



The Future Begins Now

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Greetings from the Kean University Foundation!

We are excited to share with you the latest edition of our eNewsletter. In keeping with previous publications, this eNewsletter is sent out quarterly to friends and members of the Kean Community, including content related to the many ways we can all support Kean University, as well as options available for making a gift to the Foundation. We look forward to keeping you updated on the Foundation's activities and the tremendous impact of our valued supporters!



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: *Kean University Alumnus Carmen Cicero '51*

Renowned artist Carmen Cicero '51 has recently donated one of his works to the Kean University Foundation to become part of the permanent art collection at Kean University. "We are honored to add this intriguing example of artist Cicero's work to our collection," stated Dr. Lynette Zimmerman, Executive Director of the Liberty Hall Academic Center and the Galleries. "It is all the more meaningful coming from an accomplished artist who began his journey at Kean."

Cicero grew up in Newark, New Jersey, and, following the completion of military service during World War II, he was unsure of which direction to take in life. New Jersey State Teachers College (now Kean University) was right in the neighborhood and, with the financial assistance provided by the GI Bill, Cicero decided he might as well give the College a try. He found his artistic passion during his time as a student and credits his instructors with fostering this passion. After graduation, Cicero pursued graduate studies at New York's Hunter College, studying under Robert Motherwell and Hans Hofman. He found early success working in an abstract expressionist style, with his works being collected by prominent museums such as New York's Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among many others.





As his life progressed, Cicero's artistic style evolved from abstract expressionist to figurative expressionism to a current visionary, or deep expressionist stage. His later works have been described as "fantasy," "mystery," "surreal," "satiric" and "edgy." Cicero shared that many of his works are inspired by his dreams, as they capture an ethereal sense. As described on his website, www.carmencicero.com, "These works produce a peculiar atmosphere, a strange, enigmatic spell – images that linger in the unconscious mind."

Along his artistic journey, Cicero has had parallel careers as both an educator and musician. He initially put his Newark State Teachers College training to use by teaching at elementary, junior and high school levels. Cicero then taught at Sara Lawrence College for nine years and later at Montclair State University for 31 years, where he also achieved a Master of Fine Arts. He has had a lifelong love affair with music of all genres, having begun playing the clarinet while in elementary school. Cicero is accomplished on the alto saxophone along with the clarinet. He is perhaps best known for his jazz works, having led a 17-piece jazz band early in his career and later performing with numerous jazz greats and Tony Bennett. Cicero's solo albums can be found on Youtube.

Teaching is a noble profession, and not every artist can be a teacher; it requires both aptitude and training. Teachers must stimulate students to find their talents – their own "truths within" – and help them develop the means by which to express them.

When asked if he is foremost an artist, academic or musician, Cicero claims all three - but makes an important distinction.

"Teaching is a noble profession, and not every artist can be a teacher; it requires both aptitude and training," he said.

Teachers must stimulate students to find their talents – their own "truths within" – and help them develop the means by which to express them. Artistry, both visual and performance, is more than a profession; it is a life calling. While he was able to retire from teaching, Cicero could never stop painting. His wish for today's Kean students is that they find their life's passion, be it in artistry or elsewhere.

At 96, Cicero continues to create. His art is widely shown, having recently been featured at the Annual Art Show at the New York Armory and with a show at Texas' famed Menil Collection currently under consideration. A monograph, *The Art of Carmen Cicero*, was published in 2013 and can be found in the Nancy Thompson Library, as well as most internet

retailers. A new book of his drawings and watercolors is in production for a Fall 2024 release date. He and his wife, art historian Mary Abell, split the year between their studio residences in New York City and in Truro, MA.

Cicero has won many awards including two Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowships, a Ford Foundation prize, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant and Jacob Lawrence and Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence Award.

However, the award that Kean University holds most dear is the one that proves him a valued member of our community: his 1990 Kean University Distinguished Alumni Award. We are grateful to now include his work in our permanent art collection.



Faculty Spotlight: Zahava L. Friedman, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy



In this edition of the Faculty Spotlight, the Kean University Foundation has switched gears and is happy to have Zahava L. Friedman, Ph.D., tell her own story. We would be remiss, however, if we did not express our deepest appreciation and respect for Dr. Friedman's resiliency and passion for this imperative community project.

The interdisciplinary team, including Dr. Friedman; Kelly Sullivan, Department of Occupational Therapy; Kate Nealon, School of Communication Disorders and Deafness; John Lee, School of Physical Therapy; and Keri Giordano, Department of Advanced Studies in Psychology, is already well underway and will have a tremendous impact on our community.

