchandising and not a design concentration, the garments may not be hand-sewn by students, but we do focus on product development," Murphy says. "They'll delegate roles and style everything. And with a minimum of 20 models every

year, you can imagine there is a lot to do."

The show is staged at the end of the spring semester every year, and while it had been held in Alumni Hall, this past spring it took place on April 23 at the First Church of Boston.

The best way to judge a show's success is by attendance, Murphy says. "I remember the first year, I said, 'Now don't be depressed if no one comes out.' But it was so crowded we had to get more chairs!"

She's pleased to report the show is well attended every year. "We do an after-party reception, where we acknowledge all the students' hard work, and where we launch that year's magazine," she says. The students produce *In Between*, an annual, polished publication covering industry trends and more.

"I believe students need an outlet for creativity and expression," Murphy says. "By staging the show, they have an opportunity to put their personalities on display." She is thankful for all the support the fashion program gets from the administration: "It just wouldn't be possible without it," she says.

The next Fisher Fashion Show is scheduled for April 23, 2026.

**"I believe students
need an outlet
for creativity and
expression."**

CATHERINE MURPHY,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, AND FISHER
FASHION SOCIETY ADVISOR





Assistant Professor Catherine Murphy, Fashion Merchandising Program Director, with Fisher Fashion Society members Molly Tapper '25 (left) and Natalia Matos '26 (right), and copies of *In Between*, the magazine created for their annual fashion show.

Beacon / Fisher Today



Commencement 2025

The 121st Commencement celebrated the achievements of a new group of graduates ready to make their mark.

BY PAULA M. BODAH

Fisher College welcomed some 300 members of the Class of 2025 and their guests to the 121st Commencement, held May 10 at the Back Bay Events Center. The ceremony included addresses by President Steven Rich, Boston campus valedictorian Ariana Ramos Cardona '25, and Graduate and Professional Studies valedictorian Sheryl Burke A.S. '00, B.S. '25.

The Commencement Address was delivered by Red Sox legend and National Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Pedro Martinez and his wife, Carolina Cruz Martinez, former ESPN sports reporter and President of the Pedro Martinez Foundation. Fisher College established a \$5,000 scholarship to support the Foundation, which helps underserved youth in the Dominican Republic as well as in Boston, the Bronx, and Miami. President Rich also awarded both honorees an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

Class of 2025

'DO EVERYTHING YOU DO WITH LOVE'

Carolina Cruz Martinez reminded graduates that they are not alone. "Allow God to write the best story that you can write. He will allow you to be the best version of yourself." **Pedro Martinez** exhorted graduates to make love a priority. "If you show love for whatever you are doing, you will beat fear, beat time, beat whatever adversity is in front of you. Whatever you strive to do, love it, respect it, honor it. What comes out of love is always going to be great."



“Strong branding means consistently delivering a clear promise and building trust.”

SUNG-YUN (ASHLEY) CHUNG, D.B.A.

Three Quick Questions

Sung-Yun (Ashley) Chung, D.B.A.

Assistant Professor and Program Director, Marketing

1 / How is AI changing marketing and branding? AI is transforming the way brands engage with their audience. Marketing is becoming increasingly personalized, predictive, and creative, with tools that adapt messages in real time, anticipate customer needs, and generate content on a large scale. AI can enhance speed and gain insights, but only human creativity can make content authentic and relevant.

2 / What’s the biggest misconception about branding? Many assume branding is just a logo or color scheme. In reality, it’s the entire experience and perception of a company. Strong branding means consistently delivering a clear promise and building trust—insights I share in my book *Branding Talk: From Branding Basics to Branding Cases*.

3 / How do you prepare students for today’s marketing world? Marketing has shifted from isolated campaigns to continuous conversations, and branding is now co-created with customers and employees. To prepare students, I combine timeless fundamentals with hands-on projects for Boston-area organizations, from analyzing Gangnam Spice’s strategy to promoting the Boston Women’s Heritage Trail. In today’s market, the real edge is learning quickly and thinking critically. —ML

Prepped for Success **Nayeli Peña '27** took advantage of Fisher's pre-college program to save time and money and to smooth the transition from high school to college.

BY MARIA LAPIANA

For Nayeli Peña '27, planning ahead is second nature. The junior from Boston describes herself as the kind of person who likes to be prepared. "I don't like going into new situations without having at least some idea of what to expect," she says. That's why she enrolled

in Fisher's early-college program for East Boston High School students.

Developed to ease the transition from high school to college, the East Boston High School Early College Program offers strategically sequenced summer classes that allow students to earn up to 12 college credits while still in high school. "One of the main reasons I took the early-college course was to get an early start and help me adjust to what college would be like," Peña says. The fact that it was free was a plus.

After graduating from EBHS, Peña en-

"What I'd really like to do is contribute to society by helping produce pharmaceutical products that prevent and treat disease."

NAYELI PEÑA '27



rolled at Fisher as a full-time, degree-seeking student. She is majoring in biology and plans to pursue a career in the biotech field. “What I’d really like to do is contribute to society by helping produce pharmaceutical products that prevent and treat disease,” she says. She knows there will be challenges ahead: “I try to stay on top of my schoolwork, plan out my schedule, and manage my time so I don’t fall behind.”

Fisher offers other early-access opportunities in addition to its East Boston High School Early College Program. These include College

101 and Dual Enrollment, all designed to help students move smoothly from high school into higher education. There’s another plus: Students who choose to enroll at Fisher after completing one of these programs receive a \$23,000 scholarship, renewable annually. The programs also include textbooks, transportation, and academic and social support.

“The experience gave me confidence for my transition into college,” Peña says. It prepared her in many ways for what was to come, “and as you know,” she adds with a smile, “I like to be prepared.”

News + Notes

Clubs in Full Swing

Fisher College’s clubs are a vital part of campus life, giving students the chance to explore passions, connect with peers, and sharpen leadership skills. This year, the College kicked off the semester with the annual Clubs, Organizations, and Majors Fair, bringing together dozens of groups, from the Black Student Union and Women’s Empowerment Club to the Psychology and Fashion clubs, to showcase the variety of ways students can engage both academically and socially.

Several new organizations are already making their mark, including the Debate Club, the Greenline Environmental, and the Dungeons & Dragons clubs. The latter is quickly becoming one of the most popular groups on campus.

With options ranging from community service to sport management, Fisher’s student organizations continue to foster creativity, friendship, and a vibrant culture that extends far beyond the classroom.

New Trustees

Fisher College has welcomed two new members to its Board of Trustees, each bringing unique expertise and a strong commitment to student success.

