

RIT

University Magazine

Fall 2024

Detecting Digital

DECEPTION

Also inside:

WITR: More than music

Lacrosse coach's life lessons

RIT's growing partnership with Africa





RIT University Magazine

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Travis LaCoss

The Munsons and *The Wonderful Wizard of RIT* cast.

There's no place like RIT

Welcome to ROZ-chester! Before I take you down the orange brick road, let me give you the backstory on what has become an annual rite of passage for our new incoming students. Each fall, Nancy and I help create a “welcome” video for the first-year class. The videos demonstrate the creativity, talent, and ingenuity you'll find throughout the RIT campus. In addition to nearly 50,000 views on YouTube, the six videos and excerpts have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times on other social media platforms.

This year, our aim was to make our new students feel at home. We teach our students it's all about the journey of exploration and adventure and using creativity to solve problems along the way. Lean into life, and your college experience will be filled with joy and awe. Here is one of the opening lyrics in the video:

“And we're here to tell you about this Tiger land, where the bricks are orange, not yellow like sand...RIT where great minds meet. A community of makers, we can't be beat.”

A key objective of the videos is to make Nancy and me approachable and create a more comfortable atmosphere around campus for our 17,000 Henrietta, N.Y., students, especially those who are nervous about beginning their college studies.

“Ignore voices who thrive on fear and

doubt. Here is your moment, your time to break out.”

Each video blends humor with the university's ethos, demonstrating that, at RIT, working hard and having fun go hand in hand.

“RIT—where great minds meet— a community of makers, we can't be beat... We'll help you to rally, prove you've got knowledge. And soon you'll be a rock star in college.”

We invite you to use the QR code and follow along as our lively Oz characters overcome challenges and embrace the spirit of creativity and innovation that makes RIT such a special place.

“Sharing interests with others who add fuel to your fire, you'll get engaged, refreshed, and inspired.”

There really is no place like RIT!

Yours in creative spirit,

Dave

David C. Munson Jr., President
munson@rit.edu

Watch the video
rit.edu/wizard



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More than Music

WITR has evolved since it began in 1961, but a constant has been a tight-knit network of students and alumni.

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University experts are helping journalists and intelligence analysts figure out if video, audio, and images have been manipulated using artificial intelligence.

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Life Lessons

Coach Jake Coon has turned men's lacrosse into a national powerhouse. But there's more to this story than winning and statistics.

Cover: RIT alumnus John W. Tomac '03 (illustration) created this cover. Tomac has done illustrations for many publications, including *The New Yorker*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*.

RIT's battery ecosystem grows

The Battery Development Center at RIT will play a major role in energizing today's battery-driven world.

Last spring, RIT's Battery Prototyping Center on campus merged with NY-BEST's Battery and Energy Storage Test and Commercialization Center, housed in an 18,000-square-foot renovated Kodak Park facility.

The new center, a one-stop shop for the entire life cycle of development, from testing to commercialization to manufacturing, will help launch new startup businesses, support research and development in established companies, and prepare a workforce to build and apply battery technology in today's environment.

The merger brought together two distinct areas of expertise for battery development and energy storage initiatives in New York state—the prototyping, training, and research capabilities based at RIT and the systems safety and life cycle testing, certification, and commercialization expertise of the center.

"We are currently the only university with this combination of automated battery prototyping and certified testing up to full battery packs," said Matt Ganter, center director. "This merger is a way to enhance what both facili-

ties have done well over the last 10 years by combining expertise and collaborating with faculty across disciplines. We can be the first step from the lab and initial scale-up to pilot or the final checkpoint leading to investment and deployment."

Both locations are experiencing increased demand and are adding space and equipment to accommodate new business and research support. Customer requests vary, from testing individual battery cells to training company engineers on equipment found at each facility.

Beyond the startups, the test and commercialization center capabilities provide established companies the needed performance certifications for new cells going into complex systems.

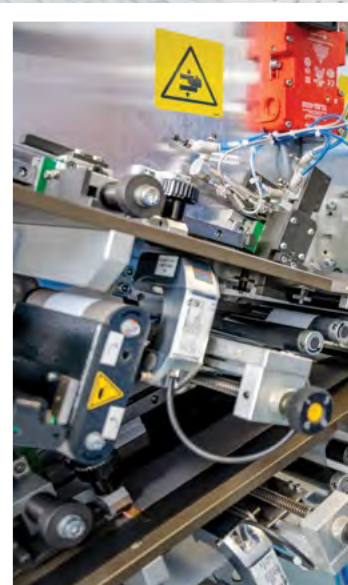
"They have resources to test degradation, system reliability, and safety that are pretty unique," said Ganter.

That uniqueness will be needed as sales of electric vehicles, one of the many drivers of battery technology growth, are expected to increase.

"We all have one goal in mind—to drive and support the advancement of battery and energy storage and establish New York state as the leader," said Ganter.

Michelle Cometa '00

Engineering technicians use high-tech pressure vessels to test the stability and safety of battery cells under multiple conditions.





Trinity Garcia, a third-year chemical engineering student, assesses elements of battery materials in the center's dry room.



Students and engineering technicians work in the Battery Development Center.

Photos by Travis LaCoss



Izzy Voegels, a third-year chemical engineering student, participates with center researchers in testing projects for corporate clients.

What's new

Tops in film

RIT's School of Film and Animation has earned a spot on *The Hollywood Reporter's* top film schools list, ranking at No. 25. This is the first time RIT has been included in *The Hollywood Reporter's* rankings.

Todd Jokl, dean of the College of Art and Design, said that the school and its programs have long been renowned for high-achieving graduates who have made immediate impacts in the industry.

New Ph.D.s

Two new Ph.D. programs in cognitive science and physics began this fall.

The cognitive science program, which is delivered by faculty from six colleges within RIT, provides an interdisciplinary study of the human mind that combines insights from psychology, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, augmented reality, and philosophy.

The physics program, administered by the College of Science, offers a wide array of research areas including atomic/molecular/optical physics, multimessenger astrophysics, photonics and the next quantum revolution, and physics for sustainable/renewable energy.

These bring the total number of RIT's doctoral programs to 13.



Museum studies students **Renee Guerin**, left, and **Claire Gallucci** hang pieces from Toni Pepe's "Mothercraft" exhibit in the RIT Archives Photo Alumni Gallery in Wallace Library.

Exhibit bridges generations of alum

Emma Truscott '24 curated the exhibit.



Emma Truscott

Before she graduated, Emma Truscott '24 (photographic and imaging arts) interviewed Toni Pepe '08 MFA (photographic and imaging arts) about her career as a photography educator and artist. Their collaboration is documented in the RIT Archives Photo Alum Oral History collection, and an exhibit of Pepe's work is on display in the corresponding Photo Alumni Gallery in Wallace Library.

Truscott gained more than interviewing and curating skills from the experience; she absorbed another photographer's hard-earned insights. Pepe shared her perspective of stepping off the RIT graduation

stage into the Great Recession and onto a personal path to a photography career. Today, Pepe is chair of photography and an assistant professor at Boston University and is working on her first photography book.

The RIT Archives Photo Alumni Gallery, supported by the College of Art and Design, launched in 2023.

"The project creates a conversation between a current student and an alum," said Elizabeth Call, RIT university archivist. "It's also a way to showcase the alum's work and reconnect the alum with RIT. The RIT Archive fosters those connections."

Truscott's interview traces Pepe's growth as an artist focusing on women in society,

An exhibit of alumna **Toni Pepe's** work is on display in Wallace Library.



Carlos Ortiz



Toni Pepe

umni

using herself as a model early in her career, and more recently working with archival media images about motherhood.

Truscott curated the exhibit “In Her Image” using selections from Pepe’s current work, “Mothercraft,” and from her master’s thesis, “Angle of Repose,” as well as other work. It includes props Pepe used in her photography, such as a vintage dress she wore.

Truscott added historical context with a montage of newspaper clippings from Marcia Ellingson’s scrapbooks held in the RIT Archives. Marcia Ellingson was married to RIT’s fifth president, Mark Ellingson, who served from 1936 to 1969. Ellingson’s scrapbooks document women’s news from 1968

to 1975 and lend historical context to Pepe’s photography.

“I was thrilled to have the “Mothercraft” show come to RIT because it’s such a special place for me—it’s where I learned to be an artist,” Pepe said.

This is the second exhibit in the RIT Archives Photo Alumni Gallery. Truscott also curated the first one featuring Chris Nakis ’83 (photography).

Truscott’s experience working with Pepe and Nakis helped her land an internship at *National Geographic* in Washington, D.C., after graduation. Her interviews and curated shows were “big talking points” in her interview, she said.

“They were impressed with the amount and diversity of work I had done,” Truscott said. “I think the RIT Archives prepared me for different ways of thinking and different ways of being creative.”

Susan Gawlowicz ’95

To learn more

Contact RIT University Archivist Elizabeth Call at ritarchive@rit.edu to suggest photo alumni for future exhibitions.

About Students





The student team took **first place** overall among 78 collegiate teams in the race at Michigan International Speedway.

RIT Formula Racing zooms to big win

RIT Formula Racing had one of its biggest wins since it began racing more than 30 years ago.

