BETTER TOGETHER
Panthers meet the moment.
Support the Martin Scholarship with a gift at go.plymouth.edu/Martin. Establishing a named scholarship fund is a meaningful way to honor family members, a mentor or a specific passion of yours. Our advancement staff will listen to your philanthropic vision and work with you to bring it to fruition. A named scholarship can be established with a minimum five-year commitment of at least $1,500 annually.

Supporting Plymouth State Students of Color

Eugene and Natalie Martin did everything they could to provide for their children. Although they struggled financially, even spending a couple of years in a homeless shelter, they always managed to come through and ensure that their children had what they needed. They especially wanted them to have the college education they weren’t able to have.

Inspired in 2019 by his parents and the life-changing opportunities he found at PSU, Gene Martin ’09 gave back by creating the Eugene P. Martin Sr. P’09 and Natalie J. Martin P’09 Scholarship, the University’s only scholarship devoted exclusively to persons of color.

“As a first-generation college graduate, I know the positive effects a college education has on upward mobility. Too often black and brown students face additional financial hurdles and I believe I have a moral obligation to do what I can to help open the doors of opportunity to students of color who may be unable to afford an education without financial assistance.” – Gene Martin ’09
When the story of Plymouth State University is written by future historians, 2020–2021 will receive special attention. Our compassionate and determined community continues to rise to the occasion and meet extraordinary challenges. The world is in the midst of an extended period of disruption in an experience that is both shared and isolating, and the changes wrought by the pandemic signify a historic turning point in higher education. Plymouth State’s collaborative culture, which has traditionally embraced change and innovation, has put us in a better position to provide a safer learning environment than many others.

Students told us overwhelmingly that they hoped to return to campus. A large class eagerly arrived after agreeing to stringent health and safety protocols, and our retention rate has risen. Commuting and online students were welcomed back as well, and teaching and learning is continuing through a mix of in-person, hybrid, and remote classes, thanks to faculty and staff’s impressive flexibility, devotion, and many hours of effort.

Together, we figured out how to reinvent our operations, including securing campus buildings, refuging classroom capacities and redesigning their layouts, upgrading our physical plant, revamping food service, and acquiring specialized health knowledge, among many other successful implementations. Faculty, staff, and students made this possible by considering every aspect of reopening, knowing that PSU is at the center of students’ lives today and of their hopes for the future.

Plymouth State is continually fine-tuning procedures based on the latest data and recommendations, and we have been highly transparent and actively soliciting feedback. While COVID-19 testing has been limited or lacking at many colleges and universities, Plymouth State has a robust, weekly program—a time-consuming activity made possible by all members of our community. Combined with masks, social distancing, and numerous physical and programmatic modifications, we have a comprehensive safety program and a team in place to rapidly respond to new developments.

PSU not only reflects the world around us but also illuminates and explains it. ‘Tackling a Wicked Problem’ students are learning about pandemics, and diversity-focused courses are examining borders and immigration, human rights and intolerance, civic responsibility, and race, crime, and class. The practical application of science is demonstrated on campus by our own COVID-testing laboratory.

The pandemic, issues raised by Black Lives Matter, and November’s election have engaged our campus. Concurrently, we are conducting a necessary process and discussion on academic priorities, which will result in some program realignments and opportunities for Cluster innovation, combination, and curricular reinvention.

Helping one another and serving our community are fundamental to PSU, and we have much to be proud of. Senior nursing students graduated early to be the first in the state to join the frontlines and we partnered with the Central New Hampshire Regional Public Health Network and the New Hampshire National Guard to convert our ice arena into a COVID surge center. The Draper & Maynard Makerspace manufactures personal protective equipment (PPE) on campus, the Office of Community Impact spearheaded a PPE collection, and marketing students are making and distributing thousands of free masks. Our collective generosity has resulted in a record number of emergency grants to students awarded by the Student Support Foundation.

We’ve benefited from teamwork at every level. The towns of Holderness and Plymouth, Speare Memorial Hospital and local landlords, state and federal agencies, private citizens and elected officials, alumni and business owners, and so many others have helped us to meet the moment.

Through it all, Plymouth State has remained a source of inspiration to both students and the region, who look to us for guidance and leadership. I believe that hopelessness is the greatest potential threat to the rising generation. We are all grappling with the pandemic and the accompanying economic downturn, shortcomings in justice and equity, and national tensions, and the University is a safe harbor to consider these consequential issues. We are not only opening doors of opportunity for students to achieve their career and life goals, we are also serving as an irreplaceable anchor of hope and stability in a turbulent world.

I am tremendously proud of all that we are achieving and pledge to continue taking decisive action to promote the University’s health and future.

We have begun planning 150th anniversary activities and will keep you posted regarding dates and details. Please plan to join our celebration of Plymouth State’s strong and enduring school spirit, which is so evident in this extraordinary year!

President Donald L. Birx

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President Donald L. Birx
National Endowment for the Humanities Grant

Exemplifying Plymouth State University’s drive to collaborate across disciplines to provide students with a well-rounded education, Assistant Professor Sarah Parrish has received a $3,400 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the creation of interdisciplinary courses. The Humanities Connections Planning Grant is allowing Parrish to work with faculty across multiple disciplines, including business and environmental science, to design thematic courses that cultivate visual literacy skills.

“The humanities, particularly the arts, offer the opportunity to cultivate different perspectives to their own disciplines and careers,” said Parrish. “The thematic courses will help students learn to understand the visual world, allowing them to bring those critical thinking skills and new perspectives to their own disciplines and careers.”

Parrish has collaborated with faculty from various disciplines to develop these thematic courses. The first course, offered in Spring 2023, “Art, Money, and Power,” will focus on the business of art through the ages.

