

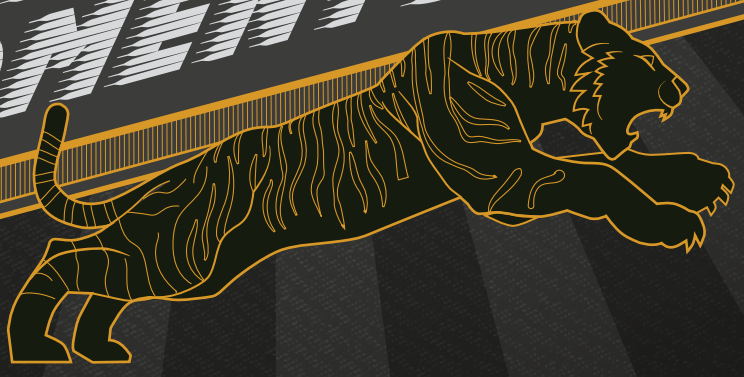
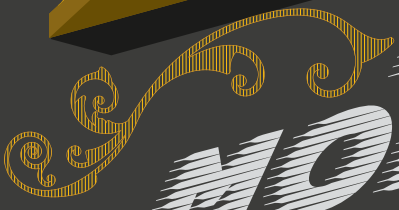
TU



MAGAZINE **SPRING 2026**

10600

YEARS OF
MOMENTUM



20 TRANSFORMING STRUGGLE INTO SOUND

22 A LOOK INSIDE TU'S INSTITUTE FOR WELL-BEING

26 MARK POTTER '84, '91 LEADS THE MARYLAND SCIENCE CENTER



A Different Kind of Science Guy

The infinity room at the Maryland Science Center helps visitors explore the vastness of space. The center's president and CEO, Mark Potter '84, '91, sees infinite possibilities for its future.

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Elizabeth Borowsky '05 transformed struggle into sound.



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Wellness Through Community and Connection

A look inside TU's Institute for Well-Being.



towson.edu/barksocial

for a dog-guided tour of Bark Social.

ON THE COVER



We wanted a special cover to mark our 160th anniversary, so we asked TU Creative Director David Calkins '93, '22 to work his magic. Inspired by lettering artists Jessica Hische, Ken Barber and Mat Voyce, Calkins incorporated campus iconography for this issue's typographic cover. We think it's a fitting birthday present for our—and your—beloved university, which is only getting better with age.

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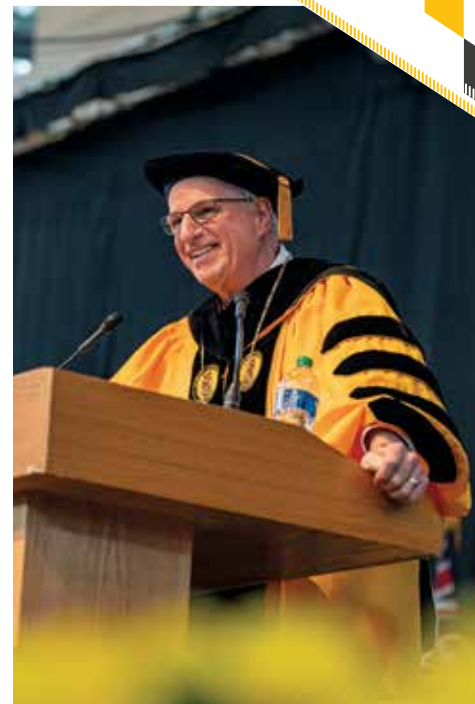
President's Letter

Dear Tigers,

We're poised for another momentous year at Towson University. In fact, 2026 is especially meaningful for TU as we celebrate our 160th anniversary.

For more than a century and a half, TU has been a state leader in education—a place where opportunities are created and success is possible for everyone. A place where dreams are not only envisioned but where they can come true. A special place that is made so because it is a place with special people.

What began with 11 students as the State Normal School in 1866 has evolved into Maryland's top-ranked public university, one of the state's largest with more than 200,000 alumni around the world. We still serve as the state's leading institution for teacher preparation yet have grown into so much more. Today, TU educates the largest number of undergraduate health professionals in the state. We are a powerhouse for research and innovation, home to one of the top cybersecurity programs in the country. And we're known for producing elite



graduates in business, fine arts, humanities and social sciences.

TU's vast impact is felt in communities across the country. It's seen in the lives we change, the neighborhoods we uplift and the talent we send out into the world. In this issue, you'll read about many inspiring Tigers who represent TU's impact, like Mark Potter '84, '91 (page 26), who's leading the Maryland Science Center through its 50th anniversary, and Elizabeth Borowsky '05 (page 20), who is using her battle against cancer to help others going through treatment.

Whether you are an alum, a student, an employee or a friend of the university, you are part of TU's storied legacy. As we celebrate this anniversary milestone, let's reflect on TU's proud history and look to the bright future we are building together.

MARK R. GINSBERG, PH.D.
PRESIDENT



TREASURES

Out of the Woodwork

For most people who find bugs unexpectedly—a wasps' nest in the attic, carpenter ants in the walls—their reaction is dread. But when John LaPolla, professor and associate chair of the biological sciences department, arrived at Towson University in 2006 and found the university's insect collection, he felt something different: possibility.

"I was really excited about it because I came from the Smithsonian Natural History Museum," LaPolla says. "Much of my research was collections-based already, so it certainly was one of the things that helped attract me to Towson."

TU also has botany, herpetology, fish, bird and mammal collections. One LaPolla interacts with frequently contains everything from tiny ants to titan beetles. He estimates the insect collection contains around 100,000 specimens representing a clear picture of the biodiversity of the Mid-Atlantic region.

"It gives us the only record, from a biodiversity

standpoint, of species distributions," LaPolla says. "If you wanted to know how bee diversity in Oregon Ridge Park today compares with 50 years ago, one of the only ways to answer that question is by looking at collections and asking, '50 years ago, what did people collect?'"

TU's insect collection contains specimens from all over the world, but he stresses you don't have to brave the Amazon to find interesting bugs.

"You don't have to travel to go see predator-prey interactions or weird social behaviors," he says. "There's stuff happening all the time in your backyard that you can watch if you pay attention."

LaPolla also points out something obvious but still slightly mind blowing about the collections: You don't know what they're going to be used for in the future.

"The collections here are over 100 years old. The botany collection is even older, going back into the 1880s," he says. "With plants, you can

study the stomata and use them as a proxy for carbon dioxide levels. Nobody knew 50, 70, 100 years ago they would be collecting a specimen we could use for collecting DNA. They didn't even know what DNA was. There's going to be uses for our collections we aren't anticipating too."

In the end, though, one of the collections' biggest selling points might be its most basic: It's real.

"These collections span many decades, and they're authentic," LaPolla says. "In our digital world, being able to have a physical thing to connect with is so valuable. Looking at a picture is fine, but there's still something special about seeing or touching a physical specimen that's right in front of you."



towson.edu/lapolla for more on the bugs and to download bug-patterned lock screen images

Campus News



Pitching to the Pros

This semester, TU introduced a new capstone class in partnership with the Baltimore Ravens. Tiger seniors analyzed the business environment of the NFL franchise and pitched strategic recommendations directly to Ravens executives.



Pitch Perfect

For the first-time, TU hosted the quarterfinals of the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella. TU group Off-Track took home first place in the event and advanced to compete at nationals in New York.



Competitive Edge

The Career Center was named a recipient of the 2025 Handshake Career Spark Award, recognizing the institution as among the top 2% of career centers nationwide for excellence in connecting students with meaningful career opportunities.

Where Are We?

TU has launched a new interactive campus map that makes it easier for students, faculty, staff and visitors to navigate campus.

The map includes an embedded search tool that helps users quickly locate campus buildings then access directions to their destinations as well as a list of the building's amenities.

Students, faculty and staff can also create and share direct links to specific buildings to help visitors navigate more easily.

Optimized for mobile devices, the interactive map connects to Google Maps and was built by TU's Center for Geographic Information Sciences (CGIS). It is available at maps.towson.edu.



A Tiger Takeover in Annapolis

Each year, TU students make sure their voices are heard loud and proud in Annapolis. That passion for their university was on full display on Feb. 24, during the 27th-annual Tiger Pride Day at the Maryland State House.

Tiger Pride Day is TU's annual day of student advocacy during Maryland's General Assembly session, and this year's event was at capacity with more than 150 students, faculty and staff attending.

Students observed the morning sessions of the House of Delegates and the State Senate and met Maryland legislators to advocate for issues affecting college students from across the state.

"I often say there are many great universities in Maryland. At TU, we strive to be a great university for Maryland," President Mark Ginsberg said during the day's lunch break. "This is exactly what makes TU great for Maryland—having students that show up and who are committed to helping their communities and ensuring a brighter future for our state."

LIFELONG LEARNING

BY THE NUMBERS

5

year membership cycle that TU is beginning in the Age-Friendly University Global Network (AFUGN), an international coalition of higher education institutions committed to promoting inclusion, engagement and opportunity for learners of all ages.

50

and older, the age for which TU's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute programs are designed.

74

dollars, the fee for one four-week Osher course.

250

dollars, the fee for which members may take an unlimited number of four- or eight-week courses each semester.

towson.edu/osher

A Home Run of a Gift

TU Athletics announced exciting updates honoring individuals whose legacies embody excellence, community and the spirit of Tiger baseball.

The Constance & Brooks Robinson Charitable Foundation, Inc. has donated \$1 million, one of the largest single contributions in TU Athletics history.

This investment supports the Campaign for Excellence, the department's \$12 million fundraising initiative fueling \$40 million in capital projects designed to elevate the student-athlete experience. In recognition of this generosity, the baseball playing field, in John B. Schuerholz Park, will be named Brooks Robinson Field.

The Eber Family Foundation, represented by TU alumni Mark '93 and Jody '93 Eber, has also pledged \$500,000 to the campaign. In recognition of their leadership and generosity, the stadium's main gathering area in Schuerholz Park will be named Eber Family Plaza.





TU's New, Nutrition-Forward Dining Hall

There is a new place to chow down on campus.

Doc's South Campus Kitchen is an all-you-care-to-eat dining hall inside the Towson Center next to Uinitas Stadium and SECU Arena.

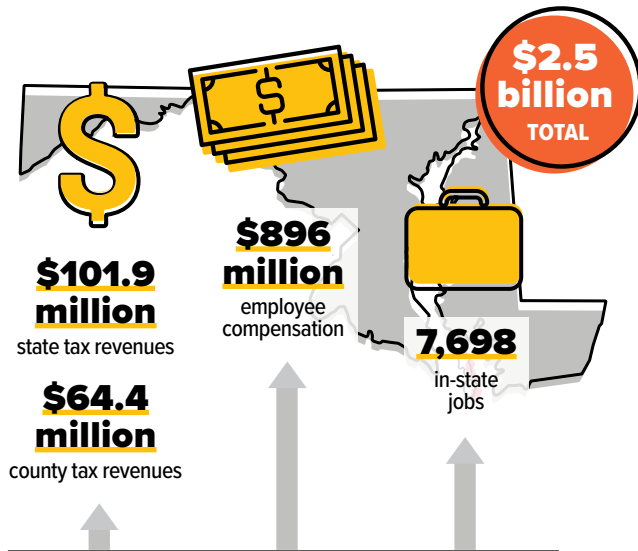
It will provide access to nutrition-forward meal options to those who spend time on TU's south campus, especially TU's student-athletes and athletics staff, while remaining open to the entire campus community.

"It's important to create a dining destination right here in south campus, where we can best meet the needs of our student-athletes and give other students more opportunities to visit this area and strengthen their

connection to our athletic facilities," President Mark Ginsberg said during the dining hall's grand opening on Feb. 3.

The idea for Doc's South Campus Kitchen came after student-athletes began spending more time in study and advising sessions at the athletic facilities on south campus. With the change in schedules, there was a need to provide a space where they could easily obtain fresh and healthy meals.

"Having an exciting, new facility here that is conveniently located near the daily activities of our student-athletes is going to be a game changer," says TU Athletics Director Steve Eigenbrot.



Billion Dollar Impact

TU continues to power Maryland's economy, generating an impressive \$2.5 billion in total economic output in fiscal year 2025—a clear testament to the university's growing impact, innovation and leadership across the state. An economic impact report conducted by the Regional Economic Studies Institute (RESI), a state resource housed at TU, found that the university supported 7,698 jobs statewide and contributed nearly \$896 million in employee compensation during FY25. TU-related economic activity also generated an estimated \$101.9 million in state tax revenues and \$64.4 million in county tax revenues, helping to fund essential public services across Maryland.



OFFICE HOURS

The Beautiful Game

As the World Cup comes to North America, TU women's soccer coach Katherine Vettori discusses the appeal of soccer in the United States—and at TU.

When I was growing up in Norman, Oklahoma, soccer was very, very new. The opportunities were limited back then. We didn't have travel soccer until we were 14. Nowadays, they have it at 8. I played all sports growing up, but I realized early on that I could do some things in soccer that I couldn't do in other sports. Technically, I caught on to it pretty quickly. I loved it, and I never turned back. My club team was the first that ever traveled outside Oklahoma to play tournaments. Five of us went on to play Division I soccer in college.

The 1991 Women's World Cup had just happened the season before I went to college. Mia Hamm had redshirted at the University of North Carolina because of the World Cup, so my freshman year at Duke University was her senior year. It was becoming more mainstream—people knew who the stars were. The 1994 World Cup for the men really put soccer on the map. Now, we're getting toward a second generation of interest. It helps that now that you can turn on the TV every single day and see a game. We didn't have that growing up.

The 1999 Women's World Cup here in America was a turning point. Brandi Chastain's goal during the shootout was an iconic moment. She was on magazine cover after magazine cover. That was a great moment for women's soccer. It put women front and center.

I was very blessed to get to go to the original Wembley Stadium in London to watch the Blackburn Rovers and Manchester United. It was something that I've never experienced in American athletics. The songs, the chants, the sense of community, the people rooting on their team. It's in their blood. They breathe and eat it.

It's a sport that's accessible for all. You just need a ball and a couple

The 1999 Women's World Cup here in America was a turning point. Brandi Chastain's goal during the shootout was an iconic moment.

of friends. You can play on the playground and in the streets. It's a game with freedom. Besides some set pieces, the game flows. There are no timeouts. Creativity is allowed to flourish. I think everyone probably sees the game differently. And that's fun in and of itself.

The main complaint I get is that it's low scoring. You might have an opponent outshoot you 25 to 1, and you might have hit the posts or the crossbar several times during the game, and the outcome could be 1-1.

I always say I would love to be on the receiving side of an undeserved victory, but it doesn't happen often. If you have that good day when you score a whole bunch of goals, fabulous, but sometimes it's very difficult to score. I think the true fan understands 1-0 is a huge victory.

I'm so excited for the men's World Cup this year. I love it in the group stage where you have multiple games going on. It's kind of like the first day of March Madness. There's something very pure about it. People are competing because they want to win and represent their countries.

Now, the NWSL (National Women's Soccer League in the U.S.) is in a great place. Things with MLS (Major League Soccer, the top men's professional league in the U.S.) are going in the right direction. I love watching our former TU players play, which has been really fun with Riley Melendez '24 getting on the El Salvadorian national team and Nia Christopher '24 and Jasmine Hamid playing with Fort Lauderdale in the USL W League. Phoebe Canoles '23 plays for D.C. in the USL, Riley Rumbley '22 plays in Italy, Maja Hansson '24 and Demi Pierre '23 play in Sweden and Courtney Butlion plays in Türkiye.

At TU, since getting the beautiful facility that we have, every single

season our fan base has grown.