The student-led team took first place overall among 78 collegiate teams at the June Michigan SAE Formula race at Michigan International Speedway. The team had top 10 placements in acceleration, autocross, and skid pad categories and aced the endurance event, taking second place in the 22-lap event.

“All of our designers shared the common goal of improving every aspect from our prior car with a full chassis redesign, suspension, aerodynamics, drivetrain, and electric powertrain,” said RIT Formula Chief Engineer Owen Sherbinko '24 (mechanical engineering). “As we began to watch the car drive since March, we kept saying the same thing, ‘We’re going to win this thing’—and it came true.”

The Michigan competition is one of the largest in the U.S., with teams from universities across the globe. This year, competitors included Cornell University, Penn State, and Georgia Institute of Technology, along with many from across Canada and Brazil.

Michelle Cometa '00



Students in **RIT Formula Racing** have competed both in the U.S. and internationally since the team started in 1992.

Tristan Ho

Tristan Ho



African countries, with their vast environmental diversity and growing population, provide research opportunities for RIT faculty and students. And RIT's tech portfolio is helping researchers from Africa solve challenges of sustainability.

IN AND OUT OF

AFRICA

.....

RIT's partnership with the thriving continent continues to grow



Destiny Amenyedzi, right, is a Ph.D. student at the University of Rwanda who is at RIT to work with Imaging Science Professor Tony Vodacek, left.

Carlos Ortiz

Destiny Amenyedzi is using science and machine learning to solve a global problem.

The native Ghanaian and Ph.D. student at the University of Rwanda is using AudioMoths (highly sensitive microphones) to monitor sounds within farms. He is specifically studying bird sounds to distinguish which birds are helpful, which are harmful, and what type of sound system can be deployed to keep destructive birds away from crops.

Africa has 25 percent of the world's bird species, so it is a prime location for this research. However, while African countries may have an abundance of wildlife, they do not have the technologies and research facilities that exist in American universities.

That's why Amenyedzi is conducting his research at RIT. He is one of three African Ph.D. students here through the Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering, and Technology (PASET). The goal of the program, sponsored by African govern-

ments and the World Bank, is to develop skilled professionals in applied sciences, engineering, and technology fields to bolster the continent's growing needs.

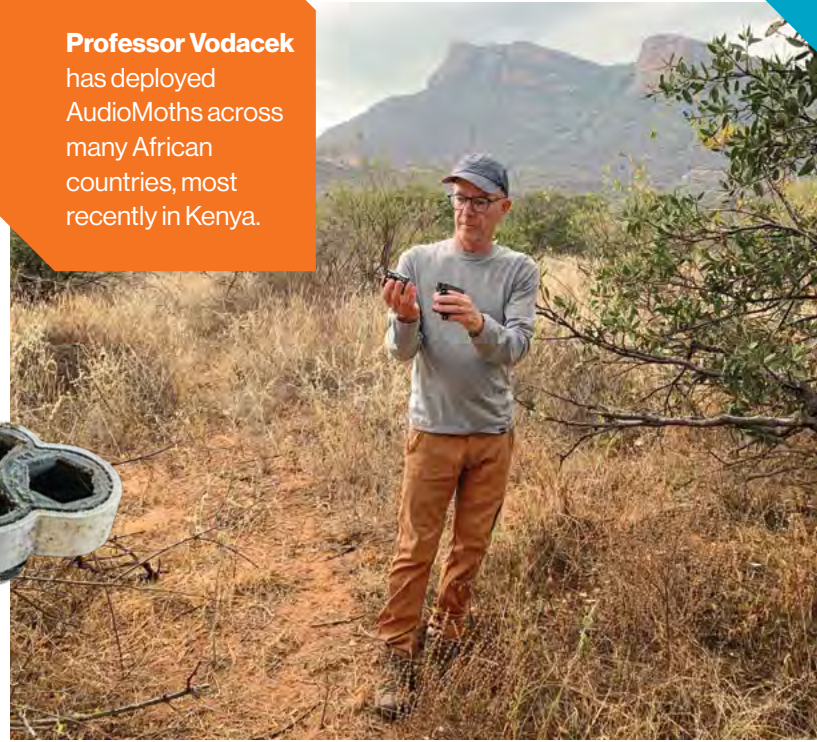
RIT joined PASET in 2023. It is the latest African partnership for the university in a 20-year history of involvement in research and relationships across the continent.

Africa is rich in natural resources and contains one of the most diverse ecosystems across the globe. The Sahara Desert itself is larger than the continental United States.

Professor Vodacek has deployed AudioMoths across many African countries, most recently in Kenya.



Remote sensing devices, called AudioMoths, are housed in protective cases that are 3D printed on RIT's campus. This one came in contact with an elephant.



AudioMoths capture sounds across a wide range of frequencies. They are low cost and easy to use.



Once the AudioMoths capture data, sophisticated software is used to edit audio frequencies so all ranges of sounds can be studied.

With all the unique landscapes, wildlife, and growing urban areas, more than 30 RIT faculty have recognized the importance of traveling to the continent, all backed by RIT Global.

"I think our academic and research portfolio may be better suited than any other U.S. university to support countries across Africa as their economies grow and as they work to solve

challenges of sustainability," said Jim Myers, associate provost for International Education and Global Programs. "Our strengths in computing, imaging, engineering, and artificial intelligence (AI) are emerging as critical to the growth of African economies. RIT has a unique opportunity to make a substantial impact on the continent."

In addition to that, the African

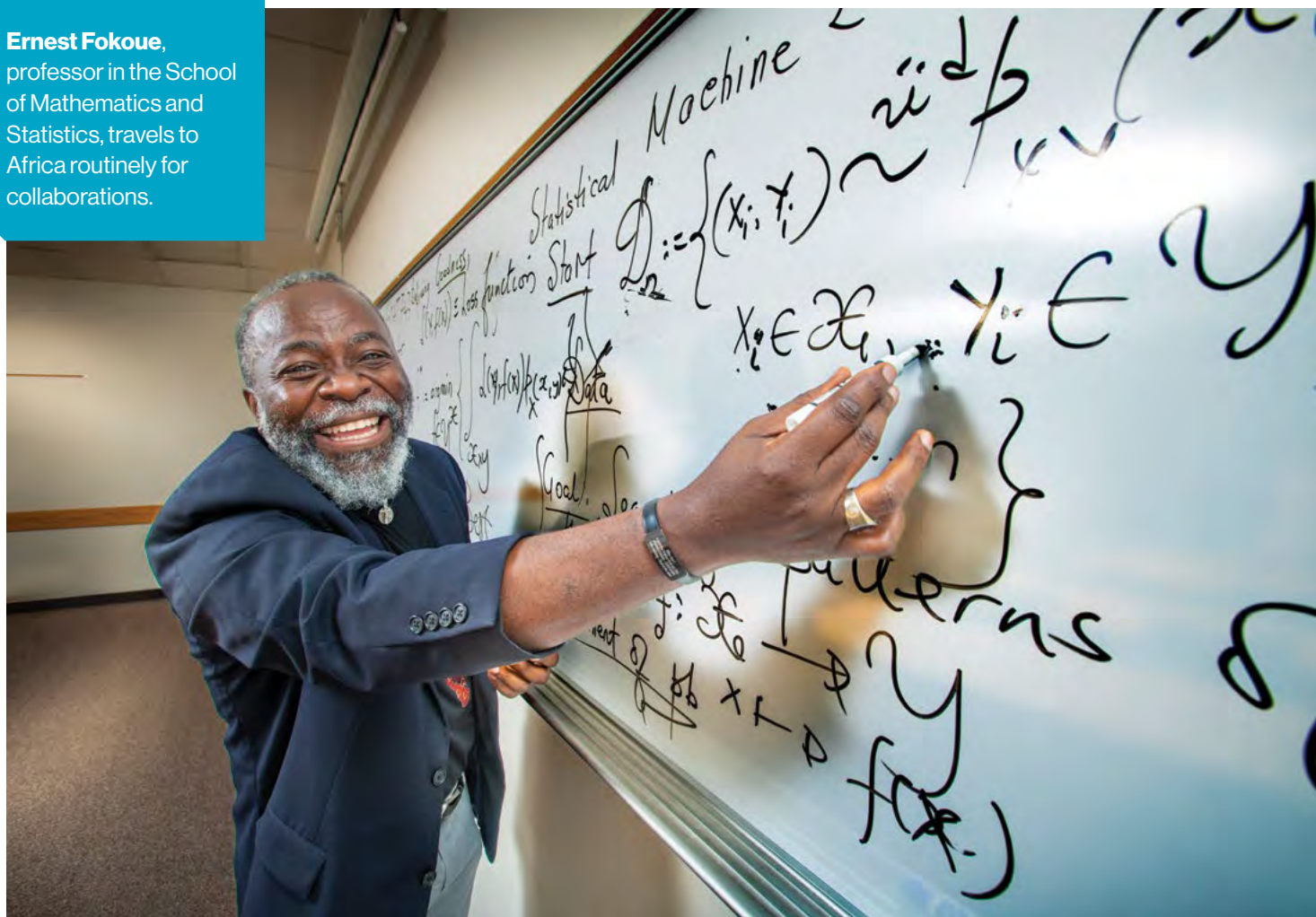
population is booming. According to the United Nations, by 2030, two-thirds of the world's population under the age of 25 will be in Africa. The increase of youthful population across the continent means the next wave of great scientists and thinkers could come from there—and RIT wants those students on its campus.

