



# 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!*



### SPOTLIGHT ON: *Katherine Brady '37 and Joseph Oliva '77*

Katherine Brady graduated from New Jersey State Teachers College, now Kean University, on June 14, 1937. Born in Newark to Irish immigrants, she was the first in her family to attend college. During her career teaching at Newark's 15th Avenue School, she inspired many others to achieve a college degree, including her students, friends and family members, including her nephew, Joseph Oliva '77.

Oliva credits Brady for being "an inspiration to me on my path through life." He followed in her footsteps by attending Kean. Like Brady, he maximized his college experience, both in the classroom and through extracurricular involvement. She was a class leader, member of the psychology club and dance study club. He served as class president, member of the student council and managing editor of the student newspaper, *The Independent*. He also found brotherhood and lifelong friendships in his fraternity, Sigma Beta Tau.

A management science major, Oliva's career journey was different from that of his aunt. Much like his aunt, however, he was a leader, teacher and mentor to others. He served in the military and as a federal civilian employee for more than 50 years. His career included multiple overseas assignments, war zone

deployments, three tours as an army inspector general and more than a decade each with the Office of Inspector General at the U.S. Postal Service and with the Department of Defense Inspector General. He led multi-disciplinary staffs of auditors, investigators, analysts, technicians and senior military officers on a variety of assignments worldwide and won numerous military and civilian awards and decorations for his service.

After graduating from Kean, Oliva earned his MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University and was a national security research fellow at Harvard University. A certified public accountant and a charter global management accountant, he is also a member and leader of regional, national and military accounting professional societies.

Throughout his career, Oliva lived the Kean motto: *Semper Discens, Always Learning*. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Field Artillery School, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, U.S. Army Inspector General School, U.S. Army Logistics and Management College, Harvard University's Executive Program for Senior Officials in National Security and the Federal Executive Institute.

Today, students are experiencing the excellent holistic education Kean provides. Like Brady, more than a third of them are the first in their families to attend college – paving the way for future generations. Others, like Oliva, are “climbing higher” by building upon their ancestors’ educational achievements. The Kean University Foundation is grateful to Oliva and to all in our community who continue the legacy of pioneers like Katherine Brady.



## Meet Kean University's Artist-in-Residence, Kean Alumnus Ricardo Roig '08

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Kean University alumnus and artist Ricardo Roig '08 has established a scholarship for Kean fine arts students in support of the University where he developed his signature style and currently serves as artist-in-residence.

The Roig Family Art Scholarship, created by Roig and his family, is an endowed fund to provide financial aid in perpetuity to students at Kean majoring in fine arts.

The contemporary artist announced the scholarship in January as he opened his solo exhibition, *Layers of Life*, in the Karl and Helen Burger Gallery on Kean's Union campus. The exhibition features Roig's signature hand-cut art, large-scale collage and works on canvas and will be on display through Friday, May 24.

Roig creates innovative, colorful, hand-cut prints. Since Fall 2023, he has shared his talent and artistic vision with students and the Kean community as the University's artist-in-residence. In that role, he created a human rights-themed mural on Kean's Union campus, *WE DECLARE*, that honors historical figures, living legends and grassroots activists in the international human rights movement.

At Kean, he is collaborating with the Galleries at Kean, College of Liberal Arts, Fine Arts Department and Office of Career Services, enhancing the curriculum with hands-on learning for students through workshops, industry networking, internships and entrepreneurial instruction on gallery management.

Roig earned a B.A. in fine arts in painting and printmaking at Kean in 2008 and later earned his teaching certification. He has said he includes some blue in every work of art in tribute to his alma mater.

Roig owns and operates art galleries in Hoboken, Westfield and Boston.

To read more, visit <https://www.kean.edu/news/contemporary-artist-ricardo-roig-celebrates-solo-exhibition-art-scholarship-announcement-kean>.



## Kean Alumnus Performs Live Reading of Original Play



*(Left to Right) Dustin Ballard '09, Nancy Boucher, W. John Bauer and John J. Wooten*

On Wednesday, January 17, playwright, Kean alumnus and recipient of the Bauer Boucher Playwriting Award Dustin Ballard '09 performed a reading of his play *Wayfarers* at Lantern Hill Senior Living Community located in New Providence, New Jersey. The play was written by Ballard and directed by Premiere Stages Producing Artistic Director John J. Wooten.

