

# carroll

**MAGAZINE**  
SUMMER 2020





## DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

As a long-time veteran of higher education with experience across multiple campuses, I know no two days on a college campus are ever alike. However, like you, I was not prepared for the 2020 unprecedented pandemic. Since early March, there has not been a day gone by without us needing to rethink an approach, adjust to new information or engage with students in a new and creative way.

What I can say is that through this time, the core of what makes my job and Carroll College so special has not changed. It is the people. In this magazine, we have a mix of stories about the current reality of COVID-19, along with stories about what we used to think of as “normal college life,” because this mixture reflects what we have all been through over the past six months—a combination of both adjusting to the COVID-19 world and the normal everyday occurrences that make life rewarding.

One example of people making Carroll great is found in the story of the Talking Saints, who are celebrating thirty years of unparalleled success. I am astounded when I think about the ripple effects of the Talking Saints program through entire communities and professions.

We also have two features specifically about COVID-19, both a piece about the science of infectious diseases and a piece about how our alumni have responded in the midst of the crisis. Again, here is an area where Carroll College has nationwide impact across many industries. Whether it is making sure people can travel safely, or working on the frontlines caring for those who are ill, you can find Carroll College alumni whose higher education experience has shaped them to be compassionate and capable in ways the world desperately needs now more than ever before.

I also want to draw your attention to the reflection in the back of the magazine. I am thankful that JP Williams '91 shared his thoughts on his parents' journey to Carroll College and what Carroll College means to him. Williams is a key member of our Diversity and Equity Task Force. The strategic plan continues to be finalized including a compelling initiative on diversity and equity, and this year there have been many reminders of the importance of this work, particularly at a Catholic college dedicated to the dignity of all people.

There are challenges ahead. We know there is uncertainty with what the fall will bring. But you can be confident that we will be here carrying the torch of Carroll College. We will seek to make sure our students are safe and healthy and are able to reach their educational goals. We also all have a unique opportunity this fall to confront deep spiritual and theological questions about what it means to be people of God in a time of uncertainty and chaos in the world. I hope you will pray for us during this time and we will be lifting prayers of safety and gratitude for you. Finally, if you are on campus this fall, please do stop into the President's Office for a cup of coffee or tea.

Be safe and go Saints!

John E. Cech, Ph.D.  
President

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MAGAZINE

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Located in Helena, Montana, Carroll College is a leading Catholic, diocesan, liberal arts, and pre-professional four-year institution. The college provides its 1,200 students an academically rigorous, affordable education incorporating service outreach and undergraduate research. Carroll is nationally ranked and award-winning for its academic quality and outstanding programs, including pre-med, anthrozoology, nursing, engineering, natural sciences, and mathematics.



### CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2020

On Saturday, May 9, 2020, Carroll College conferred degrees on 315 graduates in a virtual conferral ceremony in lieu of what would have been the 110th commencement ceremony of the college.

Mandates put in place due to COVID-19 required a change in plans for commencement. After evaluating a number of options, it was determined that the college's best hope for a more traditional and personal ceremony celebrating the achievements of our graduates would be to host the celebration next spring. Carroll has rescheduled the in-person commencement ceremony for the class of 2020 for May 16, 2021.

Although virtual, the conferral ceremony ensured that students were officially declared as graduated and were awarded their degrees in a timely manner. Following a socially distanced Mass in All Saints Chapel hosted by Bishop Vetter, the ceremony included brief congratulatory remarks from President Cech as well as the announcement of the recipients

of the annual student, faculty and staff awards. Upon the conclusion of visually sharing the names of the graduates at the end of the ceremony, there was also a special tribute video to the class of 2020 with faculty and staff sharing their congratulatory remarks with the graduates.

Selected by her peers, the class of 2020 speaker is Connor Hague of Tucson, Ariz. She will deliver her senior address at the full commencement ceremony in May 2021.

During the ceremony it was announced that the Michael Murphy Award for Outstanding Collegiate Citizenship was presented to two students: Kennedy Bahm of Missoula, Mont. and Emma Nylin of Corvallis, Ore.

The college's Bishop Gilmore Memorial Award for Outstanding Scholarship, awarded to seniors who have attained the highest grade-point average after four years at Carroll, was awarded to two graduates: Sara Johnson of Yakima, Wash.

and Clarissa Moravec of Spokane, Wash., both biology majors at Carroll.

Several faculty and staff awards were also conferred. The Outstanding Teaching Award recipient was Dr. Anneliese Renck, assistant professor of French and the Distinguished Scholar Award was awarded to Dr. Grant Hokit, senior research associate and professor of biology. The Excellence in Service Award was awarded to Shannon Ackeret, assistant director of global learning.

Carroll College also announced that two retired faculty members, Professor of Mathematics and Engineering Mr. Terry Mullen and Professor of Anthrozoology and Psychology Dr. Anne Perkins have been conferred the title of professor emeritus and emerita for having served the college long and with distinction.

The ceremony and list of graduates is available for viewing at [www.carroll.edu/2020](http://www.carroll.edu/2020).

### MARCHING BACK PLAN

In June, Carroll College released the Marching Back Plan to guide the college as it reopens in the fall. Created with the goal of providing students, employees and visitors with a safe environment to learn, work, live and visit during the COVID-19 pandemic, the plan includes enhanced cleaning procedures, plans for decreasing close contact on campus and procedures to ensure the health and safety of all who come on campus.

During the planning, the group had to tackle many challenges including how to balance the need for physical distancing and limiting contact in an environment that thrives on close personal connections. Over time, the group was able to develop protocols such as filling classrooms to only 50% capacity and requiring masks in the classroom. The group also tackled how to monitor the health of faculty, staff and students and implemented plans for isolation and quarantine if a positive case occurs on campus. Individual departments like Athletics worked on the plan as well, addressing specific challenges related to maintaining a valuable and competitive program. Similarly, lab and clinical procedures were discussed and new plans put in place to ensure students continue to receive high quality, face-to-face instruction and research opportunities.

The policies and protocols are rooted in deliberate, data-driven decisions aligned with the State of Montana and Lewis & Clark Public Health directives. The plan, which continues to be updated as the situation evolves, can be found at [www.carroll.edu/marchingback.edu](http://www.carroll.edu/marchingback.edu).

### SURF GOES VIRTUAL

During a typical year, the last Friday of April is reserved for the all-campus Student Undergraduate Research Festival, or SURF. Classes are suspended for the day and the Campus Center is bustling with student presentations. However, this year, instead of in-person poster sessions and presentations, SURF was moved to a virtual environment due to concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic.

Using skills students acquired by having many of their classes moved to remote learning, student researchers digitally captured their presentations in video format which are available for public viewing at [www.carroll.edu/digitalsurf](http://www.carroll.edu/digitalsurf).

"The Student Undergraduate Research Festival is a wonderful way to showcase and celebrate our students, a vibrant diversity of research, and Carroll's dedication to student-driven inquiry. Despite holding this year's event via a virtual platform, we are overwhelmingly proud of our students and the work that they put into these projects," said Dr. Ryan Hallows, associate professor in the Department of Languages and Literature and a member of the SURF planning committee.

"With nearly 100 presentations this year, it is evident that our students are dedicated to their projects and willing to go the extra mile, oftentimes incorporating new technologies, in order to produce their research presentations virtually. I think we can all join together and applaud this year's presenters and their determination to inform and enlighten our community and take steps to make our world a better place," said Hallows.

We know this year presented some unexpected challenges for our students in SURF so we reached out to them to get their perspectives. Please visit [www.carroll.edu/surf2020](http://www.carroll.edu/surf2020) to read what our students had to say about "Digital SURF" and the value of research as part of their Carroll experience.



The class of 2020 on the steps of St. Charles during orientation of their freshman year, August 2016.





**ONTO NEW ADVENTURES**

Most who have passed through Carroll College over the past 40 years are well acquainted with the convivial Candie Cain '82. A fixture on Carroll's campus, Candie retired this spring after 36 years of employment with the college.

After graduating from Carroll in 1982, Candie returned to her alma mater in 1984 to serve as an admissions counselor. Soon, Candie found herself serving in leadership roles within admissions and enrollment as the Director of Admissions from 1989-2000 and the Dean of Enrollment from 2000-2008. In 2008, Candie transitioned to the Office of Institutional Advancement, where she has served as the Executive Director of Development, the Senior Director of Development and Stewardship, the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Interim Vice President for Institutional Advancement, and most recently, as the Executive Director of Planned Giving.

In her tenure at Carroll, Candie has been a part of the recruitment and graduation of over 6,800 graduates.

She will be greatly missed and her dedication to Carroll is deeply appreciated by all who have known and worked with her over the years. In her farewell to her colleagues, Candie shared, "I leave this community a very rich individual for you have all shared so many gifts with me. 'Thank you' just isn't adequate to express what it is in my heart and Carroll will, indeed, forever remain in my heart. Please take good care of each other. Remember to be kind, be good, be understanding, be patient, and be welcoming."

For those who wish to show their appreciation for her service, contributions can be made to the Candace Cain Endowed Scholarship for Student Persistence, which Candie generously established some years ago. Contact [giving@carroll.edu](mailto:giving@carroll.edu) for details.