We do a lot of community service as a team. We take pride in serving others, and now those people are in turn supporting us. It's been really wonderful. The (CAA) championship year (in 2023), there were more than 1,000 people per game. So we're hoping to reproduce a championship stretch. Towson is now a destination for a lot of the best players in Maryland to stay home. And we've convinced some very special ones to do just that.

LA CAFE



Coffee With...

Keiwana Perryman

We spoke with the director of the Center for Student Diversity about the importance of diversity and how she’s seen TU evolve.

LOCATION:

LA Cafe, College of Liberal Arts Building

IN HER CUP:

Hot chocolate

ADDICTION LEVEL:

“It’s a treat every now and then.”

Q: What’s the mission of the Center for Student Diversity?

A: The purpose of the CSD is to provide support, advocacy and programming for underrepresented and marginalized students while also creating space for the entire campus community to learn about

differences and feel a sense of connection and belonging to the campus community.

Q: Why is student diversity important in general?

A: It’s important to celebrate who we are as individuals and within our respective communities, but we also want to share that with each other. I think it fosters learning and growth. Once we leave this bubble, we won’t be in spaces where it’s just people who think like us, who look like us, who talk like us or who share similar beliefs, backgrounds or experiences.

The CSD is a space for you to unpack some of the beliefs or thought processes that you had growing up. Through programs and initiatives, we create opportunities to learn about other cultures and other identities in a safe and communal way. This will enable folks to contribute meaningfully to a society that values us all.

Q: You’ve been at TU in various roles for seven years. How have you seen the university grow over that time?

A: When I first got to TU I served as the assistant director of leadership in the Office of Student Activities. Shortly thereafter I transitioned into the associate director role in the CSD where I worked primarily with our Black students on campus. We have seen a shift in the demographics

of our student body. We are now a majority-minority institution, which aligns with Baltimore as well as the state. Because of this, TU is attracting a diverse faculty and staff demographic as well. Special shout out to the Black Faculty and Staff Association for creating a community on campus for so many of us.

Q: In your LinkedIn profile, you describe yourself as a “mentor, thought partner, community builder.” You mention “centering identity, culture, and connection is my jam.” What do you mean by that?

A: My spirit speaks from a place of vulnerability and transparency. I am extremely open with students. Boundaries are set in place, of course, but I want students to see themselves in me because I was them at one point in time. I’ve made connections with students, faculty and staff across the university on a personal level. I feel like if I can make that personal connection with you, then that makes our professional relationship that much easier. I get it from my paternal grandfather. They say that he never met a stranger. I will talk to anybody as long as they will listen. And so I lean into that when I want to make connections, particularly with our students of color.



towson.edu/perryman
for more of this interview



Moving On Up



TU has sparked countless innovators. These are their stories.

David Rovine '70

Founder, Principal of D.R. Creative Initiatives

Before he started his own consulting company, David Rovine's career swerved more than a racehorse coming around the turn toward the finish line. A theatre major at TU, he's directed plays, owned dinner theaters, trained racehorses, booked national music acts and was vice president of the Baltimore Orioles' operations in their spring training home—his permanent one—of Sarasota, Florida.

Despite the disparity of the titles, the jobs have all had a common thread, he says. "Whether it's actors on a stage, horses on a track or baseball players on a field, the business is the same," he says. "It's taking care of your customer, making sure that they come back."

Now, in semi-retirement, Rovine has the time to sit back and reflect. "Really what I've done is give people a good time," he says, "and that's been very satisfying."

1948



BORN AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL IN BALTIMORE.

1966

ATTENDED THE WORLD SERIES AT BALTIMORE'S MEMORIAL STADIUM.

1967

COMPLETED HIS FRESHMAN YEAR AT TU. "I had a great time at school. I learned a lot from my professors and was fortunate to act in some lead performances."

1971

WORKED FOR ON TOUR PRODUCTIONS DIRECTING OFF-BROADWAY SHOWS IN NEW YORK.

1973



WITH HIS FATHER, MILTON, AND HIS BROTHER, HARVEY '69 (ALSO A THEATRE MAJOR), PURCHASED ONCE UPON A STAGE DINNER THEATER IN ORLANDO. THEY OWNED IT UNTIL 1985.

1987

AFTER NEARLY A DECADE OF OWNING RACEHORSES, BECAME THE LEADING TRAINER AT THE MEADOWLANDS IN NEW JERSEY, SETTING THE THEN-RECORD WITH 106 WINS AT THE TRACK IN ONE YEAR.

1981

SON, ZEV, IS BORN.

1980

DAUGHTER, JACQLYN, IS BORN.

1978



BEGAN GOING TO THE TRACK TO WATCH HARNES HORSE RACING. PURCHASED HIS FIRST HORSE.

"When I was a kid in Baltimore, I used to go horseback riding all the time. I wanted to go out and see the horses, smell the manure and get back into it. A guy at the track turned to me and goes, 'Psst, want to buy a horse?' I laughed and said, 'Sure, what have you got?' He said, 'I know this woman who has a claimer for \$1,000 but I think she'll sell it to you for \$600.' I said, 'Great, I'll buy it.'"

1990

BECAME DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AT ROSECROFT RACEWAY IN FORT WASHINGTON, MARYLAND.

"It was clear that we needed to broaden interest to get more people involved in harness racing. I began bringing in musical groups like the Coasters to add an entertainment element to a night at the races."

1995

MOVED TO FLORIDA TO BECOME DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AT RENOWNED GULFSTREAM PARK IN HALLANDALE BEACH. INCREASED REVENUES AND ATTENDANCE BY 34% OVER A NINE-YEAR PERIOD.

"I repositioned it as an entertainment facility featuring world-class thoroughbred racing. Brought in musical acts like the Doobie Brothers and Joe Cocker. People loved it, and then we taught them about racing."

2004

WAS HIRED BY SMG ENTERTAINMENT TO OPEN THE GENESEE THEATRE IN WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS.

"They did a \$23 million renovation of a 1910 historic theater. We had

2026

LIVES IN SARASOTA WITH HIS LIFE PARTNER, WENDY. HE OWNS RACEHORSES, WATCHES THEM COMPETE AND IS RELAXING, ENJOYING THE GOOD LIFE.

2020

STARTED D.R. CREATIVE INITIATIVES, WHICH WORKS WITH VENUES, PROFESSIONAL SPORTS STADIUMS AND THEATERS.

2013



NAMED VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BALTIMORE ORIOLES, SARASOTA. WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ARRANGING FOR THE SARASOTA ORCHESTRA AND OTHER ARTS GROUPS TO PERFORM AT ED SMITH STADIUM.

"We set attendance records and developed programs in the community that are part of the Orioles' presence in Sarasota to this day." Played a key role in bringing Billy Joel to Oriole Park at Camden Yards in 2019. some major acts there. I got to meet artists that I always admired, like George Carlin and James Brown."

Breaking new ground, complementing
current knowledge and leading to
solutions for the public good.

Research



HUMANIZING AI EDUCATION

The Towson Artificial Intelligence Institute (TAI) has been established to advance ethical and sustainable application of AI.

As AI continues to evolve across professions and industries, TAI is providing opportunities for students and faculty to apply AI in science, health care, business, education, the arts and more to foster impactful and ethical innovation that is responsive to societal needs.

The incorporation of AI research and education across disciplines at TU has already made significant impacts on the future of AI education and integration in higher education. That includes

TU has made significant impacts on the future of AI education and integration in higher education.

being tasked by the National Science Foundation and the National Security Agency to develop key national guidelines to define degree programs in CyberAI.

towson.edu/research

SPEARHEADING MENTORSHIP

Designed to increase capacity for undergraduate biology research at TU, the Medium Duration High



Impact Research Experiences (MD HIREs) is enabling TU faculty to be more effective and inclusive mentors while providing funded research opportunities to students.

MD HIREs arose as an opportunity for students who participated in TU's Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) to better connect research skills to career readiness and to explore research dissemination, communication and conflict management.

Through the collaboration of professors Laura Gough and Matthew Hemm, five faculty mentors are supporting student-run labs across biology disciplines.

"We wanted to find a way to help faculty manage more students than they would normally take on [in their labs] and provide students with more opportunities to do paid research," Gough says.

DOCTORAL IMPACT

While less traveled than the university's undergraduate programs, doctoral program enrollment at TU has doubled since 2022 across all four programs, and with the interdisciplinary nature of the programs, research opportunities and the dedication of the faculty and program directors, it's evident why.

These powerhouse programs are preparing the next generation of tenure-track faculty.

"Our Ph.D. programs are about more than producing research; they are about developing scholars who can ask and answer consequential questions, work across disciplines and mentor the next generations of students," says David Ownby, Interim Dean of Graduate Studies.

These powerhouse programs are preparing the next generation of tenure-track faculty in information technology, building expertise on Autism Studies among faculty, enabling cross-cultural and generational collaboration in instructional technology and contributing to the betterment of health and well-being through consideration of occupational participation.



One In a Billion

★ MEN'S LACROSSE

Could you make the worst thing that's ever happened to you into a way to help others? TU men's lacrosse team manager Noah Goldstein '26 did.

On July 25, 2019, the then-14-year-old was having a lacrosse catch with his brother when he started to feel, as he described it, tingly. Then the sensation in the right side of his body started to fade. Goldstein stumbled into the garage to his father.

"I basically said, if he didn't catch me, I was going to fall over," he says. "The paramedics came very slowly and argued with my father, saying, 'He's just having a panic attack. It's fine.'"

Goldstein's father recognized the signs of a stroke and took his son to GBMC. The staff immediately rushed him to Johns Hopkins Medical Center for an emergency thrombectomy to remove a blood clot from his brain. Two and half hours into the procedure, the interventional radiologist deemed it too dangerous to proceed.

"They told my parents, 'If we do the surgery, he may never wake up,'" Goldstein says. "I came out of the stroke reading at a second-grade level. The doctors asked me to name three animals. I got out cat and dog; the third animal escaped me. I had lost the use of my right arm, my right leg; the ability to speak; and so much cognitive function."

Nine months after finishing

outpatient rehab, he had another stroke. Then another about a month later.

In 2023, he was healthy enough to enter TU and think about the future.

"I said to my dad, 'I want to do something bigger than myself.' My dad and I cofounded a charity that supports pediatric stroke awareness," Goldstein says.

The organization works to increase pediatric stroke awareness and education levels so others know the signs and can better advocate for their children or themselves.

Last season, TU men's lacrosse Coach Shawn Nadelén suggested featuring Strokes of Luck before a regular season game against

Delaware on March 15. Goldstein—who has been a team manager since he was a freshman—shared his story with the team, whom he calls a second family, and the players wore T-shirts with the charity name and logo on them during pregame.

There's no history or predisposition in Goldstein's family for strokes.

"The doctors call me one in a billion," he says. "I've won the wrong lottery. It's a mystery to everyone. I've been fortunate and given a new lease on life. And I want to make the most of it."

Visit strokesofluck.org for more on Goldstein's organization.



BAARA STEWART '27

has had an historic 2025–26 indoor track season—breaking four individual school records in four different events.



GRACE FRANCYK '26

was a 2025 softball All-CAA second team selection and began the 2026 season hitting over .300 with three home runs and seven RBI in the first eight games.



ELIJAH SMITH '26

converted his lacrosse position from long-stick midfielder to close defense and received preseason All-CAA honors.



SAM TENNELL '26

has won six CAA Diver of the Week honors this season and holds the TU record for the 1m dive.



Brian Duker '10

Good Coordination

In February, Brian Duker '10 was named the defensive coordinator for the NFL's New York Jets. He was the pass game coordinator and secondary coach of the Miami Dolphins the past two seasons. He joins Grant Udinski '19 (offensive coordinator of the Jacksonville Jaguars), Brian Fleury '02 (run game coordinator and tight ends coach for the San Francisco 49ers) and Jim O'Neil '01 (defensive assistant for the Detroit Lions) on the NFL sidelines for the 2026 season.



SOFTBALL

Rally Cap

Senior Grace Franczyk got her 100th career hit during a 6th-inning rally, helping boost the Tigers to an 8-4 win over the Morgan State Bears on March 1, to seal a 4-0 home-opening weekend. With two outs in the bottom of the inning, Franczyk doubled and Isabella Canesi '26 reached safely to bring home the go-ahead run.

BASEBALL

Rounding Third, Heading Home

The baseball team's offense came alive during the double-header against Norfolk State on Feb. 14. The Tigers won the first game 12-3 and then more than doubled that offensive output in game two, setting the single-inning-run record with 15 runs in the fifth inning against the Spartans. They went on to win 28-4 in seven innings.

MEN'S LACROSSE

Watch This

Towson University attackman Mikey Weisshaar '26 was named to the 2026 Tewaaraon Trophy Watch List. The Tewaaraon Trophy is awarded to the top player in college lacrosse. Weisshaar made the watch list for the third straight year and was a nominee in 2025.

TRACK AND FIELD

Flying High

A track and field athlete set program bests at the Sykes and Sabcock Challenge hosted by Penn State in February. Leeann Redlo '26 reset her own program record (1.80m, 2025 ECACs) in the high jump after clearing 1.81m.

160

YEARS YOUNG



BY FELICITY KNOX '94

Towson University is celebrating its anniversary by honoring a history of academic excellence and emphasizing its momentum as a premier university in research, innovation, inclusivity and student success.



The exterior of Burdick Hall after a significant renovation in 2018.



The very first catalog of what was then called the Maryland State Normal School is just 13 pages long. It details the five instructors (principal, assistant principal and teachers of drawing, music and calisthenics), tells the exceedingly short history of the school, lists enrolled students and explains admissions, curriculum and fees.

The booklet clarifies the school's mission: "It is to learn, so as to teach."

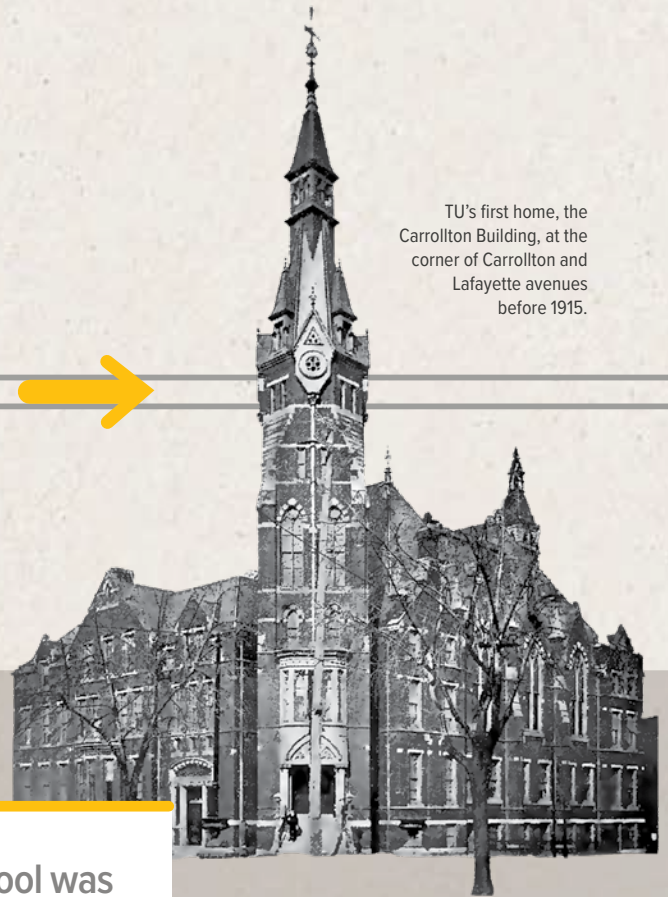
In the ensuing 160 years, the mission has expanded: offering more degree levels, introducing a liberal arts curriculum, growing the school's athletics program, exponentially enlarging the campus footprint and increasing research opportunities for all members of the TU community, among many other achievements. As the normal school evolved into a state teachers college to a state college to a university, TU's reputation has attracted national accolades and its impact is felt in the state, the Mid-Atlantic region and around the world.

