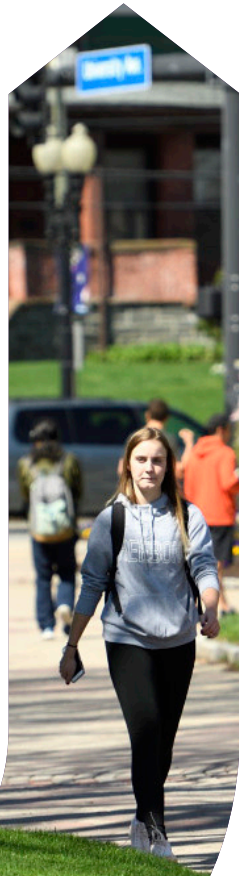
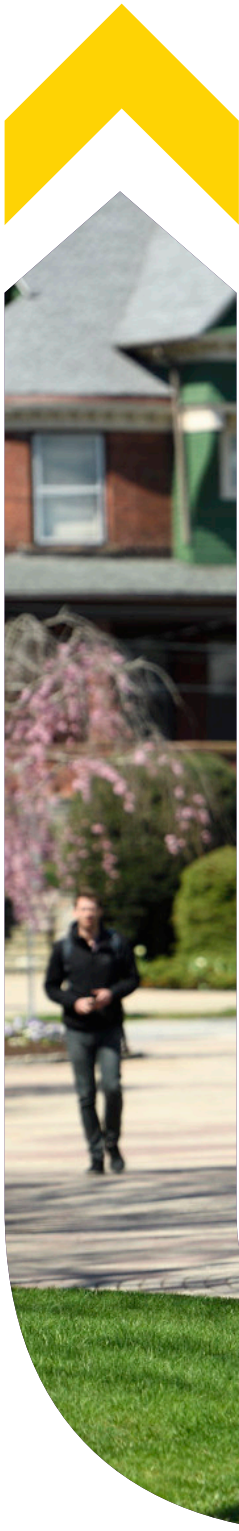




Game-changing innovation
Record-breaking giving
Transformational alumni
and Bowling

ON THE MOVE



2019 Annual Report
Office of Advancement
University of Bridgeport



Mission of the UB Office of Advancement

The University of Bridgeport's Office of Advancement is built upon the belief that great institutions are predicated upon great communities. As such, Advancement strives to cultivate a broad base of support for UB among alumni, students, parents, and friends of the University. Working with dedicated advocates, Advancement moves the institution forward through the creation of transformative philanthropic programs and partnerships. These initiatives provide essential resources for new construction projects, faculty retention, faculty recruitment, and innovative programs that guide students from education to career.



Contents

- > 02**
President's Message
- > 03**
Good News from the
Office of Advancement
- > 04**
Financials
- > 06**
A Day of Giving for the
Record Books
- > 07**
Making an Impact:
UB Alumna Finds New
Student Support Center
- > 9**
The Bridgeport Plan:
Moving from Education
to Career
- > 10**
Innovation at UB
- > 12**
Bowling a Strike for UB
- > 14**
UB Family Thrives
Thanks to Scholarship
- > 16**
Donors
- > 24**
Ways to Give
- > 25**
Officers

From the President



Dear Friends,

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT is a special place with a history of excellence. Our graduates go on to graduate school, public service, and have fulfilling careers. We are a place that opens the doors of educational opportunity and transforms the lives of students and their families.

For 92 years, the University has continually evolved to meet the needs of our student population. Today, our students represent the rich diversity of the country and globe, but more than **50 percent** of the graduating class come from Connecticut, with almost 15 percent from Bridgeport. Like many other colleges and universities, our student population is changing. Over **50 percent** of the class of 2019 was composed of Latino and African American students, 10 percent higher than the national average. More than half of the class was Pell-eligible and the first in their families to receive a college education.

Our students are smart, focused, brave, and absolutely inspiring. They are the reason why I get out of bed in the morning. Nothing brings me greater pleasure than the opportunity to chat with them during my open office hours, eat lunch with them in Marina Dining Hall, or sit with them at a women's soccer game. Our students are eager to make a difference and apply their education to make their communities and the world better places.