Ruben P. Sança, a first-generation college graduate who grew up in Boston after emigrating from

Cape Verde, is executive director of Braven Greater Boston, an organization that helps students transition from college to meaningful careers. A long-distance runner who represented Cape Verde in the 2012 Olympics in London, Sança has also led athletic and nonprofit organizations locally and internationally. He says joining Fisher feels like “coming home,” noting the campus’s diversity and close-knit spirit. About his new role, Sança says, “I hope I can bring my experience in student affairs to keep students at the center of every single conversation we’re having.”

Edward A. Palleschi, president of One Ellis Associates, LLC and a longtime public affairs consultant, has more than 35 years of experience in government and business, including serving as



New Fisher trustees Ruben P. Sança and Edward A. Palleschi bring deep experience in education, business, and public service—and a shared commitment to helping students thrive.

Massachusetts undersecretary for consumer affairs and business regulation in the administration of Governor Charlie Baker. Calling Fisher “a gem in Boston,” he was drawn to its mission of supporting first-generation students. “So many of the big schools get the attention,” he says, “but I love the idea of the underdog—the little guy. Fisher is where kids can really find their way, find a niche, find a future.”

Success Starts Here

Fisher College’s new First-Year Advising Program is helping first-year students make a smooth transition to college life. Academic Advisor and Head Women’s Basketball Coach Vivian Lara leads the initiative, guiding all first-year students through their academic journey. “We work together on choosing the right classes, understanding degree requirements, and exploring career options,” Lara explains.

Every first-year student also takes Common Experience, a course that introduces them to Fisher’s academic community and connects them with faculty in their chosen major. “We pride ourselves on being a small school where we can support every student and get to know them one-on-one,” says Lara. “It’s good for students to know someone is looking out for them.”



Student Spotlights

1 / Faith Fisher ’29 Fisher, a Health Sciences major from New Jersey, plans a career as an occupational therapist. The first-year student, who plays outfield on the Fisher softball team, values the College’s sense of community. “I came here not knowing anyone, and I have so many friends now,” she says. “Everyone knows everyone.”

2 / Josh Pafundi ’25 Pafundi transferred to Fisher from a Canadian college in his junior year, drawn by his interest in sports broadcasting. He was part of Fisher’s successful Playfly Esports broadcast season last spring and is now interning with Harvard Athletics. “I’d love to go into broadcasting,” the Sport Management major says, “but if not, I can use my communications skills in many jobs.”

3 / Ryan Sheehan ’25 After time in the working world, Sheehan came to Fisher at 24 to major in Sport Management with a concentration in Esports. Now interning with Harvard Athletics, he’s comfortable wearing many hats—from video production assistant to cameraman to TV graphics operator. His goal: “to work in broadcast production somewhere ... but not the news.”

4 / Myiah Van Dyke ’29 A softball recruit from Pennsylvania, Van Dyke chose Fisher for its athletics and size. “It feels like a small community. Everyone’s really close,” she says. “I like getting to know different people.” A first-year student with clear purpose, she adds, “I love money, numbers, cash flow, and revenue sheets.” Her major? Management with a concentration in Accounting, of course. —ML

Beacon / Pathways

Future Focused Fisher's annual Senior Career Conference gives students real-world tools, mentors, and connections for post-graduation success—and confidence in what comes next.

BY MARIA LAPIANA

AMONG THE MANY THINGS that make Fisher College unique is its emphasis on giving students an abundance of practical information to help them succeed in college and beyond. “We want our students to feel seen and heard—and give them a real-life job search experience,” says Crystal Bautista, Assistant Director of Career Services. Fisher’s Annual Senior Career Conference is designed to do exactly that.

The multifaceted program provides graduating seniors with the resources they need to navigate life after college. It features panel discussions with alumni, recruiters, and career professionals; speed networking; interview opportunities; and even professional headshots for LinkedIn.

“We saw 65 to 70 students come through this year, with a variety of majors—from Biology and English to Sport Management,” says Bautista. For that reason, the Career Services team invites diverse guests with a wide range of professional experiences.

“We try to change it up, with a different theme every year,” she says. “This year we did an alumni takeover and invited successful Fisher grads to sit on our panel.”

Vanessa Diaz Gaumond ’20, M.B.A. ’24 was one of those alumni. Gaumond works for the

State of Maine as a planning and research associate. “When I graduated in 2020, COVID had shut down the conference, so I missed out on the opportunity to ask questions about networking and what life is like after graduating,” she says. “I feel this year’s conference was well planned and offered a lot of important resources.”

She thought the free “career closet” was an especially good idea. It allows students to choose suits and other business attire for interviews. “The students were super engaged, and I was happy to come back and be candid about life after college,” she says.

This year’s keynote speaker was Raul Domrique, ’18, Director of Transplant Business Operations at Tufts Medical Center. Panelists included Monica Adwani ’12, CEO of Breezy Seguros, and Zachary Anderson ’22, a client advisor at Tiffany & Co.

“It really is a valuable program, even if some students don’t think so at first,” says Bautista. “Once they engage, they get it. Some students stayed for over an hour to network. It’s inspiring to see our seniors actively investing in their futures,” she adds, “and we’re grateful to our alumni and career professionals who generously shared their time and expertise.”



Fisher seniors explored career paths, met with alumni and recruiters, and suited up for success during the annual Senior Career Conference.





Still Serving

FISHER SUPPORTS VETERANS THROUGH EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY.

The bonds formed in the military can sometimes come untethered once a veteran reenters the “real world.” Add to that the rigors of college, and some may feel as though they’ve lost their footing. “Transitioning from military to civilian life is hard enough, but trying to navigate higher ed is something else again,” says Associate Professor and M.B.A. Program Director Neil Trotta. Having served in the Air Force for eight years, Trotta founded a chapter of Student Veterans of America on campus in 2007 and served as its first advisor. The group remains active today.

Long recognized as a military-friendly college, Fisher enrolled 40 full-time student veterans for the fall 2025 semester, offering them an array of resources at no cost—from tutoring to health services. The Student Veterans Center provides a designated meeting place for gathering, doing homework, sharing ideas and challenges, and feeling part of a community. Fitting in can be hard in a sea of 18- to 20-year-olds, Trotta notes.

Gregory Parris knows this well. A sophomore making up for lost time, Parris served in the Navy, worked for years, and now, at 52, is finally earning his degree. It’s not always easy. “Older students have different needs—from families to elder care—and I appreciate how the program is helping,” he says. “We get constant support, and there’s plenty of discussion about the future.” —ML

Beacon / The Academy

Pitch Perfect From Fisher's baseball field to a Big Four accounting firm, Evan DeLillo '25 proves that internships open doors to opportunity.