We also want to thank The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, including Michael Schmidt, CEO; Lisa Block, Senior Program Officer; and Kevin McManemin, Grants and Community Outreach Manager, for providing the generous grant that launched this program.

What inspired you to take on this initiative and how is it unique and innovative in nature?

Two things inspired me to take on this project. First, as a mother, I saw deep struggle within families of young children during the Covid-19 pandemic. Children lost access to peers and services, and caregivers were lonely and worried for their young kids. I myself had four children in elementary school at the time, as well as my youngest, who was one year old at the start of the pandemic. I knew if we were struggling as a family, many people were most likely struggling at home, too. Second, for many years, I worked as a school-based occupational therapist in a diverse community. One of the best parts of my work was the constant opportunity to collaborate – with children, with parents and with other educators and therapists. In this project, I want to be an agent of change to bring collaborative models into our universities and communities in an active way, just like I was able to do in my school-based work. This project is collaborative in nature – it brings together students, clinicians and, most importantly, families and children from our community, working together to resourcefully support child development and parent mental health.

Raising Families



How is the partnership with HFNJ going to impact the community?

This project is titled, "Raising Families". We are looking to raise up the family unit by collaborating with caregivers to become agents of change within their homes and communities. Caregivers will engage in weekly hands-on groups with expert clinicians from clinical psychology, physical therapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy fields each week. Local clinicians will have an opportunity to work with Kean University students from four departments, sharing knowledge with students and families, while problem solving real-life challenges. The potential community impact is tremendous because bringing people together who care about children and families, who have skills and passion like our students, local clinicians and parents, can recharge child development AND improve sense of community for families in struggle. A parent who engages can become more confident, not only in raising that one child but in raising their entire family, supporting peer parents in struggle, and engaging more deeply and effectively in all that they do.

“What I have seen consistently is that Kean graduates are community folk – we are down to earth, hands-on clinicians who are out there, in schools, in hospitals, in centers, in public-serving practice.”

How will this program align with the mission and vision of the university?

Kean University is known throughout New Jersey as a community-serving institution. I am originally from Brooklyn, New York, but I have been a New Jersey resident for seventeen years. As an occupational therapist who has practiced in N.J. for most of my career, I have met many clinicians, occupational therapists, speech therapists and psychologists, many of whom are Kean alumni. What I have seen consistently is that Kean graduates are community folk – we are down to earth, hands-on clinicians who are out there, in schools, in hospitals, in centers, in public-serving practice. That is what Kean personifies for me in its mission, and that is what we hope to build with the Raising Families project – a community-serving model for our local families in nearby communities, like Hillside, Elizabeth and Newark. We are a neighborhood university, and we try to be good neighbors.

What types of goals and outcomes are you hoping to see?

I will know we are successful if we see the following: parents creating a community together, clinicians showing growth by learning from families and each other, children showing significant developmental gains on gold-standard assessment tools, and Kean University students building relationships with each other and their families. This is what we hope to see with the Raising Families Project.

Where can people in the community learn more about this program, or with whom can they contact?

We are in the process of creating a flyer and screening form. We are really excited to welcome our first cohort of families, scheduled to begin in May 2023. Kean students and faculty are currently collaborating to finalize curriculum, tools, materials and staffing. This project is going to recruit families with young children; any child born from between 2018 and 2023 is eligible. We will be providing 12 weeks of free, top-notch programming to every family – and there is a travel stipend as well! Please share with any families in our area who may be interested and feel free reach out to me by email at yarmuscz@kean.edu with any questions.

CBPM Dean's Forum Focuses on Career Success and Happiness

Kean University's College of Business and Public Management (CBPM) hosted its final Dean's Forum of the 2022/2023 academic year on Wednesday, April 12, 2023. A standing-room-only audience filled a lecture room in Hynes Hall as two distinguished speakers shared their career journeys and advice for success.

Jonathan Mayes, an internationally known speaker on the topics of diversity, equity and inclusion, and former Senior Vice President/ Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer at Albertsons Companies, shared his *"Top 10 Tips for Career Happiness and Success."* Charles (Chuck) Waimon '77, Chief Executive Officer of Mutti North American and member of the Kean University Foundation Board of Directors, then shared his expertise on *"Strategic Customer Management."* Each presenter emphasized developing an intentional vision for success, or personal mission statement, followed by an accountable action plan. Both included examples from their respective experiences in a straightforward, transparent and sometimes humorous manner that was well-received by the primarily student audience. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session, after which both speakers commented on the insightfulness and enthusiasm of the CBPM students.