Joy is a word that I often associate with what we do here at the University of Bridgeport. It is a joy for the faculty, staff, and my senior leadership group to create opportunities for our students to flourish—no matter where their educational journey may take them. It is a joy to watch our students walk across the stage at Commencement to receive their degrees. It is a joy to watch a student's future unfold before their eyes.

Message from Marie Muhvic, Vice President for Advancement



IT WAS A STUNNING sight to behold: Adorned in golden robes, members of the University of Bridgeport Class of 1969

took the stage on Commencement Day 2019 and greeted a group of extraordinary new graduates. These were the Golden Knights, the esteemed alumni celebrating their fiftieth graduation anniversary. Their presence was a testament to the strength of UB's alumni community—a network that connects one generation of Purple Knights to the next.

One refrain unites [us] all: We need to keep this going.

As Vice President for Advancement, it is my job to cultivate communities of alumni and advocates who believe in and support UB. As you can see, I have a lot to work with. Since joining

the University in January, I have been gratified to meet alumni who are passionate about their alma mater. Their reasons are myriad: formative intellectual experiences, championship-winning sports teams, a close-knit campus, a diverse student body, and the list goes on. Yet one refrain unites them all: We need to keep this going.

With all this good will in place, the Office of Advancement has been able to make great strides in expanding UB's base of philanthropic support. Over the 2018-19 fiscal year, we have seen impressive increases in major gifts, trustee giving, corporate foundation support, and alumni giving. We raised more than \$400,000 in annual gifts, making it our best year yet for annual giving. We raised more than \$2.8 million in major gifts of \$50,000 or more, well in excess of our goals for the year.

These trends signal a growing network of people, businesses, and institutions committed to UB's long-term success. We will strive to continue on this course, recognizing that each dollar raised in fundraising goes directly to the student experience here at UB.

We have titled our annual report "UB on the Move" to capture this forward momentum. Yet Advancement has been

literally on the move as well. In 2018, we relocated from Cortright Hall to the eighth floor of the Wahlstrom Library, adjacent to the president's office. The new location enables us to work more closely with President Laura Skandera Trombley on major fundraising initiatives.

As the department evolves, we are dedicated to following best practices in the advancement field, with a robust annual giving program, a major gifts department, and an outcome-based alumni board. We have a renewed focus on corporate and foundation giving along with standardized industry advisory boards. I have also been working with my committed team to implement consistent processes for donor outreach, gift processing, and stewardship.

The one area we need your immediate help with is your contact information. We need up-to-date information in order to stay in touch with our valued alumni and supporters!

UB is charting a course for many new achievements, but we cannot do it without the active involvement of alumni, parents, and friends of the University. In whatever shape or form, your contribution to UB will help the next generation of Purple Knights on their path to greatness.

There is joy in being a part of the incredible journey that our students embark upon when they join the community of Purple Knights. Mark Twain once said, "To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with." The generous philanthropy of alumni, donors, and friends of the University is so important to the work that we do every day to help our students achieve their greatest individual potential. University of Bridgeport students make this the special place that it is.

The University of Bridgeport is committed to providing an outstanding education to students who will become the globally minded and socially conscious citizens of tomorrow. Our students and graduates represent the diversity that strengthens and enriches our campus and

global community. I invite you to continue to share joy with the University of Bridgeport. We are a special place because of the financial support of our community, and I hope that we can count on you to be a partner in the ongoing success of the institution.

Joyfully,

Laura Skandera Trombley
President

2018-19 was one of UB's strongest years on record. Read on!



UB ADVANCEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

A Record-Breaking Year in Fundraising for the Purple Knights

Annual Fund

“This is the largest amount ever raised for UB’s Annual Fund.

There were a couple major factors contributing to our success—a record-breaking Day of Giving, and a renewed focus on outreach. We conveyed to our advocates the importance of annual giving to the UB mission.”

– Marie Muhvic
Vice President for Advancement

FY 2019
\$400,931

GOAL
\$250,000

FY 2018
\$223,952

FY 2017
\$148,021

The Office of Advancement raised \$400,931 for the Annual Fund this year. This is a 44% increase over last fiscal year and a 160% increase over Advancement’s goal of \$250,000.