BY PAULA M. BODAH

WHEN EVAN DELILLO '25 FIRST came to Fisher College, baseball was as much a draw as academics. "I wanted to keep playing ball, and I wanted to go to school in Boston," says the Peabody, Massachusetts, native. But he soon discovered that Fisher's internship requirement would be just as important to his future as his time on the pitcher's mound.

As a Management major with a concentration in Accounting, DeLillo admits he's always had an affinity for numbers. "I wouldn't call myself a math nerd," he says, "but arithmetic has always come easy to me."

That knack for numbers led him to apply for a coveted internship with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), one of the Big Four accounting firms. Deloitte, PwC, Ernst & Young, and KPMG are the most prestigious firms in the field, making an internship there a prized opportunity.

It was Accounting Professor Donna Brady who first encouraged him to take a closer look at PwC. "The more I learned, the more I realized it was the best fit," DeLillo recalls. He applied, interviewed, and landed a 10-week summer internship in tax compliance.

The experience was both

rigorous and rewarding. DeLillo worked on projects ranging from state excise taxes on items like cigarettes and ammunition to research on sports gambling regulations. "It was invigorating," he says. "You're doing real work, and it gives you a taste of what a career there would be like."

PwC also introduced interns to the culture of the firm, hosting networking events, sending them to gatherings in Connecticut, and even flying them to Florida for training and a closing conference. "You'd be amazed at how much they had planned for us," DeLillo says. "It showed me how seriously they take developing young professionals."

The experience confirmed that he had found the right path. DeLillo has since accepted a full-time offer as a tax associate in PwC's Boston Seaport office. Meanwhile, he heads up a summer adult baseball league near his Peabody home and serves as an Assistant Coach for Fisher's baseball team.

"Fisher prepared me to make the leap from student to professional," he says. "The internship gave me real-world experience and a shot at a great job."



"Fisher prepared me to make the leap from student to professional. The internship gave me real-world experience and a shot at a great job."

EVAN DELILLO '25



“It’s competitive, but that’s what makes it meaningful,” says says Danielle Herget, Ph.D., Professor of Humanities and Honors Program Director.

Evan DeLillo '25 parlayed his Fisher internship at PwC into a full-time job offer, while continuing to share his passion for baseball as both player and coach.

Academic Edge

HONORS STUDENTS PUSH HARDER, AIM HIGHER, AND ACHIEVE MORE.

Fisher College’s Honors Program is one of the College’s signature opportunities for ambitious students, combining rigorous academics, community engagement, and professional preparation. “The program today looks very different than it did when it began decades ago,” says Danielle Herget, Ph.D., professor of humanities and director of the program. “We’ve expanded it to all four years, across every major, and the quality of students keeps rising. Right now, we have more than 120 students enrolled—the largest number in our history.”

Students apply with a strong GPA, faculty recommendations, and an essay. If accepted, they receive a \$2,000 annual scholarship and join a cohort that takes specialized colloquia, completes service projects, and writes a senior thesis. “It’s competitive, but that’s what makes it meaningful,” Herget adds, noting that students must maintain a 3.5 GPA each semester. “The program fosters a culture of excellence and collaboration. Students push one another, and they leave Fisher better prepared for graduate school and their careers.”

Austin Dabney '25, an English major, says the program gave him the confidence to pursue graduate school. “The Honors colloquia felt like training for graduate seminars,” he explains. “You’re in a room where everyone brings their best. Excellence pulls you in and elevates you.” Honors alumni credit their theses and research experience with helping them land jobs or graduate placements. —PMB



LEGACY

Arthur Asbury's
two decades at
Fisher guided lives,
strengthened
community,
and inspired
success beyond
the classroom.

GOOD ADVICE

BY MARIA LAPIANA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER CHURCHILL

Arthur Asbury's 22-year tenure at Fisher College can be divided neatly in two. For the first 11 years he was Associate Registrar.

For the second 11 years—ending this past July, when he retired—he served as Director of the Academic Advising and Support Center.

He credits serendipity with his first Fisher role. In 2003, Asbury was working as a Program Coordinator at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, when he happened upon a job fair. He had no expectations when he left his résumé at the Fisher table, so he was surprised to receive a job offer just two days later.

He went above and beyond his registrar's office responsibilities, and was soon tapped for a second role—the one for which he'll be remembered most. "When I took the job in the registrar's office, I was charged with making the position into something friendlier than what it was," he says. As he handled such day-to-day tasks as registering students and managing records, he found opportunities to interact with them beyond class sign-ups. "I was genuinely interested in them, so I started conversations," he relates. "I asked them about their short-term and long-term plans."

That led him naturally toward advising. "Fact is, as time went on, I was doing more advising than anything else," he remembers.

The College made his role official thanks to the forward-thinking Dr. Janet Kuser, Vice President of Academic Affairs. "I always felt I wanted to do more, and I owe her thanks for seeing it and acting on it," Asbury says.

Over two decades, one constant was his commitment to students' well-being. He was especially focused on the needs of underserved students, first-generation college students, and commuters who often felt apart from the campus community.

The new position, Director of the Academic Advising and Support Center, played to his strengths. Needless to say, he was thrilled to move into a truly student-facing role.

Asbury, who is originally from New York City, graduated from York College with a degree in English Literature, but, he says, "I always knew I'd do something with a nonprofit."

Over two decades, one constant was his commitment to students' well-being. He was especially focused on the needs of underserved students, first-generation college students, and commuters who often felt apart from the campus community.

"I wanted them all to know they had our ear. I held study groups. I helped keep athletes on track. I had an open-door policy and typically saw between 15 and 20 students every day," he says. He often connected students facing similar challenges. "They became the support system for each other. It helped a lot of them, the Center grew quickly, and it was great for retention, too."

Asbury says he was moved by students who had been told they weren't really "college material." Many struggled in their first semester, but he encouraged them not to give up. Often, success came from simply finding the right resources. "I followed some of those students for four years," he says.

He remains grateful for the chance to build the Support Center from the ground up. "I just liked being able to help students get jobs and figure out what they want to do with their lives."

One such student was Jae Holland '08, a basketball player whom Asbury advised informally. One day, recalls Asbury, "I got a call from the Red Sox organization. They were looking to fill a Fenway Ambassador position. I thought Jae would be great at it. Of course, he told me he wanted nothing to do with baseball."

The way Holland remembers it, they struck a deal: Asbury would approve extra courses in Holland's schedule—provided he went to the interview. They both kept their word.

"It was more of a mixer," recalls Holland. "I think they





Arthur Asbury, long-time Fisher staff member and mentor, concludes more than two decades of guiding students and shaping the College community.

were looking for outgoing people. I was called back for an actual interview, and do you know they didn't ask me a single question about baseball?"