Today's graduates, though, have essentially the same mission as the first: **Learn, grow and become effective leaders for the public good.**





TU's first home, the Carrollton Building, at the corner of Carrollton and Lafayette avenues before 1915.



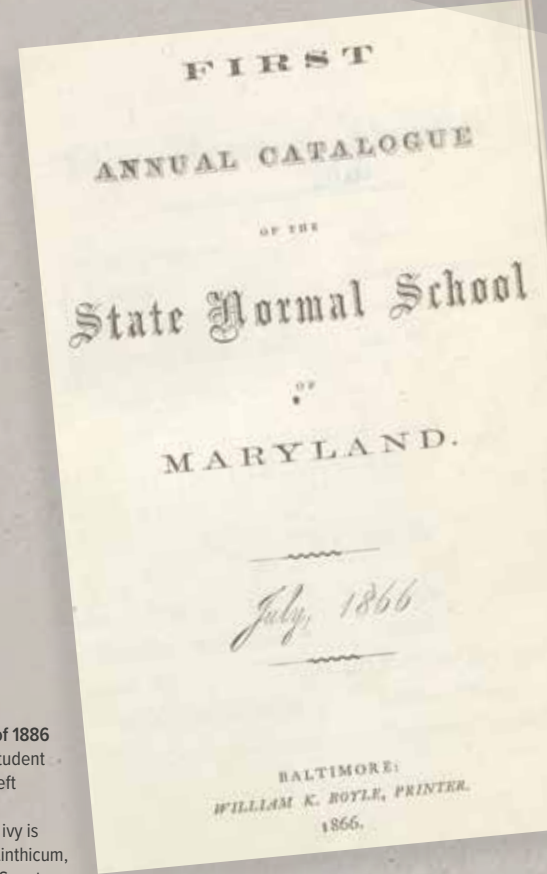
1860s

On Jan. 15, 1866, 10 students registered at the Maryland State Normal School (MSNS). The school focused on training new teachers to the same standards or norms, hence the unusual name. A state legislative act in 1864 had provided funding for public schools as well as the education of future teachers and sought to level the playing field by creating MSNS. Education in the state had been administered inequitably, with wealthier counties and Baltimore City providing opportunities that were not available to all children in Maryland.

While the students enrolled tended to be young women, the school was co-educational from the very start. Its first home was a rented hall—less than ideal for the large lecture-style classes in fashion at the time. Tuition for many of the students was free. “Those who pledge themselves to teach in the Public Schools of the

The school was co-educational from the very start.

State have nothing to pay for Tuition or Books,” declared the first catalog. This Pledge to Teach program was in place for more than 100 years, providing many students access to an education they would otherwise be unable to afford. In turn, those students repaid this boon by providing education to generations of children and becoming leaders in their communities. From its very start, the school that would become Towson University was committed to enriching the lives of the people of Maryland.



The Class of 1886
The male student on the far left standing in front of the ivy is J. Charles Linthicum, future U.S. Senator for Maryland, and advocate for the “Star-Spangled Banner” serve as our national anthem. The photo was taken at the Carrollton Building.



Left: Students at the Lida Lee Tall School on MSNS's campus in the early 1900s. Below: A view of the Glen from before campus construction began in Towson in 1914. The building on the top of the hill would be torn down to construct Smith Hall in the 1960s.



1870s- 1915

Maryland State Normal School eventually found a home in West Baltimore at Carrollton and Lafayette avenues. But as enrollment grew and education practices changed, the building quickly became outmoded. The school built additional structures on the small plot of land on which the school stood, but there were no dormitories, which meant that students who lived in areas too far away for daily commutes had to rent rooms in nearby boarding houses.

School leaders decided to relocate the school to a more suburban location, where they could build dormitories to house students and additional classroom buildings as needed. The state agreed, and in 1915, MSNS moved from Baltimore City to 88 acres of former farmland in Towson.

In 1915, the Maryland State Normal School relocated from Baltimore City to 88 acres of farmland in Towson.

An early view of Stephens Hall, then called Administration Building, which housed all classes, an auditorium, all administrative offices, a library, the campus elementary school and a small cafeteria.





Left: This 1936 campus bus with the new school name took student teachers to their teaching assignments in public schools throughout Baltimore County. Below: The 1932 men's soccer team photo. Head coach Donald "Doc" Minnegan (third from left in the top row) was hired in 1927 and led the physical education instruction efforts until his retirement in 1969.



1915-1930s

When the school opened in Towson in September 1915, all classes were held in the Administration Building, now known as Stephens Hall. The building also had an auditorium, all the administrative offices, a library, the campus elementary school and a small cafeteria that would eventually be used by commuter and elementary school students. Another cafeteria was part of the addition to the first dormitory that opened that year, Newell Hall. The only other building constructed for the new campus was the power plant. Besides fueling the other buildings on campus, it also had space for a basketball court, and at some points, served as a large dormitory space for the few men who needed housing.

The elementary school on campus was used not just as a space to model best teaching practices for student teachers but to serve area schoolchildren with

an exemplary educational experience. This school, eventually known as the Lida Lee Tall School, served the state for more than 100 years. The draft instituted during World War I revealed that America's young men were not at peak fitness, so the government began issuing grants to schools to support health and physical education departments. MSNS received money and began offering more classes to teach health and physical education.

The move to a new campus and the renewed focus on physical education were bolstered by the hiring of Mary Roach and Donald "Doc" Minnegan. Both worked at the school for more than 40 years, finding new athletic opportunities for students, even when the physical education department was comprised

of only Roach, Minnegan and one other instructor. Activities were split by gender, and while most of the students enrolled were women, varsity sports were available only to men until the passage of Title IX in 1972.

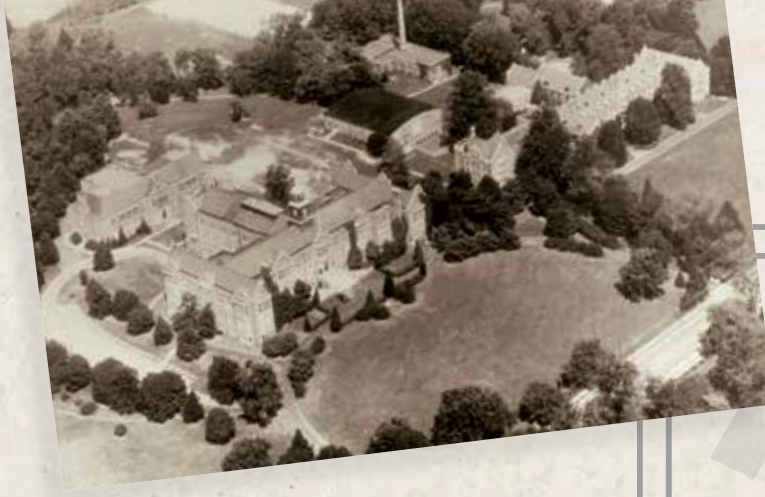
Under their leadership, the school began to play competitively against other colleges, first in soccer and basketball. Sports events became a unifying element for the campus. Students gathered to watch soccer and then football games for Homecoming weekend. Each team had a different mascot, but in 1963 the tiger was created to rally students. Eventually, the tiger would be named after Doc Minnegan.

In 1935, the school awarded bachelor's degrees for the first time and changed its name to the State Teachers College at Towson (STC).

The catalog by this time was very dry and full of facts and information: how one could apply, what the course schedule would be, what a student should bring if they planned to live in a dormitory. While it was designed to be as useful as possible for future teachers, it does give details about the student activities one could expect to enjoy when attending.



A 1940s aerial view: Between 1915 and 1946, the campus buildings total had doubled. Stephens and Newell halls and the Power Plant were joined by Richmond and Van Bokkelen halls and the first gymnasium.



1940s- 1950s



Marvis Barnes '59 (left) and Myra Ann Harris '59

While teacher education remained the primary focus of STC, the school's response to World War II created a new opportunity. During the war, the school kept in close contact with those serving in the military. After the war, hoping to attract veterans and their GI Bill benefits, the school created the Junior College program. This two-year general education program allowed students to begin their higher education at Towson and transfer those credits to another college to finish their degree. This program not only created an enrollment uptick, it also laid the foundation for programs that eventually led to the transformation of the school from a teaching college to one devoted to a comprehensive education, further demonstrating the school's desire to find new ways to serve the community's best interests.

The 1954 Supreme Court ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education* opened Towson to Black students. The first Black students enrolled in fall 1955. Four Black women graduated in 1956 in what was known as the "Fifth Year" program. They held bachelor's degrees from other institutions and attended STC to add to their academic experience.

In 1959, Marvis Barnes and Myra Ann Harris were the STC's first four-year Black graduates. The catalog from that year states: "It is the objective of the

State Teachers College at Towson to offer a broad educational program which will fit its graduates to become intelligent, active citizens and effective members of the teaching profession."

Two dormitories, Barnes and Harris halls, were named in their honor in 2022.



In 2022, TU named two of the dormitories in honor of Barnes and Harris. Barnes Hall is to the left and Harris Hall to the right.



1960s- 1970s



Nursing in 1974: Instructor Jane Wiley (right) and Sally Diffenderffer '76 taking vital signs. This photograph was taken in May/June 1974. The nursing program had been established two years prior.



By the early 1960s, it was apparent that higher education was in demand, and Maryland sought new pathways to meet that demand, particularly as the Baby Boom increased the number of prospective students. The state redesigned teacher education colleges to liberal arts colleges, so the State Teachers College at Towson became Towson State College in 1963.

It would take another year for the catalog to reflect the objective of this new mission: "The Towson program rests fundamentally on the idea that a liberal education is indispensable for the preservation of a free society." This philosophy remained in place for the next 20 years. Towson's ability to navigate this change was aided by the work it had done to establish the Junior College, which had created unexpected outcomes. With the increase in male students on campus, the school began exploring the feasibility of fielding a football team in the mid-1960s.

For almost two decades, the school grew in program offerings, enrollment and physical size, creating avenues to ensure student success. Real-world learning continued to be an important part of Towson's educational experience. Nursing students were placed in nearby hospitals to gain field experience, just as teaching students had been for the last 100-plus years. International student and faculty exchange

programs opened the world to community members studying abroad. To support all the new programs and endeavors underway, the campus began expanding in the 1960s. Stephens Hall had been the primary building on campus holding all classrooms, administrative offices and even the library until 1957. In rapid succession, the school built the library (1957), Smith Hall (1965) and Linthicum Hall (1968). As enrollment grew, the academic core continued to push west, with the University Union and more dormitories built on the peripheries of campus. Between 1960 and 1980, 17 new structures appeared on campus, almost one new building per year for two decades.

These changes were reflected in administrative changes. In 1976, the name changed once again to reflect the robust degrees it offered, becoming Towson State University.

Amid all this change, the relationship between students and administrators was also evolving. Since its inception the school had served as a stand-in for students' parents, but the change in mission from teachers college to one focused on comprehensive education, as well as the social upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s, altered that dynamic. Community members began

protesting on campus whether through demonstrations, sit-ins, student-led class sessions, new student organizations and writing in the student newspaper and other informational newsletters. School leadership changed, and students were granted more freedom including the relaxation of dress codes and dormitory rules. The first co-ed dormitory, the Residence Tower, opened in 1972. It was also the first dormitory with air conditioning. All this happened against a backdrop of tension in the state over the role of the school as well as the economic hardships of the 1970s. Creating a robust academic institution as well as a welcoming social environment was a challenge for the school's administration.



1980- 1999



An undated photograph of Norma Holter, Ph.D., from the Department of Accounting, teaching an accounting class with computers, circa 2000.

After years of change and growth, during the decades before the turn of the new millennium the school focused on

And while no new academic buildings were constructed, student services buildings and support became the focus. Starting in 1983, the Glen Complex opened dormitory space to another 500 resident students as well as providing another dining facility.



The student-run newspaper, *The Towerlight*, which itself has had many different names since it began in the early 1900s, reporting on TU's latest moniker.

enhancing the academic program. Enrollment remained steady with about 15,000 students. New educational opportunities for students were created with the establishment of the School of Business and Economics in 1982. That year, Towson State University established the current college system to organize academic departments. Promotional campaigns created at the time highlighted the school's impact on the state workforce.

In 1984, the school tweaked the philosophy that had been in place since 1964: "The curricula, services, and activities of the university are shaped by two primary goals: That all students encounter the values and methods that establish a liberal education, promote critical thought, and develop mental habits required for thoughtful citizenship; and that all students, in completing undergraduate or graduate majors, have the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills essential to their career choices."

Again, the administration faced challenges meeting students' expectations, providing a space for academic rigor and working within the bounds laid out by the state. Changing the school's name in 1997 to Towson University was in many ways emblematic of all these concerns. By this time, the school's philosophy had again changed: "The University helps all students develop a range of intellectual skills that will continue to enrich and shape their lives long after their formal education has ended."



2000-2025

TU's StarUp at the Armory in uptown Towson opened in 2020. It's the university's award-winning hub for innovation and entrepreneurship and Maryland's largest entrepreneur support organization.



The opening of Millennium Hall in 2000 kicked off not just a renewed interest in growing the physical plant but a push into construction on the west side of campus.

Starting with heavy campaigning of the state legislature for funding, TU spent the next 10 years outlining a new vision for campus and upgrading buildings to better support students' continued academic growth. The completion of the College of Liberal Arts building in 2011 was the school's first new academic building in nearly 35 years. That year also saw the construction of two dormitories as well as the West Village Commons and garage. Between 2000 and 2024, 29 structures were either created or enhanced across campus

and beyond, including the construction of TU in Northeastern Maryland in 2014 and the 2020 opening of the StarUp at the Armory, a business engagement center and free co-working space in uptown Towson. These spaces showcase TU's impact beyond its borders.

The construction boom is the most visible sign of TU's investment in its community. Other ways that TU continues to build on its legacy as a strong community partner include BTU—Partnerships for Greater Baltimore, the Institute for Well-Being and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. In 2021, the Dr. Nancy Grasmick Leadership Institute opened, and the Ben and Myrna Cardin Center

for Civic Engagement and Civil Discourse debuted four years later.

In the course catalog that now resides online, the first sentence of the mission statement reads: "Towson University fosters intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, preparing graduates who will serve as effective leaders for the public good."

For 160 years, Towson University has served as a community leader, first in education and now growing up from its original mission to continue to meet Maryland's needs. **TU**

The Health Professions Building's cutting-edge anatomage lab displays scans of people who donated their bodies to science and range in age, gender and health history. Students can parse thousands of digital layers to examine components of the bodies, such as the nervous system, musculature and the brain.



Creating Inner Harmony

AFTER A
CANCER DIAGNOSIS,
ELIZABETH BOROWSKY '05
TRANSFORMED STRUGGLE
INTO SOUND.

➔ BY MIKE UNGER



Photos courtesy of
Elizabeth Borowsky

Elizabeth Borowsky '05 didn't think she needed meditation. As a musician, her days were already disciplined—structured around practice, teaching and performance. She considered herself attentive, even mindful. For years, she had practiced yoga daily. But she was moving quickly from project to project, concert to concert. Stillness was not something she actively sought.

That changed on Dec. 17, 2024.

At 41, Borowsky scheduled a routine mammogram. The biopsy that followed led to a diagnosis of an aggressive form of breast cancer. The months ahead would revolve around chemotherapy, surgery and radiation—a different kind of regimen, equally structured but no longer self-directed.

As she typed her news on Facebook a month after receiving the diagnosis, she had no way of knowing what her future would hold.