Bill Miller, Chief Executive Officer of the Kean University Foundation, offered those in attendance an introduction to the event's guest speakers. Jin Wang, Ph.D., Dean of the CBPM, gave closing remarks, expressing his gratitude for the speakers' time and insight, and presenting each with a certificate of appreciation.



Student Spotlight: Michelle Gomez '23



Michelle chose to attend Kean University for two reasons: the school's proximity to her home and its affordability. There were a few semesters where she attended night classes and the easy commute allowed her the flexibility to work two part-time jobs.

Michelle and her parents have always been hard workers. They were extremely thankful to have found a university they could afford with a reputation for providing a stellar education. Paying for college was a struggle, but Kean made it less stressful thanks to reasonable financial options and opportunities to earn scholarships.

Having graduated just this May, Michelle reflected upon her time as an undergraduate student. It has been an unpredictable four years, especially studying during the COVID-19 pandemic, but Michelle realizes how blessed she's been to be able to further her education at a university that has taught her so much. She has met amazing friends along the way who, just like Michelle, work hard for their future selves. Michelle

was also lucky to have her best friend, Shania, by her side throughout her time at Kean. She helped make Michelle's college experience less anxious and more fun.

Michelle met incredible professors who cared about their students, wanted them to be at their best level and provided guidance whenever it was needed. She worked with supportive people who prepared her for what many call "the real world" which she's grateful for. The accomplishments Michelle achieved throughout her time at Kean made her feel valued and appreciated. It made her realize that all her hard work does pay off. She's thankful for every single experience she's had, as it helped her mature as an individual.

During Michelle's time at Kean, Professor Blanca Rosales-Ahn, in particular, was an amazing educator. She entered the classroom with a big smile and reminded Michelle of a supportive mother. Professor Rosales-Ahn made the class comfortable, especially when it came to presenting. Outside of the classroom, she helped Michelle with her recommendation letter for graduate school.

Michelle also loved a creative writing course she completed. She found the class to be therapeutic as she was able to write poems, stories, sonnets, flash fictions and songs that connected with her life. Michelle was proud to see her writing process evolve and Professor Abriana Jette played a significant role in helping her expand her creative process.

Michelle's favorite memory at Kean was when she was a guest speaker at the Kean University Foundation Scholarship Recognition Reception. It taught her to overcome the difficulty she had with public speaking. She wanted to make a great impression, especially to the donors who provide so much for the students. When the day came to give her speech, she felt extremely pleased and cherished. Her parents were there to support her and Michelle states that she wouldn't be where she is today if it wasn't for their love and support that continuously pushes her to work harder. Everyone that day gave her the strength she needed to tell the story. She is thankful to every donor for their generous scholarship support because of the happiness they bring to each student's life; each donor becomes a part of each student's support system.

Michelle's time at Kean has been a challenging yet rewarding journey. She was able to learn so much and she hopes to learn even more now that she will be studying to receive her master's in social work.



Thank you to everyone who generously supported Kean University's Founders Day and Founders 5K!

Founders Day, which was celebrated on April 14th, 2023, saw the Kean Community come together for a day of action in commemoration of the University's 168th anniversary. This year over 500 donors helped us exceed our goal of \$100,000 and raise almost \$105,000, making it the most successful Founders Day on record! Please [visit this link](#) to watch a special thank you message from Kean students and President Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D. Your support helps us continue to create opportunities and celebrate our students.

On the heels of the success of Founders Day, we held our Founders 5K Race right here on campus! More than 200 Kean students, faculty, staff and community friends joined us for a beautiful day of partnership and camaraderie. To review the race results from the day, [click here](#). Thank you to everyone who shared in the spirit of the day and showed their Cougar pride! Special thanks to all our sponsors, including *Fleet Feet of Northern New Jersey*.



The Kean University Foundation Hosts Annual Scholarship Recognition Ceremony

On Thursday, March 23, 2023, the Kean University Foundation hosted the Annual Scholarship Recognition Ceremony in Downs Hall, located on Kean University's main campus in Union, New Jersey.