Meteorology Program Awarded $528,000 National Science Foundation Grant

The Plymouth State University Meteorology Program received a $528,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support the four-year continuation of an undergraduate research program that explores atmospheric and related sciences, and provides students with research and related professional development opportunities. The award to PSU is one of two grants totaling more than $1 million to support the Northeast Partnership for Atmospheric and Related Sciences (NEPARS) Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU), an ongoing collaboration between PSU and Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York State.

Plymouth State’s program is led by Associate Professor Jason “Jay” Cordeira ’05, and PSU meteorology faculty members Professor Eric Hoffman, Professor Lourdes Avilés, and Research Associate Professor Eric Kelsey serve as faculty mentors.

“While many REU programs are geared toward third-year undergraduate students, our primary focus is to provide first- and second-year undergraduate students with rich learning opportunities, helping them prepare for STEM fields,” said Cordeira. “Students from across the country come together for several weeks each summer to collaborate with peers, faculty, and other professionals, and have the opportunity to participate in research and real-world experiences, such as visiting the Mount Washington Observatory and attending and presenting their work at a national conference.”

This funding provides meaningful opportunities for professional development activities that complement PSU’s commitment to our Integrated Clusters learning model and its emphasis on collaboration and developing critical thinking skills.

Redesigning Higher Education Highlights Plymouth State’s On-Going Transformation

With its community emerging or closing across the nation, President Donald Bix brought a vision for organizational transformation to Plymouth State University grounded in holistic integration with student-centered decision-making. The transformation began with reorganizing PSU’s 75 academic departments and three colleges into seven Integrated Clusters of discipline-based communities.

Published this spring, Redesigning Higher Education: A Small New England Public University Changes Higher Education, co-authored by President Bix, Professor Annette Holba, and Executive Associate to the President Patricia Bahr, the book uses a storytelling narrative approach to provide a practical application of the radical changes to transform a small New England Public University into a modern learning environment.

“The story of Plymouth State University is a story of institutional transformation through the willingness to take risks and embrace change,” says Bix. “The results are a more focused and engaged institution, a more integrated and collaborative learning experience.

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The National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, the oldest of its kind in the United States, recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics who are pursuing research-based master’s and doctoral degrees.

I was inspired to continue my education after seeing research done at Plymouth State to determine how plant evolution and genetics are related to each other,” said Vollmer. “Working with the professors has allowed me to develop my own research and approach this topic from a conservation mindset.

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Panthers meet the moment

Flexibility, Adaptation, and Innovation Allow Teaching and Learning to Continue

In March 2020, when COVID-19 closed colleges and universities across the country, PSU faculty switched gears in a matter of days to deliver classes remotely. Our digital tools, institutional knowledge, and flexible culture that has historically embraced adaptation and innovation have been key to both that immediate transition and to subsequent pedagogical shifts.

“Faculty and staff have done amazing, hard work in teaching and working in a unique situation,” says Interim Provost Ann McClellan. “Everyone has invested a great deal of time to make it a safe and productive learning experience for our students.”

The Spring 2020 semester continued successfully with Information Technology, the Lamson Library, the Writing Centre, and the Open CoLab all offering immediate help to faculty, staff, and students at most hours of the day. Student success coaches advised remotely on academic programs, and Career Services did so on internship policies and employment opportunities. These and other offices, including Campus Accessibility Services, PASS, and TRIO, continued to meet critical needs.

Once the semester ended in May, the CoLab’s Slipper Camp (“like boot camp, only softer and on Zoom”) faculty development series centered on curriculum design while planning for fall contingencies. This was followed by summer participation by more than 100 faculty members in further professional development focused on online and hybrid teaching, through which a number of faculty members earned certifications for best practices in online teaching.

Additional trainings, tech upgrades, and classroom modifications took place right up to fall’s reopening, when PSU students resumed their studies in various modalities. Traditional, face-to-face classes are complemented by synchronous and asynchronous formats, as well as a hybrid, combined option.

“PSU is a very student-centered institution and this distinguishes our approach to online education,” adds McClellan. “The University’s pedagogy workshops and classes focus on the human elements involved in adapting to COVID, and we really emphasize incorporating flexibility, kindness, and innovative teaching theories that support students’ basic needs in a time of economic crisis. These augment more standard, practical training such as how to use Zoom cameras and design interactive online teaching modules.”

■ Peter Lee Miller

Photos by Mackenzie Fullerton ’17 unless noted otherwise.
Academic Disciplines Respond to COVID-19

What will be the continuing impact of this epochal event after the virus ebbs? What does this mean for public health? What role will technology play in our criminal justice system? The virus in our prisons and hospitals are lots of opportunities for new research directions. The protocols that enabled students to continue their education and work remotely are being adapted to support social distancing and other COVID-19 precautions, "The pandemic forced us to offer classes courses we never thought could work remotely and opened our eyes to new possibilities. Com- bining the advantages of asynchronous and synchronous learning in the 21st-century classroom has been a game-changer. The in-person hybrid courses could attract new remote students to Plymouth State and allow them to complete their entire degree online. We highly value the in-person student experience, but believe we can also deliver a high-quality remote experience and are ready to continue this model.

Pandemic Programming: Engaged, Connected, and Socially Distanced

Summer 2020 was filled with unknowns, but students made clear their fervent wish to reconnect and fall in love, to maintain a sense of normalcy. "The pandemic forced us to stay connected and allowed us to experiment with new tools. The protocols that enabled students to continue their education and work remotely are being adapted to support social distancing and other COVID-19 precautions, "The pandemic forced us to offer classes courses we never thought could work remotely and opened our eyes to new possibilities. Com- bining the advantages of asynchronous and synchronous learning in the 21st-century classroom has been a game-changer. The in-person hybrid courses could attract new remote students to Plymouth State and allow them to complete their entire degree online. We highly value the in-person student experience, but believe we can also deliver a high-quality remote experience and are ready to continue this model.