Major Gifts

“Major gifts of \$50,000 or more have a big role to play at this institution. We are pleased to report that we exceeded our goal by more than three-fold. Major gifts this year have been earmarked for scholarships, the business school, the bowling alley restoration project, and the Bridgeport Plan. We also received major gifts for the Inauguration Fund and from corporate foundations..” – M.M.

FY 2019
MAJOR GIFTS
\$2.8m

GOAL
\$750,000

Participation



In FY 2019 the Office of Advancement organized **23 events** with a total of **1,147 attendees.**

FY 2017
600
DONORS

FY 2018
591
DONORS

FY 2019
708
DONORS

This represents a 17% increase in alumni participation over last fiscal year.

Class years that gave the most in FY 2019:

'60

'71

'84

A Day of Giving for the Record Books

Their eyes were fixed upon their computer screens as they waited for the magic number—five-hundred. When it finally arrived, they burst into cheers.

NO, THIS WASN'T THE STOCK MARKET. It was UB's Office of Advancement meeting its goal of five hundred donations for the third annual Day of Giving on May 1, 2019. It was the most successful Day of Giving to date, yielding 548 donations worth a grand total of \$78,499. The money will fund vital programs and services at UB, directly enhancing the student experience.

"What made our Day of Giving remarkable was the support from our entire community," said Ryan Zapolski, director of Annual Giving for the Office of Advancement. "From alumni to parents to current students and faculty and staff, everyone played a part in making a difference at UB. And that is what makes the UB community special."

New to this year's Day of Giving was the use of a text-to-give option, making it easier for people to participate throughout the

day. As Zapolski observes, this option will become increasingly important as more people rely on their smartphones for financial transactions.

Five generous donor challenges unlocked an additional \$5,000 for each one hundred donors to pledge. President Laura Skandera Trombley and James Loh '74 contributed the first two challenges; an anonymous donor contributed the final three.

The 24-hour event was punctuated by amusing social media fanfare. For every 100-donor milestone, UB social media accounts released a video of President Trombley's bulldog, Miss Wrinkles, decked out in Purple Knight finery.