**THANK YOU AND BEST WISHES**

Congratulations to the following faculty and staff on their retirement:

**2020 RETIREES:**

Candace Cain, *Executive Director of Planned Giving*, 36 years

Barbara Shaffer, *Application Manager*, 7 years

Mike Van Diest, *Head Football Coach*, 21 years

Willis Weight, *Professor of Engineering*, 11 years

**2019 RETIREES:**

Ralph Esposito, *Professor of Visual Arts*, Professor Emeritus, 41 years

Kimberly Garrison, *Associate Professor of Nursing*, Professor Emerita, 23 years

Donna Greenwood, *Associate Professor of Nursing*, Professor Emerita, 38 years

Kevin Hadduck, *Director of Academic Success*, 7 years

Karla Hokit, *Interim Director of the Library/Librarian*, 19 years

Melissa Kwasny, *English Instructor*, 9 years

Jonathan Matthews, *Professor of Education*, 21 years

Terry Mullen, *Professor of Engineering*, Professor Emeritus, 36 years

David Rotnes, *Events Arrangement Specialist*, 31 years

Dominick Speranza, *Data Analyst*, 9 years

**2018 RETIREES:**

Carol Anderson, *Administrative Assistant*, 9 years

Nathalie Caulliez, *Professor of French*, Professor Emerita, 36 years

Susie Conroy, *Custodian*, 9 years

Virginia Cooper, *English Instructor*, 14 years

Chuck Driscoll, *Professor of Theatre*, 25 years

Christian Frazza, *Director of the Library*, 24 years

James Hardwick, *Vice President of Student Life*, 16 years

Rob Holmes, *Electrician*, 13 years

Gloria Lambertz, *Professor of Health & Physical Education*, 31 years

John Linjanen, *Custodian*, 25 years

Anne Perkins, *Professor of Anthrozoology*, Professor Emerita, 28 years

Beth Schoyen, *Professor of Business*, Professor Emerita, 23 years

Gerald Shields, *Professor of Biology*, Manion Chair, 19 years

Rosalie Walsh, *Director of Career Services*, 39 years

**DIVERSITY AND EQUITY TASK FORCE**

On Juneteenth 2020, President John Cech announced the creation of "Coming Together: A Diversity and Equity Task Force." The task force has been charged with identifying immediate and long-term action items that will help create a welcome, open and safe campus community for all who learn, live and work at Carroll College, especially for our diverse students and employees. The task force is rooted in the historical mission of the college, and the college's recent work on the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan which has a specific strategic imperative regarding diversity.

The task force consists of the following individuals:

Judy Hay, Co-Chair, *Interim Dean of Students & Retention*

Dr. Doreen Kutufam, Co-Chair, *Associate Professor - Communications*

Shae Bills, *ASCC President*

Emily Busby, *Assistant Dean of Students & Director of Residential Life & Housing*

Dr. John E. Cech, *President (ex-officio)*

Dr. Jamie Dolan '02, *Associate Professor - Sociology; Department Chair of Sociology*

Dr. Jennifer Glowienka, *Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs*

Charlie Gross, *Director of Athletics*

Dr. Soumitree Gupta, *Associate Professor - English*

Steve Harper, *Professor - Computer Science*

Renee McMahon, *Director - Human Resources*

Dr. Eric Meyer, *Assistant Professor - Theology*

Julia Mull, *Associate Professor - Business*

Kara Paul, *Senior Executive Assistant to the President*

Renee Wall '87, *Director of Alumni & Family Engagement*

JP Williams '91, *Principal of Butte Central High School*

As our nation experienced heightened racial tension through the past several months, Dr. John and Kelly Galt and family stepped forward with a generous gift to establish an endowment at Carroll College directed at these concerns. While the details are still being finalized at the time of this printing, the endowment will support educational activities at Carroll that promote racial equality. Dr. John and Kelly Galt invite others who are so moved to contribute to the endowment. Should you be interested, you may send a gift to the Endowment for Racial Equality at Carroll, or contact Kathy Ramirez at 406-447-4388 or [kramirez@carroll.edu](mailto:kramirez@carroll.edu).

**ACCELERATED NURSING BACK ON TRACK**

Due to COVID-19, the Accelerated Nursing program set to launch in May 2020 has been delayed until May 2021. This 18-month program is a post baccalaureate degree designed for students who have already earned a bachelor's degree in another area but want to complete the requirements needed to become a registered nurse. Students will start in May and finish the following August in the accelerated program. The summer schedule allows these students to get much needed clinical hours during the summer when other nursing students are not typically in clinical rotations.

Several students who had planned on starting in May 2020 have committed to the May 2021 start. Applications for the program are online at [www.carroll.edu](http://www.carroll.edu) and more information is available by contacting the Admission Office at [admission@carroll.edu](mailto:admission@carroll.edu).



Carroll's nursing students assisted with the free on-campus COVID-19 testing provided for all students prior to the start of classes.



**INDOOR TRACK & FIELD**

Nobody knew when the Carroll College Fighting Saints track and field team returned from Brookings, South Dakota, in March, that they would be the final CC team to compete for a national championship. The 13 student-athletes that competed on the national stage seemed like the start of a fruitful winter championship season for the Saints.

Kelsey Bassett, Sam Mundel, Nikki Krueger, Natalie Yocum, Brooky Endy and Elly Machado all earned All-American status at track nationals. Most of the group figured to be in contention for future accolades during the spring outdoor season, too.

**BASKETBALL**

Weeks later, the men's and women's basketball teams would learn of their seeding for the NAIA national tournament—both with chances to bring hardware home to Helena. The men's team finished No. 2 in the Frontier Conference, while the women were the regular season champions.

Days later, COVID-19 disrupted everything. Basketball championships were never played. Spring seasons were canceled, meaning the softball, golf or outdoor track and field teams would never have a chance to pursue a title.

It left each program with a sense of incompleteness, a hollow finish to promising seasons.

The men's basketball team finished with a 24-9 record. Senior Dane Warp became a second team All-American, while sophomore forward Jovan Sljivancanin was an honorable mention All-American. Warp also received the prestigious CoSIDA Academic All-American award.

Four Saints were named All-Frontier performers: Warp (first team), Sljivancanin (second team), sophomore Shamrock Campbell (honorable mention) and Dennis Flowers III (Freshman of the Year).



While the previous Saints men's basketball team delighted with a trip to the national championship, a now underclassmen-heavy squad would have to wait for their first taste of nationals.

The women's team finished with a 21-10 record, winning the Frontier Conference regular season championship. The championship was the third consecutive the Saints had won in either the regular season or postseason. Junior guard Christine Denny was named a second team All-American, while junior guard Dani Wagner was noted as an honorable mention All-American. Three more players were named all-Frontier: Denny (first team), Wagner (first team) and sophomore Sienna Swannack (honorable mention).

A team that proved it could play with anybody on any given night, the Saints women's team would have to wait another year before making another national championship push.

**SOFTBALL**

The Saints softball team was off to an 8-11 start before COVID-19 canceled their season. The team was trending in a positive direction, looking to make a strong playoff push with the remaining Cascade Collegiate Conference schedule. All of that was cut short in March.

**FALL SPORTS**

Throughout the spring and summertime, student-athletes diligently followed health and safety guidelines—updated and revised seemingly every other week. The Carroll athletic administration did its part and fought to keep the PE Center open, but despite a lengthy list of protocols and the utmost care and diligence with hygiene and social distancing, the effects of COVID-19 limited the building's usual availability.

A concerted effort from local health officials, Carroll's athletic trainers, coaches and administration allowed the Saints to work in some summer camps, in accordance with the governor's COVID-19 guidelines.

In July, the men's and women's soccer teams learned they would not be playing a conference schedule in the fall. The Cascade Collegiate Conference made the call to delay all fall sports, electing for a spring competition schedule.

A few weeks later, the NAIA would, too, push all fall championships to a later date in the spring. In an early August decision, all volleyball competition in the Frontier Conference was moved to the spring as well. Weeks later, the Frontier Conference pushed football back to the spring also.

The Frontier Conference made the decision to continue with fall competition for golf and cross country, determining the sports to be low-risk of spreading the novel coronavirus. Student-athletes will have their chances of competing this fall, while championships will be played in the springtime.

With a renewed commitment to "Marching Back," the Fighting Saints are moving forward with optimism and plan on, once again, competing at the highest level.



**FOLLOW THE SAINTS**

For all the latest from Fighting Saints Athletics, head over to **CARROLLATHLETICS.COM** or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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# CARROLL TALKING SAINTS: A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE



Talking Saints jump for joy after winning the Western Washington Invitational, January 2019.

**“Teaching and coaching are about transforming lives.”**

—Brent Northup

**W**hen the Carroll College Talking Saints forensics team was named a Gold Medal Program in February 2020, that honor marked the 30th straight year, dating back to 1991, that the team has won or shared the conference’s top award. A string that included a national team title in 1999.

“Coach Van Diest, a humble man, used to remind me that the Talking Saints won a national title before football did,” said Brent Northup, coach of the Talking Saints, professor and chair of the Communication Department. “I’d just shake my head and remind him that we stopped at one while he kept going. Coach Van Diest hoisted a Talking Saints flag above Nelson Stadium to honor our program. Classy.”

But while Northup, 74, is proud of his team’s continued success, when he reflects back on his 31 years as Carroll coach, it’s not the wins he talks about.

“Teaching and coaching are about transforming lives,” Northup said. “I started college off balance and feeling pretty lost, but three professors—and a girl named Sue—put an arm around my shoulders and a boot in my butt and wouldn’t let me give up. All I do is payback for that love.”

## THE COACHING TREE

Northup likes to talk of the Carroll “coaching tree,” a list of Talking Saints who coached after they graduated—either during grad school or as a career. Boise State, Humboldt State, Rocky Mountain College, University of Washington-Bothell and Oregon State all have head coaches who were Talking Saints.