He got the job.

"I just knew it was right for him," says Asbury. A decade later, Holland is Director of Fan Services & Entertainment for the Boston Red Sox.

Holland describes his mentor as an "exceptional person who wants you to succeed. I'm glad that I was one of the many people he touched. The man has a heart of gold."

Francina Knights, B.A. '18, M.A. '21, also has fond memories. Now an Incident Response Team Administrator at New York University, she earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Fisher.

She met Asbury in her first year, drawn by his reputation. "Everyone referred to him as the chill advisor," she says. "I was away from home and needed support, a mentor who was more like me."

They were always candid with one another, and Asbury never held back. "He was always reminding students to make the most of 'all the money they're paying the college,'" she says with a laugh. "I told him I can't get up early and I don't want any classes on Fridays," she remembers. That settled, he curated the perfect schedule for her.

"Arthur is one of the kindest people I've ever met," says Knights. "I'm really happy he's retiring, but I do feel bad for all the students who will never know him."

Reflecting on his career, Asbury is most pleased to have been so instrumental in helping the College to achieve its mission of making a difference in students' lives.

What he'll miss most, he says, is the camaraderie. "I worked with so many different offices, from financial aid to the bursar and everything in between. I always felt a sense of community."

As for retirement? "I'm going to sleep in," he says with a laugh, "and do a little traveling."

He's starting with a 40-day cruise from Alaska down the West Coast, through the Panama Canal, and into the Caribbean. "After that I'm going to Europe," he says.

Eventually he hopes to volunteer, perhaps with Fisher alumni.

Looking back, he says he has one wish: "I just want everyone to know I did my best."

THE BUSINESSES OF BOLD

Across industries and generations, Fisher alumni are redefining what it means to be an entrepreneur.

BY **BOB CURLEY** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **CHRISTOPHER CHURCHILL**

Yano Petruzzelli '14,
co-owner of New Deal
Fruit in Revere, grew
up around hard work,
family, and food.



NEW DEAL FRUIT IS AS OLD SCHOOL AS IT GETS.

Starting with a horse-drawn wagon, this grocery store and deli run by three generations of the Petruzzelli family has served residents of Revere, Massachusetts, for more than 60 years. It's the kind of place where regulars order prosciutto, mozzarella, and eggplant sandwiches, and Italian nonnas pick through piles of cardoons to make cardi fritti.

It might not look like a hub for entrepreneurs, but nearly every small business is built by people willing to take risks. That's how New Deal Fruit co-owner Yano Petruzzelli '14 has helped his family business—and his own ventures—flourish since graduating from Fisher College with a degree in Management.

A big man with strong opinions, Petruzzelli, along with brothers and co-owners Nicholas and Dominic, inspired Tommy Guarino and Chad McDonough Jr. to launch their Boston Deli Guy comedy series in 2023. The sketches, full of Boston attitude, usually feature out-of-towners fumbling through deli orders, with New Yorkers taking the brunt.

"That guy you see behind the counter—they're playing me," says Petruzzelli. Allowing the show to film at New

Deal Fruit has boosted the deli's brand. But as proud as he is of the family business, Petruzzelli isn't content to simply follow in the footsteps of his parents and grandparents. In recent years, the father of three has launched businesses providing home services and mortgages.

Whether in the deli or his other ventures, Petruzzelli credits Fisher for helping him think bigger. "My father always says I've got the mix of street smarts, book smarts, and personality to succeed," he says.

Like Petruzzelli, Marc Palumbo '25 knows what it's like to run a business with his brothers. The recent graduate partners with his twin, Jonathan, and older brother Michael in Palumbo Investments, a real estate firm that owns three properties in Kansas City, Missouri.

Palumbo has long loved real estate, but it was at Fisher that he caught the entrepreneurial bug. "Ever since I was a kid I loved real estate, but during college I started a shoe resale company that did around \$30,000 to \$40,000 in monthly sales," he says. Soon he pivoted to researching real estate investment strategies, traveling to Kansas City to study the market firsthand.

"We chose Kansas City because it had low home prices and strong population growth," Palumbo explains. With a Management degree and a concentration in Entrepreneurship, he found ideal partners in his brothers, who work in construction and finance.

Palumbo Investments currently rents out three single-family homes, with a deal in the works for a multi-family property. The income isn't enough for the brothers to quit their day jobs, but expansion is the goal. "We hope to build, since my brother is in construction management and our family includes some developers," Palumbo says.

Learning from other Fisher entrepreneurs helped him

Whether in the deli or his other ventures, Petruzzelli credits Fisher for helping him think bigger. "My father always says I've got the mix of street smarts, book smarts, and personality to succeed."

YANO PETRUZZELLI '14,
CO-OWNER, NEW DEAL FRUIT

Yano Petruzzelli '14 at New Deal Fruit, the family deli and grocery his grandparents founded more than 60 years ago. A third-generation owner, he's helping the business thrive while launching ventures of his own—all with a mix of street smarts, book smarts, and heart.





balance growth with stability. “A lot of people say they want to get into real estate, but they don’t do the basics of learning the markets and understanding cash flows,” he says. “Every successful business starts with the basics and then scales from there.”

For Omar Ortiz '05, sports have always come first. After playing baseball with the Falcons and earning a Management degree, his career shifted to the automotive industry. Selling cars at auction sparked an idea: helping local dealers sell online.

“They didn’t have the resources to pay for marketing or business development, so I did that for them,” Ortiz says. Working on commission, he built an auction sales site and relationships with multiple dealers. The venture thrived for more than a decade until social media made direct-to-consumer sales easier.

But Ortiz never walked away from baseball. He provides coaching and instruction, and founded the Indoor Baseball League—the only league in Boston offering year-round play for adults. “Since we have multiple levels of play, we always find ways for clients to compete,” he says. “We give our players exposure on social media, including highlight videos. Being able to play year-round is a huge draw.”

Ortiz also branched into apparel with Be Clutch Sportswear, a company that outfits teams nationwide, including those in the Men’s Senior Baseball League. Unlike in his car-selling days, he now builds relationships in person at tournaments. “Everyone focuses on online marketing, so I’m bringing it back to face-to-face connections,” he says.

Ortiz credits Fisher for grounding him in business skills. “Taking time off to work before finishing my bachelor’s degree helped me connect real-world experience to classroom learning,” he says. “That combination made all the difference.”

Social media marketing isn’t just part of Amanda Mohan '21’s job—it *is* her job. She’s the founder and CEO of Slate Social Agency, which manages social media strategy for clients ranging from realtors and retailers to restaurants and performers.