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**United States Coronavirus Coordinator Deborah Birx Visits Plymouth State**

Students at institutions like Plymouth State University are showing the way to overcome COVID-19, according to United States Coronavirus Response Coordinator Deborah Birx, MD. “We’re winning now on university campuses because of students—they’ve changed their behavior,” she says.

On October 12, Plymouth State welcomed Birx to campus for a presentation on the University’s response to COVID-19, a tour of campus facilities engaged in relief efforts, and a visit to the on-campus testing site. She gave remarks on trends across university and college campuses nationwide and on the future outlook of the pandemic.

Ambassador at Large Deborah Birx is the coordinator of the United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS and US Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy. In April 2020, Ambassador Birx was named White House Coronavirus Coordinator to aid in the whole of government response of the Vice President to assist in the official and physician to the Office of the Vice President to aid in the whole of government response of the Vice President to aid in the whole of government response of the Vice President to aid in the whole of government response.

“Not many universities believe in giving their students enough exposure to the where their doors,” says Ambassador Birx, who noted that many institutions remain in online-only mode. “But key issues such as PSUs and others, she maintains, are comprehensive summer planning along with work by faculty managers, mask mandates, and regular testing. The most critical factor, however, is having students work together to prevent the spread of COVID.”

The visit to New Hampshire was especially meaningful in that it included family time with her brother, Plymouth State President Donald Birx. “Over the past eight months, not only has Deb been a trusted resource for the nation, but she’s been a sounding board for me, PSU, and the entire University System as we planned for the reopening of campus and the continuation of in-person classes throughout the semester,” says President Birx. “She has given us advice and shared perspectives that have given us the confidence to move forward.”

As the crisis deepened this spring, Ambassador Birx’s team began writing weekly state reports, which incorporated data from over 3,200 counties to provide specific recommendations. Mask mandates were proposed not only for their direct health benefits—“We know masks work,” she said repeatedly on her PSU visit—but also as important signals to retailers that reopening could be done while minimizing risks.

Ambassador Birx’s interest in reopening colleges and universities transcends their benefits to students. The shuttering of higher education nationwide this spring deeply affected the “brain trust” of research platforms that she counts on, and since schools reopened they have provided critical analysis and data not only to answer epidemiological questions, but also on social concerns such as the impact of isolation and depression.

Her years of experience gained in combating AIDS/ HIV in Africa have shown Birx how to battle Americas’ COVID outbreak. “Step by step, day by day, community by community, mapping program of our tracking and listening to people,” she says. Since June, she has listened and learned about the nation’s headway by traveling more than 16,000 miles by car to 37 states and 27 universities. First-hand observations on what communities are doing on their respective Main Streets and how business is transacted in coffee shops factor into her recommendations. Her discussion on serious pandemic matters was leaned by family recollections. The Birx siblings received Heathkits, electronic products that required that assembly, and Ambassador Birx learned to solder at age five and helped build a color television at age ten. “It was great STEM education,” she recalls, and her worldview and commitment to work were also molded at an early age by missionaries who regularly visited the family home. “Physically distant and socially engaged” is Ambassador Birx’s mantra for dealing with family situations, whether visiting with her New Hampshire relatives or when asked what we all can do when considering upcoming holiday gatherings.

“‘THANK YOU.’ The nurse’s large eye porrtay a sense of compassion and kindness.

Miller had experienced the virus’s impact firsthand. She was in Italy for a study abroad program during the spring semester before the outbreak forced an early return to New Hampshire. “I was basically in quarantine for a month,” she said. “I could have gotten really sick, I had to go to the hospital for tests, have lung scans and everything, but all the time the nurses were really nice. I was so appreciative because they were putting their families at risk too.”

Emergency medicine can often be a thankless job. And because of that, the thank-yous become even more special and memorable.

**Love-Love: Women’s Tennis serves up hope from coast to coast**

Long-time Women’s Tennis Coach Barbara Rawlky-Willet has two families; husband Doug and daughters Jessica and Meredith, and a dozen student athletes. In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, the families merged. Both daughters are in healthcare. Meredith is a registered nurse in the interventional radiology department at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) in Lebanon, NH, and Jessica is an attending physician and assistant medical director for the emergency department at San Joaquin General Hospital in French Camp, CA. Both families were engaged as the pandemic hit in full force. At DHMC, plans were readied for a potential overflow of patients, while in California the influx had already begun.

“Knowing coach’s daughters worked in the medical field and with everything going on, we felt like we should do something,” said team captain Maggie McCarthy ’21. “We wanted to make sure they knew they were appreciated.”

Family members were being chezored around the world. In New York City, crowds clapped, banged pots and pans, and honked horns in appreciation. In Plymouth, armed with paper, pencils, and markers, Panthers turned their focus from front hands and volleys to writing and sketching. Team members designed personal thank you cards with heartfelt messages and words of encouragement. Julie Miller ‘19 used her artistic talent. Miller sketched a mask and heart-shaped choker inscribed with the words “THANK YOU.” The nurse’s large eye porrtay a sense of compassion and kindness.

“I want to be a nurse because I’ve been in hospitals a lot,” she said. “Staff members have always inspired me. I felt like I had a chance to help them through that time and that meant a lot to me.”

The cards were bundled together and shipped to the two hospitals. “Each told a little bit of our team story,” said Bettencourt. “That really personal note meant a lot to me.”

“It did to the coaches daughters as well. “The main thing for my colleagues was the importance of feeling that support and recognition,” said Jessica. “During that time, we were in the midst of a COVID-19 surge in California and we were overwhelmed and understaffed, and morale was at an all-time low. It was such an important gesture. Knowing that the support extended beyond our own community was really a push for us to keep going.”

DHMC staff reacted similarly. “My colleagues and I were blown away by the kindness,” said Meredith, “especially knowing that it came from a group that knew little about us besides that we were working through the pandemic. We really appreciated being recognized for our hard work and knowing that what we were doing was having such a positive impact on everyone around us.”