“And some of Montana’s best high school coaches were from Carroll, too,” says Northup. “Don Pogreba ‘98 at Helena High, Jason Neiffer ‘97 at Capital High and Sean O’Donnell ‘96 at Flathead, all are master teachers and inspirational coaches. Sean was inducted into the Montana Speech and Debate Hall of Fame this March.”

Other team members put their gifts to work with younger students. Jodi (Majerus) Delaney ‘04 has been honored nationally for her outstanding teaching of history in the Montessori program at Helena’s Broadwater Elementary School.

“Jodi delivered impromptu speeches that were things of beauty,” recalls Northup. “Now, she empowers children by believing in them. I recruited Jodi at the Conrad, Montana, Whoop-Up Rodeo.”

The tree has new branches, too. Megan Towles ‘13 is finishing her doctorate in Communication at Arizona State. Mark Schmutzler ‘16 just finished his first year of graduate study in Communication at Cal State Long Beach. Both are headed into college teaching and coaching.

## THE BEAT GOES ON

“Lots of students have coached during grad school to help pay tuition,” says Northup. “Chris Huck ‘95, who now has his own Seattle law firm, coached the Notre Dame team while in law school there.”

The Talking Saints alums include lawyers, doctors, nurses and professors.

“Rachel Brennan ‘01 is a pediatric oncologist back east. Katie Lange ‘05 is also a doctor who has traveled to Nepal to help kids. Brett Clark ‘03 and Kris Goss ‘02 are local attorneys who continue to reach out and help us in any way they can. Kris even came to our bus to give a pep talk as we left for a big tournament. There’s a dozen more professionals in Helena, alone.”

## A LASTING LEGACY

While the Talking Saints have certainly had a dominating run these past 30 years, forensics has had a long and successful life at the college. Carroll’s commitment to speech and debate has deep roots, tracing back to the early history of Carroll College.

Professor William Huber ‘57 started teaching at Carroll in 1959. Huber coached the debate team during the 1960s, passing the baton to Dr. Harry Smith.

Two Carroll alums shared fond memories of their years with Huber.

“Of the experiences that I had at Carroll College, none had as much impact on my future life as forensics,” wrote Dave Billion ‘65. “Thanks to the coaching and mentoring of Professor Bill Huber, I gained the confidence and ability to win the support of others through my presentation and words.”

Carroll Board of Trustees member Pat Chvatal ‘72 says her years with Huber were also pivotal in her life.

“Professor Huber invited me to join the speech team, now called the Talking Saints,” recalls Chvatal. “My life changed forever. . . After 40 years in courtroom battles, I still utilize those same debate skills. As I stand in front of the court, I continue to hear Professor Huber say, ‘Speak with clarity, with power and with confidence.’”

## MEMORIES, OF THE WAY THEY WERE

Northup’s students will attest that he is a long-winded storyteller. And as he looks back on his 31 years with the Talking Saints, he’s got quite a few—and every one centers on the students, of course.

“Not many people know that back in 1992 the Talking Saints’ name was the inspiration of Mark Porrovecchio ‘95,” said Northup. “Mark masqueraded as a rebel, but underneath was a heart of gold who studied like the scholar he was. He got his doctorate, added a few tattoos, and now coaches at Oregon State University.”

A bus in the mud is a recent sticky tale.

“This January, our bus literally got stuck in the mud on the way to an 8:30 a.m. round in Oregon,” says Northup. “Our 23 students, in suits and heels, are walking down a country road to meet Boise State’s bus—sent by their coach Manda Hicks ‘97, a Talking Saints alum, to rescue us. The team members laughed it off. Judges waited patiently for them. They may have benefited from the exaggeration that we were in a bus accident. No accident, just mud.”



**“The satisfaction comes from the chance to transform lives. And that’s just as true in athletics as in forensics. A program’s value shouldn’t be measured in wins and losses, but in the impact the experience has on the students.”**

—*Brent Northup*

Most of the stories revolve around seeing team members make their mark.

“I’ll never forget the time Carroll took Kris Goss and Carolyn Parrish ‘03 to the University of Saskatchewan and they became the first American team to win the Diefenbaker Cup,” said Northup. “The next year the Canadians put in more Canadian-specific topics to stop a repeat.”

Carolyn is a source of another memory.

“I remember 2001 when Carolyn and her partner Aaron Engebretson ‘04 met the tournament’s best team in national quarter-finals,” he said. “Our whole team was all sure we had won, but the judges muttered lingo like ‘topicality’ and disagreed. Our observing team members were furious. But Carolyn just smiled and said, ‘Nothing to be upset about. Great way to end a year.’ Then she went over to shake hands with the winners. Best moment of sportsmanship I’ve seen in my 31 years.”

And it was a pretty proud moment in 2013 when Megan Towles and Chris Axtman ‘13 reached the championship round of debate at nationals.

“I seldom watch our teams in big rounds, but I had to watch that one from the balcony. Up on the screen were the names of the final four: Stanford, Yale, Loyola School of Law, and Carroll. No thanks to the worst topic of all-time, Yale won, but our smiles were the

biggest of them all. And the whole auditorium was cheering for the underdogs from the wilds of Montana.”

Along the way, the team has made numerous runs at national titles, but only once struck gold.

In 1999, with Don Pogreba as assistant debate coach, the team won the overall national team title in parliamentary debate. The team was honored with a trip to the Capitol to meet the governor and were honored with city and legislative proclamations.

“All of what follows is true, so help me God,” said Northup. “Don Pogreba was the best extemper in the country in 1994, but came in third. Amanda Taylor ‘06 was the best impromptu speaker in America in 2006, and settled for third. Tara Harris ‘00 was amazing in national finals in 2000. Mark Porrovecchio and Dan Lair ‘96 were the best team in the country in 1995, but ended up second. We’ve been too polite in national finals.”

## BEGINNINGS

Carroll has a century of success in forensics, tracing back to the days of Mount St. Charles College.

“I stood on tall shoulders when I got here in 1989,” Northup said. “Department Chair Harry Smith, a wonderful gentle man and former coach, hired me more on faith than on credentials. He took a chance, and I’m forever grateful. Bill Monroe ‘93, who was a freshman in my freshman year, was among those who made me feel welcome.”

Kevin Twohy is central to the story of the last 50 years of Carroll forensics.

“I was hired because a friend returned a favor,” recalls Northup. “I helped Kevin Twohy, the former Carroll coach, during a low time in his personal life. He promised to return the favor. Years later he called and said a coaching job was open at Carroll where he worked. I was a journalist, a former high school coach with a philosophy degree. Made no sense, but Carroll took a chance. It was an act of grace, undeserved but deeply appreciated. They told me it was for one year, but they lost track of time.”

Twohy started the “California Connection” when he left Carroll to get his doctorate at Berkeley.

“Kevin coached in northern Cal. He sent Neil Glines to Carroll. Then Neil started coaching and sent Shawn O’Rourke ‘05 and Sherana Polk ‘04—who are married and both now coach in California. Shawn and Sherana sent Megan, Jacob, Zach, Matt, Jon and Deserae. We’ve had a steady stream of great people who all trace to Kevin—and I trace to Kevin. When Kevin died suddenly in 1999, a piece of me went with him.”

Northup sees himself as part speech coach, part life coach.

“Nothing more rewarding than seeing a student blossom,” he said. “Annie Peterson ‘05, now a Helena judge, came into her own with a phenomenal speech in Regina, Saskatchewan, in the provincial legislative chambers. Here was a bright but shy girl taking control of a championship round in a setting overflowing with history. I can still see her delivering that amazing speech—arms outstretched, full power.”

And sometimes a small moment stands out, one that reflects the humility to try something new and even to fail. That spirit is a cornerstone of the Talking Saints.

“Recently, in novice prose finals, five of the six finalists were Carroll,” recalls Northup. “And those were beginners mastering a skill they’d never tried. I was so proud of them. When kids try something new, something that scares them, and succeed—that’s prep for life.”

Not all the stories are about winning rounds.

“My family took Sherana, a Southern California transfer, to a rodeo in White Sulphur Springs which included driving on a perilous dirt mountain road that a small river had washed out. Against everyone’s advice, I just accelerated and hydroplaned through the water,” recalls Northup.

And there are more crazy memories, too.

“I remember the kids singing South Park’s ‘Blame Canada’ and ‘The Mountie Song’ as we headed north of the border. For the record, one of our ladies invited a Mountie to a Carroll dance and he came.

“Oh, and there was the period when Barbie dolls became our team mascot and often appeared on stage during awards. At nationals, one of our best left his script at home. Thank God for Fed Ex.”

Northup also recalls sleeping nights at Harborview Hospital in Seattle after team member Conor Coutts ‘19 had emergency brain surgery following a Bellingham tournament. Coutts recovered, but not quickly enough to give the student speech at graduation. Northup filled in and read Conor’s speech.

“I can proudly say I was the student speaker at a Carroll graduation,” said Northup. “At the parties afterwards, students were waving at me and teasing, ‘nice speech, Conor.’”

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“Brent creates an atmosphere within the Talking Saints that leads to lifelong friendships. After the days of competition have passed, team members still rely on one another in professional and personal matters. We’ve known each other over 20 years, socialize frequently, served in each other’s weddings, and work together to support the Talking Saints because of Brent’s dedication to that friendship-focused team philosophy.”

—*Kris Goss ‘02*

“I credit debate with my career success, personal growth, lasting friendships, and for goodness sake, it is how I met my wife! I met people who challenged me, and helped me through difficult times. I made friends that made me a better person, and I am so grateful for such meaningful friendships. And, of course, the coach officiated our wedding ceremony, and is a friend to this day!”