"The last few weeks have been something of a stress-dream realized," she wrote. "I am grateful for the support received thus far... things are moving quickly."

Roughly 2,300 miles from Borowsky's home in Lebanon, New Hampshire, Jesika Harmon

read the note with a heavy heart. The two had met 25 years earlier at a program for young women and had remained loosely connected online. Harmon, now a meditation coach, reached out.

"I was coming from a place of having just lost my father-in-law to pancreatic cancer," Harmon says. "And as a meditation coach, I found myself wishing there was something I could do to help."

Turns out there was. The two reconnected, and, over Zoom, Harmon began guiding Borowsky through meditation sessions. It wasn't about avoiding fear or insisting on positivity, Borowsky says. It was about cultivating attention—learning when thought serves and when it obstructs.

"With a diagnosis and treatment plan to navigate, there was a constant flood of information, and it was all too easy to get caught up in Googling every possible scenario," she says. "Meditation offered a way to step back, observe and respond rather than be swept along by the noise."

From the start, their weekly sessions were deeply personal. Over time, a thought blossomed: What if

this exchange could extend beyond the two of them? The challenges Borowsky was facing—uncertainty, fear, the flood of information and the constant need to make decisions about her body and treatment—were likely universal. What if the lessons emerging from this work could help others navigating illness, uncertainty or grief?

Neither woman remembers who first proposed the plan, but between chemo treatments, Borowsky boarded a plane to Utah. Days later, in a studio in Provo, the two created what would become "Inner Harmony," an album pairing Harmon's guided meditations with Borowsky's piano music, composed in real time. Both the music and meditation were born from Borowsky's cancer experience.

Released last fall on major music streaming platforms, Borowsky is careful not to describe the project as music for meditation or meditation with background music.

"The music and the words are fully interwoven, note by note, word by word," she says. "Each responds

to the other. It's a single, unified experience."

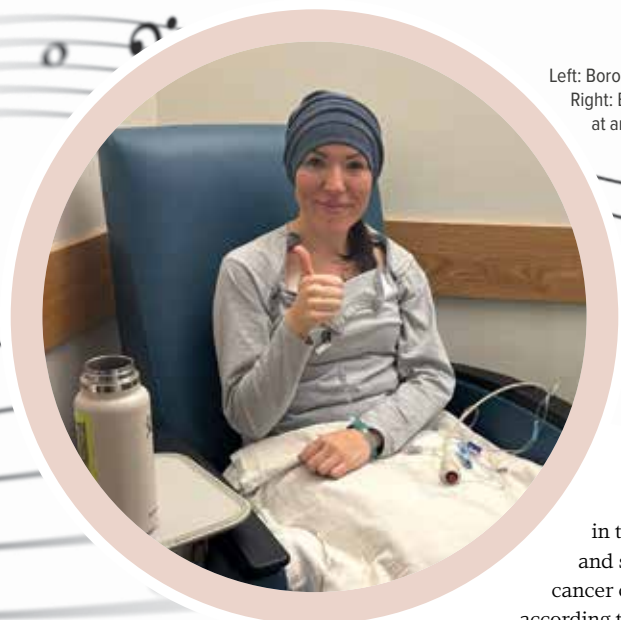
Music has always structured Borowsky's life. Her mother, Cecylia Barczyk, was a longtime cello professor at TU, and the household revolved around disciplined practice and performance. By childhood, Borowsky was already performing internationally; by 18, she had appeared in more than 30 countries.

"I don't remember life before piano or life before music," she says. "It's always been part of how I understand the world."

Borowsky excelled at TU, where, in addition to her music classes, she took acting, public speaking, sociology and political science; was in the Honors College; studied abroad; and served as an orientation leader. Studying with renowned pianist Reynaldo Reyes, a member of the music faculty at TU for more than 50 years who passed away in 2016, gave her tools of discipline, artistry and performance that she says continue to shape her work today.

Left: Borowsky at a chemo treatment session.

Right: Borowsky and Harmon performing at an event in Utah.



in the U.S. for all types and stages of breast cancer combined is 92%, according to the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

“The music department faculty are deeply committed educators who bring national and international expertise to the program,” she says. “My studies in theory, musicianship and music history laid the foundation for everything I do as a performer, teacher and composer.”

After graduating, Borowsky participated in the International Chopin Competition in Poland and recorded a solo album, “Chopin Recital.” She then pursued a master’s at Indiana University, spent three months as an artist-in-residence in Germany, performed at pre-Olympic celebrations in Beijing and published “100 Solos for Piano Prodigies,” among other projects.

Then came the diagnosis. Breast cancer is the most common form of the disease diagnosed among women in the United States, comprising 32% of all new cases, according to Breastcancer.org. One in eight women in the U.S. will develop it in their lifetime (the median age is 62). While traditional risk factors such as smoking or obesity are often emphasized, many people diagnosed with breast cancer have few or none of these factors. Increasingly, younger women and otherwise healthy individuals are being diagnosed, underscoring how unpredictable the disease can be.

Those are unnerving numbers, but advances in treatment have helped lead to better outcomes. The five-year relative survival rate

But patients are people, not statistics. In February 2025, Borowsky began five months of chemo. As a performer, her physical self was part of the image she had created and identified with—and chemotherapy was rewriting it. She had already cut her mid-back-length hair to stay ahead of the loss, but now it was time to go even shorter. When Thom, her partner, shaved it, he went straight down the center. That’s when she realized she had forgotten to attach the guide to the clippers.

“He looked at me apologetically and said, ‘Now you have a clown cut,’” Borowsky recalls. “I had anticipated this ritual would be a tragic moment. Instead, we were laughing hysterically.”

Managing her emotional and cognitive load became as important as managing her body. The potent chemotherapy drug doxorubicin, nicknamed the “red devil” for its bright red color and harsh side effects, created an immediate feeling of inner repulsion. Borowsky could feel it and taste it. Even thinking about it between infusions made her gag. Through guided meditation, Harmon helped her reframe it, seeing the drug not as poison but as medicine targeting cancer cells. “Each week she asked what I’d experienced, how my body felt and what was happening emotionally,” Borowsky says. “Then she would guide me through a meditation or teach me a mindfulness tool that could help, followed by

an email that would be a summary of our discussion to help me practice during the week.”

These conversations ultimately gave rise to “Inner Harmony.” Throughout the process, Borowsky and Harmon made deliberate choices. They recorded audio and video simultaneously, preserving the immediacy of each performance. Borowsky chose to appear as she was—bald from chemotherapy—in solidarity with patients past, present and future who might encounter the project on YouTube. They entered each session without a script or written score, guided only by a loose outline of intention. Because the spoken words, pacing and music unfolded differently each time, each take was unique and unedited, resulting in a recording that could not be pieced together from multiple takes. What emerged was not a constructed product but a lived moment. The project gave birth to a new form of meditation, Sonisah Meditation, from the Latin *sonis* (“sound”) and the Hebrew *niysayon* (“experience born of trials”).

“Musically, these are relatively simple compared with what I play and write,” Borowsky says. “But these tracks are infused with attentiveness to breath, heart rate and the message of Jesika’s words. I still draw on everything I’ve explored over decades: How do I forge a connection with my audience through sound? How do I bring them into another world? How do I make this an experience? How do I inspire them to feel deeply?”

Each of the seven tracks addresses a challenge Borowsky confronted. “I am more than my body,” “I can’t do

this alone, but I am not alone,” and “The only way forward is through.”


“As someone who records guided meditations, finding music that goes with it is often a challenge,” Harmon says. “Because of her musicianship and expertise, she was able to translate her own battle against cancer into music in an incredible way.”

Released in October, breast cancer awareness month, the album has resonated widely. Harmon’s neighbor, recovering from a brain aneurysm, used the meditations daily during a month-long hospital stay. The project has also been featured on podcasts, highlighted on a national breast cancer organization website, and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, where Borowsky received treatment, plans to show the videos in cancer center waiting rooms and infusion suites.

Today, Borowsky’s life is getting back to normal. A new normal. Although she currently has no evidence of disease, she’s continuing endocrine therapy to reduce the risk of recurrence. She and Harmon are sharing “Inner Harmony” with hospitals, podcasts and health care providers, hoping to help patients.

“If I knew then what I know now or if someone could have said, ‘Here, let me give you a sense of what to expect and how to make this a little easier,’ it would have been a profound gift,” Borowsky says.

A gift she and Harmon are now giving to the world. **TU**

 towson.edu/innerharmony
to listen to the guided meditations

Wellness

Through Community and Connection



The Institute for Well-Being's four centers emphasize the tie between health and well-being to significantly enhance participants' overall health and quality of life.

✎ BY MEGAN BRADSHAW

When the clock ticks 12:01 a.m. on January 1 each year, people have likely already been bombarded for weeks with what experts say will be the wellness trends for the next 12 months.

But at Towson University's Institute for Well-Being (IWB)—an educational teaching facility for the College of Health Professions (CHP)—wellness isn't a trend or New Year's resolution. It's something lived every day by the faculty, staff, students, clients and program participants in each of the four centers.

The Hussman Center for Adults with Autism and the Hearing and Balance, Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language centers offer professional services from licensed and certified health care experts. They also serve as a dynamic interprofessional learning lab for TU students working under mentorship and supervision to learn best practices in health and wellness.

The IWB epitomizes wellness through community and connection, a concept endorsed by the World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control as highly

beneficial to individuals' health and longevity.

Each of the four centers help their participants combat isolation, develop confidence, find a sense of purpose and focus on their well-being by meeting them where they are with individualized treatment plans or programming.



Fostering advocacy and independence

In addition to providing hearing and balance evaluations and fitting clients with a full array of hearing aid products, Amanda Kozlowski, director of the Hearing and Balance Center, and her team of licensed clinicians and supervised students advise individuals with hearing loss or balance issues how to advocate for themselves.

"We teach communication strategies," she says. "How to ask people to slow down their rate of speech, to talk a little bit louder and to situate themselves in well-lit environments

to see faces better. Hearing aids are great tools, but how can we make the whole environment better for our clients?"

The Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language centers coordinate their efforts in evaluation and treatment programs, helping clients from young children to adults with a variety of sensorimotor, physical or communication differences.

"Independence is an important pillar of mental and emotional health," says Karen Day, director of the Speech and Language Center. "Helping children to communicate socially with their peers is also a confidence boost. Positive experiences in supported social interactions as provided in our programming can carry-over to more positive experiences with peers in and out of school."

Dan Hollern, director of the Occupational Therapy Center, agrees.

"A lot of what we do is help children with social and emotional regulation," he says. "If you become dysregulated, then you're not really able to attend to what's going on around you. This can really impact

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CENTER



SPEECH AND LANGUAGE CENTER



HUSSMAN CENTER FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM



HEARING AND BALANCE CENTER



social participation, learning, and everything else you do in a day.

“Our OTs do a great job at figuring out what might be triggers for kids and finding solutions—deep pressure, vibration, swinging, whatever it may be—that allow them to be more successful in whatever environment they may be in.”

The Hussman Center for Adults with Autism offers programming, training and resources for autistic adults. The center includes TU students with community participants in a variety of interactive learning opportunities from cooking classes to comedy nights. But one of the most important functions is simply to be a safe space.

“When they are here, they feel they can be their true authentic selves, and they can interact with whoever they want to, and they can engage to the extent that they want to without being forced,” says Doug DeHaan, center director. “They make friends if they want to. They can ask for help if they’re not exactly sure what to do.”



Building bonds for better health

Combatting isolation is a vital component to all the IWB centers’ work. Chronic loneliness has been shown to negatively impact health, with some studies finding isolation to be as detrimental as smoking.

“A life-changing disability or disease, such as a stroke, can be very isolating,” says Hollern. “The programs here give folks maybe their only opportunities to get out of the house. It can be a lot of work for individuals with disabilities to get washed, dressed, in the car, travel, be here for a couple hours then go home again. A lot of our clients return every single semester. They’ve really built a community bond and connection with each other.”

The benefits extend beyond the people visiting the centers for treatment or activities to their families.

There are caregiver support groups and coffee hours, but it also happens organically.

“I’ve seen a lot of bonds form between the family members of [participants],” says Carol Gebhardt, IWB director. “They’ll sit outside on a sunny day and have their time while family members are participating in programs.”



Making physical fitness fun

The emotional-social bonds developed extend to activities that have been created with physical health maintenance or improvement in mind. All the center directors have noticed the connection between participants has made fitness programs fun and even a bit competitive, from pediatric clients to older adults.

“When we work on gross motor activities, we may use the playground, an obstacle course or climbing up the stairs to go down the slide,” Hollern. “The TU students [working under supervision] are creative in coming up with fun activities that engage the kids. In our pediatric motor rooms, we have the rock-climbing wall. We have swings. We’ve got equipment to climb on that’s soft and safe.”

The Hussman Center’s physical health programming is mostly indirect, offering social opportunities like ping pong and resources on making healthier food choices.

“We support physical health through our cooking programs—sharing information on making healthy choices related to how they’re shopping, what they’re cooking and the amount they’re eating and drinking,” says DeHaan.

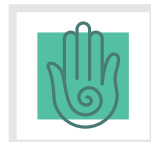
The center also offers fitness- and dance-related programs that include

movement components to support physical health.

The IWB has programs for older adults—Wellness in Stroke and Head Injury (WISH) and Community Health and Resilience in Parkinson’s (CHRP).

The former program, which is designed for recent or long-term survivors of head injury or stroke, involves a variety of daily living, social communication and movement activities. The latter is for individuals with Parkinson’s Disease to maintain their wellness through social/emotional support, client and family education, daily life skill training and a structured, movement-based exercise program.

“Twice a week, the last hour of [the stroke program] is movement



“Your wellness is tied to being active in community. That’s the only way you’re going to grow. At the IWB, we provide that community in a lot of ways.”

—DOUG DEHAAN

activities,” says Hollern. “Exercise doesn’t have to feel like work. You can find fun activities that are still beneficial. We do a lot of things like yard games and scavenger hunts.

“Making fitness fun competitive gets them engaged, and they play off each other well. Being in a group, you’re looking around and thinking, ‘Everybody else is doing it, so I’m going to do it too.’”

DeHaan sees a similar dynamic in Hussman Center participants.

“Even amongst autistic people who have this diagnostic characteristic of ‘being unsocial,’ when

they're in the fitness programs, often I find them chatting, and that boosts overall well-being," he says. "Your wellness is tied to being active in community. That's the only way you're going to grow. At the IWB, we provide that community in a lot of ways."



Developing research-driven approaches to care

The IWB's role as a vibrant interprofessional learning lab for TU students helps the licensed staff and clinicians provide innovative services and educational programs to participants. It also creates opportunities for ground-breaking research conducted by faculty, staff and students in CHP and the IWB.

The IWB's research spaces and faculty-student collaborations further enhance innovative thinking and problem-solving, positioning TU students to lead through evidence-based practices in a dynamic and ever-changing health care industry.

CHP and the IWB are integral parts of the university's push for the Carnegie R2 research classification. There are spaces throughout the IWB for research that can potentially improve systems and practices in health care while also contributing to changes in culture and improvement of outcomes.



Educating TU students

Making a lifelong impact is also a goal for the directors when it comes to the TU students working under clinical supervision or participating in Hussman Center programming.

"We reach out to the [outside] community, but there's such a huge component of student education," says Gebhardt. "We're educating future clinicians. At the Hussman Center, the TU students come from all over the university, taking an undergraduate class called Individuals on the Autism Spectrum."

Their role there is to co-participate and develop a sense of allyship with autistic and neurodiverse people in what they navigate on a day-to-day basis.

"We're respecting autistic individuals for whoever they are and walking alongside them wherever they are," DeHaan says.