548
donations

>\$78K
raised in
24 hours



...and 5 costume
changes for
Miss Wrinkles

MAKING AN IMPACT

UB Alumna Founds New Student Support Center



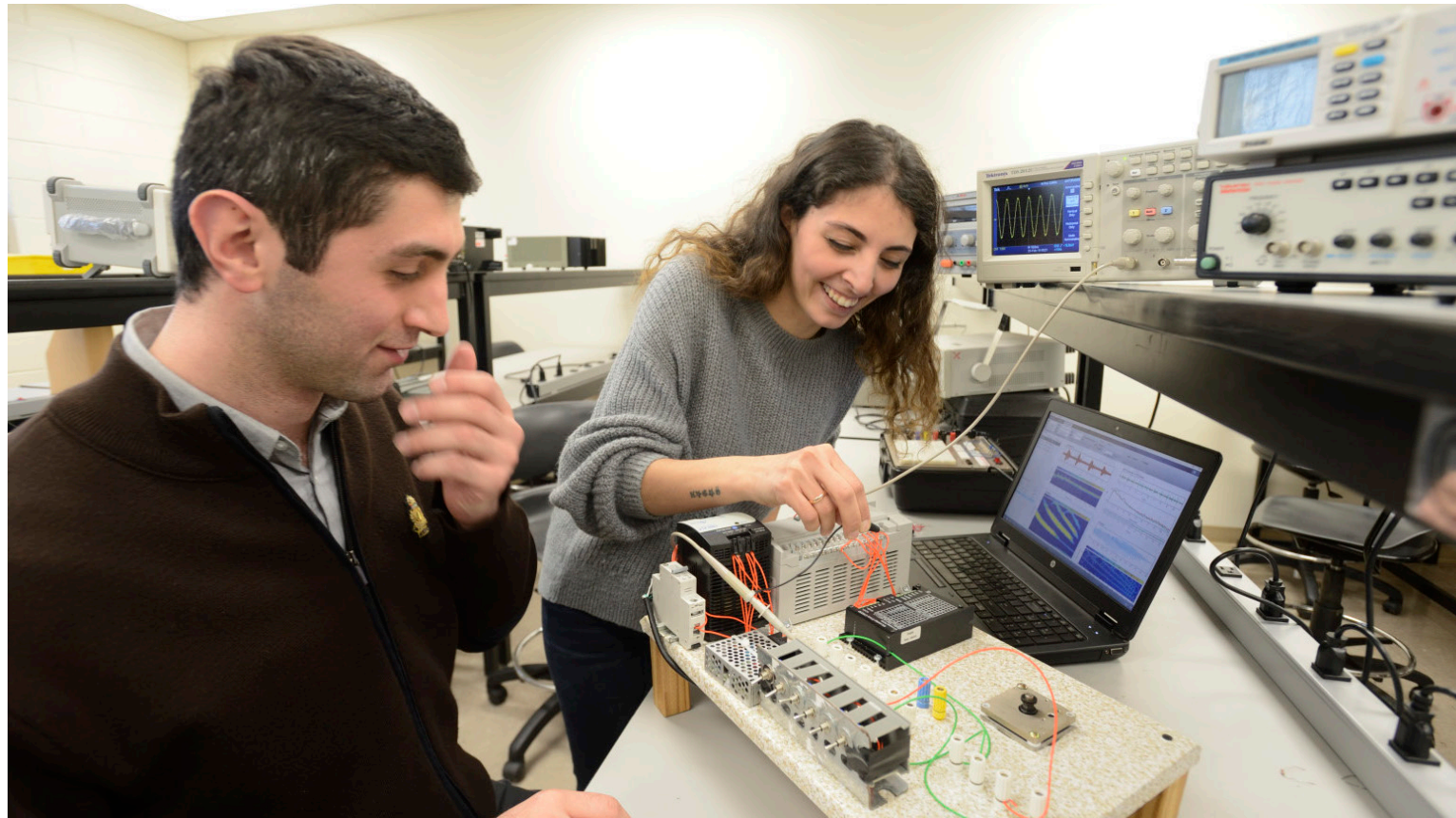
"I remember one time I had \$50 in the bank. Paying my way through school really taught me my work ethic."

LIKE SO MANY COLLEGE STUDENTS TODAY, Susan Heckman O'Hara worried a lot about covering her out-of-state tuition when she attended UB in the 1980s. In addition to taking classes, Heckman O'Hara worked at various times as a bartender, a waitress, and a residential assistant to pay down her expenses. "I remember at one time I had \$50 in the bank," she said. "Paying my way through school really taught me my work ethic."

Still, Heckman O'Hara '84 said that the delicate balancing act of work and school at times compromised her academic performance. Now, after an illustrious career in fashion merchandising and marketing, and after becoming a UB trustee, Heckman O'Hara is taking bold steps to help UB students in similar situations.

In her most recent gift, Heckman O'Hara pledged \$250,000 for the establishment of the Bridgeport Plan, a student support center that will enhance UB's services in career counseling and academic tutoring. It will be located in the second floor of the Wahlstrom Library and is scheduled to open this fall.

Reflecting on her own experiences, Heckman O'Hara said that additional tutoring support created by the Bridgeport Plan will be of great benefit to the many working students at UB. The new center, she added, will also help UB improve retention of students from underprivileged backgrounds.



Recently, Heckman O'Hara found out through an e-mail thread that the Bridgeport Plan would be named after her—the Heckman Center for the Bridgeport Plan. “I was practically in tears,” she said. “It really was so touching. I never expected that.”

Heckman O'Hara graduated with a B.S. in fashion merchandising, after which she became a buyer for G. Fox Department Stores and, after that, for Ivey's Department Stores. She then went on to a 15-year career in sports and entertainment marketing.

Heckman O'Hara is currently director of marketing services at International Marketing Systems, Ltd., a Shelton food sourcing firm owned by her husband Thomas O'Hara, also a UB alumnus, trustee, and longtime donor.