—*Chris Axtman-Barker ‘13*

“I was involved in Carroll Forensics for nine years as a competitor and coach. What made the Carroll program special was its emphasis on the whole student—competition was important, but it had to be grounded in what was really valuable.”

—*Carolyn (Parrish) Sevier ‘03*

“The Talking Saints taught me so much about the world and my role in it. In four years, I learned about countless social and political issues all over the world, and was given a place to think critically and come up with new ideas about them. Most importantly though, the Talking Saints helped me to find my voice and use it well. Carroll’s Speech and Debate program is such a special community, and I am grateful to have been a part of it.”

—*Kelsie Watkins ‘20*

In the end, it’s about making memories, counseling and mentoring.

“I have a belief that every student will crash at least three times during four years of college,” says Northup. “Helping them recover is far more important than coaching. Both teaching and coaching, are, at their best, ministry. Good PR comes from wins, but the deepest satisfaction comes from quiet conversations.”

Northup says his philosophy of coaching and teaching is inspired by Sister Annette Moran, who taught at Carroll from 1996 to 2007. Moran saw teaching as transformation first, education second.

“The satisfaction comes from the chance to transform lives,” says Northup. “And that’s just as true in athletics as in forensics. A program’s value shouldn’t be measured in wins and losses, but in the impact the experience has on the students. The true test is what those students contribute to their communities later on—and whether they send a Christmas card that says ‘thanks,’ 20 years down the road.”

“The Talking Saints trained us in speech, theater, and debate while fostering friendship and kindness. We could not have made it to national finals without all of these together.”

—*Megan Towles ‘13*

“The Talking Saints allowed me to travel all over the country and the world during my four years at Carroll, experiences that shaped my future. The team provided many things as I moved into adulthood, including self-confidence, the ability to think on my feet and most importantly, lifelong friendships. I wouldn’t be the person I am today without those skills and friendships.”

—*Anne Marie (Heffelfinger) Peterson ‘05*

“I was fortunate to be a member of the Talking Saints from 1991 to 1995, and I was even more fortunate to have Brent Northup as my professor, coach, mentor, and friend. I can truly say that I would not be where (or who) I am today without Brent. Brent was then—as he remains today—both funny and kind. He is an expert in his field, but with such a calm, humble, and generous heart. And the team, as I was able to experience for myself during the next four years, was much more than a team, it was a family.”

—*Chris Huck ‘95*

“Speech and debate stoked a fire in me. I knew I wanted to be a doctor and the support my team family gave me throughout college picked me up when days were hard and helped me make that a reality. What I learned about communication keeps growing, because what I really learned was how to learn. Now that I can sleep in uncomfortable places, nothing can stop me.”

—*Katie (Lange) Arcenas ‘05*



## INFECTIOUS DISEASE ECOLOGY: HOW ZOOONOTIC OUTBREAKS HAPPEN

By Grant Hokit, Ph.D.  
Professor and Senior Research Associate in Biology and Biochemistry/Molecular Biology

**B**iology can humble the most advanced beings. With tripod war machines, heat-ray artillery, and the chemical weapon known as black-smoke, *The War of the Worlds* published in 1898 by H. G. Wells is known for futuristic technology. Less recognized are the biological themes. Evolution has equipped Martian invaders with large brains capable of telepathy and obvious intelligence. However, they are not prepared for the ecological conditions on Earth. They struggle in our gravity, atmosphere and soup of microorganisms. Having a weakened or absent immune system, they succumb when exposed to pathogens carried by humans. Highly transmissible and virulent, the pathogen initiates a pandemic that destroys our attackers.

H. G. Wells was trained as a biologist in the late nineteenth century. He was a student of Thomas Huxley and studied natural selection by Charles Darwin, biogeography by Alexander von Humboldt, and ecology by Ernst Haeckel. Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch had recently demonstrated that pathogens (viruses, bacteria, fungi, prions, and parasites) are the cause of infectious disease. By 1898, biologists understood that bubonic plague was caused by a bacterium (*Yersinia pestis*) transmitted by fleas carried by rodents.

Thus, began the study of zoonoses, the cross-species transmission of disease also known as spillover. Zoonoses are responsible for most disease outbreaks. All forms of plague are zoonoses and have killed hundreds of millions of people in pandemics that changed history. Typhus, tuberculosis and rabies are zoonoses. Most influenza outbreaks are the

result of zoonoses. Spillover was responsible for the 1918 flu pandemic that killed 50 million people. Recent genetic analysis suggests the virus was likely circulating in the human population by the early 1900's after first jumping from birds to swine and then to humans. Alarmingly, zoonotic outbreaks are increasing in frequency and most are caused by previously undescribed pathogens. Known as emerging diseases, humans have experienced many novel zoonoses in recent decades: Ebola, hantavirus, HIV-AIDS, Hendra virus, Lassa fever, Lyme disease, Marburg virus, MERS, Nipah, SARS, West Nile, Zika, and now COVID-19. Coupled with new forms of influenza A from birds and swine, 75 percent of emerging diseases originate in animals.

Spillover of a new pathogen is an *evolutionary process* resulting from *ecological context*. Pathogens evolve. In the modern sense, evolution occurs when chains of molecular units called nucleotide bases alter in type or organization. A change in the genome (the collection of all bases) can change the structure and function of a pathogen. For example, the entire genome of the influenza A virus is just over 13,500 bases long. A change in

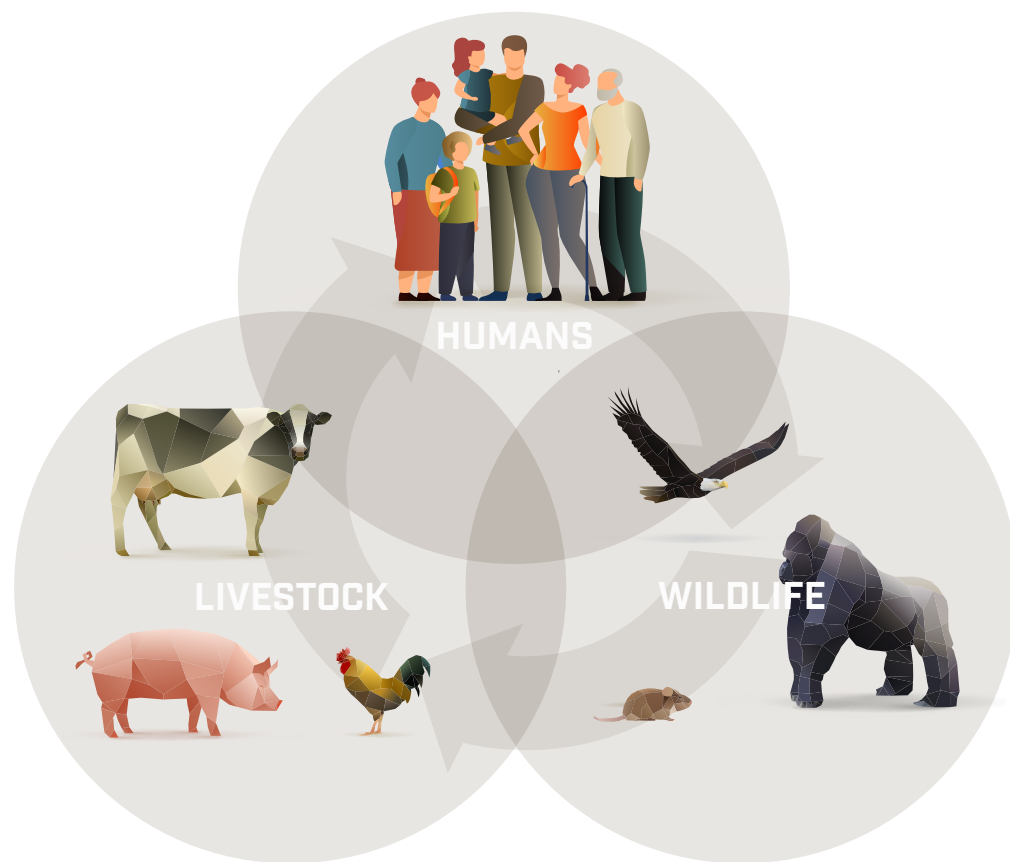
**“With our strong programs in science, social science, and humanities, Carroll College is positioned to prepare leaders for the next zoonoses that biology tells us is sure to come.”**

—Grant Hokit, Ph.D.

the sequence can result in a virus that is more contagious or virulent. Small changes in the virus occur frequently resulting in the need for a new flu vaccine each year. A major shift in the genome can occur when animal influenza combines with human influenza radically changing the virus function. This occurred in the 2009 swine flu pandemic. A new influenza A virus was a combination of two different pig strains, a bird strain and a human strain. The geographic origin was traced to pig farms in central Mexico. Many zoonotic outbreaks have been traced to domestic animal farms and markets throughout the world. To make the jump to humans, pathogens need the proper ecological context. Recombination of genomes results in the evolution of a new virus but frequent interactions between humans and animals provides the context. For domestic animals,

high-density industrialized production has replaced small-scale regional operations increasing the opportunities for disease transmission with subsequent transport of animals and human labor to international destinations.