Enrollment of African students at RIT has grown in the past

decade, from 64 students in 2015 to 104 from 25 different countries in 2023. That is a trend the university hopes to keep.

"These students are critically important to us in terms of the intellectual capacity that they bring to the university," said Myers. "These are some of the best and brightest students in the world, and we are fortunate to have many of them coming to study at RIT."

Ernest Fokoue, professor in the School of Mathematics and Statistics, travels to Africa routinely for collaborations.



Carlos Ortiz

Early partnerships

RIT's connection to Africa was propelled forward when Rwandan physics professor Manasse Mbonye left RIT to become a vice rector at the University of Rwanda. He guided students, with the help of the Rwandan government, to study in RIT's imaging science graduate program.

Tony Vodacek, a professor in the Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science, visited Africa with Mbonye in 2008 and kept in touch with Mbonye once he left. The two discussed how Vodacek's environmental remote sensing research could be applied in Africa.

Vodacek has witnessed Africa's diversity and rise for decades. After living in Nigeria for a year or so when he was a child, he always wanted to find his way back to Africa. The 2008 trip opened the door to many more research opportunities in the years to follow.

"That first trip was kind of an administrative visit in a way to establish connections," explained Vodacek. "Out of that came various research projects."

Those projects have included monitoring

a major lake in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo for deadly gases, traveling to a remote rainforest in Madagascar as part of a Seneca Park Zoo research team, and, most recently, visiting Kenya to use AudioMoths to listen for elephants.

Vodacek remains closely involved in all of RIT's African partnerships. He is Amenyedzi's adviser in the PASET program.

"The population is very young and there is a lot of pressure on the natural resources there," he said. "Technology can help us understand what's going on and help with the management of that. There are a number of African students who are working on projects where they really want to make an impact for the development of their country."

Vodacek has also been instrumental in getting other RIT faculty members involved in African research.

About the same time Vodacek was making his first forays on the continent, Ernest Fokoue was starting as a professor in the School of Mathematics and Statistics at RIT.

A native of the Republic of Cameroon,

Fokoue grew up surrounded by math, and he was not the only one of his siblings to become a mathematician and professor. In 2017, he traveled back to Africa shortly after RIT became a leading partner with the African Centres of Excellence (ACE). These are World Bank-funded programs to address higher level skills development needs in the continent's priority development sectors, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Vodacek has been closely involved in the Internet of Things ACE program while Fokoue is involved with data science.

In a quest to find the next Einstein, Fokoue also started working with the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences, teaching courses in data science and participating in conferences.

"For me as an African, it's a good way to give back to Africa. It's a win-win for everyone," said Fokoue. "Momentum is shifting in Africa. AI and cloud computing are the equalizers. I am so glad that my university is trying to reach out and make the most of this."



Francisco Pinto is from Mozambique. He is working with researchers at RIT's Golisano Institute for Sustainability.

Destiny Amenyedzi plans to bring his AudioMoths work back to his home country to help improve agricultural production.

Promise Agbedanu is from Ghana. He is at RIT to further his research in the growing field of machine learning.

Relevant research

Not long after Amenyedzi arrived in Rochester during the spring 2024 semester, he and Vodacek went to the Seneca Park Zoo to set up AudioMoths around different animal enclosures to see if the animals would react during April's total solar eclipse.

Once sounds are captured with the devices, the researchers

use advanced software to target different wavelengths. Some animals make sounds at frequencies that can't be heard in the natural environment, so separating and adjusting those frequencies makes them audible and able to be studied.

Amenyedzi is using the software to study AudioMoth information from different bird

species and is then using machine learning to build a system to scare harmful birds away. He is taking full advantage of the experts here in the U.S. until he returns to Africa at the beginning of 2025.

His research is based in Rwanda but has the potential to be used in his home country of Ghana and around the world.

"We can use machine learn-

ing to train a model that will be able to identify ones that eat the crops, and whenever it detects those birds, it will trigger a system to play a scaring sound to drive them away," explained Amenyedzi. "It will reduce the impact of yield loss."

Amenyedzi's fellow PASET scholars are also utilizing RIT's technology to work on projects that will improve



Amenyedzi and Vodacek worked with Rochester's Seneca Park Zoo zookeeper Brenna DeAngelis '16 (biology), right, to install AudioMoths to see how species would react during the total solar eclipse in April.

Carlos Ortiz



Carlos Ortiz



Carlos Ortiz

The AudioMoths captured sounds from animals at the Seneca Park Zoo, including this African lion. The audio data was then analyzed with software that separated sounds based on frequencies. This collaboration built on previous work done in a rainforest in Madagascar.

their home continent.

Francisco Pinto, who is from Mozambique and studying at the Institut International d'Ingénierie de l'Eau et de l'Environnement in Burkina Faso, is researching how to optimize the gasification generated by briquettes made from sawdust and biomass in an attempt to recycle waste products into usable fuel.

Promise Agbedanu, a Ghanaian Ph.D. student at the University of Rwanda, is working on self-learning anomaly detection for the Internet of Things. His research in machine learning is an advanced approach to identify unusual patterns or outliers in data.

From ACE to PASET, RIT hopes to aid these past, current, and future initiatives and give

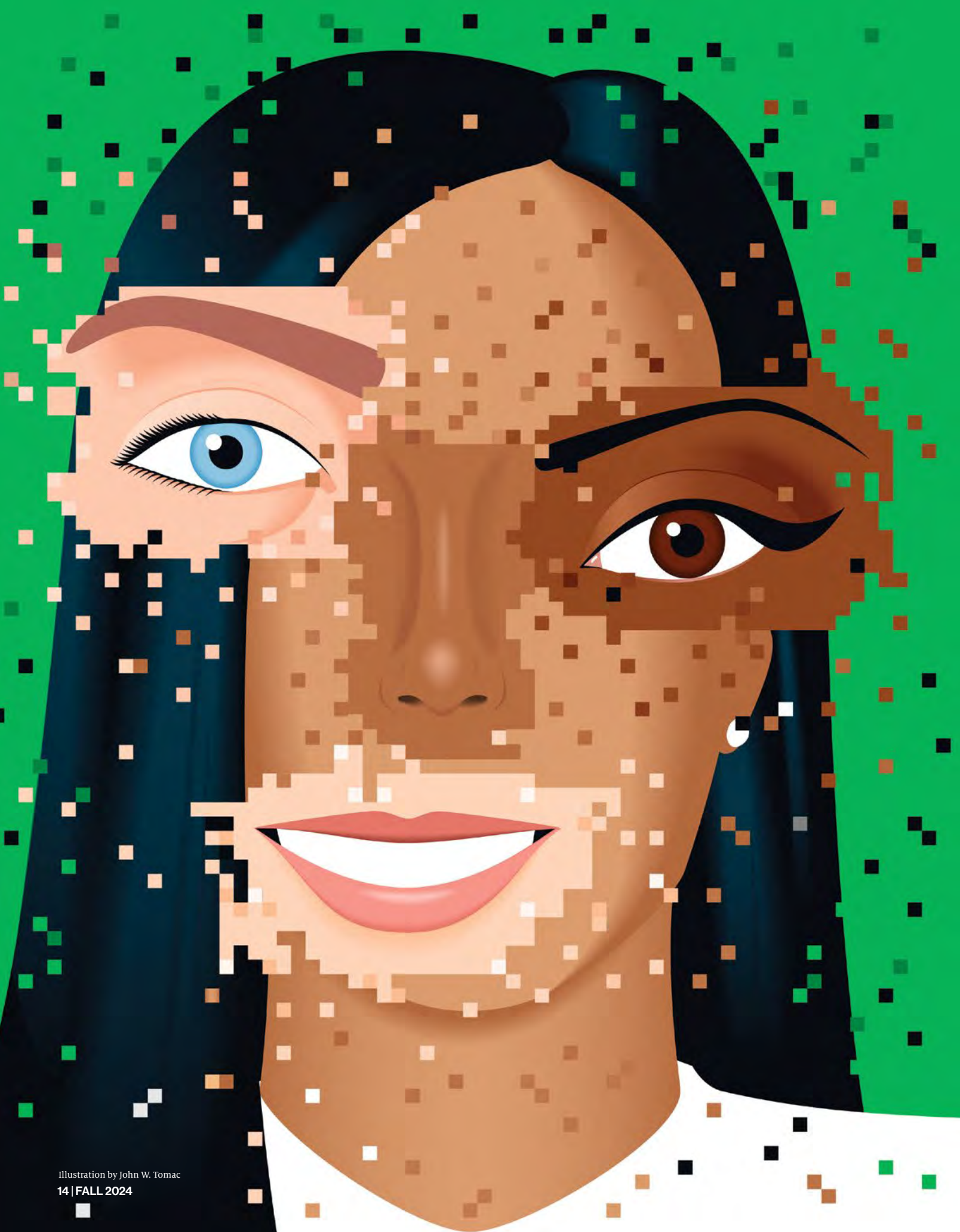
young Africans all the tools needed to make their home countries thrive.

Amenyedzi is uniquely positioned to share his experience with the next set of students and encourage the growth of cross-continent partnerships.