And that’s how a little team from PSU encourages frontline workers from coast to coast. “Emergency medicine can often be a thankless job,” said Jessica. “And because of that, the thank-yous become even more special and memorable.”

Chris Kilmer ’99
Together, We’re Better: Community Collaborations

It’s easy to wear a mask. It’s hard to recover from COVID.

That’s one sentiment on a hand-made flag that flies in downtown Plymouth. There are dozens more with messages like: You matter. Love wins. Stay positive. The voice of many is heard loud and clear.

These poignant and inspiring thoughts were written, painted, and embroidered by students, staff, alumni, and community members as part of PSU’s Community of Caring flag project. They decorate the artistic streamers that flutter in downtown Plymouth—and across the campus—giving voice to the emotions people are feeling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cynthia Cutting, director of the Museum of the White Mountains, created the 70-foot banners by sewing individual flags together. She read each one, savoring the expressions of consolation, inspiration, and spirit.

“People chose their words really well,” she says. “As I sewed, I smiled. I picked up each flag and considered the student or community member who made it. It felt so good, like I was sewing the community together.”

“That was the intent of the Community of Caring flags project—to bring the wider community together.”

“The University’s task force subcommittees focused on specific areas, including safety, communications, academics, community relations, and campus culture. Their combined efforts resulted in a nearly 100-page document, including key protocols for community safety.”

“We were very much reassured as a town that there was an extreme amount of planning put into this,” says Bill Bolton, chair of Plymouth Slecct Board. “There was a need to share, Cuting says. “It’s so touching. It makes us think about how people actually care.”

Collaborating, Caring

Caring for each other and our community is at the heart of PSU’s mission. “We wanted a participatory experience to process what we’re going through collectively and serve as a visual representation on how interconnected we are,” Cutting says.

The panel tapped Cutting’s expertise in installing exhibitions and hosting community art projects. Cutting suggested the flag-making idea as a way to give voice to all hopes and fears.

Material was donated, and Cutting used it to create square- and rectangular-shaped flags, evoking Tibetan prayer flags. She and the committee created kits with instructions: “The direction was to share how you’re feeling with your community during this time of COVID,” she says.

In the first two months, over 100 individuals, artist collaboratives, schools, clubs, businesses, and other organizations contributed flags. Cutting began sewing them together in early September, creating the banners installed around downtown.

Bolton, “I want people to see the messages of reassurance, because I think people will be moved by them. They need to see that this is a shared response.”

As part of the project, Tallie Phan ’20 created a Community of Caring flags logo and “BEAT COVID/Together, We’re Better” lawn signs, paid for by subcommittee member Doug McLane.

“We wanted to be proactive and educate students on their role in the community,” Cutting says. “We live and work here and have a stake in PSU’s success, so we took it very personally.”

Janice Beetle

It’s not too late to take part!

To request a kit, e-mail Cynthia Cutting at cutting@cph plymouth.edu.
A MOVEMENT AND A MOMENT: BLACK LIVES MATTER AT PSU

Two hundred and thirty-three years after the Constitutional Convention, we continue to strive “to form a more perfect union.” This year represents a watershed toward the goals of racial justice and reconciliation, both nationally and at Plymouth State University.

The PSU community joined the nation in recoiling in horror from the brutal death of George Floyd in May. In a public statement, President Donald Birx shared how it filled him with both sadness and anger. “The discrimination that permeates our country in so many subtle ways hurts us all, and we are all diminished by it,” he said. “It astounds and baffles me that in the midst of a virus ripping through the country, there is still a penchant for hate, prejudice, and tearing down others. Our response must be to continue the ongoing effort to treat each other with love and care.” (President Birx’s full statement can be read at go.plymouth.edu/DLB-statement.)

“The discrimination that permeates our country in so many subtle ways hurts us all, and we are all diminished by it.”

—President Donald Birx

Office of Minority Student Resources

The Office of Student Life, with the help of many faculty and staff members, has worked hard to create a more diverse and inclusive environment, especially for underrepresented groups and students of color. “Throughout the summer, we all witnessed the nation push back on the racial injustices that have and continue to plague our country,” says Director of Student Life Tevis Bryant. “After discussing these tragedies in depth, we asked: What can we do at PSU?”

Over the course of several meetings, it was evident that PSU needed to provide more opportunities and resources for students of color. Hence, the new Office of Minority Student Resources has been set up in a high-traffic area of the HUB, serving as a “one-stop shop.” Resources will include cuisine, hair care, and on/off-campus engagement suggestions, along with minority scholarship information, connections with leadership organizations (Manchester RLM, NAACP, etc.), mentorship and community building opportunities, educational diversity training, workshops, and more.

“Protest Portraits” Feature Our Community

This fall saw the campus installation of “Protest Portraits” by internationally acclaimed portrait photographer Maundy Mitchell. The exhibit consisted of life-size images from Black Lives Matter demonstrations that took place this summer on the Plymouth Town Common.

“We are seeing profound cultural change in the US,” says Mitchell. “Urgent calls are being made to examine systemic racism in our country, and our tiny town in the mountains of New Hampshire is not an exception.”

Jessica Dutille ’03, ’04MBA, ’20EdD, director of the Office of Community Impact, and Michael Heitz ’13, administrative assistant of the Museum of the White Mountains (MWM), were among those photographed. “We are passionate about human rights and want to make sure it’s in our community and our world,” said Dutille, and Heitz explained, “I’m here to listen and to learn, and to show support for an equitable future.” Depicted members of the PSU community also included Michael Cuddihy ’05, MWM Director Cynthia Cutting, and Sydney Marville ’20.