Mohan, who majored in Communication and Media

Ortiz credits Fisher for grounding him in business skills. “Taking time off to work before finishing my bachelor’s degree helped me connect real-world experience to classroom learning. That combination made all the difference.”

OMAR ORTIZ '05,
OWNER, BE CLUTCH SPORTSWEAR

Learning from other Fisher entrepreneurs helped him balance growth with stability. “Every successful business starts with the basics and then scales from there.”

MARC PALUMBO '25,
CO-OWNER, PALUMBO INVESTMENTS

Studies and minored in Social Media, launched her company in high school. “Everyone told me I didn’t really need to go to college. I’m glad I went,” she says. “I was there when the social media minor was first offered, which was perfect timing.”

At Fisher, Mohan hustled, walking into Boston shops to ask if they had someone running their social media, and offering to do it for free if not. “I wanted to build my portfo-

Marc Palumbo '25, below, represents the next generation of Fisher entrepreneurs, building his real estate career with the same drive and curiosity that shaped his time on campus. Omar Ortiz '05, opposite, wears his Be Clutch gear—a brand he created to outfit and inspire athletes nationwide.



lio,” she says. A work-study job in Fisher’s Marketing and Communications Office further added to her résumé.

Since 2017, Slate has worked with more than 400 paying clients. “A lot of what I learned at Fisher was foundational, like networking and time management,” Mohan says. The latter is especially useful as she juggles Slate with her role as lead global content strategist for PwC.

An early adopter of AI for content creation and management, Mohan urges students to build their personal brand and focus on volume. “Creative output is the key to success on social media,” she says. “If you keep posting and putting yourself out there, it’s almost impossible to fail.”

Michael Newcombe ’08 proves that an entrepreneurial mindset can lead to unexpected places. After earning a degree in Management, he began a career as a professional photographer. A decade later, he reinvented himself as a vegan chef.

“At Fisher I played basketball with Greg Avila, who’s also an entrepreneur, and he got me involved in selling a health drink,” Newcombe says. “That introduced me to health and wellness. I went vegan 10 years ago and started cooking and posting on Instagram.”

His online presence grew into vegan dinner parties and pop-up restaurants in New York City. “I actually learned to cook while I was at Fisher because I wanted the food I used to eat at home. I started cooking in the dorm for me and my roommates,” he says. Today, favorites include vegan lasagna and mushroom burritos.

“Fisher gave me space to grow, make mistakes, and learn,” he says. “A lot of kids that age don’t know what they want. I was able to figure it out.”

Newcombe, whose family roots are in Honduras, leans on cultural influences in his cooking. For Monica Adwani ’12, who grew up in Puerto Rico, community is central to her business.

Adwani earned her Management degree while attending night classes and working full-time at Liberty Mutual Insurance. “I liked that the night students were a more

Adwani earned her Management degree while attending night classes and working full-time at Liberty Mutual Insurance. “I liked that the night students were a more mature and professional group,” she says. “Not only was I able to learn in class, but I also built a network with people already in the workforce.”

MONICA ADWANI ’12,
CEO, BREEZY SEGUROS

mature and professional group,” she says. “Not only was I able to learn in class, but I also built a network with people already in the workforce.”

In 2020, she launched a consulting firm helping insurance agents nationwide manage operations. “I love taking broken things and fixing them—processes, management, governance,” she says.

Today, Adwani is owner or partner in several insurance companies. Closest to her heart is Breezy Seguros, a Worcester-based independent agency dedicated to empowering Latin entrepreneurs.

“I know insurance, but I also know how these businesses suffer,” says Adwani, CEO and managing partner. “Many of these owners are trade savvy but not business savvy. They can make money, but they don’t have the tools to sustain it.”

Her mission is to build companies that last. “We empower entrepreneurs through insurance by showing them how to protect their business,” she says. “For example, when someone tells me they hire everyone on a 1099, they’re opening a big gap for liability. A third party can sue you, and workers’ comp won’t apply.”

“A lot of entrepreneurs run companies just to make money, not to grow,” Adwani says. “It’s a different mindset. We bridge the education gap between the two.”

Monica Adwani ’12 built her insurance business to empower Latin entrepreneurs. As CEO and managing partner of Breezy Seguros, she’s helping business owners protect what they’ve worked hard to build—and closing the education gap between making money and sustaining success.



FROM LITTLE LEAGUE TO LEGACY

YANO PETRUZZELLI ’14 may have gained internet notoriety through the Boston Deli Guys comedy skits, but he was already a hometown hero at age 12, when he helped the Saugus American baseball team reach the U.S. Championship game in the 2003 Little League World Series.

Petruzzelli played third base on the all-star squad that advanced through the Massachusetts state tournament and

won the New England regional, earning the right to travel to Williamsport, Pennsylvania, for the World Series.

There, representing New England, Saugus went 3-0 in pool play before facing Richmond, Texas, in an epic semifinal. The Massachusetts boys jumped to an early lead, but Richmond stormed back to go ahead 13-10 in the top of the sixth, the final inning of regulation.

In the bottom half, Saugus scratched out three runs to tie the game. Then came the dramatic finish in the seventh inning: with two outs, Dave Ferreira laid down a swinging bunt and beat the throw to first, driving in the winning run in a 14-13 thriller. Ferreira would later reunite with Petruzzelli as a teammate on the Fisher Falcons baseball team.

Saugus’s magical run ended

in the U.S. Championship game, where they lost to East Boynton Beach, Florida, 9-2, and then fell in the consolation game to Curaçao, 6-1. But back home, Petruzzelli, Ferreira, and their teammates remain cherished for their unlikely march to Williamsport and a legendary August night in 2003 that still ranks among the most memorable games in Little League World Series history. **-BC**





WITH HEART, HUSTLE, AND PERSPECTIVE,
FISHER'S WOMEN COACHES ARE BUILDING TEAMS—
AND FUTURES—
THAT THRIVE ON AND OFF THE FIELD.

THE GAME CHANGERS

BY BOB GULLA

Photographs by
CHRISTOPHER CHURCHILL

Head Coach Natividad "Natie" Manolo '19, M.A. '21, with her players from the women's volleyball team.
A Fisher alum twice over, Manolo leads with empathy and connection—mentoring athletes through both sport and student life.

Prior to the 1972 passing of Title IX, more than 90 percent of women's collegiate sports teams were coached by women. (Quick refresher: Title IX made it illegal to exclude, separate, or discriminate against a person on the basis of sex in educational settings.) While the law opened the door to a greater number of women's teams, in a cruel twist of irony, the number of women coaching those teams dropped precipitously. Fifty years later, female coaches across all three intercollegiate divisions had fallen to less than 40 percent.