"I am getting a broader view of what goes into research," said Amenyedzi. "It is an amazing environment because every-

one is willing to support and I'm able to find what I need. My passion is to disseminate knowledge, so I'm going back to teach and give students the experience so they can also bring in some other ideas that could be used to improve upon our lives in whatever field they find themselves in."

Mollie Radzinski





Real or **FAKE**?

RIT EXPERTS ARE HELPING JOURNALISTS AND INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS
DETECT DIGITAL DECEPTION

Seeing is believing. Well, it used to be, anyway. Today, artificial intelligence (AI) is being used to manipulate media. It can face-swap celebrities. It allowed a de-aged Luke Skywalker to guest star in *The Mandalorian*. It also falsely showed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky surrendering to the Russian invasion.

Deepfakes are videos, audio, or images that have been altered using AI. In a deepfake, people can be shown saying and doing things that they have never said or done.

This capability has profound implications for entertainment, politics, journalism, and national security. As deepfakes become more convincing, the challenge of distinguishing fact from fiction grows, threatening the credibility of news sources and the stability of democratic institutions.

At RIT, a team of student and faculty researchers is leading the charge to help journalists and intelligence analysts figure out what is real and what is fake. Their work, called the DeFake Project, has more than \$2 million in funding from the National Science Foundation and Knight Foundation.

The RIT team aims to mobilize the best

deepfake detectors around—observant humans armed with the right tools.

“There is real danger in shiny new deepfake detectors that confidently offer often inaccurate results,” said Saniat (John) Sohrawardi, a computing and information sciences Ph.D. student leading the DeFake Project. “We need to provide journalists—and other experts who vet reality—with forensic tools that help them make decisions, not make the decisions for them.”

Journalists agree and they are working with RIT.

Scott Morgan, a reporter and producer with South Carolina Public Radio, said that it’s increasingly harder to spot a fake and a good detector tool would be invaluable. He said he’s often relying on a “would that person really have said that” kind of approach.

“And ultimately, that’s what DeFake is trying to be—a tool that supplements the journalist’s gut feeling and complements old-fashioned legwork, but doesn’t replace them,” said Morgan. “Because even an AI-driven program that analyzes videos for the teeny-tiniest of clues that it might have been doctored shouldn’t be left to make decisions about what to do with that information or disinformation.”

Spotting the fake

Matthew Wright, endowed professor and chair of the Department of Cybersecurity, first saw a high-quality deepfake lip sync of President Obama in 2017. He called it a real “OMG moment.”

“It was really disconcerting,” said Wright. “The potential to use this to make misinformation and disinformation is tremendous.”

As an expert in adversarial machine learning, Wright was studying how AI can impact cybersecurity for good and bad. Deepfakes seemed like a valuable offshoot of this.

In 2019, Wright and the newly formed DeFake Project team answered a call from the Ethics and Governance of Artificial Intelligence Initiative to build a deepfake detector. After developing some specialized techniques, their detector worked perfectly on curated deepfake datasets—it had 100-percent accuracy. Then they pulled up some YouTube videos to run through their detector.

“It would make mistakes,” said Wright. “But this wasn’t just our design. There is a cottage industry around developing deepfake detectors and none of these are foolproof, despite the claims of the company.”

Detectors can become confused when video is even slightly altered, clipped out of context, or compressed. For example, in 2019, a Myanmar news outlet used a publicly available deepfake detector to analyze a video of a chief minister confessing to a bribe. The tool was 90-percent confident that the video was fake, yet expert analysis later determined it was in fact real.

“Users tend to trust the output of decision-making tools too much,” said Sohrawardi. “You shouldn’t make a judgment based on percentage alone.”

That’s why the DeFake Project is so important, said Andrea Hickerson, dean and professor of the School of Journalism and New Media at The University of Mississippi and a member of the project. The goal is to make a tool that journalists can actually use.

“If a trusted journalist accidentally shares a deepfake, it would reach a wide audience and undermine trust in the individual and the profession as a whole,” said Hickerson, the former director of RIT’s School of Communication. “Journalists have important contextual expertise that can be paired with a deepfake detection tool to make informed judgments on the authenticity of a video and its newsworthiness.”

To better understand the journalistic process, the DeFake researchers interviewed 24 reporters, ranging from national broadcast networks to local print media. Taking inspiration from a popular tabletop game, the team created a role-playing exercise called Dungeons & Deepfakes. The journalists were placed in a high-stakes newsroom scenario and asked to verify videos using traditional methods and deep-learning-based detection tools.

The team observed that journalists diligently verify information, but they too have the potential to overrely on detection tools, just like in the Myanmar incident.

Most of all, journalists saw the overall fakeness score and had a healthy skepticism. They needed insight into its calculation. Unfortunately, AI is not inherently good at explaining the rationale behind its decisions.



Ph.D. students Saniat (John) Sohrwardi, left, Kelly Wu, and Professor Matthew Wright are part of a team at RIT's ESL Global Cybersecurity Institute researching ways to thwart deepfakes.

Real or **FAKE?**



Professor Wright, left, Sohrawardi, and Wu are developing a deepfake detection platform that helps evaluators pick out the right tool for the job.

Unboxing the black box

When Pamposh Raina is asked to investigate a potential deepfake, she checks with multiple sources and often reaches out to RIT's experts.

She is an experienced reporter who has worked with *The New York Times*, written for international publications, and currently heads the Deepfakes Analysis Unit at the Misinformation Combat Alliance, which is helping fight AI-generated misinformation in India.

One clip she questioned was being passed around social media in 2024. It was a video in Hindi that apparently featured Yogi Adityanath, chief minister of the most populated state in India, promoting a pilot gaming platform as a quick means to make a financial gain.

After running the video through detection tools from Hive AI, TrueMedia, and escalating to ElevenLabs for audio analysis, the investigators wanted an expert view on possible AI tampering around Adityanath's mouth area in the video.

The DeFake team noted that the chief minister's mouth animation looked disjointed and could be a result of the algorithm failing to extract proper facial landmarks. Ultimately, the Deepfakes Analysis Unit concluded that the video

was fake and Adityanath did not utter the words attributed to him.

Creating meaningful tools like this is why Kelly Wu, a computing and information sciences Ph.D. student, came to RIT. After completing her undergraduate degrees in mathematics and economics at Georgetown University, Wu jumped at the chance to research deepfakes with the RIT team.

"Right now, there is a huge gap between the user and detection tools, and we need to collaborate to bring that together," said Wu. "We care about how it will transition into people's hands."

Just like human brains, AI systems identify trends and make predictions. And just like in humans, it's not always clear how a model comes to any particular conclusion.

Wu is figuring out how to unbox that AI black box. She aims to produce explanations that are both faithful to the AI model and interpretable by humans.

A lot of today's detection tools use heatmaps to present explanations of results. A blob of dark red highlighting the eye region signifies that this area is more important for the model's decision-making process.

"But, even to me, it just looks like a normal eye," said Wu. "I need to know why the model thinks this is important."

RIT Research Scientist Christopher Schwartz, left, and Ph.D. student Akib Shahriyar said that deepfakes have made questioning the authenticity of media and identifying potential manipulation not just a recommendation, but a necessity.



The DeFake tool will highlight areas and provide detailed text explanations. The detector displays information on the processed content, including metadata, overall fakeness, top fake faces, and an estimation of the deepfake manipulation method used. It also incorporates provenance technology, extracting Content Credentials—a new kind of tamper-evident metadata. Due to the resource-intensive nature of AI, the tool allows people to assess specific snippets of a video.

Most recently, the DeFake Project, which now has nine members from three universities, is expanding to meet the needs of intelligence analysts.

In 2023, RIT earned a grant to work with the Department of Defense on bolstering national security and improving intelligence analysis.

RIT's team is interviewing analysts and using their insights to help create a Digital Media Forensic Ontology that makes the terminology of manipulated media detection methods clearer and more consistent.

Analysts can use the DeFake all-in-one platform along with the ontology to narrow down why content needs to be analyzed, where in the media analysts should focus their attention, and what artifacts they should look for.

Candice Gerstner, an applied research mathematician with the Department of Defense, is collaborating on the project. She said that when analysts write a report that will be passed up the chain, they need to be sure that information has integrity.

"I'm not satisfied with a single detector that says 99 percent—I want more," said Gerstner. "Having tools that are easily adaptable to new techniques and that continue to strive for explainability and low error rates is extremely important."

In the future, the DeFake Project plans to expand to law enforcement, who are worried about fake evidence getting into the court system. RIT students are also researching reinforcement learning to limit bias and make sure AI models are fair.

Akib Shahriyar, a computing and information sciences Ph.D. student, is taking it one step further. He's attacking the underlying model that powers the DeFake tool to uncover its weaknesses.

"In the end, we're not just creating a detector and throwing it out there, where it could be exploited by adversaries," said Shahriyar. "We're building trust with the users by taking a responsible approach to deepfake detection."

Scott Bureau '11, '16 MBA

How to identify a deepfake

Although RIT's DeFake tool is not publicly available, here are some common ways to identify fake content.

■ Artifacts in the face

Look for inconsistencies in eye reflections and gaze patterns. Anomalies may occur in the face—unnatural smoothness, absence of outlines of individual teeth, and irregular facial hair.

■ Body posture

Deepfakes prioritize altering facial features, so body movements could appear odd or jerky.