The Bauer Boucher Playwriting Award was established in 2014 through funding by Premiere Stages supporters W. John Bauer and Nancy Boucher. The annual award recognizes the works of one Kean University student and one playwright from the alumni community. The Bauer Boucher Award provides enhanced visibility, dramaturgical feedback, a cash award and the opportunity for winning playwrights to have their play read out loud by an ensemble of professional actors.

## Introducing the Norman and Williams Athletic Director's Honor Roll

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The Kean University athletics department has recently announced the creation of the Norman and Williams Athletic Director's Honor Roll.

The Norman and Williams Athletic Director's Honor Roll has been established to recognize the outstanding academic achievement of Kean University student-athletes. The name of the honor roll is in remembrance of David and Willie Mae Williams. Their nurturing spirit guided Mr. Ravi Norman, who is one of the most successful CEOs and entrepreneurs in the country and a strong supporter of Kean Athletics and Kelly Williams, Director of Athletics & Recreation.

Go Cougars!

For more information, visit [https://keanathletics.com/news/2024/2/23/general-norman-and-williams-athletic-directors-honor-roll.aspx?utm\\_source=Publicate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=...&utm\\_campaign=Kean+News+2-27-24](https://keanathletics.com/news/2024/2/23/general-norman-and-williams-athletic-directors-honor-roll.aspx?utm_source=Publicate&utm_medium=email&utm_content=...&utm_campaign=Kean+News+2-27-24).



## It's *A Different World* at Kean University

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Kean University welcomed the cast of the iconic sitcom *A Different World* to campus in November to explore the many cultural and academic changes that have taken place since the show aired 35 years ago.

This President's Distinguished Lecture Series event brought together Kean students, faculty, alumni and members of the community to listen to the stars of the show, including Darryl M. Bell, Jasmine Guy, Kadeem Hardison and Cree Summer. The actors offered their insight and perspective on college, then and now. They also shared personal memories from their time filming the show, which took place at the fictitious Hillman College.

Following the panel, members of the Kean community had the opportunity to meet and speak with the cast at an after party hosted by the Kean University Foundation.

To read the full story, visit [www.kean.edu/news/different-world-comes-kean-university](http://www.kean.edu/news/different-world-comes-kean-university).



## Meet One of the Newest Members of the Kean University Foundation's Board of Directors

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The Kean University Foundation Board of Directors is pleased to introduce one of the Board's newest members: Cheryl Quinio-Blodgett '04 '05. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Foundation Board, a distinguished group of professionals who generously offer their time and expertise in support of the University.

Blodgett began her career in 1992 as an operations manager for Clemcor Resources, where she provided staffing resources, training and production enhancement guidance to three large banks in New Jersey. In 2002, she became a team leader at Wachovia Bank, where she provided operational support, including executing performance reviews and career development pathways.

In 2004, Blodgett moved into the realm of governmental support as special assistant to the commissioner in the New Jersey Department of Human Services. She later served as legislative director and special assistant to the commissioner in the New Jersey Department of Civil Service from 2006 to 2009 and the legislative director of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development from 2009 to 2010.

The following year, Blodgett took on the role of president of Keenyo Consultants, LLC., an organization specializing in resume assistance, interview skills, grant writing, fundraising and event planning. She was also a grant writer for the County of Middlesex Office of Emergency Management and assistant director of purchasing for the County of Middlesex Purchasing Division.

In 2017, Blodgett returned to the world of finance as an assistant supervisor for JP Morgan Chase. For more than four years, she oversaw a team of administrative assistants for Solutions Asset Wealth Management, managing daily schedules and travel logistics for high-level managing directors, providing research and background information on potential clients and managing both the on- and off-boarding process for employees. Blodgett is passionate about governmental efficiency and accountability. She has previously acted as the legislative liaison for New Jersey's Department of Personnel, where she oversaw the procedural process used by legislators while maintaining the integrity of the state's rules and regulations.