Roughly 400 generous donors, student scholarship recipients and their loved ones were in attendance at the lovely event where they mingled, shared a meal and, most importantly, showed their appreciation for all the support both given and received. Students welcomed the opportunity to meet in person those whose donations have allowed them students to remain in school, free from the burdens of financial concerns, and work towards their goals of graduation.

If you are interested in more information regarding making a donation towards a scholarship, please visit the Kean University Foundation's website at www.keanfoundation.org or call (908)316-8931.



Grant in Support of Kean University's Center for Veteran Student Success Offers Once-in-a-Lifetime Travelearn Opportunity

The Kean University Foundation recently sponsored veteran students on campus with a grant in the amount of \$12,900 designated to support the Center for Veteran Student Success and the first veteran-designed Travelearn program. Travelearn, one of Kean's most exciting programs, offers students the opportunity to visit and learn about new parts of the world through short-term study abroad programs that consist of lectures, museum visits and excursions related to educational topics.

With over 300 student Veterans on campus, the Center for Veteran Student Success decided to organize a Travelearn program to Europe to expose veteran students the history of World War II. Interest in the program was overwhelming, with more than 47 students having applied, and, with an initial goal of 15 student participants, a total of 20 were selected based on seniority. These students were given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the history of World War II and walk in the footsteps of those who served before them.

The trip was arranged by Vita Zajda, an adjunct professor at Kean University in both the English and History Departments and the Director of the Center for Veteran Student Success, and was linked to a World War II course he taught. Zajda said, "I devised the curriculum around the United States entering the war, preparing for the invasion at Normandy and following the 101st Airborne's mission from Normandy through Bastogne to Berlin." The objective of the Travelearn program was to have today's veterans understand the events and experiences of World War II.

The students enjoyed a well-organized, robust itinerary with numerous historical and educational stops. The group spent three days in Normandy visiting places like Omaha Beach, the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial and the Hillman Bunker Complex. They traveled by bus to Bastogne for three days and saw the 101st Airborne Museum, the Bastogne War Museum and the Bastogne Barracks. While visiting the Bastogne War Museum, students got to experience a simulated, immersive bombing raid. One veteran who went on the trip said, "It was a great experience just to feel how they lived and be a part of what they witnessed and learn about all of it."



“This trip was one of the best decisions I ever made and I would not change it for anything else. I definitely gained a much bigger perspective, especially coming to Europe. It was such an amazing time. We were all veterans together and it hit home.”

On their way to Munich, the travelers visited the last two surviving World War II Siegfried Line Bunkers. While in Munich for three days, they participated in a historical walking tour of Stuttgart, covering the sites significant to the bombing raids of the city. They also took a guided tour of the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site. “I wanted them to understand a time gone by and hopefully put them in the late 30’s early 40’s and what the world was like,” said Zajda. “The country itself came together to fight a war that was not on our soil.”



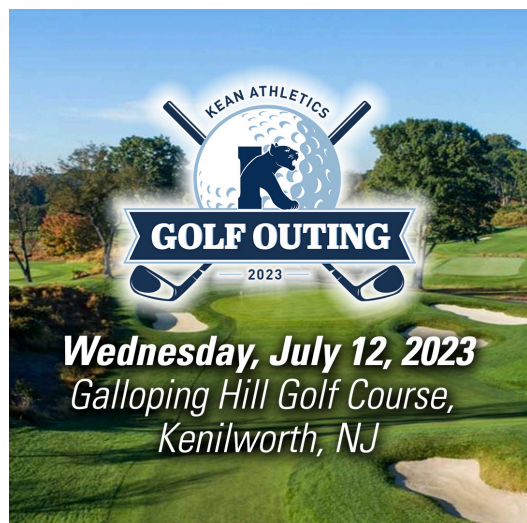
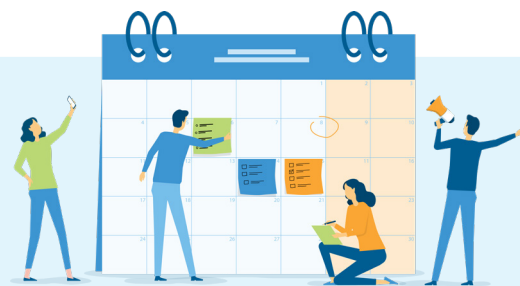
The trip was informative and in-depth as it delved into the history of the war. Patrice Guillaume, business major and Navy veteran, said, “This trip was one of the best decisions I ever made and I would not change it for anything else. I definitely gained a much bigger perspective, especially coming to Europe. It was such an amazing time. We were all veterans together and it hit home.”