The Office of Minority Student Resources has been set up in a high-traffic area of the HUB, serving as a “one-stop shop” for students of color. Hence, the new Office of Minority Student Resources recommend a cabinet-level position to provide campus-wide leadership and guidance on equity and inclusion. [In October, Plymouth presented that concept to the USNH Board of Trustees and received approval to conduct a search for the position. We look forward to this new opportunity to better serve our students, staff, and faculty of color in the coming year.]

“People here have their different ideologies and political beliefs, but I think if we were moving the progress forward … we would be bettering our school.”

—Michael “MJ” Shannon ’22, Political Science

“Strictly political beliefs, but I think if we were moving the progress forward … we would be bettering our school.”

—Zachary Eastman ’21, Business Administration

“I felt like the Protest Portraits exhibit really spoke volumes, that this issue wasn’t going away and is still very relevant.”

—Avery Jones ’21, President, Class of 2021

“‘When something this big and deep-rooted in society happens, it’s something that we have to confront.’

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Up here in the mountains, two hours from Boston, five hours from New York City, we enjoy the pleasures of living in the country: beautiful scenery, less traffic, fewer people. Easy access to skiing, hiking, and climbing is part of what makes PSU attractive to students and residents alike. We cut off interstate 93 and leave the world behind to shelter in the Pemigewasset Valley.

But what happens when the world comes to us? The COVID-19 pandemic is worldwide, reaching from major cities to small towns, though New Hampshire has had relatively fewer numbers of cases and deaths during the pandemic of New Hampshire, with 4,319 deaths reported for 1918-1919. The Spanish Flu took its toll on the population of New Hampshire, with 4,319 deaths reported for 1918-1919. The numbers of cases and deaths during this period are not easily available for Plymouth, but students wrote about the flu. According to Marion Gale’s '21 scrapbook, students were sent home on February 14, 1919, and did not return to Plymouth until March 2. Newspaper articles called this a "flu vacation."

Other pandemics caused Plymouth Normal School students to be quarantined. In 1926, students wrote, "Yes, the scarlet-fever germ believes in Normal school education this year as formerly. However he didn’t remain with us very long this year, and utterly failed to cause a panic of fear." In the 1928 Plymouth Normal School publication, the Prospect, students asked, "How can we forget that period between Christmas vacation and Easter?" It was at this time that we were all introduced to the hypodermic needle, because of the scarlet fever epidemic, but even quarantined it has its joys."

As we know, PSC was shut down in March of 2020, with students returning home and finishing the semester remotely. There was no Commencement in May. Students returned to campus this fall under strict guidelines to wear masks, be socially distant, and get tested regularly. Classes were conducted face-to-face but also remotely. No "flu vacation" for today’s students. In 1970, the world came to Plymouth State College in the form of the Vietnam conflict. On May 4, 1970, student protesters were fired upon and four killed at Kent State University, and college campuses around the country were in a state of turmoil. PSC was no different. President Harold Hyde had been appointed to a federal panel of university and college presidents to discuss student unrest. In fact, on May 4, President Hyde was at a meeting of this panel in Iowa when news broke about the shootings at Kent State. The president of Kent State was also on the panel and the meeting immediately broke up, with presidents rushing back to campuses to deal with the situation.

On the evening of May 4, Plymouth State students met peacefully. When Boyd Hall proved too small to handle the gathering, students calmly marched through town to the Field House, where they voted not to strike but to hold meetings, workshops, and other peaceful protests.

Along with President Hyde, who refused Governor Peterson’s offer to send the National Guard, Stephen Eastman, the student protest president, was credited with ensuring that that meeting and subsequent ones were peaceful. When establishing a scholarship in his name, his Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity brothers wrote, "Reflective of Steve Eastman and his innate character, the scholarship recipient shall be a student leader who promotes a caring sense of community that was, is, and forever shall be Plymouth."

In the pre-Civil War era, one of the most famous abolitionists of the time lived in Plymouth. Nathaniel Peabody Rogers was born and raised in a home located on the common, over the issue of slavery, stating, “If you will not strike this iniquity, we will not remain in your communion." The church answered, "Cease your agitation or we will excommunicate you." It did. Rogers' son, Daniel Farrand Rogers, considered his father a martyr for the anti-slavery movement, giving up his church and his livelihood to fight for abolition. It is said that the house in Plymouth was a stop on the Underground Railroad, and Nathaniel’s children recalled finding escaped slaves in their home on many occasions.

In 2020, the town common reprised its historic role as a center of justice advocacy with citizens speaking up for the Black Lives Matter movement. Local artist Maundy Mitchell created a beautiful and meaningful series of photographs that were displayed on the common and is now traveling the state, much like Nathaniel Rogers did, to fight inequalities that people of color still suffer. Plymouth State University has pledged to take action to better ensure inclusion of its students of color, striving to live up to the legacy of Rogers’ activism.

When the world comes to Plymouth, citizens meet the challenges and work to bring about meaningful change, as they have for generations.
Pride in Her Alma Mater Lives On

Ruth (Birch) Marcez ’48 was a fiercely passionate woman. She loved Plymouth State and the friends she made—and kept throughout her life—during her time here. Her deep appreciation of the English language stemmed from her education and experience at Plymouth.

Ruth’s devotion to Plymouth State lives on in the wake of her passing in January 2018 through a planned gift to the Clara Koezer Birch and Ruth Birch Marcez ’48 Scholarship, named after her and her mother.

She felt honored to leave a legacy to serve deserving students through her scholarship endowment. Ruth once said, “Without the lessons learned at Plymouth, I would not have had a successful career and happy life with which I’ve been blessed. May they who get their help, share with others along the way, and prove the love and pride in our alma mater lives on.”

There are many ways you can make a planned, meaningful gift. To find out more, contact Director of Planned Giving Ann Thurston ’06, 603-526-2357 or at ann.thurston@plymouth.edu.

Thanks to the members of the Class of 1953 who decided to create a scholarship from their class fundraising efforts to help deserving students complete a PSU education.