Heckman O'Hara said she wanted to get involved with UB to build upon her non-profit work in North Carolina. While she lived there, she co-founded Young Elites of North Carolina, an MBA-style leadership training program for high school girls.

**“To me,
it's magic.”**

As with the Young Elites, she said, there are many opportunities to make a long-term impact by giving to UB. Since joining the Board of Trustees, Heckman O'Hara has made many generous contributions to UB, including the establishment of the Heckman Family Legacy Scholarship.

Heckman O'Hara became especially inspired about reconnecting with UB after visiting campus with her husband and her sister. Their tour guide was George Estrada, vice president of facilities and UB's resident guru of Purple Knight history.

Estrada recalls the visit as a moment of reconnection: “They hadn't been here in so long that everything was new again,” he said. Estrada said Heckman O'Hara has since demonstrated her passion for “having a direct effect on the experience of the student.”

Indeed, Heckman O'Hara said she is excited to see the Bridgeport Plan come to life and help generations of students find meaningful and rewarding careers.

“To me, it's magic.”

➤➤➤➤➤➤➤➤➤➤ The Bridgeport Plan

Moving from Education to Career

The traditional office space was designed for productivity, but not necessarily for sociability: Encamped behind a massive wall of a desk, the office worker labors within an almost hermetic solitude. Approaching this employee can be an intimidating enterprise, especially for college students.

With this in mind, planners for a new student support center at UB opted for another model to guide their design choices—the café. “We see that students prefer the coffeehouse environment,” said Sara Connolly, assistant provost and director of the Heckman Center for the Bridgeport Plan. “The entire idea is that this is a student-owned space.”

Dispensing with traditional desks, architectural renderings for the Bridgeport Plan envision a space designed for movement, comfort, and conversation: There are **couches** arranged in semicircular formation, coffee tables surrounded by **cozy chairs**, and **collaborative workspaces**. Located on the second floor of the Wahlstrom Library, the Bridgeport Plan is slated to open this fall.

Echoing the dynamic nature of its design, the Bridgeport Plan seeks to provide students the wide range of services they need to move successfully from college to career—ranging from tutoring programs to academic advisement to career guidance.

Rather than receive students at their desks, advisors and tutors will walk out to meet them within the **open floorplan**. For those who need more privacy, there will be **glass-enclosed conference rooms** at the perimeter of the space.

The Bridgeport Plan also incorporates ingenious strategies to get students into the space. **A new staircase** will connect the ground floor of the library to the second floor. Additionally, students will be allowed and encouraged to use the space for general studying. As Connolly observes, students who are more comfortable with the space will be more likely to use its services.

The Bridgeport Plan mission can be divided into two essential components. The first is to provide students essential career preparation services. Toward that end, there will be **career counseling** and opportunities for **job shadowing and internships**. The Bridgeport Plan will also schedule **alumni showcases** in which UB graduates share their career experiences with students.



The second component involves the **academic support** structure that students need to achieve their career goals. The Bridgeport Plan will thus become UB's hub for academic advising and tutoring services.

In order to achieve these and other goals, the Bridgeport Plan will bring several UB services under one roof, including career development, first-year seminars, the Bridge Program, the honors program, civic engagement, and community-based service learning.

As part of the Bridgeport Plan, UB is also expanding several student support services. The tutoring program, for example, will be rolling out more opportunities for embedded tutoring in the classroom. Additionally, new hiring will enable career services staff to spend more time developing UB's professional networks of employers and internship providers.

INNOVATION AT UB

The Innovation Center will provide aspiring entrepreneurs the resources they need to bring their business plans to fruition.



Like so much of Bridgeport's historic architecture, the Gilded Age mansion at 82 Marina Park Circle has deep roots in Connecticut's industrial past. Before UB acquired it as dormitory housing, it belonged to William Grippin, president of the Bridgeport Malleable Iron Company.

Now, thanks to a \$2.3 million gift from Carol and George Bauer, the stately mansion will once again become synonymous with business and industry. This is the new Bauer Hall Innovation Center, a startup incubator for UB's student entrepreneurs and the Connecticut business community at large.