All four directors emphasize learning how to communicate with clients and patients is a key skill for students to develop, and, at the IWB, they have opportunities to practice communication skills in a highly supportive and mentored environment before going to off-campus placements or starting a full-time job.

"The textbook may say [a patient has] a particular type or degree of hearing loss, but how that impacts the individual can vary greatly based on their environments and interests," says Kozlowski. "We spend a lot of time teaching the students how to ask patients about their lifestyles and their environments to learn the information they need."

Occupational therapy students simulate and practice skills learned in the classroom on each other. But working with clients in the IWB gives them a new perspective.

"In class, we talk about what muscle tone is, but [students] don't really know until they experience it on a client," Hollern says. "One

of the most impactful things I've heard a student say was how much their participation in the WISH program helped prepare them for their fulltime field work."



Paying it forward

Community connection provides essential emotional and practical support, acting as a buffer against life's challenges and, working in tandem with wellness, significantly enhancing overall health and happiness.

This is true whether it's an IWB participant or a TU student working in the centers.

They receive first-hand experience in practicing health care best practices, learning to be an ally and collaborating in interdisciplinary teams to help center participants live their best lives. They learn from their supervisors and the people they help. So when they start their careers there'll be a connection between the IWB and their former, current and future clients.

With 79% of recent TU graduates staying in Maryland to live and work, those clients are or will likely be members of the greater Baltimore community. Whether it's in a clinical or school setting, taking health and wellness care into area retirement communities like Blakehurst and Edenwald or bringing people together over popcorn and a movie at the Hussman Center, TU faculty, staff and students play a key role in connecting with the community and improving the health and well-being of residents throughout the region.

"The impact is going to extend so much because the students are going to take what we're doing here and what we're focusing on to the community and beyond," Hollern says. **TU**



The Teeny Tigers program is for children ages 18 months to 3 years and their parents. It develops motor skills, speech and language skills and overall wellness.

A Different Kind of Science Guy



Build a Mars Base

What will it take to live on another planet?

One of the goals of any future colony on Mars will be to produce enough oxygen, food, and water to sustain a human population.

Work together to harvest natural resources, develop energy solutions, and produce food and water, to build a successful colony on Mars.

COLONIZE MARS

BY MIKE UNGER

BY ALEXANDER WRIGHT '18

As the Maryland Science Center celebrates its golden anniversary, **Mark J. Potter '84, '91** is looking ahead to its next 50 years.

Mark Potter is strolling through the Maryland Science Center pointing out exhibits, beaming with pride. He's worked for what some call the first jewel of the Inner Harbor for more than 15 years, the last nine as its president and CEO, playing a key role in its renaissance.

"Space is a hit," he says of the center's latest exhibit, which opened in December. In fact, it may be too much of a hit. For a facility that welcomes 400,000 guests a year—roughly 100,000 of whom are Maryland schoolchildren—wear and tear on exhibits designed for maximum interaction is a real issue.

"One of the biggest challenges operating a science center is keeping

everything working because people love our exhibits. They love them to death," he says. "Within two weeks of opening, the fabricators had to come back to fix numerous things that have been overly loved."

But no one loves the science center quite like Potter, who came on board in 2011 as vice president of development. He's quick to point out that he's not a "science guy." He may not be Bill Nye, but Potter is very much a Maryland Science Center guy.

"Mark has been an extremely strong and effective leader," says Laurie Schwartz, who retired as president of Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore in July. The nonprofit is dedicated to

enhancing and promoting the waterfront district. "His strong development experience and local relationships have brought an infusion of private corporate and philanthropic dollars, without which the science center wouldn't be able to provide new exhibits and experiences that bring fun, a sense of exploration and learning for so many of Maryland's children."

Always humble, Potter is quick to deflect credit.

"My success in leading the science center is a result of our wonderful, dedicated and creative staff, a committed board of trustees and our loyal donors, without whom we would not have accomplished any of this," he says.

As he walks the center's 140,000 square feet of public space on a cold January morning just before the front doors are set to open and welcome an avalanche of those excited kids, he seems to be the one having all the fun.

"That's Maryland's state dinosaur," he says in the shadow of a 30-foot fiberglass replica *Astrodon johnstoni*, whose tiny head peers out a wall of windows with a stunning view of the harbor and downtown Baltimore. The dinosaur exhibit also underwent a recent renovation. "This space was painted for the first time in 20 years. That beautiful mural was painted by one of our staff members. All the technology has been changed out. Our monitors are touch screens now. This is one of our most popular exhibits. Everybody loves dinosaurs."

True. But there's one attraction in You—The Inside Story, that always seems to elicit an audible reaction from visitors. The exhibit, which covers the miracle of the human body, has the only fart simulator in the United States. Press a button and you'll hear three varieties of passing gas. (Fortunately, no aroma accompanies the sounds.)



A star of the dinosaur exhibit is this 30-foot fiberglass replica of *Astrodon johnstoni*, Maryland's official state dinosaur.

"I guess I'm proud—I don't know if that's the right word," Potter says, chuckling. "The kids love it, but the adults love it more."

With its early childhood center designed for the littlest learners, adult nights featuring booze and planetarium shows set to the music of bands like the Grateful Dead and Talking Heads, an IMAX theater that is the largest indoor

screen in the state, an observatory—and yes, faux flatulence—the Maryland Science Center, Potter wants all to know, truly does have something for everyone.

But the flashy technology, awe-inspiring installations and cool events are not what continue to make the center one of Baltimore's must-visit attractions, he says.

"Our exhibits are merely a backdrop. It is our staff who bring science to life for our guests."

Potter, 64, was born and raised in Baltimore, and he remembers when the Inner Harbor wasn't a tourist attraction but a working harbor. One of the first steps toward its reimagining came in 1976, when the Maryland Science Center opened in its current location, anchoring the south side of the waterfront. Harborplace opened in 1980, the National Aquarium a year later.

But the organization's DNA dates to well earlier than that. The Maryland Academy of Sciences, still the science center's parent name, was founded in 1797. Throughout the decades, brainy science types would meet throughout the city to discuss the scientific advances of the day. In fact, George LaTour Smith, the first head of the science department at the Maryland State Normal School (now TU) was a member and curator for the academy in the 19th century.

Potter remembers going downtown to visit the new center, but he certainly never thought that he'd work there.



The Space exhibit opened last year and has proven to be wildly popular.

When he enrolled at TU, he majored in history and minored in secondary education. The only science class he took as an undergraduate was geology. It wasn't his favorite course, but he enjoyed his TU undergraduate experience, which included student teaching in Baltimore County, so much that he returned to earn his master's and served as president of the alumni association for four years in the '90s.

He held down three jobs to work his way through college (including at SECU, where he once was then-TU president Hoke Smith's loan counselor) before becoming a teacher at Archbishop Curley High School for 17 years. It was there that he stumbled—or was pushed—into the world of fundraising.

The school was celebrating its 25th anniversary and wanted someone to put together a book marking the milestone. Potter, who was the yearbook editor as a student there, was asked to take on the job. He pulled it off—even making a profit.

"The principal at that time came to me and said, 'Would you like to be the development director?' I said, 'I really don't want to do that. I'm a history teacher,'" Potter recalls. "He said, 'Well, it comes with an office and a phone.' That's power if you're a teacher. Unfortunately, the office ended up in the basement. But I started down that track. I think being a teacher provides you with the No. 1 skill you need to be a good development professional, which is the ability to communicate, the ability to reach people."

The career shift led him to the Baltimore Basilica, where he helped lead a campaign to complete a restoration and a national celebration of its 200th anniversary. In 2011, he moved to the science center, and he hasn't looked back.

"Mark is super passionate about what he does," says Mark Zimmerly, chair of the science center's board of trustees. "He grew up in that fundraising world where he understands the importance of relationships. He does a great job connecting with the community, with what's going on downtown and with the waterfront. He's just really good with people."

When he became president and CEO in 2017, Potter embarked on a systematic plan to upgrade just about every facet of the operation. First was instituting annual raises for the employees (which now number 45 full-time and far more part-time). No detail was too small to overlook.

"Even for board meetings, they served pastries and coffee," he says. "We're bringing together some of the biggest minds in Baltimore four times a year. Can't we do a catered breakfast? We do that now. I mean, I'm Italian, so it's always about food."

Potter navigated the center through the pandemic, presided over the opening of the human body, space, and several other exhibits, as well as the conversion of the IMAX theater from film to digital. He is now helping lead a capital campaign in honor of the 50th anniversary. The center is a state-aided, not state-owned, facility. Sixty percent of its revenue comes from admission fees. A mixture of grants from the state, corporate sponsorships and individual donations comprise the rest. That money covers free admission for Maryland school groups and goes to programs like Access Science, which allows anyone holding a Maryland SNAP or Maryland WIC card to purchase up to four tickets for \$5 each.

Additionally, the center has outreach programs that visit 55 Head

Start classrooms in Baltimore City and on-site events throughout Maryland.

Implementing some of those programs is among the responsibilities of Karen Via '04, the center's director of education.

"I think we do an excellent job of communicating big science topics in a way that is approachable," she says. "Everyone here works to make sure that we're clear on the fact that you are a scientist. You can't be bad at it and be a human. So you don't have to worry about someone telling you that you're not very good at science. You can do it, and we can make it fun and engaging and interesting."

"Mark is a real champion of this place," she says. "He feels like we are important, and you should absolutely think so too."

Among the major projects scheduled to coincide with the 50th anniversary is a rebuilt entryway that will feature more green space and fewer hard surfaces. Groundbreaking for the \$2 million project will happen in June. The center is working with MCB Real Estate, the

firm redeveloping the Inner Harbor, to ensure that the new entrance and an adjacent urban farm will seamlessly fit into the new surroundings.

A framed autographed campaign poster asking people to "Vote for Baltimore. Re-Elect Mayor Schaefer" hangs on a wall in Potter's office. He's always admired the late William Donald Schaefer, who's largely credited with creating the public will to develop the original Inner Harbor. Never did the man to whom Schaefer signed, "To Mark, Best Wishes" think that he'd be leading the largest provider of informal science education in the state through a landmark anniversary and into the Inner Harbor's latest iteration.

"I probably say it too many times, but experiential learning is what we are all about," says the non-science guy. "A visit to the science center is not a static experience—you have to participate. This isn't the Smithsonian. We make sure that you get involved with what we're doing." **TU**



#TU proud

Crowded House

The women's basketball game on Dec. 4, 2025, against local rival Loyola University Maryland set a new attendance record, with 5,209 people packing SECU Arena. It was the team's annual STEM Day game, where local schoolchildren come to watch the game and learn more about STEM subjects and careers. It was TU's first total sellout of SECU Arena, and the crowd was treated to a terrific game, a heartbreaking 64-63 loss for the Tigers.



◆ MY TOWN

Cenk Aroma '00 Amsterdam

FAVORITE MUSEUM
STRAAT Museum (NDSM)

RESTAURANT
Bacalar

LANDMARK
Magere Brug (Skinny Bridge)

HIDDEN GEM
Cafe Parlotte

TOURIST ATTRACTION
Renting your own canal boat

BOOK/MOVIE/PLAY SET IN MY TOWN
"Ocean's Twelve"

When Cenk Aroma was looking for a university to attend, he wanted somewhere "that combined academic rigor with a welcoming environment, and TU felt like the right balance," he says.

He majored in business administration with a concentration in finance and his first post-grad job, in his home city of Istanbul, Türkiye, as an accounting and finance specialist, he felt prepared personally and professionally.

"TU was more than where I earned my degree—it was a defining chapter of my life," he says. "As an international student, everything felt new: the culture, the independence and the responsibility of building a life on my own. Looking back, those years shaped my confidence, resilience and global perspective in ways I only fully understand now."

His career path has taken him to Croatia, Ukraine, Russia and now the Netherlands, but Amsterdam was more than a professional move.

"Amsterdam had always been a city [my partner and I] imagined ourselves living in," he says. "Its international character, openness and entrepreneurial energy felt aligned with who we are. It has a rare balance: You can have a high-level business meeting in the morning and bike along the canals in the evening. It's creative, progressive and open-minded but also grounded."

One of his favorite times of year is the summer, since the sun sets close to 10 p.m.

"Terraces stay full late into the evening, parks become gathering places and festivals like **Loveland**

"You can have a high-level business meeting in the morning and bike along the canals in the evening. It's creative, progressive and open-minded but also grounded."

bring a vibrant, celebratory energy," Aroma says.

Two neighborhoods stand out for him: **De Pijp** and **Jordaan**. He says De Pijp feels energetic and multicultural, with its cafes, markets and independent shops. But Jordaan's history, narrow canals and small galleries give it a timeless charm.

Aroma appreciates Amsterdam's culinary diversity—cooking at home, trying refined dining experiences making spontaneous market visits.

The last time his friends visited, they leaned into the city's outdoor energy and spent "long afternoons at open-air bars in **Westerpark**, enjoying drinks in the sun and letting time pass slowly."

Something else he enjoys doing with friends is renting a small, six-person boat and **doing their own canal tour**.

"Seeing Amsterdam from the water—with music playing, friends laughing and the city glowing in the evening light—felt very special," he says.



Alumni News



Stay in the Know

Never miss a fun event, special discount or exclusive benefit—just for TU alumni. Make sure your contact info is up to date at alumni.towson.edu/update.



Roar at the Shore

Meet us on the shores of Maryland and Delaware for a series of family-friendly events June 18–21. Join us for one event or make a weekend of it.

View the full calendar at alumni.towson.edu/events.



Alumni Awards Nominations

We're searching for our most accomplished Tigers for the 2026 Distinguished Alumni & Deans' Recognition awards. Know an impressive candidate? Nominate them by July 15 at alumni.towson.edu/dadr.

2025 Alumni Survey Results



Last spring, Towson University participated in the 2025 Alumni Attitude Study®, a national survey completed by more than 1 million alumni across more than 320 institutions over the past two decades. This is TU's second year participating, following its initial study in 2016. The results provide a comprehensive view of how TU graduates perceive their student experience, their life as alumni and their connection to the university today.

Key findings show that 74% of graduates rate their alumni experience as good or excellent, with the latter up three points since 2016. Overall, affinity is on the rise, demonstrating progress in outreach, engagement and post-graduation connection. Results indicate that alumni are eager for a

variety of programming, with 42% interested in attending events tied to activities or groups they loved as students and 41% interested in family-friendly activities. Lifelong learning and career-related programming resonate as well, with 34% of alumni interested in career networking events and 35% looking for intellectual or academic programming. More than half of alumni prioritize volunteerism. The top interest is providing career advice to students or recent graduates (48%). Other popular activities include volunteering at alumni events (31%) and sharing expertise as guest speakers (28%).

Analysis shows that alumni who

feel well prepared for their careers, personal development and long-term well-being report the strongest sense of connection to TU. A positive student experience and strong relationships within their college or major also play a critical role.

Insights from this study directly inform our strategic planning around events, communication, volunteer opportunities and lifelong engagement initiatives. We will continue to listen to alumni and act on their feedback as we shape current and future programming. To read more about the study, and to access past surveys, visit alumni.towson.edu/surveyresults.

Tigers Lend a Paw

Whether out in the community, inside classrooms or from the comfort of home, Tigers have been making a huge impact through volunteerism. From 2024 to 2025, we saw a 30% increase in quarterly service project participation. January marked our best-attended in-person volunteer opportunity to date, with nearly 60 alumni, family and friends packing food boxes for seniors in need at The Salvation Army in Baltimore. We also saw an 89% increase in alumni postcard program participation, shattering previous records. More than 500 Tigers wrote welcoming messages to accepted students in 2025, and we broke that record again in 2026 with 600. To learn how you can get more involved in volunteering at TU, visit alumni.towson.edu/volunteer.