Women can bring unique perspectives and coaching styles that contribute to a more diverse and inclusive environment. The decline in their presence may limit the diversity of coaching methods and approaches. Young girls benefit significantly from having coaches who can serve as mentors and role models. Without them, aspirations in sports can be limited.

The good news is that gender stereotyping and other factors driving the decline in women coaches have begun to dissipate. Today, the number of female coaches has risen to 43 percent, with most of that increase coming in the last five years. And the best news, for our purposes, is that Fisher has been doing its part to boost that number.

Vivian Lara '20, Fisher's Head Women's Basketball Coach, came all the way from California to play her final two years at Fisher as an undergraduate. Crossing the country changed her life. "I found out pretty quickly that the great thing about Fisher is that it's a small school and a very supportive community," she says.

As a student, Lara majored in Sport Management while also tutoring and working in the Office of Student Accessibility Services. "Everybody knows who you are," she says. "The opportunities are endless and, for me, I just took advantage of everything that Fisher had to offer."

During the Spring of 2020, due to COVID, Lara moved back to California to complete her Fisher degree online. "It was tough times," she admits. "I was just working regular jobs. I was at a grocery store during COVID. I worked in a warehouse. It certainly wasn't what I wanted to do."

She completed her Fisher degree that year remotely. Graduation might have been the end of her Falcon story.

Then, like a bolt from the blue, Lara got a call from Fisher, offering her the opportunity to interview for a full-time role in the Fisher administration. The position was in the Registrar's Office, advising first-year students. She jumped at the chance to interview. "I really needed something good to happen, and there it was."

Lara earned the job and returned to Boston to work at Fisher full-time. During this time, she became involved in the women's basketball program as an Assistant Coach. In January 2025, at the start of the basketball season, she became Head Coach. "We had eight seniors, so it was fine finishing out the year," she says. "We had a great season."

This summer has been all about recruiting. "I'm rebuilding the program," she says. "It's a big challenge, but I'm doing all I can to make it work. I'm really looking forward to the new season."

Like Coach Vivian, Natividad ("Natie") Manolo '19, M.A. '21, Head Coach of the Women's Volleyball Team, played two years at a junior college in her native California before being recruited by Fisher in 2017 to finish her education and join its inaugural volleyball team. "I took a chance coming out to Boston," she says. "But deep down, it felt like a great opportunity."

After graduating in 2019 with a degree in Psychology, she was invited to be an Assistant Coach. "I had coached kids in club volleyball in California, and when this opportunity arose I felt like it was right for me. I knew the coaching staff. I knew the returning girls."

While helping out with the team, Manolo earned her master's in Counseling Psychology. In 2021, after serving two years as Assistant Coach, she was offered the head coaching

Head Coach Vivian Lara '20 with members of the women's basketball team. A former Fisher player turned coach, Lara returned to campus to rebuild the program she once played for—bringing energy, empathy, and a deep understanding of what it means to succeed on and off the court.

“I’m rebuilding the program. It’s a big challenge. I’m really looking forward to the new season.”

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL COACH
VIVIAN LARA '20





“As a coach you have to balance discipline, routine, organization, and relationships.”

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL COACH
MACKENZIE “MACKIE” CHANDLER

position. “What really drove me to continue my coaching career was what I went through as a transfer student,” she says. “I was doing it on my own, and I just kind of put myself in the shoes of those incoming players. I felt like I could be in the position to guide them so that they don’t feel alone.”

Being of service has always been what brings Manolo joy. “I love watching kids develop,” she says. “I love helping people who need help. That’s what attracted me to coaching.”

While coaching an upstart program can be an uphill climb—especially at a small college like Fisher—Manolo felt supported. “Whenever I needed anything, Athletic Director Scott Dulin provided me with it. The entire athletic community here has been very supportive not just of my team, but of all the women’s teams.”

Like the other coaches at Fisher, Manolo wears different hats. In addition to her coaching role, she is Student Activities Director and a Resident Director. “It’s a pretty intimate environment here,” she says. “It’s the familiarity and the comfort that makes Fisher a special place for everybody. Not just for the students, but for the staff as well.”

Sophia Campos ’26, a Criminal Justice major from Puerto Rico who captains the volleyball team, loves playing for her coach. “You can really see the difference when a woman coaches you,” she says. “You feel you can open up about things that you might not want to talk about with a man, so it makes you feel more connected, like she’s there for you in more ways than volleyball.”

Mackenzie “Mackie” Chandler, Fisher’s Head Women’s Softball Coach, also assumed her coaching responsibilities halfway through the last academic year and is excited about her first full year in charge. “I have to admit that ‘year zero’ was kind of tough,” she says, “scrounging up

nine young women and starting from scratch. But I think it was a blessing in disguise. It gave me a head start on this year, and I’m speaking to recruits all the time, so it’ll be a whole different ballgame from here.”

Originally from Orlando, Florida, Chandler was a four-year standout across several levels of collegiate softball, a feisty left-handed “quick slapper” with a good batting average and a knack for stealing bases. She spent a brief stint in the Navy prior to embarking on a coaching career. “As a coach you have to balance discipline, routine, organization, and relationships,” she says, explaining that her coaching style is an amalgam of her playing style, coaching experience, and military experience. “As a player, though, I didn’t really see all that went into coaching, especially coaching young women. But now that I’ve done it, I can understand it better, and I do everything in my power to make this team and these young women successful.”

Chandler also has insight into more than just her team’s performance on the field. As an Assistant Director of Admissions, she tracks her players’ academic performance as well as prospects’ standing with admissions. “Fisher has given me all the support I need,” she says. “My goal is to inspire and support these athletes as they grow into confident, successful women who take pride in representing Fisher.”

Makayla Tzul ’28, the team’s first baseman and captain, has been impressed with her new coach. “You can tell when someone loves her job,” she says. “And with Coach Mackie, you can feel how much she loves us, and you see how much she fights for us. She has created a close bond with us in a short time. We all have a feeling she’s going to completely change this program around.”

Head Coach Mackenzie “Mackie” Chandler with members of the women’s softball team. Drawing on her Navy and collegiate playing experience, Chandler brings structure, energy, and inspiration to a growing program.

GLOBAL GOALS

BORN AND RAISED IN

Mexico City to an Italian American father and Peruvian mother, **Naomi Vivas M.B.A. ’22** first played collegiate soccer at Lindenwood University in Missouri. From there, she came to Fisher for a post-grad year, where she was named team captain.

“When the opportunity came up to play at Fisher, I didn’t think twice about it,” she says. “I really wanted to see Boston. That was the dream. So when head

coach John Del Valle reached out and recruited me, I was like, ‘Let’s do it!’ I flew to Boston, met the coach, met the staff running the M.B.A. program, and I was sold.”