Wildlife are also reservoirs for pathogens. Scientists have documented direct transmission of disease to humans from amphibians, reptiles, birds, armadillos, bats, rodents, racoons, canines, ungulates, primates and many invertebrate parasites. As humans transform the landscape at an ever-increasing pace, there are more opportunities for transmission. This is especially important in tropical regions where most species on Earth exist, many hosting pathogens unknown to the human immune system. By extrapolating the known number of pathogens carried by some birds and mammals, researchers have identified the tropics as a likely origin of many future zoonoses. To compound the problem, many zoonoses are transmitted indirectly through arthropod vectors. Ticks, mosquitoes and other insects are responsible for zoonotic diseases such as West Nile, Lyme and Zika. Human designed landscapes are often ideal for arthropod species. For example, *Culex* mosquitoes known to carry West Nile, are most prevalent in urban, suburban and agricultural landscapes where



Zoonoses is transmitted to humans from livestock and wildlife and between livestock and wildlife.

open water is prevalent and attractive to reservoir-hosts especially during times of drought. Climate change exacerbates the problem by allowing some arthropod vectors to disperse to higher latitudes. Lyme disease is now more prevalent in the northern states and Canada than it was 20 years ago.

The COVID-19 pandemic features the same biological principles. Having sequenced the entire genome of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), researchers are making comparisons with viruses in likely host species. Because bats are host to many coronaviruses, it is not surprising that a virus from *Rhinolophus affinis*, a bat from Yunnan Province in China, is up to 96 percent identical to SARS-CoV-2, suggesting the species is a reservoir for the virus in the wild. However, the virus has evolved since jumping to humans and it is less clear whether the spillover event came directly from bats to humans or involved an intermediate host. Recently, a virus found in smuggled pangolins (*Manis javanica*) from tropical Malaysia showed 92 percent similarity to human SARS-CoV-2. Pangolins are a popular food item in China and have been connected with the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan, the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak. Adjacent to other domestic and wildlife species, the pangolins are housed in densely packed cages allowing easy transmission of pathogens.

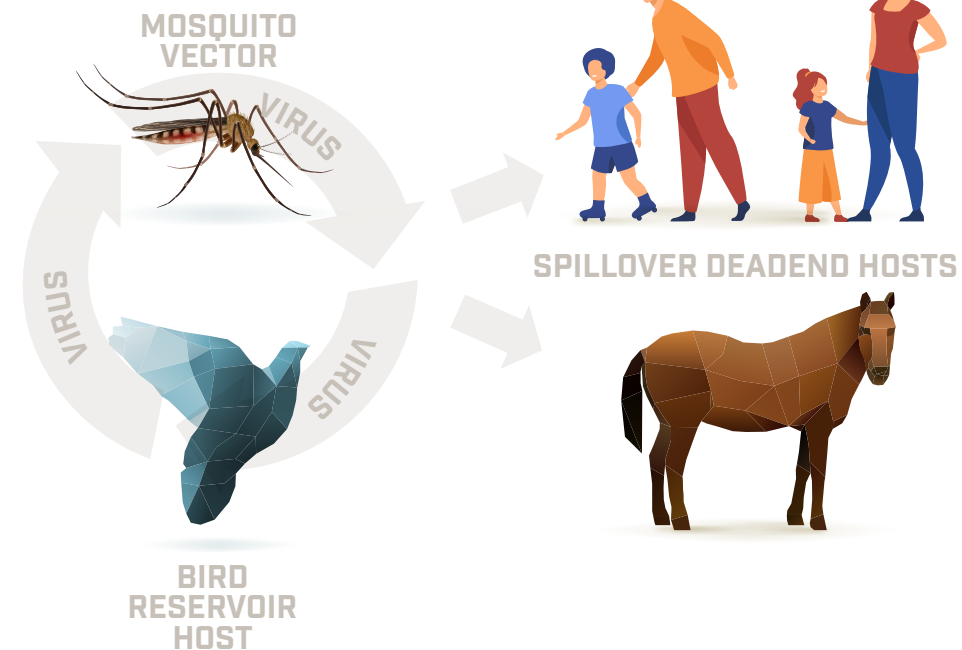
Still under investigation, the intermediate-host hypothesis does have precedent. The SARS-CoV virus that initiated the SARS 2003 outbreak has been linked to a live animal market in Guangdong, China, where Himalayan palm civets (*Paguma larvata*) likely served as an intermediate host to a virus that originated in wild Chinese horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus sinicus*). Thus, the ecological context producing COVID-19 may include human encroachment in tropical forests (where bats and pangolins are found), transport of wild food species to live-animal markets under less than sanitary conditions, and a high-density human population connected to other populations through global transportation. More than 4.5 billion passengers traveled by air in 2019. The evolutionary consequence—a spillover of a novel virus into humans with subsequent worldwide transmission.

Before air transport, H. G. Wells observed one million individuals die in the 1890 flu pandemic, a zoonosis caused by the influenza A virus H3N8. Although new concepts in the late nineteenth century, he used ecology, evolution and germ theory in

his novel, imagining a highly-evolved life form ill-suited for ecological conditions on Earth suffering from cross-species disease transmission. He attributed inspiration for the novel to a conversation with his brother discussing the hubris of British invasion of colonial territories. Wells subsequently survived the 1918 zoonosis caused by influenza A subtype H1N1. In 1945 he wrote, “Adapt or perish, now as ever, is nature’s inexorable imperative.”

It is possible to adapt to the threat of novel pathogens and spillover events. We understand the ecological context for this evolutionary process and from what species zoonoses are most likely to originate. We know how to monitor livestock and wildlife populations for pathogens. We have managed to contain Ebola outbreaks through constant surveillance of human populations. We eradicated smallpox and have polio in submission. Funding for disease surveillance programs can be expensive but early warning and a proactive response is far less expensive than reactive clinical treatment of a pandemic or closing the economy. Science can help prevent the next pandemic or at least limit the impact. Through research, surveillance, vaccination and containment, we can mitigate the effects of zoonoses at a fraction of the cost in lives and livelihood. With our strong programs in science, social science, and humanities, Carroll College is positioned to prepare leaders for the next zoonoses that biology tells us is sure to come.

**“Adapt or perish, now as ever, is nature’s inexorable imperative.”**  
—H.G. Wells



Transmission cycle for West Nile virus, a zoonosis now endemic to Montana that can spillover into humans and horses. Some bird species serve as competent reservoirs for the virus. The virus is transmitted from bird to bird by mosquito vectors. Spillover can occur when infected mosquitoes feed on horses or humans.

## ABOUT DR. GRANT HOKIT



As a landscape ecologist interested in biogeography, infectious disease and animal behavior, Dr. Hokit has served Carroll College for 24 years as a professor of biology with some administrative assignments and more recently as a Senior Research Associate. Since 2009, he has been part of a team of scientists from Carroll and Montana State

University along with colleagues at tribal colleges, county, state and federal agencies that have implemented a statewide surveillance program to detect West Nile virus in mosquito populations. He was the 2004 recipient of Carroll’s Outstanding Teaching Award, has been a Project Director for a Howard Hughes Medical Institute award received by Carroll, and has been a Principal Investigator for numerous research awards. He earned his Ph.D. from Oregon State University and his B.S. from Colorado State University.



Early detection of zoonoses can save lives and capital. Field surveys by Carroll students for West Nile virus (WNV) in Montana provide early detection of the virus in mosquito populations and allow public health warnings to be issued in targeted local communities. The annual expense is less than the cost of treating one patient with neuroinvasive disease. Upper left, dipping for mosquito larvae to assess breeding habitat. Lower left, Carroll student and veterinary technician drawing blood from horses on the Fort Belknap Reservation to test for antibodies indicating exposure to WNV. Right, flood irrigation and stock ponds are landscape modifications that provide ideal breeding habitat for mosquito vectors.



## WHEN CAN WE EXPECT A VACCINE?

By Theresa McHugh, Ph.D.,  
Assistant Professor of Microbiology



Vaccine development has been a major part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the number of confirmed cases continues to surge globally, the task of creating broad immunity to SARS-CoV-2 becomes exceedingly urgent. A vaccine is a simulated infection that triggers an immune response to a foreign substance, or antigen. Through the introduction of antigenic components of a pathogen into the body, a recipient's immune system responds by making neutralizing antibodies and memory cells that allow for recognition and targeting in a later encounter. Historically, vaccination has contributed tremendously to global health by enabling a rapid immune response before a pathogen can cause sickness. Prevention of infection is always preferable to disease treatment, especially for viral diseases with few drug options.

Before a vaccine can be widely administered, its safety and efficacy must first be established. This regulatory process consists of three phases of testing. Phase 1 is the safety trial, which involves giving various dosages to a small number of participants in order to determine how to generate a strong immune response with only minimal side effects. Once that has been determined, then Phase 2 expands the study to hundreds of individuals with age and health conditions similar to those of the intended vaccine recipients. Then in Phase 3, thousands of individuals receive the vaccine under natural disease conditions. This final phase is the longest because the researchers must wait and see how many individuals get sick and to what extent the vaccine has reduced the development of disease. After such rigorous testing has been completed, then licensing and large-scale manufacturing can begin.

Vaccine development is typically a long and complex process, often lasting 10-15 years. Remarkably, the proposed timeline for a coronavirus vaccine is 18 months, with the human and economic impacts of the pandemic acting as strong drivers. Five companies, representing a mix of private and public research entities, began the final phase of clinical trials in July. Of these top vaccine candidates, the most promising are RNA vaccines. Unlike traditional vaccines, which work by injecting a pathogen's antigen, RNA vaccines instead provide the genetic code for making the antigen. With these instructions, the cells of the body produce the foreign component as if they had actually been infected with the coronavirus. Immune cells can then interact with this material and develop a memory defense against it, allowing for a swift attack to be mounted if later confronted with the virus. Optimistically, at this advanced pace of research and development, a vaccine may be available for emergency use some time next year. Meanwhile, it is up to each one of us to follow local guidelines established to protect the health and safety of those in our community.