Gaia '16, '23 and Riza Gonzales package food for seniors at The Salvation Army.





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TAPAS WITH TIGERS: On Nov. 13, Tigers in the Big Apple met up at Peaches Prime in Brooklyn for a top-notch food tasting co-planned by the Alumni Relations office and Tracy Wright '99. Special guest Chris Chulos, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, gave alumni exciting updates about TU and its evolving campus.

1. Kennedy Gooden, Jordan Gooden '22, Tracy Wright '99 and Kerra Kingston '22
2. Sam Polandick '17, Eric Wu '18, Kelly Griebe '05 and Candace Steadman '16, '18
3. DJ Alexander '20, Brenan Chiulli '17 and RJ Martinez '18
4. Alex Kline '19 and JJ Pontrelli '17

JUST TIGERS (NO LIONS OR BEARS):

Alumni and friends took a trip to Oz via the Hippodrome Theatre in Baltimore to see "Wicked" Jan. 8. Guests enjoyed a reception with President Ginsberg before watching the Broadway smash.

1. Cathy Mattingly '89 and Katelyn Woodard '11
2. John Smith III, Angelina Davis, Andrew Rosenblum '10, '17, Maria Fracasso and Amy Vickers
3. George and Erika Conn '06, '13, '19
4. Leah Daniel, Aidevo Longe '21, '24 and Ese Ikheloa



WINTER VOLUNTEERING: On Jan. 31, alumni worked with The Salvation Army, packaging boxes of nutritious food to be delivered to seniors throughout Baltimore City and Baltimore County. Together Tigers packed 20 pallets (900 boxes) of food for neighbors in need.

1. Nearly 60 Tigers, family and friends volunteered.
2. Elizabeth '21 and August Castiglia
3. Sandy Mryncza '81
4. LeChez Solages '00 and Shannon Bogle '14



O'S SPRING TRAINING: On March 6 and 7, Tigers met in sunny Sarasota for our annual spring training crab feasts and Orioles games. Alumni and friends enjoyed a taste of Maryland before watching the O's take on the St. Louis Cardinals Friday and the Minnesota Twins Saturday.

1. Michael Preston '87, Sean Murphy '87, Steve Martin '88 and Mark Angle '87
2. Guests decked out in their O's and Tiger gear enjoy crabs before the game.
3. Ed McDonald '78, Elaine Anderson and TU President Mark Ginsberg
4. Heather '96 and Marty Lev '86

Class Notes

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

We'd like to hear about your personal and professional lives.

SEND MAIL TO:

Alumni Relations, Towson University,
8000 York Rd. Towson, MD 21252-0001

EMAIL:

alumni@towson.edu


WEB:


alumni.towson.edu/classnotes

 **Tiger Connect:**
alumni.towson.edu

 **Facebook:**
Towson University Alumni Association

 **Twitter:**
@towsonualumni

 **Instagram:**
@towsonalum

 **Tag your posts:**
#TowsonUAlum

1970s

JOHN SCOLLAN '71 was named board chairman of Let's Eat Inc., a Baltimore-based mobile food resource system. Let's Eat rescues more than 1 million pounds of food annually then re-distributes it via 25 partners throughout greater Baltimore. In 2025, the nonprofit provided services to more than 200,000 food-insecure families.

DAVE TRUMBO '76 plans to retire as the head coach of the women's volleyball



and beach volleyball teams at Stevenson University on June 20. Trumbo has won more contests, 442, than any other head coach in any sport in Stevenson history. His .787 win percentage also ranks first in Stevenson athletics history. In 17 seasons under Trumbo's guidance, Stevenson's indoor women's volleyball program compiled an overall record of 442-119; developed 22 All-Americans, 52 all-conference selections, six player of the year selections, three rookie of the year selections; and made 13 postseason appearances.

1980s



HOPE TARR '86 sold the audio rights to both books in her American Songbook

series, "Irish Eyes" and "Stardust," to Tantor Media. The "Irish Eyes" audiobook was released in March.

JULIE KICHLINE '87 is the owner of Kik-line Design, a Baltimore-based design,



social media and marketing firm that works primarily with small businesses, nonprofits and local events. Through her work, she helps organizations build strong visual identities and grow their audiences across digital platforms. Her clients have included community organizations, festivals, hospitality businesses and media outlets, and she regularly contributes pro bono creative support to raise funds for breast cancer.

1990s

PIPPER MOSLEY '91 has a new role as mid-Atlantic client relations manager at RMF Engineering. Mosley brings more than 25 years of industry knowledge and business development experience working with leading architectural and engineering firms.

MATTHEW BOWERMAN '92 earned his doctorate in educational leadership with a focus in trauma-responsive education from Bowie State University. He is a professor at Bowie State University as well as a school administrator with Montgomery County Public Schools. In addition, Bowerman published his first book, "Heartleader:

A Trauma-Responsive Approach to Teaching, Leading, and Building Community.”

DAN ROSEN '92 is developing a one-hour TV show for NBC/Universal.



He has been a professor of film and dramatic writing at the Savannah College of Art & Design in Georgia since 2019.

NANCY RYBA PANZA '94 was appointed to the board of directors for the American Board of Police and Public Safety Psychology. Panza is a clinical psychologist and a board-certified police and public safety psychologist.

CORENE WICKENHEISER '94 was hired in February as a special education teacher at Deering High School in Portland, Maine. Wickenheiser has worked in education since 2012.

MICHAEL HAPPY '95 works at the University of Michigan doing communications for a child health equity research team. Last summer, he and his wife, **SHANNON (O'NEILL) HAPPY '95**, celebrated their 31st anniversary.

PAMELA DIEDRICH '96 joined the law firm of Goodell DeVries as a



partner in the firm's medical malpractice practice group. She represents

health care providers and organizations in complex medical malpractice litigation, credentialing matters and privacy breach issues. With more than 25 years of experience, she has built a practice focused on catastrophic injury litigation. Her work spans medical malpractice, personal injury, toxic tort, premises liability and product liability matters. She has successfully represented clients in state and federal courts, class actions, mass tort proceedings and before licensing boards and administrative tribunals. Prior to joining Goodell DeVries, Diedrich served as a director at a Washington, D.C.-based law firm and was a key member of its health law practice.

DAVID CAMPAIGNE '97

is now a senior partner at Blue Trust, a wealth management and trust



services company headquartered in Atlanta, with 18 branch offices across the country. Campaigne serves clients from the mid-Atlantic branch office in Hunt Valley, Maryland, and is in his 24th year with the company.

2000s

SEAN BURGER '02, '25 recently celebrated a key milestone in his academic career: the publishing of his thesis from Naval Postgraduate School. Burger is an administrative and technical specialist at Naval Surface Warfare Center, Carderock Division.



ALEX HYMAN '16

Hear the Great Outdoors

Alex Hyman's participation in the Hike Through History project at Cromwell Valley Park was predestined. Marlene Riley, occupational therapy and science emerita professor and Hyman's godmother, conceived of the project during the pandemic, when finding clinical placements for her students was difficult. Riley and Hyman's mother—also an occupational therapist—had become friends working at Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore.

The project is a two-mile trail featuring audio narration via QR code that explains the significance of the historical sites and structures in the park.

Hyman, an electronic media and film graduate, had only been to the park a couple times. He is, by his own admission, not a hiker. He was also initially reluctant to participate.

"I had no microphone. I didn't have audio production software," Hyman says.

So he recorded the project on his phone, all 20 locations.


There's plenty to learn. Find the mysterious graveyard in the park known only through oral histories. The apple orchard—planted during World War II on the Sherwood side of the park—evolved into a peach orchard. If an apple tree died, a peach tree replaced it.

"Everything I read was complete news to me," he says. "I was inspired to go see where the placards were going to be," he says. "The project is so laudable to me. Everyone [in the OT program] involved needs kudos. It's one of the most meaningful things I've done."

Cromwell Valley Park's Hike Through History

You can hear Alex Hyman's narration via QR code for yourself if you visit Cromwell Valley Park's Willow Grove Farm. The trail begins at the Merrick House and winds through the park, stopping at historical sites like the Pool House and the lime kilns as well as everyday farm sites like the corn crib, cider house and bull barn.



 towson.edu/hyman
to hear selected audio narrations



WENDY CHERNAK HEFTER '85

Celebrating the Festival of Lights

Tradition—the kind passed down through generations—has always been important to Wendy Hefter. She now carries that love of continuity into her Pikesville neighborhood, where her Chanukah House has become an annual holiday destination.

Every year, starting two weeks before the first night of Chanukah, Hefter and her husband, David, turn their home into a hub for holiday cheer. They surround it with hundreds of decorations, including lights, inflatables and fun characters, like Spider-Man and Winnie-the-Pooh, dressed in their Chanukah best.

The idea came from two places. The first was memories the couple have of visiting another house in Baltimore that had been decorated for Chanukah for more than 25 years. The other was after their youngest daughter was married and they attended her Sheva Brachot (a special blessing recited for a Jewish bride and groom) dinners in Houston. Her new in-laws showed them the area, including the Meyerland Hanukkah House in Houston. The Hefters decided that their house could become the area's premier location to celebrate the Festival of Lights.

Wendy comes from a four-generation TU family. Her grandparents, Helen Ann Patz Chernak and Sidney Nathan Chernak, graduated from Towson Normal School in the early 1930s. Her mother, Judith “Judy” Abramowitz Esterson Chernak, attended Towson Teachers College in the 1950s. Wendy graduated when it was named Towson State University and her daughters, Stephanie Hefter '10 and Amy Hefter Wiesen '11, graduated from TU. She partially attributes the success of the Chanukah House of Pikesville to her education and experiences at TU and being part of the campus' chapter of the American Marketing Association.

“It's been really fun to see the excitement and reactions from many people who remember the original Chanukah House and now bring their own children or grandchildren,” Hefter says. “This year, we even received a handwritten note from someone in the community. It was the cutest thing that simply said, ‘Thank you so much. We love watching the display go up.’ David and I really get a lot of joy out of it, and so does the community.”

The thesis, which examined the use of opioid settlement funding, was the capstone of Burger's MBA. Its public release marks the culmination of his recent scholastic efforts that also included a Master of Science in Public Health Sciences from TU.

CRAIG COLLINS-YOUNG '03 enlisted in the Maryland Defense Force as a research and development NCO (E4/SPC) assigned to 231st Troop Command HQ, C Company, at Camp Fretterd Military Reservation.

GREG JANOS '05 is serving as director of alumni relations at The Harvey School (his high school alma mater) and recently led a fundraiser to support renovations to its on-campus hockey rink. Teaming up with former NHL player Colton Orr, the school hosted a benefit game featuring Harvey alumni hockey players vs. New York Rangers alumni. Janos participated in the ceremonial puck drop with Orr.

KARA BALL '08 was recognized with the Bezos Courage & Civility Award by Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sánchez Bezos. As part of the award, Ball directed \$5 million to Understood.org, a nonprofit focused on helping the 1 in 5 Americans with learning and thinking differences (such as ADHD, dyslexia). The funding will support students with learning and thinking differences receive access to STEM education.

DANIEL POPE '08 has joined Post & Schell, P.C. as chief financial officer. Pope will oversee the firm's financial operations



and strategy. He brings more than 15 years of law firm financial leadership experience to the role. He joins the firm from a national law firm headquartered in Philadelphia, where he most recently served as director of pricing and practice economics.

MICHAEL WERDIN '09 was elected to the New Freedom, Pennsylvania, Borough Council in November 2025. He will serve four years as a councilman, from 2026 to 2030.

2010s

DONALD SILWICK '10 was named a 2025 Baltimore Business Journal 40 Under 40 honoree for his leadership and impact in the architecture,



engineering and construction industry. As sales operations manager at Jacobs, he has led high-profile proposal efforts spanning 88 countries, managed international teams of more than 20 professionals and

maintained an 84% win rate, generating \$53.6 million in average annual revenue. As a national conference speaker for both the Society for Marketing Professional Services and Proposal Industry Experts, he shares insights on strategies for inclusion and professional growth. He also mentors emerging leaders, volunteers with Engineers in Action to support bridge and clean water projects in developing regions and serves on two national association boards advancing inclusion and leadership development.

BRIELLE WINKLER '13 was promoted to shareholder of Marshall Dennehey's casualty department.

MICHAEL UKOHA '14 delivered a presentation called Beyond Our



Intentions: The Hidden Impact of Implicit Bias at the 5th Global Congress on Advanced Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in December.

“[The Bezos Courage & Civility Award] shines a light on something deeply personal to me: ensuring that all young people—including those with learning differences and advanced learners—learn and thrive in their own unique ways. For a kid who grew up loving science but not always being seen as capable, this award feels full circle in the best possible way.”

KARA BALL '08



MEGAN LOVELY '22

A Market of Stories



When Megan Lovely moved to the Baltimore area to pursue her Master of Fine Arts in theatre arts at TU, she was eager to sink her teeth into the hidden gems of her new town. Her hunger to learn took her to the 32nd Street Farmers Market in Waverly, where she started spending nearly every Saturday morning.

It was her thesis adviser who suggested that she focus on the market for her project. She immediately recognized the natural connection.

“I started to see the market as not only a place where I was working and shopping but a place where I could research the process of an artist becoming part of a community,” she says. “I baked muffins with ingredients from local farms, and I put up a sign that said, Swap a story for a muffin.”

People ate up her offer. Some told her why they drove from neighboring counties to come to the market. It provided others with a sense of community. Still more felt they were making a difference by buying from local merchants as opposed to big corporations.

“We come back to the grocery store and fill a whole trash bag with all the packaging from our food,” she says. “I think people like to have that personal connection with where our food is coming from. They like to be able to talk with the people growing their food. It makes them feel more connected to it.”

Lovely, who now works as an instructor and program manager at the Center for Community Engagement at the University of Rochester in New York, compiled her project into a book, “Story Seeds: Growing Home at the Farmers Market.” It was published last year.

She misses the market but is warmed by the thought that it, and others like it, will endure.

“People come because it provides a sense of consistency and normalcy,” she says. “We all come from different places, but in that moment, home is at the market.”



JOHN FISHER '77

The Seasoned Rookie

Age, John Fisher is fond of saying, is “just a letter.” It’s apt that Fisher, who recently retired after a long career as a producer in Hollywood, turns to a movie (“Dumb and Dumber” in this case) to explain his second act. At 70, last year he became the oldest person in California to graduate from a basic police academy program.

“Half of my class was under 30. The youngest didn’t even turn 21 until halfway through the academy,” he says. “I think the next oldest person was probably in their forties. Initially, no one could figure out what I was doing there. I was a bit of a mystery. Early on, I knew I had something to prove. But within a few weeks, they saw that I was serious about this and that I was up to the physical and academic challenges.”

Fisher earned a communication degree from TU before embarking on a career at Sony Pictures Television. An avid mountain biker, he joined a group advocating for trail access. That led to a volunteer stint with search and rescue. Over the last 11 years, he’s volunteered with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Search and Rescue team and the LAPD’s California Emergency Mobile Patrol. He went on to earn his emergency medical technician certification and graduate from Rio Hondo College’s police academy.

“It was a full spectrum of academics, physical training, driving skills, arrest and control skills and defensive skills. We worked on the range with pistols and shotguns,” he says of his training. “The academic side of it was everything from case law to history to ethics and integrity and report writing.”

Fisher’s volunteerism has turned into a second career. He’s now employed full-time as a ranger for California’s Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. Law enforcement is only a part of his role; other duties include maintenance, working on park interpretation, interacting with park visitors and patrolling roughly 100,000 acres in the Santa Monica Mountains to the coast of Malibu. Fisher wasn’t necessarily looking for another full-time gig, but he doesn’t play golf and genealogy can wait a few more years. Service is at the core of his being.