Boston quickly became special not only to Naomi, but also to her entire family. Her two brothers, Kenji M.B.A.’25 and Alec ’26, followed her to Fisher, where they both played soccer.

“Not only is Boston my favorite city, but my whole

experience there was the highlight of my life so far,” she says. “I was captain of the team, and my classes were amazing. I was the only one graduating with my specialty in Sport Management, so it was an intimate education. In my current job, all of my M.B.A. classes have been relevant. It’s incredible to see how my education has paid off in the real world.”

Today, Naomi has parlayed her Fisher athletic and academic experiences

into a global career. She works at TMJ, a women’s soccer agency headquartered in Mexico City that represents athletes across five continents and six confederations.

“I handle sponsorships and branding,” she says. “I get to go to events, support our players, organize production days, and manage social media. I work in the space between brand and player—and it’s been a fascinating job.” —BG



Fisher Festivities!





Join fellow alumni and friends in supporting Fisher!

No matter when you graduated or where life has taken you, we invite you to reconnect and engage as a Fisher Falcon for life. **Your involvement strengthens our community and enriches the Fisher experience for everyone.**

FISHER ALUMNI MIXER



We want to hear from you! After the success of View Boston, we're reimagining Fisher's 3rd Annual Alumni Mixer for 2026. What kind of networking event would you love to attend? Scan the QR code to help shape the experience.

June 2026, TBD

FISHER COLLEGE GOLF CLASSIC

Fisher's 4th Annual Golf Classic returns to the Merrimack Valley Golf Club in Methuen, MA.

October 5, 2026

HALL OF FAME

The Fisher College Athletic Program will honor Class of 2026 hall of famers.

October 24, 2026

Save the Dates!



FISHER COLLEGE

For Stacia (Phelan) Baquerizo '90 and Lindsay '28, Fisher College is more than a campus—it's a family tradition.



BEYOND

Alumni News

Full Circle Fisher helped Stacia (Phelan) Baquerizo '90 launch her career—now her daughter, Lindsay '28, is charting hers.

BY PAULA M. BODAH

WHEN STACIA PHELAN (NOW BAZQUERIZO) '90 arrived at Fisher College from New Jersey, she was nervous, homesick, and unsure of herself. Within weeks, though, she discovered that Fisher had a way of making students feel they belonged.

"I always tell people Fisher helped me find myself," she says. "I realized I could do better than I ever thought I could as a student."

At Fisher, Stacia earned her A.S. in Liberal Arts and discovered a community of supportive professors and staff. That sense of belonging gave her the confidence to continue her education with a certificate in executive assistance at Katharine Gibbs School.

Those credentials led to a fulfilling career. For the past 25 years, Stacia has been Executive Assistant to the Chief Financial Officer at the Boston-based equity firm Great Hill Partners, where she manages calendars, prepares expense reports, and keeps a team of 20 running smoothly. "Over the years

"I always tell people Fisher helped me find myself."

STACIA (PHELAN) BAQUERIZO '90

I've played many different roles," she says. "I do whatever the team needs, whether it's helping with benefits for new employees or making sure the CFO has what he needs."

She has become the hub for her department, a steady presence who ensures details never slip through the cracks. "I've grown so much in this role," Stacia reflects. "I work with C-suite executives every day, and I know Fisher helped me develop the confidence to do that."

The Boston area, too, has become home. Though she briefly returned to New Jersey after graduation, she soon moved north again, now living in Tewksbury. "Fisher gave me not just an education, but friendships and connections that drew me back," she says. Many of those friendships have lasted decades; she still keeps in touch with classmates on social media.

Now, Stacia is delighted to see her daughter, Lindsay Baquerizo '28, find her own place at Fisher. A sophomore majoring in Liberal Arts, Lindsay is exploring courses in science and sustainability and considering a career in biology or environmental studies.

Like her mother, she has come to value Fisher's small size and central location. "It's in such a great area of the city, so close to so many things," Lindsay says. "At first, adjusting to living away from home was hard, but once I found a good group of genuine friends, it got so much easier and so much more enjoyable."

Lindsay is thriving academically, too, after shifting her focus toward the science classes she finds most engaging. "I feel a lot more motivated now that I'm taking courses I really enjoy," she says.

For Stacia, watching her daughter thrive brings everything full circle. "I thought Fisher would be a good place for her," she says. She's happy to know her motherly instinct was on target.

Fisher Through the Years

1903

Brothers Myron Cornelius Fisher and Edmund Hiram Fisher found the Winter Hill Business College in Somerville.

1910

The school's name is changed to Fisher Business College.

1939

Fisher Business College moves to 118 Beacon Street in Boston.

1944

The school is established as a non-profit corporation, and the name is changed to The Fisher School.

1945

Florence Hall, at 112 Beacon Street, opens as a dormitory for 26 women.

1952

The Massachusetts Board of Collegiate Authority (MBCA) approves a name change to Fisher Junior College.

1970

Initial accreditation is granted by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

1988

Massachusetts Board of Higher Education approves name change to Fisher College.

1998

Men and women are admitted to Fisher College day school.

1999

Fisher becomes a four-year college, offering its first bachelor program.

2001

Fisher College establishes its athletic program.

2007-2020

Degree programs proliferate, including three new B.S. degrees, six B.A.s, and master's degrees in Business Administration, Criminal Justice, and Psychology.

2022

Fisher's Esports program is launched.

2024

Fisher launches its Master of Education in Early Childhood Education program.

From Playbook to Portfolio Fisher prepared Carmine Charles '06 for a thriving career in finance.

BY PAULA M. BODAH

Basketball opened the door to Fisher College. The education and relationships Carmine Charles '06 built there helped him step confidently into a career in finance.

Charles, a New York City native, was recruited in high school when a coach from Fisher saw his talents at a tour-



nament. "Once I met Coach Scott Dulin, we hit it off right away," he recalls, making the decision to head to Boston for college an easy one.

On the court, Charles became the first Fisher student-athlete to be named Sunrise Conference Basketball Player of the Year, led the Falcons to their first conference championship, and finished his career in the 1,000-point club. He also earned multiple all-conference honors and served as team captain, helping establish Fisher basketball as a competitive presence. Off the court, he worked as a student assistant in the Athletics Department and made connections that remain strong today. "I still have friends from Fisher, and I still catch up with Scott," he says. "It just shows you the type of school Fisher is, and how welcoming it was."