■ Audio discrepancies

Does the audio sync seamlessly with the speaker's mouth movements?

■ Contextual analysis

Consider the broader context, including the source, timestamps, and post history.

■ External verification

Do a reverse image search and try contacting the original sources.

■ Check the news

Look for reports about the content in reputable news sites.

How do deepfakes work?

The process uses AI deep learning algorithms to analyze thousands of images and videos of the person being replicated. The neural network then recognizes patterns, like facial features, so it can continuously generate new ones.



Carrying coach's lacrosse

Jake Coon coaches the RIT men's lacrosse team at the 2024 Division III national championship in Philadelphia on May 26. It was the team's third appearance in a national title game in four years.

Traci Westcott



Traci Westcott

lessons into life

Coach Coon says a key to building a top program is balance. His notes during this year's first team meeting focus on the importance of family and academics.

When David Burke '11 (civil engineering technology) is leading multimillion-dollar construction projects for The Whiting-Turner Contracting Co., the lessons he learned playing lacrosse under RIT Coach Jake Coon about integrity and treating people fairly guide his actions.

Chris Cherami '11 (graphic design) often thinks about Coon's ability to get members focused on one goal, especially when he created his adventure bag company MULUS.

Ian Dominick '13 (mechanical engineering) knows from his years playing RIT lacrosse that no matter how tired he is, he can still find a way to get

something done as a sales engineer for Hobbs & Associates.

Burke, Cherami, and Dominick were all members of Coon's first team at RIT in 2010. And they, like other lacrosse alumni, carry these lessons with them in their professional and personal lives.

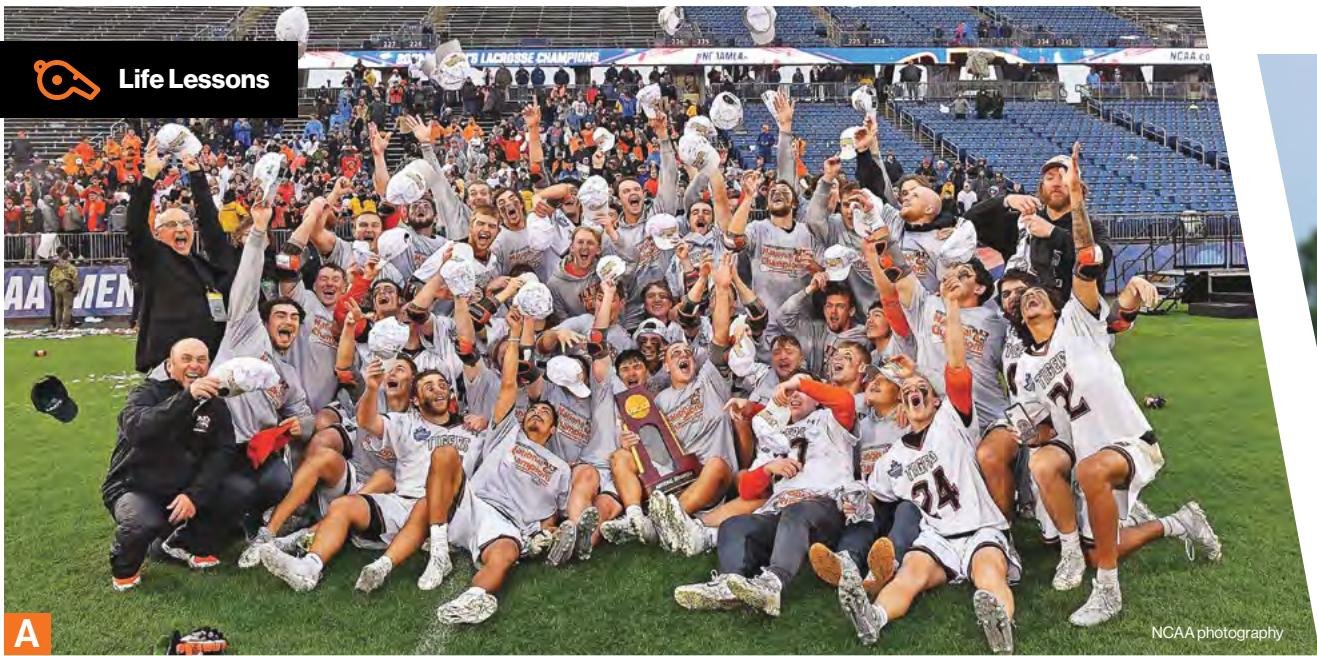
Coon has turned RIT men's lacrosse into a national powerhouse. Consider the statistics. He has the highest winning percentage (.903) in all NCAA divisions. Every year, his teams have appeared in the NCAA Division III Tournament and two have won national championships. He has coached 108 All-Americans, athletes considered to be the best in their sport.

Coon, though, prefers to talk about the

15 classes of leaders he helped shape and the assistant coaches who worked with him to build a top-notch program. The key to their success, he says, has always been balance. First comes family, followed by academics. Then there's lacrosse and a social life.

Jacqueline Nicholson, RIT's executive director of Intercollegiate Athletics, said that recipe for success involves Coon being a father figure to players while they are in school and then transitioning into a friend role after graduation.

"He is building not just that community that is there for four years but a lacrosse community that is there for a lifetime," she said.



A

NCAA photography



B

Rich Barnes

Coming to RIT

Coon considered playing lacrosse at RIT in the late 1990s. But the native of 6,000-population Homer, N.Y., found a better fit at Nazareth College (now Nazareth University) across town in Rochester.

He was a star goalie and four-time All-American at Nazareth and ended up staying there after graduation from 2001 to 2005 to coach the goalies and defense. Coon also played professionally for the

Rochester Knighthawks. He had moved on to defensive coordinator at the University of Massachusetts when the RIT head-coaching position opened.

Coon applied, he said, because he was interested in moving his young family back to upstate New York and becoming a head coach at a growing university. Initially, though, RIT wasn't super interested in him.

"I was somewhere around the fourth pick," Coon said, grinning.

Cherami, who was a player representative on the hiring committee

along with Burke, remembers thinking that Coon was the change the players had been seeking.

"Probably the best thing he did in that interview with us, which is probably the biggest thing to our success, is that he wanted to know what we were thinking," the Jersey City, N.J., resident said. "He said, 'I am not here to make this my show.'"

By the time Coon started that fall of 2009, his players had already begun fall ball, the period when spring sports are allowed to have formal practices.



Traci Westcott

C

A Men's lacrosse won its first national championship in a stunning double overtime classic in 2021.

Burke remembers driving from a co-op with Whiting-Turning in Baltimore to RIT for one of Coon's first practices.

"It was a sticker shock," said Burke, who now lives in Charlotte, N.C. "Jake came in and just lit a fire under everybody. We knew this guy was legit."

The fire was in the form of conditioning.

Coon's philosophy has always been that the team in the best shape is going to have success.

"We jokingly called him the time bandit," said Dominick, who lives

B The team celebrates after winning its second national championship in 2022.

in Baltimore. "We would show up for practice and before we knew it four hours had disappeared."

There was also another element that changed the dynamic of Coon's introduction to RIT.

Player Willie Rago, who was in his first year, was diagnosed with cancer and was unable to compete. Rago died in September 2010.

"One of our main pillars is being thankful for the opportunity to play and that was definitely true immediately the first year in our

C Coach Coon is also engaged in lacrosse in the Rochester community. Here, he gives instructions during a summer camp.

program," Coon said. "The guys had a deeper understanding of what playing the game really meant."

Although it was a tough year that started with two losses, Coon's first team ended up winning the conference championship as well as its first game in the NCAA Tournament.

Coon gives the credit to the players, who he says set the tone for the next 14 years.

"This program wouldn't be where it is today if those guys took a different path."



Traci Westcott

“Other teams know they had better be ready for RIT men’s lacrosse,” said Jacqueline Nicholson, RIT’s executive director of Intercollegiate Athletics. “I think that says something about what he is doing and what he has built.”



Coach Coon credits his staff, including Assistant Coach Shawn Wilkins '02, for the program's success.



Traci Westcott

Building a program

Coon's teams have continued to excel, losing no more than three times a season since that first year.

By his side the entire time has been assistant coach Shawn Wilkins '02 (hospitality and service management).

"Jake is the father figure, and I am kind of like the uncle," Wilkins said. "We balance each other out really well. Jake is super organized. He is very detailed, very thorough. I am more creative. I allow guys a little more freedom. I am allowed to do that because I am the offensive coach."

Three years after Coon and Wilkins started, the Tigers played for the national championship.

They won the national title for the first time in 2021 in a double overtime thriller against Salisbury University.

Alex Maruna '21 (mechanical engineering) said that was a once-in-a-lifetime event for him and other seniors following the COVID-19 pandemic. It also was special because during his first year on the team, they lost the championship to Salisbury.

They were successful, Maruna said, in part because players kept the game in perspective. They focused on being thankful for the opportunity to participate in a championship instead of the stress of the national stage. The team even visited Dave & Buster's arcade before the game to "stay loose and happy."

Maruna said he learned from Coon how to push through when things get tough, how to prioritize, and how to set a high standard of excellence—skills he uses in his job as a senior engineer at Enica Engineering in New York City.