1950s

Edythe (Grant) Adams ’56 met her husband Dr. Arnold Adams ’55 at Plymouth State and felt her time there had a positive impact on the rest of her life. She is effusive in her praise of the PSU education.

Thanks to the members of the Class of 1953 for their fundraising efforts to endow their class scholarship.

1960s

Wayne R. Jacoby ’64 majored in education and was actively involved with the Model UN Club and leadership organization. Jacoby taught social studies at a secondary school from 1954 to 1974 in Springfield School District in Montgomery County, PA, eventually transitioning to teaching global education. He received his MEd from Temple University in 1969 and his MA in history from LaSalle University in 1975. In 1980, Jacoby and two of his colleagues of Global Education Mottos, Inc., which he has been director of since its founding.

Sue Clark, 78, is a member of the Class of 1978 and has been working with youth to empower them with real-world experiential learning across cultures. When asked how PSU prepared him for his career, he says, “It was one of the best things that happened to me in my life. Everything I do evolved from my time with Dr. Hogue and my MUN experience at PSU.”

1970s

Madeline (Kacian) Zimmerman ’66 was active in the Outing Club, New- man Club, and Volleyball Team. She was drawn to Plymouth because of its size. Plymouth prepared her to be a teacher. The best thing I liked about being a teacher, was being a cheer- leader* for my brother’s school. She married Erion Eugene “Gene” Zimmerman on August 8, 1966. Her son, Paul Eugene was born in 1967, and daughter Susan Joanne in 1971. Goldberg attended Seattle University and graduated with an MEd in 1972. She retired in 2012, and now lives in an assisted living facility in College Place, WA, with her son Paul live closely.

Maryrae (Reusch) Preston ’83 majored in physical education at Plymouth State and was involved in many programs such as the ten- nis and basketball teams, Pickwick Club and other clubs. Goldberg chose PSU for the physical education program and the sports teams. She mentions how PSU helped her program for her basketball team. After Plymouth, she obtained her MEd from Cambridge College and went on to teach PE for 35 years in Danvers, MA. Goldberg has moved to The Villages, Florida, where she excels in table tennis and pickleball— even won third place in table tennis at the Nationals in Ohio 2013—and still plays to this day. Now she uses her love of tennis to help teach students. The women’s tennis program is a final house in Beverly, MA. She has two children, Mindy and Jay, and two grandchildren.

Linda (Merrill) Landry ’71 was fea- tured in an article about her 10th year as a teacher at Canaan (NH) Elementary School. Some highlights from the article include how she began teaching at the school in downtown Canaan in 1971, at the age of 20, after graduating from PSU. Later, she started a loop of teaching third graders one year and fourth graders the next. In 1986, the school burned down, and she and her colleagues had to find places around the town to teach the students. The community came together, and businesses offered spaces to host each grade. During that time, she gave birth to her son in March 1986. Landry has since used her experience from when her school burned to deal with COVID-19 and other high-stress situations. This year, she faced them head on with the thoughts of her students. With a positive mindset we can’t wait to see what she accomplishes next!

1980s

Brian Stone ’81A is now a semi-retired independent insurance and financial advisor practicing in southern Maine for over 25 years.

Maryrae (Reusch) Preston ’83 works with her family at Preston Real Estate. In 2017 she opened a seasonal gift shop on Hampton Beach called Sand and Santa Gift Shop. They specialize in nautical and Christmas decor, and boast a ‘Santa Claus in beachwear down to the sand on his feet. Folk’s from all around the world have posed for pictures with their Santos.

Shawn Griffin ’88 was inducted into the PSU Athletics Hall of Fame in 2019. Griffin played four years on the soccer team and was the head coach for four years. He is now head coach at Hobart College. The high- light of his coaching career at Hobart thus far came in the 2015 season, when the statesmen won a pro- gram-record 5 games and advanced to the third round of the NCAA tournament. Read more at tinyurl.com/yyg23wfl.

Congratulations to Diane (Tillotson) Tiffany ’78, Phil Auclair andlongtime staffmember, on their well-deserved retirement. Many of you have known Diane, who was the face of this Alumni and Advancement Offices during her 22 years at PSU. Please join us in wishing her well and we are looking forward to seeing her back on campus in the future.

Jon Gilbert Fox photo.

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Retired Brigadier General Shawn O’Brien ’86 (on left)

Michelle Chemeron ’92 (on right) with Trish Ferland

Shawn O’Brien ’86 (photograph at left) retired as head general and commander of the NH National Army National Guard after 34 years of service in a ceremony and changing of the guard on October 3, 2020. His military career began when O’Brien served in the ROTC program while attending Plymouth State. O’Brien continues his full-time work in pharmaceutical sales for Onaka USA and in a member of the Plymouth State Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Tom O’Mara ’87 retired in May 2017 as a professor and coordina- tor of teacher education at Central Community College in Morehead City, NC. In September 2019 he relocated with his wife of 35 years to Sprin- gels Village, AR, to enjoy the mountains and lake life.

Jan (Christensen) Ingraham ’83 majored in business administration. In August 2020 she started a new job working for former Intel- ligent organization focusing on retailer success across the country with multiple companies. After 30 years in the grocery indus- try that included an opportunity to work in London for three years, she developed a passion for international business. Adding to her years of experience in merchandising, nego- tiations, software implementation, and many other skills, she is ready to tackle the challenges. Ingraham’s time at Plymouth State taught her how to become a versatile leader and how her experiences was “memorable and I look back on it fondly.” Her favorite season was winter, during which she skied and worked locally with school friends, making more special memories to look back on.

E. Lloyd Soucy ’87 was recently elected to the council chair posi- tion for Lions Club International Multiple District 26, representing all clubs in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, along with three border- clubs in Maine, Mont, Keats, Fort Fairfield, and Calais.