Today, Blodgett is the director of the Market Strategy Chief Investment Office at UBS Americas, a role she has held since September 2021. She holds active memberships within the American Society of Public Administrators, the Women's Political Caucus, Women Advocating for Good Government and the Filipino American Political Action Committee. She is also the first Filipino American to hold the title of political director in New Jersey. Earlier this semester, Blodgett addressed students in Kean's College of Business and Public Management at a Dean's Forum held on Thursday, February 22. Her presentation, titled, *The Crooked Line: Not All Career Paths are Straight*, was well-received by those in attendance.



## Student Spotlight: Makenzie Kuntz

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Growing up in Linden, New Jersey, Makenzie Kuntz was always familiar with Kean University. As a child, she attended several shows at Wilkins Theatre and as a young adult participated in a number of leadership conferences on campus.

It seemed fitting that when it came time for Kuntz to attend college, Kean was one of the few schools that offered an established undergraduate program in her chosen major – speech-language-hearing sciences, and a minor in theatre. Kuntz, a first-generation college student, received the William Livingston Scholarship, something that she said contributed greatly to her decision to attend Kean.

Kuntz also knew there were many opportunities for her to get involved in student life. She said she immediately joined the Student Government Association (SGA). During her freshman and sophomore years, she served as the Class of 2025 president, and she currently holds the position of SGA president. Her participation in the SGA has allowed her to contribute toward enhancing the student body experience through implementing educational and social programming and addressing student concerns.

Kuntz is also a Gold Leader and mentor in the Leadership Institute and a member of the President's Advisory Council, Kean Theatre Council and Speech- Language-Hearing Science Association. She is involved with Kean's Study Abroad program, the Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, and Cougar Volunteers, and has been a New Student Experience Leader.

Kuntz said she has enjoyed her classes at Kean and describes her encounters with Kean's professors as positive. One of her favorite classes, Interpersonal Communication, taught her leadership skills that she relies on daily. Kuntz said the course, taught by Adjunct Professor Sandra Bodin-Lerner made quite an impact on her personally and professionally.

"I love being a student at Kean, and I couldn't see myself being anywhere else!" Kuntz said, adding that the support she has received at Kean has pushed her to be the best person she can be.

One of Kuntz's favorite memories at Kean is attending the 2023 Student Leadership Retreat hosted by the Division of Student Affairs. She assisted in the planning process and had the opportunity to co-lead a workshop for her peers. This valuable experience empowered her to build new relationships with other student leaders and improve her skill set.

Kuntz looks forward to graduating in 2025 and seeing where life's journey takes her.



*"I love being a student at Kean and I couldn't see myself being anywhere else!"*

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## Corporate and Foundation Relations Awareness

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The Kean University Foundation teaming up with the Masters of Public Administration program in Kean University's College of Business and Public Management (CBPM) for a second semester to educate students on the business of philanthropy.

The Foundation's Chief Development Officer Ed Ahart is working with Associate Professor Bok Gyo Jeong, Ph.D., and the students currently enrolled in his Grants Process class to offer insight into corporate and foundation relations through grant writing. Ahart is giving presentations about aligning missions, writing stories, building relationships and creating budgets. He is also working directly with three students to write and submit grants to fund initiatives at Kean, giving them real-world experience in the field of nonprofits.

This semester's initiative builds upon a collaboration with Jeong launched during the Fall 2023 semester. Jeong and the students in his Intro to Nonprofits class worked with leaders at the Kean University Foundation to create a Philanthropy Center pilot program, a call center in which the students learned how nonprofits use call centers to set goals and fundraise. The students got first-hand experience in operating a call center and were successful in securing donations for the Foundation's mission in support of the University. As part of the course, they heard directly from Ahart as well as Foundation Chief Executive Officer Bill Miller and Senior Director of Annual Giving Molly McGarry.



## Kean University's Founders Day and Founders 5K

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The Newark Normal School, now Kean University, held its first day of classes on April 14, 1855. We celebrate this day as Founders Day and host our annual day of giving and Founders 5K in celebration of this momentous occasion.

This year, Founders Day falls on Monday, April 15. It is a special day of gratitude and a great time to display our Cougar pride, honor our mission and raise crucial funds to support Kean University.