"He adapts to the people in the locker room, people's strengths and their weaknesses," said the defensive player, who spent a lot of time with Coon. "He isn't stuck on what he has done in the past. He is pushing to get the most potential out of each guy."

Wilkins said a unique aspect of RIT men's lacrosse is that there is no hierarchy among the players.

"There are 58 guys in that locker room, and they are all equal. If you are a freshman, you can be yourself right away. You don't have to wait until junior year or senior year to

By the numbers

Men's lacrosse under Coach Jake Coon

- **.90301** – Coon's winning percentage, the highest of all time ahead of Salisbury University Coach Jim Berkman at .90282
- **270** – wins, the most in program history
- **5** – national championship game appearances in 2013, 2017, 2021, 2022, 2024
- **2** – national championships in 2021 and 2022
- **10** – NCAA Final Four appearances
- **14** – straight NCAA Tournament appearances — there was no NCAA Tournament in 2020
- **108** – All-Americans
- **2** – national players of the year



break out of your shell.”

It’s a culture people want to join. On a recent afternoon, Coon scrolled through pages and pages of players from all over the United States and Canada who want to come to RIT.

Every athlete wants to play for a successful program, said Jack Langan, chair of the Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, a national group that provides insight on the student-athlete experience.

“Top-tier programs often bring in top students,” Langan said. “The competitive drive to succeed on the field frequently bleeds into the academic world, leading to high-performing students.”

This high-performing culture in some ways is just beginning. Both Coon and Wilkins said they want to get back to the national championship game, which they lost last season to Tufts University in Philadelphia.

Next academic year, the team will play in a new \$30 million stadium. Every year, Coon said, he and his coaches will focus on continuing to improve the program, as well as growing an active alumni base. Coon corresponds with nearly 700 alumni and friends of RIT lacrosse regularly.

“We will continue to develop young men into great citizens. We will continue to excel off the field, in the classroom, and in the community,” Coon said. “Some of those things are a little more important than wins and losses. I think those are important too, don’t get me wrong. We want to win. But I think the bigger picture is just as important.”

Athletic Director Nicholson said Coon has been recruited for Division I coaching positions but he has stayed because he is invested in the local community and RIT.

Coon said he has no plans to leave.

“I have thought about it for a brief second,” he said. “You know what, I am taken care of here. I feel appreciated here. I am in a good place.”

Mindy Mozer



A sea of orange was on display at the national championship game last May in Philadelphia. Lacrosse alumni stay in touch and show up for big games. “We had alumni fly in from all over the country,” said Alex Maruna ’21.



Traci Westcott



Rendering by LaBella Associates and Populous

Coming Soon

The \$30 million Tiger Stadium, which will become the home of men's and women's lacrosse and soccer teams, is expected to open in fall 2025.

The 38,823-square-foot facility will seat 1,180, with additional capacity in the hospitality room, along with standing room.

Amenities for the new stadium include team locker rooms; a training room with two large hot and cold tubs, taping tables, and exam tables; media suite; concession area; hospitality room with glass viewing wall; and an outdoor concourse.

The stadium architect is LaBella Associates, with support in the design process by Populous, a nationally recognized stadium design firm. Construction is being managed by Pike Construction Services.

WITR

COME FOR THE

MUSIC

STAY FOR THE

COMMUNITY

Julianna Upham, a second-year illustration major, joined RIT's college radio station because of her passion for music. But being in a community with like-minded people from across the university is what keeps her engaged.

"It's easy to connect with people through music," said Upham, from Chester Springs, Pa. "The station really brings you together and helps you see how much you have in common with someone you've just met."

Nestled in the basement of the Student Alumni Union (SAU), the WITR radio station space is a treasure trove of music, personalities, and nostalgia. The station and the music have greatly evolved since its first broadcast in 1961, but one thing has remained constant: the tight-knit network of students and alumni.

The opportunity to make connections on such a large campus is what drew Sejjemba Magoye to WITR from the small town of Golden, Colo.

"It's one of those things that is so easy to stumble into, and then it becomes such a serious part of your college experience," said Magoye, a second-year game design and development major.

Upham and Magoye are just two of the hundreds of community members, past and present, who keep the station's air-waves flowing.

Keep reading to discover some of the station's student-led projects, on-air personalities, and brains behind the technology.

Joining a community of like-minded people with a passion for music is what draws most students to the station, according to Julianna Upham, left, and Sejjemba Magoye, right.



89.7 FM
WITR



Join the station's broadcast on
89.7 FM or scan the code to
listen from the station's website.

Photos by Traci Westcott

The variety of genres and station history housed in WITR's music library is a source of inspiration to draw from when curating radio show playlists. It even inspired some student-led projects in recent years. From left: Mikayla Stolarsky, Caitlin McCabe, and Riley Mason.



DOCUMENTING AND REVIVING STATION HISTORY

WITR's music library contains over 80,000 CDs and vinyl discs. Fourth-year student Riley Mason was enthralled by the collection when she became a member of WITR.

"Access to the library is a really big selling point for members to join, but in practice, finding specific items in the collection wasn't easy," said Mason, from Mililani, Hawaii. "It was like an adventure every time you went in there."

This past spring, Mason and Caitlin McCabe '24 (museum studies and history)

embraced their background as museum studies students and created a new cataloging system to better document what was in the library.

The collection's genres range from alternative music to jazz, rap, country, reggae, metal, and beyond—truly embodying the station's tagline, "modern music and more!"

McCabe said that the variety within the collection reflects the many students who helped build it through the years.

"It's like the layers in sandstone. It's a

physical manifestation that shows what genres were really popular among our students at all the different points of time since the station first began," said McCabe.

As the pair dug into their project, it sparked other members' interest. Some wanted to help with the library cataloging, and others, like Emma Nastro '24 (museum studies), were motivated to learn more about WITR's history.

After finding copies of past WITR program guides in the RIT Archives, Nastro felt



inspired to revive them. While they started as an advertisement for the station, members added their own spice to the guides over the years by including illustrations, inside jokes, and campus commentary.

“You could tell how much history and community was in the station when reading the old guides, and we wanted to share our own story,” said Nastro, from Oceanside, N.Y.

In December 2023, WTR started releasing new program guides, distributed exclusively in print at select locations around

campus—an homage to the guides’ origins. Now that Nastro has graduated, Mikayla Stolarsky is taking the lead on editing and producing the new guides.

“It’s incredible to be able to take this part of the station’s history and give it a new life,” said Stolarsky, WTR member and fourth-year individualized program major studying design and studio art, from Newton, N.J. “If people have half as much fun reading the guides as we have making them, it’s all worth it.”

INS & OUTS

INS AND OUTS

WITR's program guides have always contained helpful information, like specialty show schedules and event dates, but the more exciting elements showcased the station's culture. Silly comics, inside jokes, "Top 20 Tunes" lists, and editorial commentary gave others a glimpse into the community of students that ran the station.

When reviewing older program guides, current station members were particularly interested in the "Ins and Outs" sections, which explained what was and wasn't considered popular at the time. Here is a comparison of the "Ins and Outs" from 1968, top, and 2024, bottom.

Winter Quarter
Line-Up of programming.
Thus far, the following
listing of shows are
in effect as of 1/8/68:

MON. 9-1a.m. TIGER
 TONES
TUES 9-1a.m. RIGHT NOW
 FOLK
WED. 9-1a.m. CONCERT
 UNDER STARS
Thurs 9-1a.m. NIGHTLIFE
FRI. 9-1a.m. J. KUDER
SAT. 1-7:30a.m. DOG
 HOUSE
SUN. 8-9p.m. BOSWELL
 9-10 HIDE AWAY
 10- 11 MUSIC
 11-1a.m. FACTORY
 HIDE AWAY

program notes:

Make sure you check out Harry & his harmonica & good farm apparatus on "Right Now Folk" with Harry Schaefer, Tues. nights, 9 until 1 a.m.
"NightLife with Kerry Becker" will devote an entire show to the Beatles on Thurs., Jan. 11th from 9 until 1 a.m.

STAFF MEETING: Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Union.

Sgt. Pepper is IN.
Kent Hall is IN.
White socks are definitely OUT!
NRH's 4th floor is IN.
Being a viking is IN.
This Rochester cold weather is OUT.
Troup St. is still very much IN.
Salt on the streets is OUT.
#122 film is OUT.
Fall Quarter is OUT (and over with.)
"Que pasa" is IN.
Pink sneakers are OUT
Mini-skirts are OUT.
Girls in mini-skirts are definitely IN though!
Iowa is OUT.
Ioway is IN.
Dr. Spock is OUT (on bail.)
Billy Jo is OUT.
Billy Batson is IN.
Listening to WITR at 600 k.c. is IN.
The Small Faces are IN
Listening to the Music Factory is IN.
Listening to other radio stations is definitely OUT.
Reading INS & OUTS is IN, IN, IN!

89.7 WITR Program Guide
MAY 2024

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| in: | out: |
| -blogs | -finals |
| -taking your meds | -avoidance |
| -eating dirt | -pennies |
| -curiosity | -snapchat |
| -flip phones | -coffee |
| -open windows | -algorithms |
| -juggling | -corporate greed |
| -clementines | -allergies |
| -board games | -popcorn kernel |
| -taken big juicy naps | -Munson (lit) |

listening to WITR is always in B-)

Follow WITR! @WITR897 everywhere that's cool!