Tom O’Mara ’87 (on left)

Paul Laliberte ’83 has been named head coach of the Ottawa RedBlacks in the Canadian Football League. Laliberte was a wide receiver at Plym- outh State after graduating with a degree in physical education, Laliberte became a member of the American collegiate league in 2010, he began working in the CFL. As an assistant coach, Laliberte won a Grey Cup with the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2007 and the Brier Bowl in 2019. Visit more at tinyurl.com/yyg23wfl.

1990s

Michelle Chemeron ’92, a Chi Alpha Zeta sorority sister, read the story of a Tai Omega sorority sister, Trisha Forland (PSU 1999–2011), in desper- ate need of a kidney transplant on the Plymouth State Greeks Facebook page (both pictured above). Ferland has been battling kidney disease for a long time, and in August reached a critical point—and stage kidney failure with dialysis being her last option while she waited for a donor. Chemeron was already in the system as a donor, and soon came the great news that they were matched and that the transplant surgery would take place on Septem- ber 12, 2020. No words can adequately describe how amazing a gift of life Michelle is providing to Trisha. It’s a great example of the Plymouth State Greeks saying, “No Matter the Letters, Greeks Stand Together.”

Amanda Hughey

The Green | Plymouth State Alumni News & Notes

Plymouth Magazine | Winter 2021

Plymouth State University
IN MEMORIAM

Richard M. Wood ’74
Scott Riel ’74
September 16, 2020, Manchester NH
August 8, 2020, Dillsburg, PA
Malcolm F. Carr Jr. ’74, ’75G
Beverly E. Edwards ’73
December 16, 2019, Concord, NH
June 9, 2020, Rochester, NH
David M. Anctil ’73
Shari (Pennock) Lemeris ’72
December 4, 2019, Campton, NH
Pamela J. Gale ’71
October 4, 2019, Farmington, NH
June 10, 2020, APO, AP
June 3, 2020, Ottumwa, IA
October 8, 2019, New Gloucester, ME
Tyrus C. Houston ’68
Dale F. Keniston ’67
March 18, 2020, Laurentian, MI
June 19, 2020, Chichester, NH
October 20, 2019, Rochester, NH
June 6, 2020, Plymouth, MA
February 25, 2020, East Derry, NH
April 14, 2020, Newport, NH
March 31, 2020, Plymouth, NH
August 5, 2020, Plymouth, NH
June 6, 2020, Plymouth, MA
May 31, 2020, Manchester, NH
Stephanie M. Fralic ’94G
November 20, 2019, Shrewsbury, MA
Nour Shoumanouskou ’93G
Class of June 2023, 2020, Beirut, LA
Pamela A. Umana, Class of May 2022, 2020,
May 30, 2020, Plymouth, NH
May 26, 2020, Portland, ME
Jennifer M. (Atlee) Luther ’96 (prov.)
(Mary Lou C. Luther, her late husband) graduated this May on the day of her daughter’s graduation from Plymouth State. Amy Luther ’20 graduated with a BFA in graphic design. Jennifer and Amy even shared the same graphic design professor, David Martin.

Dr. Ronald Fussell ’77 enjoyed a successful career as a research fellow after graduating. “The Department of Marine and Fishery offered an excellent pedagogical and administrative foundation to be able to direct one of the largest middle school instructional programs in the state at that time,” he writes. He went on to school administration and completed his EdD in interdisciplinary leadership at Creighton. The award recognized Fussell also completed Air Command and Staff College and the Air Force Reserve Component (2001–present). Smith also completed Air Command and Staff College with the Air Force Reserve Component. Smith recently took a new job with Blue Pearl as a senior IT project manager, and purchased a new home in Florida.

Kenneth Butler ’77 (prov. pictured above) worked for seven years as the chair of the football team. He was also part of the PBA Retail Training staff (for veterans), serving as an academic chair in 1997. Other accomplishments include being listed in the Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities & Colleges 1997 (pg.557), 1997 Outstanding Senior, and a student mentor of Lassen Library. Smith was also class agent in 1995 and 1999 and formerly represented the Class of 2002. He says, “I am thrilled to find a human resource professional with such deep experience working in higher education,” said Chuck Litchfield, vice chancellor for human resources at Plymouth State University. "He has spent the last few years focusing on the needs of our diverse student population and brings a wealth of experience in the higher education sector, which makes him an ideal fit for this role. We are thrilled to have Brian lead the campus toward a comprehensive people plan to support our educational mission."
Matthew Burke made the announcement that Shawn Manfredo '04 will be the old son Logan dream career of being a teacher and Moving back to New Hampshire, he didn’t want in order to teach them to third graders. He realized he didn’t want California but decided to try teaching graphic design and polished his skills, obtained his BA in Ravine, Logan, and Zach Cary ‘04

Mark MacLean ’08CAGS has been named Superintendent of the Year by the New Hampshire School Administra tors Association. MacLean started his administrative career as the dean of academics for the Hudson School District, and then became assistant superintendent of schools for the Keansburg Regional School District. MacLean is now the superintendent of Merrimack Valley and Andover schools. Read more at tinyurl.com/7y5u00.

Gregory S. Bowes ‘03 (pictured above) is the director of communications & marketing, University Foundation of South Florida Foundation. He received a master of education in curriculum and instruction from UF.

Amanda Frame ‘05x3xoejue. Her work has been featured in the Boston Globe, The Boston Herald, and numerous other outlets from AcuteByDesign. The award is granted annually to two new authors whose first-time children’s books represent the best in storytelling and illustrations. Ms. Flannery is a long-time educator and resides in New Hartford, CT, with her husband, Brian, and two children.

Gregory Desmond ‘17 were married in Nashua, NH, on October 26, 2019. (pictured above) Kaylee Darrieng ‘16 and Branden Lambert were married in Durham, ME, on August 1, 2020. Mariann Ford ‘72 and Gregory Desmond ‘72 were married in Manchester, NH, on October 3, 2019.