# THE "FLU"

By James J. Sheerin, Mount St. Charles, class of 1919



"For nearly two months, a more terrible army than that of Kaiser 'Bill' has been invading our country from coast to coast. It was not an army of Germans, but of germs, commanded by an unknown general not yet decorated with the Iron Cross. It took possession of our cities, great and small. Its victims were numbered by the thousands.

"Like the Pilgrims of old, it seems to have landed on the shores of Massachusetts, near Boston. With little difficulty, it invaded that great army cantonment, Camp Devens. Stout and sturdy soldiers though the men at the camp were, their efforts were powerless against the onslaught.

"Doctors and nurses rushed from all sections of the country to stay the advance of the deadly enemy. Day and night the army of mercy fought against the cohorts of misery, but with poor results. Towns, villages and hamlets all through the eastern section of the country were captured.

"Throughout the attack we felt that, due to pure air and perennial sunshine, the Rocky Mountains would be an impregnable position against the advancing forces of destructive bacteria. From our hearts we sympathized with our countrymen in the East. Earnest supplication ascended heavenward to the Almighty that the Treasure State of the Golden West might be spared. For a time, things looked favorable.

"The month of October had not dawned, however, before the enemy was found lurking in many homes of Montana. All too soon the whole state was overrun.

"Our capital city, like Leonidas of old, ensconced between Mount Ascension and Mount Helena, warded off for some time the attack of the oncoming foe, but at length, the medical army was forced to surrender to the invincible invader.

"Schools, churches, theaters, even political rally rooms were ordered to close. Saloons, it is true, in spite of the fact that men of the medical profession have pronounced alcoholic beverages as the 'Flu's' best friend, were allowed to remain open; but there was a reason for that.

"Even the College on Capitol Hill, through the solicitude of a few over-anxious public guardians, was forced to send its sons to cities more fully under the control of the malevolent, inimical intruder.

"Helena, usually a gay and social city, took on a new aspect. Those whose features were not hidden behind a bundle of gauze wore a solemn and thoughtful look. Everyone realized that a serious crisis was at hand. The city was apparently nonplussed.

"The members of the S. A. T. C. (Students' Army Training Corps), being soldiers of the United States Government, could not be sent home by the medical authorities of Lewis and Clark County, or of Montana. They stood by their guns, looking the scourge in the eye with Napoleonic indifference. No one

manifested undue anxiety in the matter, although every precaution was taken to keep the attack from the College.

"The result was that the S. A. T. C. won the day without a single fatality. It was the constant stream of funerals rushing north on Benton avenue to the cemeteries that lie in the valley that kept alive in our minds the reality of the great offensive war brought to our doors by General 'Flu.'

"Day after day, week after week, ambulances could be seen rushing hither and thither. Sufficient accommodations could not be found in the local hospitals . . . Afflicted persons in large part were forced to remain at home and be satisfied with a made-over-night attendant.

"To get a registered nurse was almost out of the question, for the skilled women of Montana, like their able-bodied brothers and consorts, are out on active duty fighting against the enemy Over There. The few physicians whom duty to the aged and infant had withheld from enlisting with Uncle Sam's forces battled incessantly night and day against frightful odds.

"Often the Angel of Death would enter a home close upon the footsteps of the doctor's first visit. Families were wiped out of existence with meteoric rapidity. The insidious scourge with which God had visited His people forced the overseas conflict and the pending elections out of the ordinary parlance of the people.

"The only way the 'Flu' did affect Mount St. Charles was the postponing of a memorial service for Lieutenant Harold H. Joyce, an illustrious son of the College, who had gloriously fallen on the fields of France while contending bravely for God and country.

"Except for a few inconveniences in town, the boys at the College suffered nothing from the noisome war that raged all around them. Classes in the S. A. T. C. continued without interruption. Even the 'Flu' masks which so many in the city were wearing aroused no terror in the doughty residents of Capitol Hill.

"Difficult, indeed, would it be to duplicate a crowd of men so immune from disease. Much credit is due to the fact that the young officers-in-making had been in the best physical condition, and were kept so by the constant training of army life. Nothing seems to be more effective against the 'Flu' than the good, fresh air so abundant in the Helena Valley.

"Above all we acknowledge that our miraculous escape from the ravages of the epidemic was due to the Providence of God, Who saw fit to guard our sacred walls from the terrors of a scourge, the like of which has not visited this country in many years.

"It is, therefore, with heartfelt thanksgiving that we acknowledge God's goodness, and we hope that the great All-Father will ever in the future protect the College as He has so completely done in the Fall of 1918."

This article was originally published in the November 1, 1918, issue of the Mount St. Charles (now Carroll College) student newspaper, *The Prospector*.

# ALUMNI ON THE FRONTLINES: FROM COVID UNITS TO COFFEE COUNTERS



Dr. Andy Benson '99 is Chief of the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) Division at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

**C** OVID-19 is a worldwide pandemic, but it has affected individuals in very different ways. With a worldwide network of over 17,000 living alumni, the Carroll College community consists of individuals experiencing the pandemic in a variety of jobs and places, from the early centers of the pandemic to rural or remote locations. And, within the Carroll College community, there is a broad diversity of experience in terms of how the pandemic continues to affect them. But as the world adjusts, some themes have begun to emerge and many agree that their time at Carroll College shaped their responses and continue to help guide them professionally.

Dr. Andy Benson '99 has been on the frontlines of COVID-19 as Chief of the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA) Division at The Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. "I think I heard about it on the news in January, but I didn't appreciate the impact." By mid-March, Dr. Benson said the virus was on his radar and the hospital was getting prepared. Dr. Benson earned his bachelor of arts degree in biology at Carroll College before attending The John Hopkins School of Nursing and earning his nursing degree. After that he attended Duke University earning a masters in nursing to become a nurse anesthetist. He then earned his Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Rush University in Chicago in 2017. "People thought it was only going to be a couple of weeks," Dr. Benson commented. He noted that it took those two weeks for people to begin to realize the impact of the virus.

Like many people in smaller parts of the country and rural locations, Jed Thomas '07 did not think COVID-19 would have a significant impact in Burley, Idaho, where he works as a special education teacher. Thomas earned a sports management degree at Carroll College and coached before moving into the classroom. For him, things changed over spring break. After that week off from school, the teachers had only two days to come back, inform their students and transition to remote instruction.

Devan Hromcik '16 was in Boise, Idaho, working at Saint Alphonsus as a registered nurse in the medical, surgical, neuro, trauma ICU when she first heard of COVID-19. She knew, "I would be seeing it in my line of work someday." What she did not know was just how far she would go in response to the pandemic.

**"Leading in crisis is something that is best learned through experience. It is a dynamic environment."**

—Dr. Andy Benson '99

Eric Phillips '93 was serving as the Senior Vice President of Pricing and Revenue Management at Delta Air Lines when he first heard of COVID-19. He noted that they were anticipating the impact of demand to and from China based on the previous SARS and MERS outbreaks, which lasted six to seven months. Based on that, they mapped out what it could mean over the first half of 2020. Phillips earned his bachelor of arts in communication studies with minors in public relations and business administration from Carroll. On March 1, Phillips transitioned to the role of Senior Vice President of Airport Customer Service and Cargo at Delta Air Lines. "Our decisions changed pretty rapidly," Phillips said as he began his new role and was immediately faced with establishing protocols and purchasing equipment to disinfect aircraft. "When it became real for me was when I realized the amount of uncertainty about the virus and the speed at which things were changing. The decisions felt very significant."

Though it had been on her radar since January, when Montana Governor Steve Bullock issued the Phase I mandate regarding COVID-19 in March, Lindsey Barnes '05 was camping in the desert in Utah. To complicate matters, her business partner was backpacking in South America. A graduate with bachelor's degrees in history, secondary education, and Spanish, Barnes is a co-owner of the General Mercantile in downtown Helena with Aaron Lamphear '05. Both quickly returned to Helena. She credits her team of "ferocious SheWolves" for helping implement the guidelines quickly in their absence. "When I got home a couple days later, it felt surreal to walk into the store and not hear the chatter of customers dispersed throughout the nooks and crannies. The old men weren't ponied up to the bar as is the norm and there was an overall heaviness to the environment," Barnes said.

## WORKING IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT

Working in the new environment shaped by COVID-19 has meant tackling new challenges. "I went back to school," Thomas said when explaining that he had to immediately get up to speed on the technology he needed to support his students remotely. This included getting adept at video and conferencing applications, as well as lecture capture technology that would help him deliver coursework to his students.

As a CRNA, Dr. Benson and his team were uniquely qualified to help when the situation hit, having critical care skills along with expertise in ventilator management. In March, when the hospital initiated its COVID-19 plans, Dr. Benson mobilized part of his team back to the ICU, another third transitioned to working

as respiratory therapists, and the other third remained providing anesthesia care in the operating rooms.

Remembering the first time he received assistance in getting suited up in the personal protective gear to enter a COVID-19 positive unit, Dr. Benson called the experience "really scary and overwhelming." As he talked weeks later as the new norm set in, he noted that he now feels safer on the COVID-19 positive unit than he does going to the grocery store.

"This has made the vibe of the Merc different mainly because I can't spend the majority of my day socializing!" Barnes said. She noted that the regulars are largely back, but they are picking up their orders to go as they have not been able to open their seating



**"I hope that at the end of all of this we can look back as a collective society and start a new chapter in how we choose to spend our money. I hope we invest more in our small local businesses and their workers, and I hope the realization becomes apparent that service workers are absolutely equal to people in any other sector."**

—Lindsey Barnes '05, General Merc Owner

Current owners Lindsey Barnes '05 and Aaron Lamphear '05 sit with founder of the Merc Ray Domer, May 2019.