How can you get involved? Participate in the Founders 5K on Sunday, April 14, on Kean's main campus in Union, beginning in the Vaughn-Eames parking lot and traversing a designated course. You can also make a gift anytime between now and midnight on April 15 to count towards Founders Day.

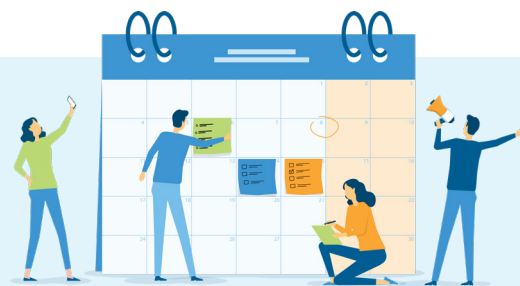
Giving matters! From strengthening programs, supporting scholarships and ensuring current and future Cougars have a world-class education, each gift, in any amount, is vital to enhancing Kean's campus and community.

Visit [keanfoundation.org/keanfoundersday](https://keanfoundation.org/keanfoundersday) to register for the 5K and make your gift in support of Founders Day!



## Mark Your Calendars!

*Save-the-Dates for exciting events and celebrations happening in the coming months!*



## Save the Date for Kean University's 2024 Gala

**WHEN:** Thursday, June 20, 2024

For more information, visit [www.keanfoundation.org/Gala2024](http://www.keanfoundation.org/Gala2024).

Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks!



## Extra! Extra! Kean University in the News!

Genetic Counseling  
Graduate Program  
Receives Accreditation for  
6 Years

[CLICK HERE](#)

Computer Science  
Students Take Top Spots  
at Great Minds in STEM  
Conference

[CLICK HERE](#)

Kean University Offers  
New Faster Path for  
Adults Returning to  
College

[CLICK HERE](#)

Contemporary Artist  
Ricardo Roig Celebrates  
Solo Exhibition with Art  
Scholarship Announcement  
at Kean University

[CLICK HERE](#)

## An Invitation to Join the Kean University Medallion Society



KEAN UNIVERSITY  
**MEDALLION**  
SOCIETY

***“You must be the change you wish to  
see in the world.”***

– Mahatma Gandhi

The Kean University Medallion Society recognizes and celebrates individuals who have generously provided for the future of Kean through a charitable planned gift in their wills, living trusts or estate plans.

A planned gift of any size is an impactful way to show how important Kean University is to you. Medallion Society members leave a legacy at Kean while also enjoying a deeper connection to the University, knowing that their gifts will significantly impact future generations.

If you have already included the Kean University Foundation in your will or estate plan, please let us know. We would be delighted to welcome you to the Medallion Society and honor you at our upcoming reception. Recognizing our members inspires others to give, but we also respect the privacy of those who wish to remain anonymous.

Medallion Society members are among our most loyal and important donors. Some of the recognition benefits include:

- A Medallion Society lapel pin to proudly display your support of Kean.
- Invitations to the Medallion Society Reception, the President's Holiday Party and other VIP events on campus.
- Special recognition at Kean University Foundation events.
- Prominent listing in the Kean University Foundation annual report and website, as well as being featured in donor stories in our e-newsletter.
- Complimentary tickets to athletic events and select performances upon request.

To learn more, contact Lori Funicello, Director of Planned Giving, at [lfunicel@keanfoundation.org](mailto:lfunicel@keanfoundation.org) or (908) 481-5336.

Visit our website at [keanlegacy.org](http://keanlegacy.org) to sign up for our monthly planned giving e-newsletter!



## Support Kean Students!

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Each year, the Kean University Foundation relies on the generosity of donors, like you, to help fulfill our mission in support of the world-class education for which Kean University is known.

Every donation, regardless of the amount, is vital to enhancing the accessible and affordable education the University provides and maintaining Kean's state-of-the-art facilities and extensive program offerings.

By designating your gift toward a specific campaign, you are helping to prepare each Kean Cougar to climb higher – in the classroom and in their chosen fields.

Thank you for helping to make a difference in the lives of today's and tomorrow's Cougars!

**MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!**

*click here* 

## Questions? Comments?

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FOUNDATION