ARRIVALS

Heather Adee-Merrithee ’98 and Rebecca Adee-Merrithee welcomed their son, Briggs Alan Adee-Merrithee, on January 24, 2020.

Meghan and Thomas Berick ’04 welcomed their daughter, Millie Berick, on April 19, 2020.


Kate (Cotness) Conn ‘95 and Billy Conn ‘95 welcomed their son, Evan Daniel Conn, on April 14, 2020.

EXCHANGING VOWS

Alison M. (Cramer) Cook ’96 and David Michael Harley were married on December 5, 2019. (pictured at right)

Stefanie (Philibotte) Brinn ‘16 and Matthew Brinn ‘16 were married in Nashua, NH, on October 26, 2019. (pictured above)

Kaylee Darrieng ‘16 and Branden Lambert were married in Durham, ME, on August 1, 2020.

Mattie (Hamon) Fitchburg State Director of Athletics Shawn Manfredo ’04 will be the old son Logan dream career of being a teacher and Moving back to New Hampshire, he didn’t want in order to teach them to third graders. He realized he didn’t want California but decided to try teaching graphic design and polished his skills, obtained his BA in Ravine, Logan, and Zach Cary ‘04

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Kate (Cotness) Conn ‘95 and Billy Conn ‘95 welcomed their son, Evan Daniel Conn, on April 14, 2020.
graphic designer for the marketing team for four years until tough times hit with the pandemic. She had to switch to working as a bridal stylist and will be assisting in the marketing for this bridal shop. Though her job was compromised, she wouldn’t let the pandemic stop her from having a beautiful wedding in a backyard setting with 60 of her closest friends and family (see Vows).

Mariah (Ford) Desmond ’17 chose Plymouth State because it felt like what home should be. “Plymouth taught me to take risks—on things, on people, and on myself.” In 2019, Desmond landed a job with one of the largest and most reputable HR outsourcing companies in the world and now has a very rewarding career as a payroll consultant. Ford met Gregory Desmond ’17 the first day of their sophomore year at PSU and were married in 2019.

James Watson ’17G is a retired veteran of the NH Air and Army National Guard. He chose Plymouth State because he loved the opportunity to obtain his master of education degree in both an online learning platform and in person. “The hybrid model was excellent!” Watson currently develops curriculum and lesson plans at the NH Police Academy as a law enforcement training specialist. The education he received at PSU gave him the knowledge and confidence to perform these duties.

Justin Montgomery ’18 (on left) and Nicholas Simeti ’18 after climbing Mount Washington in 2019.

Ashley Hitchborn ’20 majored in interdisciplinary studies, which allowed her to design her own major: Hitchborn combined graphic design, communications, and marketing with women, gender, & sexuality studies. She was an orientation leader. Hitchborn combined graphic design, communications, and marketing with a women, gender, & sexuality studies minor to go into a field of TV production.

Nicholas Simeti ’18 (pictured above) received a Plymouth State Panther Award in 2018, and in his third season as assistant coach for PSU wrestling. Simeti says, “Plymouth State gave me the perfect amount of challenges and positive experiences that created a wonderful learning environment. I was able to work with brilliant professors and conduct research that provided tangible outcomes that helped develop the community in which I live. Working with real-world stakeholders and presenting research and conducting programs within the community were once simulated experiences, which ended up translating into my professional role at the health department.” In 2020, Simeti earned a master’s degree in public health from UNH, and now works for the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services as a containment strike team coordinator. This grant-funded position by the CDC provides highly specialized public health infectious disease control with identified COVID-19 high risk populations through investigation, education, and development of programs and policies.

2020

Ashley Hitchborn ’20 in interdisciplinary studies, which allowed her to design her own major: Hitchborn combined graphic design, communications, and marketing with women, gender, & sexuality studies. She was an orientation leader. Hitchborn combined graphic design, communications, and marketing with a women, gender, & sexuality studies minor to go into a field of TV production.

Joseph Payne ’18 was promoted to senior accountant at Levine, McDonnell & Roberts Professional Association. Payne works out of the Wolfeboro office.

Simon C. Pierpont ’18 majored in English and was very active during his time at PSU. He was a managing editor of the Cliff student newspaper for two years, had a fellowship in the Admissions Office, and was a member of the Golf Club. The minute he stepped on campus he decided this was the school for him. After graduation, Pierpont was an admissions counselor at Saint Anselm College. He says, “I love that my time spent in the Admissions Office at PSU let me to go directly into the field of college admission.” Pierpont recently joined PSU’s Admissions Office.

James Watson ’17G is a retired veteran of the NH Air and Army National Guard. He chose Plymouth State because he loved the opportunity to obtain his master of education degree in both an online learning platform and in person. “The hybrid model was excellent!” Watson currently develops curriculum and lesson plans at the NH Police Academy as a law enforcement training specialist. The education he received at PSU gave him the knowledge and confidence to perform these duties.

Justin Montgomery ’18 (on left) and Nicholas Simeti ’18 after climbing Mount Washington in 2019.

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Nicholas Simeti ’18 (pictured above) received a Plymouth State Panther Award in 2018, and in his third season as assistant coach for PSU wrestling. Simeti says, “Plymouth State gave me the perfect amount of challenges and positive experiences that created a wonderful learning environment. I was able to work with brilliant professors and conduct research that provided tangible outcomes that helped develop the community in which I live. Working with real-world stakeholders and presenting research and conducting programs within the community were once simulated experiences, which ended up translating into my professional role at the health department.” In 2020, Simeti earned a master’s degree in public health from UNH, and now works for the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services as a containment strike team coordinator. This grant-funded position by the CDC provides highly specialized public health infectious disease control with identified COVID-19 high risk populations through investigation, education, and development of programs and policies.

2020

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