**“The hardest part of caring for those patients at the bedside was serving as a bridge between the patient and their loved ones. Visitors were not permitted at the bedside. Therefore, nurses had to step up in an empathetic role in a totally revamped way.”**

— Devan Hromcik '16

areas back up. She noted that they have also seen an uptick in merchandise sales. “It’s been an adjustment, but overall the store has weathered this storm extremely well due to the support of our loyal customers.” During the pandemic, Barnes noted that the social and economic divide between the worker and the consumer in the service sector has become very apparent. She said the vast majority of customers have been great, following guidelines, being caring and respectful and tipping well. But, some customers do forget the person behind the mask, “(I) hope that at the end of all of this we can look back as a collective society and start a new chapter in how we choose to spend our money. I hope we invest more in our small local businesses and their workers, and I hope the realization becomes apparent that service workers are absolutely equal to people in any other sector.”

New in his position, Phillips was faced with ensuring passenger and employee safety in some of the most challenging parts of the process. From cleaning the airplanes to ensuring clean terminal buildings, his team jumped into action. “You always want more information, but what helped me was our decisions were rooted and grounded in protecting the health and safety of our employees and customers.” As part of his new role, Phillips visited the airport in Atlanta where he works and they reviewed everything from bathrooms to signage.

When numbers started to rise in the eastern part of the country, Hromcik volunteered to travel to a sister hospital in Detroit to care for the influx of patients. What started as a two week rotation turned into three as she cared for many intubated patients who were nearing the end of their life. “The hardest part of caring for those patients at the bedside was serving as a bridge between the patient and their loved ones. Visitors were not permitted at the bedside. Therefore, nurses had to step up in an empathetic role in a totally revamped way.”

### ADVICE AND LESSONS LEARNED

“You really don’t want this virus,” Dr. Benson noted, explaining that he had recently worked with an 80-year-old patient who had bounced back very quickly and one room over had a patient in their fifties who was struggling. For his part, Dr. Benson is encouraging his parents back in Whitefish, Montana, to practice social distancing, wear their masks, and wash their hands—advice he would give any student or alumni.

Dr. Benson said that his time at Carroll College had a profound impact on him and that the leadership skills he learned at Carroll College have served him well in the crisis. “Leading in crisis is

something that is best learned through experience. It is a dynamic environment.” He noted the particular importance of communication and the need to be there on the frontlines. “I was there on weekends, working in the ICU. I think that gained some credibility.”

“So much of my job has been communicating with teams,” Phillips said. He noted that he sees the value of the liberal arts core at Carroll as it prepared him to always be thinking about people and how to make communication meaningful for them. When speaking about leading during this time of crisis he noted, “It has to be about people, and a faith-based liberal arts education roots you in that.” Phillips hopes that after COVID-19 people he works with and the customers that he serves will remember that they invested in the long-term relationships and were not just focused on transactions. “Forge a culture, be who you are. That gets remembered for a long time,” was his advice for organizations navigating in the time of COVID-19.

Thomas agrees with Phillips that communication has been a key skill employed during this crisis. “My communication has to be top notch,” he noted. During the pandemic, he has had to conduct meetings with other teachers, parents and students online and on the phone with some of the highest risk and most academically-challenged students. He said one thing that has been apparent throughout the spring is that both he and his students have learned they took school for granted. Students who previously expressed that they did not like coming to school told him throughout the spring, “I miss school.” Thomas clearly expresses that he misses it too, noting that he has missed what he learns from colleagues and teachers every day.

Another theme that seems to be emerging as these leaders learn amid the crisis is one of hope. “When things are so uncertain, a liberal arts education has incredible value in this. Humanity always wins. I’ve loved Carroll for that,” Phillips said.

Thomas noted that he was reminded that failure is inevitable, and throughout the process of learning to live with COVID-19, we are all likely to make mistakes. “In the grand scheme of things, we are all in this together,” Thomas said, “Nobody knows everything; that was a huge awakening for me. But if we can come together as a group we can accomplish this.”

During this pandemic, Hromcik commented that she has often gone back to her Exploring Empathy class, taught by Kay Satre. “Having a core understanding of empathy, vulnerability, and positivity has helped me to be more raw and honest through this experience. To enter into the chaos of another, and simply be present. I will forever cherish what I learned in that



**“Forge a culture, be who you are. That gets remembered for a long time.”**

— Eric Phillips '93

class.” Hromcik also credited her nursing education, particularly the lab experiences, with being able to control her emotions in a high stress environment, “I was able to practice recall of knowledge and critical thinking, while executing fast and effective patient care. This has helped me every single day as a nurse, but especially now during this time.”

At the General Mercantile they are adjusting, but Barnes has a much different vision of the future, “I want to feel the energy of the Merc return. I want customers back at our tables reading books, talking philosophy and politics, playing Scrabble, writing prose and poetry, etcetera. The original purpose of a coffee house, and one the Merc will continue to safeguard, is one of community conversation and soulful stimuli.” Barnes added, “As Carroll history majors, both Aaron and I are bookishly aware of what occurs psychologically and societally when civilizations are dealing with plagues, inefficient politicians and staving off decline. Thank you, Dr. Swartout, Father Sullivan and Father Greytak!” Barnes, who has two current employees who recently graduated from Carroll, offers advice to current students, “As a former high school history teacher, I would give the same advice to young people whether we were in a global pandemic or not. Read. Vote. Educate yourselves broadly and holistically. This pandemic has revealed holes in our society that we cannot ignore.”

## 2019 ALUMNI AWARD HONOREES

A special gathering during Homecoming Weekend 2019 provided the opportunity to formally recognize and honor Carroll's exceptional alumni through the presentation of the Alumni Awards.

### TOM HARPOLE '88 ALUMNI ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



*The Alumni Academic Achievement Award is given to Carroll College alumni who have distinguished themselves academically or artistically.*

Tom Harpole is a man of many talents. In addition to being an award-winning science and fiction

writer, he's been a logger, a firefighter, a teacher of Alaskan natives in remote villages, a boxer, a rodeo bull rider, an EMT, and a Montana state racquetball champion. He is an accomplished skydiver, a paraglider, an arborist, an explosives expert, a gifted guitar-playing musician and a singer of Celtic tunes. His primary titles are that of writer and journalist, and he has won numerous national and international writing awards and accolades including being a finalist in 1994 and 2010 for the National Magazine Award for reporting. His work has appeared in National Geographic, Smithsonian, Sports Illustrated, Architectural Digest and Scientific American, to name just a few. Not only is Tom a fascinating individual whose life adventures and misfortunes have informed much of his writing, he is also a dedicated and much-appreciated educator. A student of Tom's creative nonfiction for publishing course at Carroll shared that he was "... enthralled with his kind humanity, his nonjudgmental insight into the human condition and his ability and willingness to mentor and to encourage his students."

### SHANE VAN DIEST '10 YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

*The Young Alumni Award honors graduates within the past 10 years who best exemplify Carroll's distinguished service and character in their young careers.*

Shane Van Diest has chosen a career path in which he is able to share, teach and lead in faith. He is currently Director of Evangelization and Religious Education at St. George Catholic Church in Saint Louis, Missouri, following positions in Campus Ministry at both Duchesne High School and the Archdiocese of St. Louis. His path to becoming a mentor in religious education began as a counselor at Legendary Lodge in Montana. His supervisors and co-workers talk about his "contagious motivation (and) his excitement for the Faith." Shane is a natural leader with a strong work ethic who serves with compassion and zeal. With the joy he exudes through his service, Shane is particularly adept at investing and motivating young adults to help them grow into leaders in the Church. He earned his Masters of Arts in Theology and Philosophy-Christian Wisdom from Augustine Institute and Holy Apostles College and Seminary, respectively.



### JOHN SCHARF '73 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME AWARD

*The Alumni Hall of Fame Award honors alumni who have given outstanding contributions of time, talent and treasure in distinguished service to his/her community and/or Carroll College.*



Dr. John Scharf has been a professor in Carroll's Engineering Department for over 40 years, having begun his teaching career at Carroll in 1976 after earning his Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame. He has been an inspirational teacher and mentor to many students, in addition to taking on a number of administrative and service roles at the college. Dr. Scharf established the Carroll College Student Chapter of Engineers Without Borders in 2006. His energy and generosity of time and means has been the impetus to grow Carroll's program to four active projects in Mexico, Guatemala, St Lucia, and Kawango Village, Uganda. He is particularly adept at matching professional mentors with student projects, as well as spearheading fundraising efforts. Dr. John Scharf has put Carroll College on the map as a distinguished place where students can come and have profound, life-changing experiences.



### TROY MCGEE '75 LUMINARY AWARD

*The Luminary Award is given to recognize those alumni who have inspirational success in their careers and/or in their communities and have been "luminary" in the lives of others.*

Former Helena Chief of Police Troy McGee demonstrated strong leadership skills over his

four decades with the Helena Police Department including 23 years as the chief, retiring in March 2019. During his tenure, he was instrumental in creating better relationships between the police department and the Helena community, and he was a strong supporter of recruiting and retaining female officers. His commitment to coordination between the police department and the Lewis & Clark's Sheriff Department led to a SWAT team comprised of officers from both departments, and his dedication to the safety and training of officers was evident in his support of the construction of the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in Helena. Chief McGee has demonstrated a deep commitment to his community and has served the citizens of Helena long and well.