“Maybe it’s my lack of maturity or being a Baby Boomer, but I like to challenge myself, get out of my comfort zone,” he says. “I get so much out of helping people. There are opportunities out there—you just have to say, ‘I’m going to go do it.’”

KAYLA SMITH '16 joined the Choptank Community Health System’s school-based health centers serving Caroline County Public Schools. She brings experience providing outpatient and school-

approaches, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, play therapy and strengths-based treatment.

BRANDON WHARTON '17 joined McGuireWoods LLP as an associate in the firm’s labor and employment practice.



based mental health services to children, adolescents, adults and families. Smith most recently worked as a private practice therapist, managing a caseload of children, teens and families and using evidence-based

2020s

LOGAN KOPSIDAS '22 graduated from the University of Maryland Medical School’s Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

“I have been hugely fortunate in my life in terms of health, family and some business success. Now is the time for me to pay it forward. As CEO of Let’s Eat, I get the honor of making some lives a little better every day. I can honestly say that after a 50-year career, this is the best job that I have ever had.”

JOHN SCOLLAN '71

In Memoriam

Alumni

Doris S. (Spurrier) Raspberry '47
Sept. 24, 2025

Richard L. Weise '54
Nov. 18, 2025

Colleen S. (Stokely) Hughes '57
Oct. 26, 2025

Joan C. Stall '57
Nov. 21, 2025

Marlene (Helmer) Duke '58
Feb. 1, 2026

Eleanor B. (Brocato) Metzbower '59
Nov. 11, 2025

Beverly R. (Abrams) Breckstein '61
Oct. 20, 2025

Sandra W. (Wentz) Langley '61
Feb. 4, 2026

Anna Charlotte H. Boring '63
Dec. 21, 2025

Charles M. Croner '63
Jan. 12, 2026

Carolyn J. (Hess) Sides '63
Dec. 30, 2025

Charlotte R. (Ray) Sommer '63
Nov. 13, 2025

Judith S. (Smith) Valentini '63
Jan. 9, 2026

Bela Kissh '65
Dec. 29, 2025

Irvin S. Eberlin '66
Feb. 20, 2026

James W. Dempsey '67
Nov. 20, 2025

Marilyn J. Siegal '67
Nov. 4, 2025

Janet K. Brooks '68
Dec. 24, 2025

Dorothy A. Horner '68
Dec. 28, 2025

Sylvia A. Taylor '68
Feb. 8, 2026

Vicky Demos '69
Oct. 6, 2025

Charles E. Fisher III '69
Nov. 22, 2025

Jane E. Kiedaisch '69
Jan. 25, 2026

Pamela C. Miller '69
Dec. 21, 2025

Diane H. (Hromadka) Wood '69
Nov. 22, 2025

Julie A. (Frisbee) Engleman '70
November 2025

Gerald P. Garey '70, '79
Dec. 30, 2025

Frank A. Traglia '70
Jan. 1, 2026

James F. Aliquo '71
Oct. 16, 2025

Kathryn S. (Schott) Hill '71
Nov. 26, 2025

Wayne O. Morris '71
Nov. 9, 2025

William Harry Rufenacht '71
Nov. 20, 2025

Phyllis S. Spence '71
Feb. 7, 2026

Lawrence Roland Townsley '71
Feb. 10, 2026

Sandra L. Warner '71
Nov. 23, 2025

R. C. French '72
Dec. 14, 2025

Rosalyn K. Fromm '72
Dec. 12, 2025

Gary M. Gist '72
Jan. 10, 2026

Joseph B. Harris Jr. '72
Dec. 17, 2025

Robert J. Ryan '72
Jan. 17, 2026

Deborah D. (Trainor) Felix '73
Dec. 28, 2025

Michael W. Hood '73
Oct. 22, 2025

Mary M. (Spear) Nousek '73
Nov. 29, 2025

Robert S. Peirce '73
Dec. 14, 2025

Doris A. (Messick) Sauerwein '74
Jan. 6, 2026

Sally J. (Klein) Steelman '74
Feb. 2, 2026

Mary E. (Calary) Triplett '74
Oct. 19, 2025

Betty R. Batchelor '75
Dec. 25, 2025

William N. Clatterbuck '75
Nov. 1, 2025

Kathleen L. Thomas '75
Dec. 13, 2025

Mary K. Belin '76
Oct. 12, 2025

John E. Bresnan '76
Feb. 5, 2026

Clarence B. Riggs '76
Jan. 23, 2026

Eileen P. Burress '77
Dec. 8, 2025

George A. Frank '77
Feb. 14, 2026

Victoria M. Sindler '78
Dec. 22, 2025

Lucy V. (Cohee) Armstrong '79
Dec. 23, 2025

Jack F. Cover Jr. '79
Jan. 7, 2026

Teresa E. Dennis '80
Dec. 2, 2025

Joanne P. (Penner) Perlin '80
Jan. 2, 2026

Maija O. Wentworth '83
Dec. 12, 2025

Edmond K. Yue '84
Nov. 20, 2025

Deborah M. (Kohlman) Carr '85
Nov. 26, 2025

Elaine R. Friedman '86
Nov. 21, 2025

Tina Marie Hagarman '87
Nov. 20, 2025

Francesco Luigi Legaluppi '87
Sept. 10, 2025

Christopher J. McManus '87
Nov. 16, 2025

Frank J. Verde '87
Oct. 25, 2025

Frances M. Phillips '88
Dec. 28, 2025

Elmer Leroy Masimore '89
Dec. 13, 2025

Hildegard L. Owens '90
Jan. 28, 2026

Maureen D. (Day) Pullias '90
Jan. 3, 2026

Cindee Sue Wolford '90
Dec. 2, 2025

Trudy Karr '91
Dec. 18, 2025

Joseph M. Ruppel '93
Nov. 25, 2025

Helen L. Anderson-Cokley '94
Dec. 24, 2025

Edith D. Cutler '94
Oct. 2, 2025

Victoria Lee Rose '94
Oct. 18, 2025

Jeffrey Williams '94
Dec. 3, 2025

Barbara R. Gormley '96
Dec. 29, 2025

Christine T. Stelmack Longen '97
Jan. 11, 2026

Katie L. (Krug) Filling '99, '05
Dec. 7, 2025

Tracey A. Vollmer '00
Nov. 22, 2025

Edith G. Scouten '01
Nov. 7, 2025

Pamela J. Winkelman-Etue '01
Nov. 7, 2025

Delores M. Basilio '02
Oct. 18, 2025

Sheila A. Supi '04
Dec. 29, 2025

Jedediah K. Lowman '10
Feb. 3, 2026

Michael B. Harris '11
Dec. 23, 2025

Larry Eugene Painter '11
Oct. 15, 2025

Abigail E. Ritchey '17
Nov. 28, 2025

Joshua S. Michnick '20
Nov. 8, 2025

Mariama Samateh '21
Nov. 23, 2025

Faculty & Staff

Robert G. Allen
Dec. 10, 2025

Charles W. Bauknight Jr.
Nov. 20, 2025

Susan (Tracy) Boyd
Feb. 13, 2026

Arlene C. Campeggi '91
Nov. 15, 2025

Helen E. Coulby '55
Jan. 8, 2026

Harriet Anne Douthirt '66
Nov. 17, 2025

J. Van Fenstermaker
Nov. 11, 2025

Karen L. Fulton
Oct. 30, 2025

Joan S. Haag '73
Dec. 4, 2025

Matilda C. Kelly
Nov. 10, 2025

Lonnice McNew '68, '74
Dec. 12, 2025

Marilyn Nicholas
March 2, 2026

Daniel J. O'Connell
Jan. 10, 2026

Gary W. Rosecrans
Nov. 2, 2025

Aubrey G. Scarbrough
Dec. 23, 2025

Marsha S. (Stewart) Scott '68
Feb. 8, 2026

Charles E. Tiedebohl
Nov. 25, 2025

Mitchell J. Tropin
Nov. 20, 2025

Rearview Mirror

FROM THE DESK OF FELICITY KNOX '94, Assistant University Archivist



ASK AN ARCHIVIST

Hey Felicity...

Q: Were there dorm rooms in Stephens Hall?

A: In our photographs collection, there is a picture of dormitory spaces in what was then called the Administration Building and what we now know as Stephens Hall.

Perhaps it is this photo that has led some to think that dormitory spaces in that building were part of its original design; however, this was a unique and short-lived situation. In 1924, the Baltimore Teachers' Training School, a school also focused on training teachers, shut its doors, and their students were invited to continue their education at the Maryland State Normal School (MSNS)—Towson University's first incarnation. Because of this, enrollment at MSNS skyrocketed, and to accommodate the newly enrolled students, living spaces were created in the Administration Building. This building held every other facet of MSNS life, including a library, elementary school, auditorium, all administrative offices, all classrooms and a small cafeteria. Creating space for students to reside in the building must have been a challenge, but it was temporary. At that time, the academic program was a short two years. Likely within a year, these living spaces would have become unnecessary.

Have a question for Felicity? Email her at fknox@towson.edu.

WHAT'S NEW

Oral History with Froma Willen



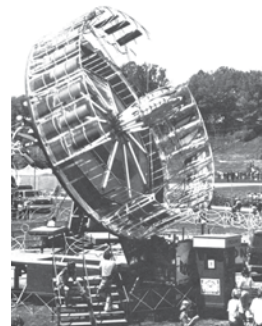
This past fall, Elaine Mael, Jewish Studies librarian and Ashley Todd-Diaz, Ph.D., director of distinctive collections and digital scholarship, conducted an oral history with Froma Willen, former coordinator of the Baltimore Jewish Council's Holocaust Survivor Testimonies Project. In her five years as coordinator, from 1989 to 1994, Willen arranged 142 testimonies conducted with Holocaust survivors in the Baltimore area. In her oral history, Willen describes her experience and the work undertaken to make those testimonies available through a collaboration with Baltimore Hebrew University and the Yale Archives.

PAST



1915

May Day: Starting sometime after the move to Towson's campus in 1915, the school started an annual spring festival tradition. Students from the teachers training school and the elementary school would dance about tall maypoles erected on the field by York Road, a queen and court would be named and the school celebrated the coming warmer months as a community.



1974

Springfest: In 1974, the resident students sponsored a new festival they called "Springfest." This was a weeklong celebration that was supposed to bring the entire Towson State College community together and culminated with a two-day carnival.



1988

Tigerfest: By 1988, the festival was rebranded as TigerFest and had evolved into "an outdoor picnic for both residents and commuters...featuring a disc jockey and games" according to a 1988 Towerlight article. Today, the Campus Activities Board sponsors a week of activities culminating in a concert featuring popular artists.

PRESENT

In My Queue

MATTHEW JEFFERS, CLASS OF 2013

Matthew Jeffers never feels more powerful than when he's acting. The Pikesville, Maryland, native first graced a stage when he played Schroeder in his middle school's production of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown." He's never looked back.

"I was bit by the bug," says Jeffers, who now lives in Brooklyn, New York. "When I'm acting, it feels like there's an equilibrium between me and the audience that has always made me feel both safe and limitless."

Jeffers, who earned his bachelor's degree in theatre at TU, says his undergraduate years were transformational for him, as a person and as an actor.

"It was the first time in my life that I was able to be out in the world and figure out what I was interested in."

His first professional break came in 2018, when he read for a part in a Broadway show. He didn't get it, but the casting director recommended that he audition for a role in the television show "New Amsterdam." He landed that part, for which he had one line in one episode in the first season. But that led to more spots (and more lines) in future episodes and a recurring guest star role in seasons four and five. Eventually, he snagged a role on the hit TV show "The Walking Dead" and shortly after made his Broadway debut in "An Enemy of the People," alongside Jeremy Strong and Michael Imperioli. Later this year he'll appear in his first studio film, Apple TV's "Being Heumann" and a sci-fi show on the streaming network called "Neuromancer." The future appears bright for the 34-year-old.

"It's been a fulfilling journey so far," he says.



towson.edu/jeffers to read more about the actor and get additional movie picks

In 2013...

Jeffers praises his professors at TU, including David White, the founding artistic director of the Towson Theatre Lab, who is still a member of his creative team. Here are some of the films that influenced Jeffers when he was an undergraduate.



Her

The first movie I saw after graduating from TU and moving to New York City, it confirmed that I was pursuing the right career. One of the very best movies I've ever seen; it's achingly beautiful and prophetic in the quest to find meaningful connection in a terminally online culture.



The Shining

I watched this movie alone in the dark in my Tower B dorm room over a bowl of microwaved Campbell's beef chili. It was the first time I truly fell in love with a horror film. To date, it's the most unsettling film I've seen.



Beasts of the Southern Wild

A magical, atmospheric wonder. A limited budget doesn't mean you have to have a limited imagination.



Winter's Bone

Gritty, with stellar performances. I watched this during summer break, and it made me want to jump back into Acting II with professor Steve Satta.

In 2026...

Jeffers is an avid consumer of films, and he likes most genres. These are among the movies that have caught his attention lately.



The Remarkable Life of Ibelin

It's about this kid with a terminal illness whose parents, after he dies, learn that he's built an unbelievable community of friends on this video game. It is a really moving, human film.



Weapons

Amy Madigan scared the hell out of me in this movie. I found myself clenching my fists. It's a wild ride.



One Battle After Another

This was probably the best movie I saw that came out last year. It's a white-knuckle, wild ride. Paul Thomas Anderson is a gift. And I think it's actually one of DiCaprio's best performances.



No Other Choice

This felt like a punch in the gut of where we are in terms of our economy and AI and how so many people are being displaced from their jobs. The way it's shot feels timeless and current. I love films that rearrange where you are in time and space.

From Towson, With Love

At TU, thousands of romances have blossomed in dorm rooms, dining halls and at dance parties—no swiping right necessary. Tell us about yours by emailing munger@towson.edu.



Taylor Walker's Story

CLASS OF 2019 | ACCOUNTING

We met in a Towson seminar class spring semester 2016, "The War on Drugs." He was handsome and my type. We were business majors, but we never had any other classes together. We saw each other around campus a lot, but we didn't date or really talk. We wouldn't have been the right person for each other at that point. He says I was out of his league. Now we both have the same outlooks on life, want a family in the future and have so many common connections.



Last year he reached out over my Instagram story about these cookies and cream cookies I make. We talked for three to four hours on Instagram that night. On our first date we went back to campus to find the familiar spots we had passed each other as students. I worked in the admissions office, and we would have new students do a scavenger hunt to become familiar with the campus, so we created our own. We got a picture in front of Stephens, found the tiger statues, went to Cook Library and revisited the classroom where we met. It was so crazy to see

how much the campus has expanded but finding those intimate places that still look the same as when we went there was so memorable.

My grandfather passed in April (2025), and he was one of the most influential men in my life. Tim and I reconnected at the end of May (2025), so I felt like he brought [Tim] into my life. We mesh so well together. I tell my mom, "I always want to be around him, he is my best friend." And then he planned that engagement that was very me, very minimalist, on the beach. So perfectly planned. One of my favorite colors is light pink, so he picked light pink roses, set it up himself because he knew I wouldn't want something elaborate. And he had a photographer there because he knows pictures are my favorite thing, too, because that's what you have forever. Everyone tells him it was like "The Bachelorette" on the Outer Banks. I feel seen, heard, and loved, for sure. We've been talking about having a family. And knowing we've met our person, it's like, "Why wait any longer?" We have a church wedding in June. And then we'll have an intimate family ceremony in August.

Tim Chesser's Story

CLASS OF 2019 | FINANCE

We met each other years ago at Towson when we were both freshmen. I remember that blond hair, those blue eyes looking at me from time to time. I kind of wish I shot my shot back then, but I'm also glad I didn't because I've learned so much since then. I wouldn't have wanted to ruin it with this once-in-a-lifetime kind of person.