With support from the Kean University Foundation, Kean University and planning by Zajda, the Center for Veteran Student Success was able to keep the cost to a minimum for each participating student. Due to the trip’s tremendous success, the Center for Veteran Student Success plans on organizing a new one every year. Next year, plans are in place to visit England to learn more about the Blitz, how the British never relented and survived the London bombings as Germany was trying to close off ports, bomb production and shipping during World War II.

Kean University, a #1 Military Friendly School, recently received the “We Value Our Veterans” Award presented by the New Jersey State Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The award is given to universities that value and honor the sacrifices, patriotism and bravery of men and women who have worn the military uniform.

To learn more about supporting the Center for Veteran Student Success or future Travelearn programs, please contact Michael Russo, Senior Director of Development at (908) 721-6216 or by email at mrusso@keanfoundation.org.

Mark Your Calendars for
Exciting Events Taking Place
in the Coming Months!



Kean Athletics Golf Outing

- **WHEN:** Wednesday, July 12, 2023
- **WHERE:** Galloping Hill Golf Course, Kenilworth, NJ

Join us for a great day of golf and networking while supporting Kean Athletics at the 3rd Annual Kean Athletics Golf Outing! For more information, please visit the event's webpage:

www.keanfoundation.org/AthleticsGolf2023



Jazz & Roots Music Festival

- **WHEN:** Saturday, September 23, 2023
- **WHERE:** The Lawn at Enlow Hall, 215 North Avenue, Hillside, NJ 07205

Kean University and internationally acclaimed bassist/producer Mike Griot are proud to present the 3rd Annual Jazz & Roots Music Festival, a free, outdoor music event that is open to the public and the entire Kean Community. To view photos from previous festivals, please visit the following webpage: <https://www.kean.edu/jazz-roots>

Extra! Extra! Kean University in the News!



Kean Alumnus
Ricardo Roig
Named University's
Artist-in-Residence

[CLICK HERE](#)

Kean Historians
Lead New
Research into
Revolutionary
War Battles

[CLICK HERE](#)

Kean Ocean
Graduate is
Dedicated
to Helping Victims

[CLICK HERE](#)

U.S. Senators
Menendez, Booker
Highlight \$18 Million in
NJ Higher Education
Federal Funding at Kean

[CLICK HERE](#)

Biotechnology Grad
Uses Food Chemistry
Expertise to Boost
Beer and Food Flavor

[CLICK HERE](#)

Twin Sisters,
Researchers, Raising
the Profile for Women
Scientists at Kean

[CLICK HERE](#)

Your Will – Don't Leave Home Without It!



***"What you leave behind is not what is
engraved in stone monuments, but what is
woven into the lives of others."***

—Pericles

It's summertime, have you made your vacation plans yet? More importantly, have you established your will yet? If not, do so before your vacation. It will give you peace of mind.

Before your summer trip is a great time to write a new or updated will. Our team at the Kean University Foundation can provide you with a free [Will Planning Guide](#) to help you as you plan your will to provide for your family and protect your assets.

We also invite you to create a free account on our [Will Planner](#) page, which is a convenient and efficient way to document all of your wishes in one place before you meet with an attorney to finalize your will.

While you write or update your will, we also hope you will consider joining the group of exceptional individuals who have chosen to support the Kean University Foundation by including legacy gifts in their wills. To learn more, please visit keanlegacy.org.

For more information, please contact Lori Funicello, CFRE, Director of Planned Giving,
at lfunicel@keanfoundation.org or via phone at (908) 481-5336.



Celebrate with Us and Support Kean Students!

We have lots to celebrate as the 2023 academic year comes to a close. We welcomed our largest freshman class ever this fall as well as an increase in recruited faculty. With this growth comes the need for more support.

When you invest in Kean, you are contributing towards breakthrough research, influential scholarships and impactful academics. Supporting the Kean University Foundation is one of the best investments you can make. Every gift, regardless of size, impacts each of Kean's students.

The cumulative impact of giving from our donors goes beyond Kean's campus. In fact, Kean is recognized as the most affordable university in NJ and students graduate with less debt than the national average.

Click the link below to make your gift today. Your support is vital to today's students and tomorrow's graduates.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!

click here 

Questions? Comments?

Kean University Foundation, Inc.
1000 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ 07083
Phone: (908) 316-8920
Fax: (908) 316-8921
kuf@keanfoundation.org



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FOUNDATION