After earning his bachelor's degree in Management, Charles entered the world of public finance. Today he is a director at Fitch Ratings, a leading bond rating agency, where he manages a portfolio that includes cities, counties, districts, universities, and nonprofits across the Midwest and Northeast. His work combines business development with maintaining long-term relationships, a balance he says feels both challenging and rewarding. "It's definitely an interesting time to be in this business," he says. "From one day to the next,

you don't know what will happen." Part of that uncertainty stems from changes in federal higher education funding. "Right now we're seeing a lot of funding being pulled that will impact universities," Charles explains. "If this continues, schools are going to face real cuts because the government isn't supporting them the way it once did." Still, he adds, the shifting environment has pushed institutions to think more creatively about how to serve students and strengthen their financial footing for the future.

Though the finance world keeps him busy—he lives in Brooklyn and works in Manhattan, with frequent travel across the country—Charles stays grounded in family life. He's the proud dad of a nine-year-old daughter, and revels in the joy her continued growth brings.

He also remains a passionate basketball fan. "Every now and then, I still play," he says. "I have WNBA season tickets and love catching professional and college games whenever I can."

Looking back, Charles credits Fisher for his ability to thrive in both athletics and academics. "The lessons I learned there continue to shape my leadership and outlook today," he says. "I would tell students that stepping out of their comfort zone to make the kinds of strong connections I did at Fisher will help them throughout their careers."

Shaping Future Leaders

For Ibtissam Daif '17 M.B.A. '18, education is more than a profession—it is a calling and a lifelong passion. Today she teaches and coaches students at Mohammed VI Polytechnic University in Benguerir, Morocco, where she designs learning experiences that prepare them for life after graduation and beyond. "I want to be for my students what my professors and mentors at Fisher were for me," she says.

Daif's journey began when she left Morocco to study at Fisher College, a leap that challenged and inspired her. The transition was not easy. "In Morocco we didn't write research papers the way

American students do, so I spent hours in the library learning those skills," she recalls. That determination, along with close relationships with faculty and staff, helped her thrive both academically and personally.

Outside the classroom, she became deeply involved in campus life as a peer mentor, teaching assistant, and student worker. "Learning doesn't happen only in the classroom," Daif says. "At Fisher, I discovered the value of connecting with people from many backgrounds and perspectives."

After five years in Boston and Washing-

ton, D.C., where she worked in workforce development and educational programming, she returned to Morocco in 2020. Since then she has taught courses in business and human resource development, coached more than 500 students, and launched youth-focused initiatives promoting environmental stewardship and leadership.

Looking back, Daif says Fisher shaped her in ways that extend far beyond academics. "It was a beautiful experience where the labels disappeared, and I could truly be myself," she says. **—PMB**

Fisher Events

An annual tradition continued when alumni gathered at **View Boston** in June to reconnect with old friends, make new ones, and reminisce about their time at Fisher, all while enjoying the stunning Boston skyline.

The **3rd Annual Fisher Golf Classic**, held at the Merrimack Valley Golf Club on October 6, 2025, was a resounding success, raising record-high funds. The Club will host the 4th annual tournament on October 5, 2026.

The **College 101 Graduation** honored local high school students completing Fisher's free pre-college Summer program, with graduates taking home college credits in top fields and building the foundation for future college success.



Donor Q+A

Norberto Ceballos '21, M.B.A. '22

Fisher's Housing Director
on giving back.

What inspired you to give financially to Fisher College?

I donate monthly to support Athletics. Sports played a big role in my time at Fisher—especially baseball—so it feels natural to give back in that way. I also served as an assistant volleyball coach from 2022 through 2023. Now that I'm in a staff role and can't contribute as much on the field, I do my part financially.

Why did you choose to attend Fisher?

I grew up in Loiza, Puerto Rico, and was planning to attend a university there when I came to Boston for a baseball tryout and met Coach Scott Dulin. I had also always dreamed of living in Boston and rooting for the Red Sox. Fisher made both possible.

How did your education set you up for success?

Fisher's small size meant my professors knew me, worked with me, and cared about my success. If I ever struggled with an assignment, they always gave me the chance to communicate and make it right. That one-on-one attention helped me grow, both academically and personally. Today, as Housing Director, I try to offer students the same understanding and support that I received.

What motivates you to continue supporting Fisher?

At 26, I know there's more to life than what you spend on daily habits. Even a small monthly contribution can make a meaningful difference. I always tell people: let your Fisher experience guide your giving. If everyone gives back to the programs that shaped them, future students will have even better opportunities. For me, that means helping Athletics so the baseball program can reach new heights. To donate, please visit fisher.edu/give. —Paula M. Bodah



“Fisher’s small size meant my professors knew me, worked with me, and cared about my success”

NORBERTO CEBALLOS '21, M.B.A. '22



Giving Back

Turning Shares into Support

MAKE A GIFT TO FISHER COLLEGE WITHOUT USING YOUR CHECKBOOK.

It's easy to forget that much of the stock you own has quietly gained value over time—especially if you've held it for more than a decade. This year, many Fisher College donors are finding a simple, strategic way to give back during the holidays: by using appreci-

ated stock to make their gifts. For example, 100 shares purchased at \$25 each and now worth \$50 per share represent a \$2,500 gain—an amount that would normally be subject to capital gains tax if sold. By transferring that stock directly to Fisher, donors avoid the tax, receive a charitable deduction for the stock's full current value, and remove a low-yield asset from their portfolios. It's a way to make a meaningful gift without dipping into cash—one that directly supports Fisher's mission to equip students with the education and skills they need to thrive in Boston and beyond. *For more information, contact Alex Laser, Director of Advancement and Alumni Engagement, at (617) 236-8822.*

Spot the Difference*

A Taste of Change

Dresses, heels, and pie once ruled the cafeteria—today's Fisher looks a little different.



In 1956, the lunch line at Fisher Junior College was a daily ritual. Resident students dined in the cafeteria tucked beneath 131–133 Beacon Street, where dresses and high heels were as common as coffee and pie. Commuters grabbed a sandwich and milk in the snack bar. Today, little cash changes hands—mostly card swipes—and no one dresses quite so formally for lunch. **See if you can spot the eight changes in these photos.**

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

Artifact



VINTAGE PENCIL SHARPENER

Before laptops and tablets, this Boston Ranger crank sharpener was the star of the classroom—its whirring gears and tidy pile of shavings proof that learning was in full swing. Perched on a Fisher desk back in the day, it turned ordinary pencils into precise tools for note-taking, bookkeeping, and bright ideas. The satisfying twist of the handle symbolized focus and determination—traits Fisher students have always shared. Like the College itself, this old-school gadget kept evolving, staying sharp through every era. Today's Falcons may swipe instead of crank, but the mission endures: to shape minds, refine skills, and prepare students for success. —Paula M. Bodah



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