I'm a religious person. When I saw her Instagram story [last May], I felt something come over me, like, "I have to talk to this girl." We talked for several hours that night. And I remember thinking, "Wow, for 10 years, what was I doing?" I say when I see a bald eagle fly overhead during a major life moment, it's God's way of telling me I am on the right path. That happened to us the first time we went to the beach.



It's funny how things happen. I'm thankful for it every day. She's extremely thoughtful. She puts in so much effort, love, and care in many ways. Our humor matches up. She's my best friend and I'm excited to marry her.

When we started hanging out, did I think we were going to get engaged quickly? Nope. But then I realized, "This is my person." I put endless effort into the proposal. I kept in contact with a photographer from a band I played piano in. Since she lives in North Carolina, and I sent decorative things to her: flowers, fake candles. She and her husband brought my 100 roses. I hired a musician to play our song, "Joy of My Life," by Chris Stapleton. I perfectly timed the walk on the beach to the music to find exactly where the proposal spot should be. I remember very specific things about planning it, but the main proposal speech, I'm sure I blacked out.

The funny part is I planned the proposal so well, but when the photographer asked, "Where do you guys want [photos]?" I had no idea. I didn't think that far! It was the happiest day of my life. I am sure both weddings will be the next happiest days of my life. Then it will be when each new child is born. If we are blessed with sons, I'll tell them, "Make sure to shoot your shot."

Philanthropy

Jenny Jochens

History Faculty Research

Endowed Fellowship



A generous \$500,000 gift has established an endowed fellowship, which supports TU's mission to foster intellectual inquiry, critical thinking and academic excellence through research. Named in honor of Jenny Jochens, a prolific scholar, women's historian pioneer and longtime TU faculty member, the fellowship is for faculty whose research spans the globe. It funds research travel and offers faculty the opportunity to advance their scholarly contributions while easing the financial burden that comes with it.

Students also benefit. Research-active faculty enhance learning in the classroom by bringing current scholarship into discussions, mentoring students in primary-source research and modeling intellectual best practices.

The fellowship was established by Jochens' son, Peter Baldwin, Ph.D., global professor at NYU's Center for European and Mediterranean Studies.

The first Jenny Jochens History Faculty Research Grants will be awarded in 2027.

Recognizing and Celebrating the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum



From left: President Ginsberg; Matthew Nugent, dean, Fisher College of Science and Mathematics; Hans Keller, vice president, CIO Forum; Mike McGuire, CIS chairperson

mentorship and professional development opportunities, they have played a foundational role in enriching our students' education and helping to cultivate the next generation of technology leaders."

Created in 2003 as a peer-to-peer regional network for CIOs and other senior-level informational technology executives, the forum established its partnership with TU shortly thereafter and has been providing scholarships to TU students since 2006.

Present at the dedication were Hans Keller '10, vice president of the Mid-Atlantic CIO Forum, senior vice president and CIO at Erickson Living and a member of the Fisher College of Science & Mathematics Advisory Board. Fisher College leadership included Dean Matthew Nugent and Mike McGuire, chair of the computer and information sciences department.

Brennan Family Supports Nick Ziolkowski Scholarship Fund

Patrick Brennan and his partner, Helga Maria Surratt, donated \$100,000 in support of the Cpl. Nicholas "Nick" Ziolkowski Memorial Scholarship, an endowment that honors the fallen U.S. Marine who planned to attend TU after his service and whose legacy continues to resonate across campus.

Ziolkowski was killed in Fallujah, Iraq, in 2004. His mother, longtime TU staff member Tracy Miller, later became a champion for veteran and military-connected students, helping re-establish the university's Military and Veterans Center in his honor.

Their gift deepens the long-standing connection between the Brennan family, Nick's family and TU—ensuring that his legacy continues to inspire and uplift TU students for generations to come.

Brennan relayed the following story about Nick: "Helga and I got to know Nick through our son Eric. Nick was home on leave, and he came by our house to pick up Eric on their way to the ocean. I spoke with Nick briefly and remember thinking how fortunate we as Americans are to have such fine young men like Nick serving in our military. Nick's professionalism and strong commitment made a profound and lasting impression even 20 years later. Helga and I are both very honored to support the scholarship."



SPRING CLEANING TIPS

FOR YOUR OVERALL FINANCIAL WELLNESS



The Birds have returned to Baltimore, and the weather is finally feeling warmer again. Spring has sprung across Maryland!

Whether you are preparing to grab some more sun on a fun spring break getaway, getting the lawn ready for summer, or just thinking about what the rest of the year holds for your finances, here's what you can do right now to set yourself up for financial health, wellness, and success in 2026.

SAVE MORE MONEY

Having extra savings not only means you can splurge on that vacation or date night out. It also means peace of mind knowing that you have the funds to weather life's curveballs.

An easy way to start is to break your savings goal into monthly or weekly targets. Breaking your goal into smaller steps removes guesswork and helps you determine whether your plan fits your budget. For example, saving \$600 in six months becomes \$100 per month.

If your number feels too high, adjust your timeline. You are building a realistic plan, not aiming for perfection.

A dedicated savings account keeps your goal separate from everyday spending and helps you better track progress.

SET FINANCIAL GOALS

You may be balancing career growth, supporting children, preparing for education costs, managing debt, or accelerating retirement planning. Setting goals can be the first step to gaining control over your finances, and not letting them control you.

GOALS FOR 2026 AND HOW TO REACH THEM

1. **Strengthen retirement savings:** Review your retirement contribution rate and adjust if needed
2. **Prepare for future education or caregiving expenses:** Map out large expenses expected in the next five to ten years
3. **Pay down existing debt:** Evaluate debt payoff strategies to find one that supports your budget
4. **Update insurance and beneficiaries:** Update account information after major life changes
5. **Get organized with key financial records:** Schedule routine financial checkups to stay organized and prepared
6. **Review Social Security or pension expectations:** Review Social Security or pension expectations
7. **Plan for health care and long-term needs:** Meet with a financial advisor to discuss retirement transitions

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM TAX SCAMMERS

This time of year, tax scammers are looking to cash in on your refund. Here's what to look for and how to avoid them.

IRS IMPERSONATION SCAMS

In an IRS impersonation scam, someone claims to represent the IRS and says you owe back taxes. If someone pressures you to act immediately, or demands unusual forms of payment, or threatens arrest or legal action, it's a red flag.

Remember, the IRS doesn't:

- Demand immediate payment over the phone
- Threaten arrest or deportation
- Require payment through gift cards, wire transfers, or cryptocurrency

PHISHING EMAILS AND TEXT MESSAGES

Phishing scams attempt to trick you into clicking a link or providing sensitive tax information through email or text message. **These messages often look like they come from the IRS and may mention any of the following:**

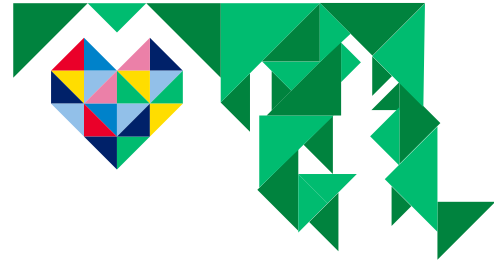
- A tax refund
- A problem with your return
- Verification of personal information
- Updated account details

The IRS doesn't contact taxpayers through email, text messages, or social media to request personal or financial information.

TAX SCAM DEFENSES

Tax scams rely on urgency. Slowing down is often your best defense.

- Be cautious with unsolicited calls, emails, or texts related to taxes.
- Don't click links or download attachments from unknown sources.
- Use strong, unique passwords for financial accounts or online tax preparation software.
- File your tax return as early as possible to reduce the window for identity theft.
- Monitor your financial accounts regularly for unusual activity.



Take Advantage of Free Money and Local Banking

With financial centers in Towson and across Maryland, SECU is dedicated to the financial wellness of our members. **This includes free financial:**

- ✓ Wellness checkups
- ✓ Counseling services
- ✓ Educational programs for all ages
- ✓ Calculator and tools for homebuying, retirement, credit scores, and more

We're also helping new and existing members meet their financial wellness goals by **giving them \$350* for opening a new SECU Total™ Checking & Rewards account.**

You'll gain immediate access so many account benefits and rewards. Enjoy overdraft protection, cash back on debit card purchases, early payroll deposits, *and much more.*



SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE

*\$350 offer valid from 11/1/24 – 6/30/26 for new SECU members and 8/15/25 – 6/30/26 for existing SECU members without checking. Must meet the following criteria: 1) Open a SECU checking account during the promo period. New members need to join SECU. 2) Within 90 days of opening checking: Set up e-statements and have at least 2 separate qualifying payroll Direct Deposits post to your checking account. Members or former members that had a checking account in the last 24 months are not eligible for this offer.

Offer is only available to Maryland residents or residents of surrounding states (DC, DE, PA, VA, WV). Residents of other states not listed are not eligible. Qualifying direct deposits include recurring electronic deposits of payroll, pension or Social Security and must be in your checking account. Person to person, bank transfers or other electronic money transfers, such as those made through internet payment services, do not qualify. All criteria must be met within 90 days of opening checking. SECU will credit one cash bonus of \$350 to the primary owner of the new SECU checking account within 60 days of meeting the requirements. Membership and accounts must be in good standing to receive the bonus. Promotional period and offer are subject to change at any time without notice. The promotional bonus is limited to one per member. If you received a bonus for a SECU checking promo in the last 24 months, you are not eligible for this offer. Advertised bonus cannot be combined with any other offer. Membership eligibility required.

Bonuses are considered miscellaneous income and may be reported as income to the IRS on Form 1099-MISC. SECU's determination of offer eligibility is final. Federally insured by NCUA.

*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. APYs current as of 11/01/21. You must meet the criteria for each rewards level to receive the APYs for that level. APY is calculated based on average daily balance and will be a blended rate. Rates and rewards subject to change at any time. Fees may reduce earnings on the account. Membership eligibility required. Only accounts in good standing are eligible to qualify for rewards.

Platinum: For this level, balances less than \$3,500 receive 0.10% APY. Balances between \$3,500 and \$19,999.99 receive an APY of 0.10% – 0.15%. Balances over \$20,000 and \$74,999.99 receive an APY of 0.10% – 0.50%. Balances over \$75,000 receive .10% – 2.00%.

Gold: For this level, balances less than \$20,000 receive an APY of 0.10%. Balances over \$20,000 receive an APY of 0.10% – 0.15%.

Silver: For this level, all balances receive an APY of 0.10%.

Bronze: For this level, the portion of your balance above \$1,000 receives an APY of 0.05%.



“USA Lacrosse and our Center for Sport Science and Safety are proud to support Towson University’s exercise science department. I advocated for this gift because access to elite-level technology transforms how students learn, conduct research and prepare for careers in sport performance.”

—Bailey Speight, sport science manager, men’s and women’s national teams, USA Lacrosse



An athlete-testing event at the USA Lacrosse National Team Development Program, where TU student-athletes had the opportunity to work as volunteer sport scientists.

♥ GIVING

Gifts in Kind: Defining Giving Differently

In March 2025, nearly a decade after kinesiology students had the opportunity to train on GPS monitoring equipment as part of a collaborative research project with TU Athletics and Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, USA Lacrosse gifted sport performance tracking (SPT) equipment valued at more than \$25,000, to the kinesiology department at Towson University.

The equipment helps coaches, support staff, athletic trainers, strength and conditioning coaches and sport scientists to evaluate the fitness of players as well as the demands of training and competition. In total, 75 vests and 45 GPS units, along with charging docks, heart rate monitor clips and chest straps, were gifted to TU. The GPS monitoring vests measure variables including heart rate, running distance and intensities.

“These tools mirror what our national teams use, bridging classroom theory with real-world application,” says Bailey Speight, USA Lacrosse’s sport science manager for men’s and women’s national teams. “At USA Lacrosse, we’re committed to not only grow the game but to advance athlete safety, performance innovation and evidence-based best practices nationwide.”

At one time, technologies like SPT were only used in professional sports. The evolved technology is now present across all levels, including youth sports. As TU prepares students to compete for jobs as professionals in the field, offering hands-on experiences and real-world learning are vital to their success.

“I hope that having this equipment as a permanent asset in our department will allow us to incorporate it more consistently in courses and research projects with students so they can graduate with these in-demand skills,” says Kyle Leppert, a clinical associate kinesiology professor.



Every gift matters, no matter the size.
towson.edu/support

“We are very fortunate to have a strong relationship with USA Lacrosse. Not only have we received valuable research equipment, but our kinesiology students also had experiences which resulted in internship and career opportunities.”

—Kyle Leppert, clinical associate professor, kinesiology

♥ DONOR PROFILE

Debora and Roger Plunkett

In 2023, a gift from Debora A. '81 and Roger L. Plunkett, Ph.D., funded programming, equipment and technology in the Plunkett Cyber Exercise Room, located in the TU Cyber Center. The space welcomes students for cyber competitions, undergraduate research projects and related workforce development activities.

WHAT INTERESTED YOU IN FUNDING CYBER SECURITY LEARNING AND THE CYBER EXERCISE ROOM AT TU?

Contributing to cyber learning at TU is an extension of our desire to see more students trained in simulated scenarios that prepare them to enter the workforce and protect and defend our nation's infrastructures. There continues to be a cybersecurity workforce shortage and a critical need to build capacity.

HOW DID THIS GIVING OPPORTUNITY COME ABOUT?

Brian DeFilippis (vice president for university advancement at TU) approached us about the opportunity and made a compelling case for us to consider it. We ultimately decided to make a pledge to support the TU Cyber Center.

HOW DO YOU HOPE YOUR GIFT INSPIRES OTHERS?

We have been giving advocates for more than 40 years, believing that to whom much is given, much is expected. We started our careers as public servants, and even while living on public service salaries, we have given proportional to our means. Our strong faith teaches us to be generous with our time, talents and treasures. We believe that investing in education is one of the best ways to prepare for our future.



towson.edu/plunketts for more about the work of TU's Cyber Center



OUR TOWN

Bark Social

Brad Notaro '15 has always loved dogs and business. Now, the 33-year-old is using his finance degree and passion for our four-legged friends at Bark Social, the dog park/human bar he bought last year. At his Baltimore and Columbia locations people can bring their pooches while they work, eat, drink—or do all three. He doesn't just own the place; he and his mini golden doodles Ollie and Luna are regulars. "Dogs are so forgiving," he says. "They don't hold any grudges. They're always so happy. The connection that they have to their owners, that love, that's something that's hard to find in humans."



towson.edu/barksocial
to watch a dog-guided tour of Bark Social

Gratified By Giving

In October 2025, Tower Light Society members, Keith Ewancio '94, '07 and former mass communication department chair Ron Matlon, Ph.D., experienced a full-circle moment.

At an event on campus, Keith shared a photo taken in 1993 of Ron presenting him with a ceremonial scholarship check.

Keith now enjoys a successful career in human resources and both men went on to establish bequests to create named scholarships to benefit deserving students now and in the future. Reconnecting with Keith was a joyful reminder for Ron that scholarships have the power to shape lives.



To learn more about how you can make a difference for TU students, now and through a legacy gift, contact:

CONTACT | **Geannine Callaghan**

DIRECTOR OF PLANNED GIVING

PHONE | **410-704-2299**

EMAIL | gcallaghan@towson.edu



“Seeing the impact of scholarships on my students’ lives was a motivating factor in establishing my named scholarship through a bequest.”

**Ron Matlon, Ph.D.,
mass communication faculty emeritus**

towson.edu/giving

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HOME COMING
2026
SATURDAY, OCT. 31



**Towson Tigers vs.
Hampton Pirates**

**Homecoming Week:
OCT. 26–NOV. 1**