Real WITR-heads are in the discord... email our MAL! MAL@wittr.rit.edu





THE PERSONALITY BEHIND THE MICROPHONE

Erik Golen '03 (computer engineering), '09 Ph.D. (computing and information sciences), senior lecturer for Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences, made his DJ debut on WITR in March 2020.

Known on air as "DJ Boston Erik," Golen hosts *That Flannel Show*, a specialty '90s grunge and alternative program that broadcasts every Friday from 9 a.m. to noon in Studio X, which opened in 2015 on the first floor of the SAU. Below, he shares insights on being a DJ.

How does one become a DJ at the station?

Typically, you start by training with the station's program director. They teach you what you should and shouldn't do on air and the general flow for a show. Then you can host shows on the WITR Underground, which streams on our website. To host a show on FM radio in Studio X, you have to create and pass a two-hour demo show.

How do you curate a show?

I like to do themed sets. Sometimes they're inspired by a listener's request, other times I'll do band tributes. I usually start the show with my own selections to give people time to tune in for their requests. After the show, I document the playlist so I can track what I've played. I try to not repeat songs too much other than "Cheesecake Truck" and "Closing Time," which are weekly staples.

Can you still play CDs and vinyls from the music library on air?

We have three CD players that are connected to our soundboard. When you load up a CD, you pick a track, and it sits there waiting until you press the fire button. Some DJs still play a ton of vinyl, so we also have two turntables so you can have one vinyl spinning while you load up the next one.

ENGINEERS KEEP THE AIRWAVES FLOWING

The station engineers may be invisible to the audience, but their behind-the-scenes efforts ensure that music flows freely.

Remy Rattner joined WITR's engineering department during his first year at RIT. Now, as chief engineer, he helps his team oversee "anything that plugs in" at the station. This includes managing the equipment and playback systems in both of WITR's broadcast studios, the station's website and its servers, the transmitter site at the top of Mark Ellingson Hall, and more.

"Our priority is ensuring that our on-air product has the best sound possible. It's

the driving force behind everything we do," said Rattner, from Greenwich, Conn.

Many of the engineers come from RIT's computing college, but anyone who is willing to learn can work with the team. Rattner himself is a third-year management information systems major, which is based in Saunders College of Business.

In recent years, the engineering team has embarked on projects big and small, including renovating and rebuilding both of WITR's broadcast studios.

Former chief engineer Mike Vasile '22 (computing and information technologies),

who currently serves as a WITR station adviser, initiated projects that brought the station's systems up to industry standards, including replacing equipment to produce a higher quality sound and increase the reach of the station's broadcast. He now works as a computer support administrator at RIT.

"The ability to work on something like this that the average person doesn't get to see is really special," said Vasile. "I think all of my experiences working at the station as a student taught me valuable lessons that I still use in my current job."



Remy Rattner got a glimpse of WITR's tech on top of Mark Ellingson Hall as a first-year student. Above, he works at the site with Alex Polge '24 (computing and information technologies), left, a WITR technical adviser.

WITR ALUMNI THROWBACKS

In addition to the over 60 current members of the station, WITR has an impressive cohort of alumni. Three shared what they were listening to as students.

Michael Lambert '74 (photography)

Founder and chairman of Lambert Media Group in Los Angeles

What artists were on your playlists?

Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, The Doors, The Rolling Stones, and a lot of folk rock.

Why did you want to be part of WITR?

Being able to put WITR on my resume helped me get my job at Viacom. It's a great opportunity for current students.



Alumnus
Michael Lambert recently returned to campus to get a tour of WITR's upgraded facilities.

Ken Huth '88 (professional photographic illustration), aka DJ Adam

Professional photographer and owner of HuthPhoto in Durham, N.C.

What artists were on your playlists?

Dead Kennedys, The Clash, The Cure, Joy Division, and the Ramones.

Why did you want to be part of WITR?

They were the tastemakers, exposing people to new music and easing them into something cooler than mainstream radio.

Rick Kittles '89 (biology), aka DJ Playzay

Professor and senior vice president for research at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta

What artists were on your playlists?

KRS-One, EPMD, Run-DMC, Queen Latifah, Rakim, and a lot of MC Lyte.

Why did you want to be part of WITR?

WITR had an iconic presence on and off campus and brought a sense of belonging and community.

Felicia Swartzenberg '19

Chris Wairegi '14, a cinematographer based in Brooklyn, N.Y., created a group to help unify Black women in the film industry.

Grad brings together Black women in the film industry

When walking into the workplace, one might assume that the staff would be as diverse as the local community it's in. Chris Wairegi '14 (cinematography and photography), a cinematographer based in Brooklyn, N.Y., found that this isn't the case in the film industry.

"I've worked jobs where there are at least 200 people on set and I'm the only Black woman. When I walk around New York City I pass every kind of person, so it's surprising when that does not carry over into the workplace," said Wairegi. "My dream of dreams is that the film and television industries reflect the world in which they operate."

Wairegi is the founder of 600 Black Women, a collective of motion picture filmmakers, still photographers, and publicists who are Black women, femmes, and gender expansive people in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 600 guild.

When Wairegi was recruited for a job by a large television network, she was required to join the guild. After joining, another Black woman informed her that she was the fourth Black woman camera operator in the union.

"I thought she was joking, but then I got onto set and every person I came across said that they've never seen a Black woman operator or had never seen Black women in the camera department at all," she said.

Wairegi explained that these comments weren't meant to be negative, it was just a reflection of the industry.

Of the over 10,000 current members of the union, only





108 of them are Black women, femmes, or nonbinary—and they are all members of 600 Black Women. Since its founding in 2022, the collective continues to grow and now hosts annual “camera cookouts,” where members meet for a series of workshops and networking on Juneteenth weekend.

Wairegi said that professional networking is actually the least important opportunity that the

group provides. She described the camaraderie between members as “part friendship, part mentorship, and part therapy.”

“All of us at one time, in whatever industry you’re in, had someone who gave us an extra boost to help us achieve a goal. That’s what 600 Black Women is all about,” said Wairegi. “We benefit from each other by supporting each other. It’s a network of people who are dedicated to

seeing you win.”

When reflecting on the growth of 600 Black Women, Wairegi shared that she believes that everyone has the capability to make change happen and that it isn’t always as difficult as it may seem.

“If there is something in your world that you’d like to change, you might be the person you’ve been waiting for,” she said.

Felicia Swartzenberg ’19

EchoMentor creates a new wave of sonographers

An online community for sonographers channels the professional excellence and passion that is a hallmark of RIT's diagnostic medical sonography program.

Hayley Bartkus '17 (diagnostic medical sonography) and Christina Werth '13 (diagnostic medical sonography) created EchoMentor as an educational platform for healthcare professionals working in sonography or ultrasound, a medical imaging method that uses sound waves to peer inside the body.

EchoMentor is an evolving resource for continuing education, mentorship, professional development, and patient-focused case studies.

It launched last spring with Bartkus teaching "Approaching Appendicitis." New content this fall included her class on kidney transplants, and Werth's session on fetal skeletal dysplasia. Colleague Samantha

Grimsley '15 (diagnostic medical sonography), a vascular sonographer at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates, taught a third class on subclavian steal syndrome, a condition in which the subclavian artery narrows and causes blood flow reversal in the vertebral artery.

Courses developed for EchoMentor are accredited by the American Society of Radiologic Technologists and satisfy continuing medical education requirements of the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers and the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists.

EchoMentor grew from the co-founders' experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, when they worked together in high-risk maternal fetal medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. They saw first-hand the need to promote the important—yet often overlooked—role





Sonography graduates **Christina Werth '13**, left, and **Hayley Bartkus '17** created an educational platform for lifelong learners in their field.

Jackie Molloy

sonography plays in healthcare, said Bartkus, director of the diagnostic medical sonography program at Johns Hopkins Schools of Medical Imaging and host of the ultrasound podcast *256 Shades of Gray*.

EchoMentor represents a grassroots effort to bring awareness and visibility to a profession that emerged alongside technological advances in the latter part of the 20th century.

“One of the gaps we want to fill with EchoMentor is helping sonographers learn how they can further their careers without leaving the field,” said Werth, an echosonographer at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “Opportunities are unclear because those paths aren’t yet well forged.”

As an online platform, EchoMentor can work toward establishing professional representation. To Bartkus, that means being part of the conversation around current issues facing the medical field, such as gender affirming care and the Black maternal health crisis.

“EchoMentor is meant to empower other sonographers to get excited and motivated about these things, too,” Bartkus said. “It’s how they can make a change in the field and in the world because sonography is life-saving healthcare.”

The name of their organization underscores the importance

of mentorship in the niche ultrasound field, said Werth, who mentored both Bartkus and Grimsley. EchoMentor will expand to include a mentorship program with a lineage that traces back to Hamad Ghazle, director of RIT’s diagnostic medical sonography program and an influential figure in the field.

In many ways, EchoMentor is a conduit for sharing Ghazle’s legacy in ultrasound education and imparting his high level of excellence and joy for sonography, Bartkus said.

Graduates from the RIT program have a reputation for growing in their positions and embodying an inclusive, extra quality that lifts up the people around them.