The Innovation Center will provide aspiring entrepreneurs the resources they need to bring their business plans to fruition. It will provide high-tech business development tools such as graphic design equipment and 3D printers. It will also provide access to game-changing mentorship opportunities. Users will be able to consult with lawyers, accountants, an international trade expert, and four resident entrepreneurs.

One crucial feature of the Innovation Center is that it will **foster collaboration between students and the business community**, said Elena Cahill, director of the Ernest C. Trefz School of Business. The project, she notes, brings together higher education and private enterprise as major drivers of innovation. "You allow the eco-system to come together at an innovation center," she said.

For example, a company working at the Innovation Center might ask a computer science student for help with data analysis; conversely, that student might ask the company for help in planning a budget. The net result: networking opportunities for the student and a boost to economic development for the state.

The Innovation Center boasts of four floors and 8,600 square feet of space. The top floor is being reserved as the future home of UB's Student Entrepreneur Center, currently located on Myrtle Avenue. Opened in 2015, the Entrepreneur Center provides UB students free support services in developing start-up concepts. (Within the Innovation Center, it will continue to be a space dedicated exclusively to students.)

Jonathan Kibwe '18 made use of the Entrepreneur Center while pursuing his MBA at UB. He said the Center ultimately helped him launch his real estate business, Kibwe Reality. One of the most important aspects of the Entrepreneur Center, he said, is that it provides access to knowledgeable mentors. "They take you step by step," he said. "If you need to get lawyers, they'll get you lawyers. They also have space you can use to develop your ideas."

Kibwe said he was excited to hear plans for the new Innovation Center and hopes that students will take advantage of it. "It's a big thing for the school and the students," he said.

George and Carol Bauer announced the gift for the Innovation Center in January of 2018, stating that the investment represented a commitment to the "common good." **The Bauers cited UB's economic and cultural diversity as a motivating factor in their decision to make the gift.** Since the Bauers made their gift, UB has been seeking partners to name rooms within the Innovation Center. Board of Trustees member Michael Kolakowski has since donated to name a conference room. A formal dedication ceremony for the Innovation Center is scheduled for 9 a.m. on the Saturday of Homecoming, September 28.

Bowling a Strike FOR UB



FOR YEARS, a locked door in the basement of the Cox Student Center was like a portal into the past. Behind it, under a patina of dust, was UB's long-lost bowling alley, shuttered around the year 2000 after an illustrious 40-year history.

Now it's back. Thanks to a capital project started in the spring of 2019, the University plans to have the bowling alley rebuilt and operational by Homecoming. President Laura Skandera Trombley announced the revival during Homecoming 2018. Reactions were two-fold—astonishment from those who did not know that UB had a bowling alley and nostalgia from alumni who fondly remember the thunderous sound of strikes from the student center.

Michael Schneider '84 falls in the latter camp, having received physical education credit for an early-morning class at the bowling alley. As he observes in a written remembrance of the beloved lanes:

"Because it was the early 1980s, the alleys did not have any modern amenities: We kept score with pencils on a simple sheet of paper. There was no electronic scoring displayed; that was merciful for me, as my dependably sub-100 scores remained mostly confidential."

The University is rebuilding most of the bowling alley, though the old hard-wood lanes will remain, said George Estrada, vice president of facilities. Yet even

Thank you!

NAME THE LANES GIFTS

President
Laura Skandera
Trombley

Anonymous Donor
Rob & Heather Gerowe

Ashley Perzyna
& Jason Rivera

Michael & Lynn
Schneider '84

Hal Tepfer '78

To contribute to the bowling alley reconstruction, contact Ryan Zapolski at (203) 576-4542 or at rzapolsk@bridgeport.edu. You can also make a donation online at <http://give.bridgeport.edu/bowling>.

new construction work will re-capture the alley's retro look. The tile contractor for the project, Daltille, will reproduce the distinctive design pattern that decorated the original bowling alley. Additionally, some of the items from the old bowling alley have been preserved as memorabilia—including old pins and bowling balls.

Estrada said that one of the most important features of the new design is that it provides disability access, creating a more inclusive space.