Carol Will, Cynthia Thornquist and Kristin Williams from the Office of Institutional Advancement are all smiles at the Alumni Awards Luncheon.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Many of Carroll's annual in-person, on campus events for the fall of 2020 are being rescheduled or re-envisioned due to the challenges brought on by COVID-19.

### SPIRIT WEEKEND OCTOBER 16-18, 2020

Naturally planning for a gathering as large as Homecoming is an impossibility this year, thus the alumni office is designing a virtual event in its place. Stay tuned for details about "Carroll's Virtual Spirit Weekend" taking place October 16-18, 2020. We look forward to a time in the future when we can all join together once again on Carroll's campus.

### PARENTS' WEEKEND

Parents' & Family Weekend, which is held in the fall often in conjunction with Homecoming, is being moved to the spring. We will share more details, including dates, in future communications.

### FOUNDERS GALA NOVEMBER 6, 2020

As we continue to navigate the pandemic, we recognize that our Founders Gala event will need to look significantly different this year. Our supporters have made clear the desire to celebrate with the Carroll community in some way. With that in mind, we are preparing a "deconstructed" Founders Gala, with privately-hosted (and prudently intimate) dinners distributed throughout the nation and, perhaps, the world. More details will be provided in the near future, please contact Cynthia Thornquist in the Office of Institutional Advancement if you would be interested in serving as a dinner host. Mark your calendars to celebrate with us, at a distance, on November 6th!

**For information on Carroll College events, visit our online calendar of events at [CARROLL.EDU/CALENDAR](https://carroll.edu/calendar)**

## 2019 ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

The Carroll College Athletic Hall of Fame honors Saints' athletes who have left a lasting legacy on the college with their careers as exemplary student-athletes. Congratulations to the following athletes who were inducted into the Hall of Fame during the 2019 Homecoming weekend:



### **BRUCE PARKER** ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Parker served Carroll from 2003-2014 before being enshrined in the NAIA and NACDA Hall of Fames. He became the NAIA Athletic Director of the Year twice and Frontier Conference Athletic Director of the Year nine times. He brought cross country, men's soccer, men's and women's track and field, and softball to Carroll College. He developed the corporate sponsorship program and led improvements in athletic facilities.

### **MARCUS MILLER '08** FOOTBALL

A three-time national champion kicker and defensive back, Miller holds the NAIA record in career field-goal percentage at 82.9 percent (58 of 70). He was the 2005 Annual Kick Scoring Champion, playing in 14 games and making 67 of 69 PATs while connecting on 14 of 18 field goals to score a total of 109 kicking points. He became a first team All-American and a three-time first team all-Frontier cornerback.

### **JOLENE (FUZESY) LLOYD '09** WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Considered the greatest shooter in Carroll women's hoops history, Fuzesy holds Carroll College records for most career points (2,067), most field goals made (672), most field goals attempted (1,394), most three-pointers made (464), most three-pointers attempted (903) and most games played (139). She holds NAIA records for career three-point percentage (51.6). She was a two-time All-American and all-conference three times.

### **JEFF HAYS '06** MEN'S BASKETBALL

A member of the record-holding 2006 team for most wins in program history (30), Hays was a core piece of successful Saints teams in the mid-2000s. A 6-foot-5 wing, Hays became a first team Frontier Conference performer twice, as well as a two-time honorable mention All-American and a two-time NAIA all-tournament performer. He became a two-time academic All-American in his three seasons at Carroll after transferring from the University of Montana.

### **2005-06 MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM**

The 2005-06 men's basketball program, coached by Gary Turcott, set the school record for most wins in history with 30 (an 88.2 winning percentage), the school record for threes in a game at 17, doing so three separate occasions, and for three pointers made in a season at 358. The team won the Frontier Conference championship and advanced to the NAIA quarterfinals before falling to eventual champion Texas Wesleyan, 73-70.

### **JENNI (ANNICCHIARICO) HERNDIER '08** WOMEN'S SOCCER

A top-marked forward for opposing defenses during her career, Annicchiarico totaled 101 points during her time at Carroll, the No. 4 mark on the all-time list (37 goals, 27 assists). She became a three-time All-American and was a part of some of the very best Carroll women's soccer teams, including the 2007 team that earned a 2-1 victory at the national tournament and posted a 17-2-2 overall record, the best in school history.

### **2006 WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM**

The 2006 women's soccer team, coached by Mark Hiemenz, posted a 13-6-1 record and advanced to the Region I tournament championship losing on penalty kicks. The team received the program's first ever at-large bid to the national tournament, falling to Lee University 2-1.

### **2007 WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM**

The 2007 women's soccer team, coached by David Thorvilson, earned the best record in program history at 17-2-2. The team won the Frontier Conference in its first year of existence. The team went on to win the Region I tournament in its last year in existence and then defeated Point Loma Nazarene 2-1 in the Round of 16 and fell to Lindsay Wilson in the Round of 8.

### **MATT THOMAS '07** FOOTBALL

A two-time All-American defensive back, Thomas is a member of four Carroll College national championships. The Helena native earned the Defensive MVP in the 2005 national championship game. He was a three-time first-team all-Frontier corner known for his toughness and strength during the most successful run of Carroll College football.

### **MIKE VAN DIEST** FOOTBALL

Van Diest became the most successful coach in Carroll College history during his 20-year run as head coach (1999-2018). As the all-time winningest football coach, he led the Saints to six national championships and posted a 203-54 record. His teams won 14 Frontier Conference championships, including 12 consecutive. He was selected as the NAIA National Coach of the Year twice and Frontier Conference Coach of the Year 10 times. The American Football Coaches Association selected him as the Coach of the Year three times, as well. He coached four NAIA Players of the Year during his distinguished tenure.

## THE EQUALITY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION AT CARROLL COLLEGE



**“I believe in these incredible times that at Carroll College, the light is shining and will continue to be bright as we embrace the future of change in our own lives and communities, and within our great nation of America.”**

—JP Williams

done something wrong. I was shocked when Coach said, “I know some people have been treating you badly, but you have to rise above that because I don’t care about your color. All I care about is if you are a good man.” Coach said what I had heard my parents say over and over, again and again. That day we crushed Western by 63 points at their homecoming. It was one of the greatest games I ever played in my life.

As I see my own daughter Alex now attending Carroll some 70 years after her grandparents, it resonates within me why Carroll and my parents took their risks. Watching Alex on the court, and seeing the love and friendships she shares with her teammates and peers, as well as the support Alex receives from the entire Carroll community, has been one of the most wonderful blessings of my life. I can’t imagine how hard it really was for my parents to take their heroic journey. There must have been an incredible amount of stress and pressure on them and Carroll to be successful and build a foundation of lasting and effectual change of racial equality in education. Even though decades have passed since my parents and I attended Carroll, it’s evident that the ideals of racial equality and social justice at the college continue to remain relevant to a new group of students, and there continues to be work that needs done to build on the foundation set in part by my parents.

In greater reflection, I am reminiscent of one of my favorite scriptures my mother Bernice taught me. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). I believe in these incredible times that at Carroll College, the light is shining and will continue to be bright as we embrace the future of change in our own lives and communities, and within our great nation of America.

With prayers of peace and God’s blessings,

JP Williams ‘91

**W**ith all that has been occurring in the past few months, I decided to take the opportunity to reflect on the value and importance of equality in Catholic education at Carroll College. In 1957, Carroll College answered Christ’s call of acceptance. The college accepted Bernice Jackson and Robert Williams (my parents) and created a pathway to equality in higher education. This journey of equality happened long before the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which would end the legal segregation of people of color in America. Both of my parents attended Carroll in 1957 and were at the forefront of the demand for equality in the state of Montana. Boldly, my parents stepped to the front of the civil rights movement and became agents of social justice in Montana and across America.

Together, my parents attended Carroll and constantly worked to remove barriers to racial equality in an unprecedented manner. They knew it was a risk for the college to accept people of color and go against the law and accepted norms of society. For my mother and father there was also an immense personal risk to attend the small, Catholic institution. They felt that if they failed, the doors of equality for other people of color in Montana and the United States would have remained closed. Both Bernice and Robert (Bob) graduated from Carroll by 1961 and would go on to be extraordinarily successful in their fields. Bernice in nursing and higher education and Bob with the U.S. Marines and federal government.

Looking back, my parents never allowed me to use the color of my skin as an excuse for failure. The expectation was that as the son of Bernice and Bob, I would always work hard, respect my elders, give back to the community, and most importantly, I would always put God first. When I attended Carroll some thirty years after my parents, I began to understand why those values had been imparted to me as a child. The Carroll campus was special and became a safe haven for me. Still it was not perfect then, and nor is it today. Coach Bob Petrino reinforced my parents’ lessons, calling me into his office only once. I was nervous because I thought I had

## ABOUT JP WILLIAMS

JP Williams of Anaconda, Montana, is married to Jamie Quigley-Williams of Avon, Montana. Their daughter Alex is a junior at Carroll studying environmental policy. Williams has been the principal at Butte Central Catholic High School since 2018. He currently serves as the chairperson of the Office of Public Instruction Montana Special Education Advisory Panel. Previously, he was appointed by the Governor of Nevada to the Nevada Indian Commission Educational Task Force and worked in special education, Indian education, and equity and diversity in Las Vegas, Nevada. He holds a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Williams is currently finishing his doctoral studies in Educational Leadership at MSU – Bozeman and will graduate with an Ed.D. in December 2020.

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**—Alli Buckner, Class of 2022**

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