"I think it will be a very exciting addition to the campus experience," he said, "not just as an opportunity for competition but also as a space for friends to congregate."

As part of the fundraising efforts, donors can name a lane for gifts of \$5,000 or more. As of press time, UB had six of the eight lanes named. The project also received a major boost from a surprise bequest to UB left by David Furman '68.

"It's been an exciting campaign," said Marie Muhvic, vice president for advancement. "We received a large six-figure gift this spring from David Furman, which propelled the timeline forward and will allow everyone to enjoy the bowling alley this fall."

The bowling alley will be open to students, University employees, and the community at large. Plans are also in place for the creation of formal bowling leagues.

UB Family Thrives Thanks to Scholarship

From a young age Cleef and Camina Valbonard learned the value of education. After the Valbonards immigrated to Stamford from Port-au-Prince, Haiti in 2004, Cleef and Camina watched as their mother, struggling to pay the bills as a housekeeper, put herself through classes to become a nursing assistant. Her persistence became a model for her son and daughter.

“She really wants us to pursue our dreams,” Cleef said of his mother Guerda. “She wants to show us that if she could do it, we could also do it.”

Thanks to her encouragement, both Cleef and Camina are now students at UB. Being siblings on a college campus has its perks: Cleef, who is entering his senior year this fall, does what he can to help his younger sister navigate college life. He showed her around campus when she first started and helped her select classes.

Yet sending two children to college at the same time took its toll on the Valbonards’ household finances. As a single parent, Guerda said, she could not keep up with the costs.

It was within this context that Cleef was selected as the recipient of a scholarship founded by local philanthropist Dorothy Bannow Larson (known to her friends as “Dottie”). Cleef said the scholarship lifted a burden that weighed heavily on the family and that caused him so much worry.

“I was surprised and honored when I heard I got the scholarship,” he said. “It’s going to help a lot. Dottie Larson basically lifted those worries from my mind.”

As the Valbonards continue their studies, they have their sights set on big goals and on helping others. After completing her Human Services degree, Camina plans to pursue a career in social services. Whether working as a social worker or as a probation officer, she said, she wants to help people struggling in distressed neighborhoods. She was inspired to pursue the career path after participating in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. “I want to help people who feel like they don’t have someone to talk to,” she said. “I want to be a role model.”

Cleef, who is majoring Health Sciences, plans to go on to graduate studies in order to become a radiologist. He said he chose the career field because he likes helping people and because it aligns with his academic interests. “I really liked the science section of my courses and I realized I could take that and apply it to my life every day,” he said.



The scholarship is the latest in a long line of local philanthropic enterprises championed by Larson, who has deep roots in the greater Bridgeport community. She is the daughter of industrialist Rudolph Bannow, who collaborated with Magnus Wahlstrom in founding Bridgeport Machines in 1939 and who later became a UB trustee.

After graduating from Tufts University, Larson became personnel director at Bridgeport Machines and, in the ‘60s, made a name for herself as an advocate for people with intellectual disabilities. In 1963, she co-founded the Four Seasons Ball, which continues to be a major fundraiser for the Kennedy Center, a Trumbull-based agency serving people with disabilities.

Larson has gone on to make major philanthropic contributions to a wide variety of non-profit organizations in the greater Bridgeport region. Amid all of these endeavors, Larson has long devoted special attention to UB. She served on its Board of Trustees throughout the ‘70s and ‘80s and is currently a life trustee.

“Dottie Larson has been tireless in her support for communities in need,” said Marie Muhvic, vice president for advancement at UB. “She has been a ray of hope for our students and the many people touched by her generosity.”

Thank You to our Generous Donors

This list recognizes each gift given between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. We regret any inadvertent omissions and thank all of our contributors for their generosity.

* Denotes annual giving of three or more consecutive years

\$25,000 & ABOVE

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Walter & Merle Baum Family Foundation, Inc.
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KBE Building Corporation *
Michael & Eileen Kolakowski *
Dorothy Larson
Susan Heckman O'Hara '84 & Thomas M. O'Hara '84 *
Paul Antinozzi, A.I.A *
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