“They want to do more than the bare minimum of scanning patients,” Werth said. “They want to be involved in education and research, mentorship opportunities, patient-care improvement, and quality projects.”

This is where EchoMentor comes in as a resource for lifelong learning that furthers the profession and helps patients.

“We learned from our time at RIT that when you’re passionate about what you do, that passion trickles into all areas of your life and can make for a joyful career,” Werth said.

Susan Gawlowicz '95

Open source opens doors at Red Hat

As a Fedora community architect, Justin W. Flory '20 (networking and systems administration) wears many hats.

He is a community liaison, accountant, and project manager—all rolled into one. Most of all, he's a leader at Red Hat working on the strategic direction of the Fedora Project, a cornerstone of the Linux open source movement.

Open work is non-proprietary—meaning it's licensed in a way that is publicly accessible and anyone can modify and share it. The original term for open source came out of the software industry.

"Open source is a set of rules and guidelines about protecting freedoms, but it's also a movement of people—that's what has always attracted me to it," said Flory, who is based out of Atlanta.

Flory fell in love with open source in high school, when he used it to play and run a *Minecraft* game server. After he learned that RIT offers the first-ever minor in free and open source software and free culture, he applied to the university early decision. He also arrived at school a week early in order to attend Flock to Fedora, a global open source event that was coincidentally being held in Rochester that year.

At RIT, Flory learned how to use the technological and social sides of open source to share and analyze data and improve collaboration among global, decentralized teams. He also volunteered with

Red Hat, and through an RIT initiative, he earned a co-op with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), where he helped grow a community around a mapping project that visualizes schools around the world and their connectivity to the internet.

Now, Flory has joined Red Hat and the Fedora Project, which produces the popular open source Fedora Linux operating system. It's used by millions—from small nonprofits to Meta.

Flory collaborates on projects that make it easier to develop artificial intelligence solutions on a Linux platform and RISC-V hardware architecture for developing open source microprocessors. He is also promoting outreach to engage more open source creators from underrepresented places.

Four people have now taken on the role of Fedora community architect and three of them have been RIT alumni. The newest intern is also a current RIT student.


Most recently, Flory ran the annual Flock to Fedora conference and he brought it back to Rochester for 2024. Nearly 120 contributors came together from 14 countries to exchange ideas and improve society.

"If you told me nine years ago that I'd be making a career out of organizing Flock and these projects, I wouldn't have believed you. RIT helped open the door for me to this incredible community."

Scott Bureau '11, '16 MBA

While at RIT, **Justin Flory '20** found a community of like-minded open source enthusiasts.

Scott Hamilton



Valerie Horn '19, '19 MS
hopes to change the way
businesses approach
accessibility practices.

Carlos Ortiz

Passion for prioritizing accessibility **inspires alumna**

Valerie Horn '19 (public policy), '19 MS (science, technology, and public policy) believes accessibility should be at the forefront of entrepreneurs' minds when developing their businesses. This belief pushed her to co-found Zestability, a consultation firm that advocates for prioritizing accessibility and inclusive business practices.

"I want everyone to have more choices. Deaf people and people with disabilities often have limited options, and that can also mean limited quality of services or products. It can be a very frustrating experience, and I've encountered that many times myself," said Horn.

The mission of Zestability, co-founded by Horn and Sheila Xu, is to "change the way industries approach accessibility." They collaborate with businesses to create innovative, inclusive, and accessible solutions for customers both with and without disabilities.

"The global disability market is \$13 trillion in annual spending. That market includes people with disabilities, but it also includes their families, friends, and

government agencies," said Horn. "When companies invest in accessible practices, it can create loyalty among their customer base. If they make a bad impression by not being inclusive, customers are not going to use those services again."

Since graduating from RIT, Horn has worked at several nonprofits in roles focused on policy and advocacy work for people with disabilities. She met Xu when she relocated to Boston for her current position as the nonprofit manager of Deaf Inc. The pair bonded by venting their frustrations over obstacles they've faced as deaf women due to businesses not prioritizing accessibility, and they channeled those frustrations into this new business venture.

Zestability was founded in early 2024. To Horn's delight, the majority of their clients have been new startup companies. These companies benefit from consultations for product and customer experience development, as well as research and design feedback from Zestability's disability network.

"People reach out to us because they're not sure how to include accessibility within their products, and we help guide them,"

said Horn. "We're really happy to work with them at that beginning stage. Once a business has already developed products and information, backtracking to make things more accessible takes more time and money to fix."

For clients seeking to improve their established offerings, Horn and Xu provide accessibility evaluations, language consulting, training workshops, and other services regarding appropriate practices and language needed to maximize inclusivity.

A passion for breaking barriers and inspiring people to achieve their goals is the motivation behind Horn's work. She said that her time at RIT helped her realize that she could use her skills and experiences to make a difference.

"I did a lot of advocacy work for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community through my sorority, Alpha Sigma Alpha, and through Student Government. I think the self-confidence I gained through those experiences really helped me get to this point in my career," said Horn.

Felicia Swartzenberg '19

Amazon executive supports new path for cybersecurity students

Arthur Deane '08 (electrical engineering) broke into the cybersecurity industry and he hasn't looked back. Now, he's helping others unlock opportunities in cybersecurity, paving the way for a more diverse and inclusive tech industry.

Deane has become a leader in the field and currently works in Washington, D.C., as Chief Information Security Officer at Amazon Health Services. On the same week that he started that CISO role, he also established an endowed scholarship fund to support African American, Latin American, and Native American students enrolled in cybersecurity at RIT.

"I rarely had someone who looked like me and was doing things I aspired to do, someone whose shoes I could see myself in," said Deane. "I want to give people what I wish I had, so they can thrive in this rigorous program. My scholarship recipients are also future mentees."

Growing up, Deane enjoyed exploring technology and breaking things—just to put them back together. He chose to attend RIT for the practical engineering experience and the co-op program. There was no cybersecurity degree at the time, but Deane saw electrical engineering as the ideal place to learn all things technology.

"It was an eye-opener in terms of diversity—coming from the Bronx where all my peers were people of color, then going to a program that was not very diverse," said Deane. "In some ways, it prepared me for corporate America, where I got used to being the only one in the room."

One year into his electrical engineering career, he noticed that government and industry were starting to take cybersecurity seriously. He was working on a small intelligence community program and he pivoted full force into the cyber world.

"It piqued my intellectual curiosity

because the field changes every day," said Deane. "I tried a bunch of different cyber roles to learn all the different components of the industry, from penetration testing to doing digital forensics, and even less technical areas like risk management."

Deane's many cybersecurity leadership roles at Amazon, Google, and Capital One have shaped his perspective on balancing the tensions between security, compliance, and innovation. He emphasizes the importance of meeting regulatory compliance while striving for top-tier security. Now, with Amazon Health, he's driving innovative solutions that allow the health-care business to advance securely.

"I'm excited by the opportunity to transform an industry as critical as healthcare, with security and privacy driving much of the innovation," said Deane.

Deane's commitment to opening the world of cybersecurity extends beyond his office job. He has written books on cybersecurity certifications, which are an important way for people to enter the cybersecurity industry and hone their skills. He is also an adjunct instructor at American University, a member of the Computer Science Advisory Board at Howard University, and a member of RIT's Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences National Council.

Deane enjoys international travel and learning about local cultures. He said that getting different viewpoints is important for cybersecurity, too.

"Relying on a single perspective limits our ability to understand and address complex problems," said Deane. "Building diverse organizations and encouraging broad viewpoints ensures that we can effectively tackle the large problems that we see every day in this industry."

Scott Bureau '11, '16 MBA



Arthur Deane '08 is in Washington, D.C., leading cybersecurity for Amazon Health and finding ways to create a more diverse cybersecurity industry.



BRICK CITY HOMECOMING & FAMILY WEEKEND 2024

A Alaqua Cox, who portrays Marvel Cinematic Universe character Echo on Disney+, discussed being a superhero, an Indigenous actor, and an advocate for the Deaf community.

B Joseph Caldwell '74 joined other members of the Class of 1974 to share memories at the Golden Circle event, which honors graduates celebrating 50 years or more as RIT alumni.

C Students and community members attended a pep rally during homecoming.

D Antonella Lombardo, a third-year physician assistant student, sits front row at the sellout men's hockey game against Bowling Green at Blue Cross Arena in downtown Rochester.

E The RIT Chamber Orchestra performed in the SHED atrium.

F Brick City attendees played games at the Family Fun Zone.

G The women's hockey team played two games against RPI at the Gene Polisseni Center.



A, C, E, F, Myers Creative Imaging B, Yeh-Hsi Hsiang D, Travis LaCoss G, Traci Westcott

HEY TIGERS, TELL YOUR STORY!

*All **RIT Tigers** have a story,
and we want to hear yours.*

RIT, in partnership with Publishing Concepts, is collecting Tiger Stories from our alumni—stories of your RIT experience in your own words.

So, what story will you tell?

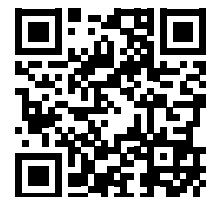
- Did you find your future partner at RIT?
- Did a special faculty or staff member have a profound impact on your life?
- Can you trace your career path back to a defining moment at RIT?
- Were you on the Quarter Mile during a historic moment?
- Have connections you made on campus turned into lifelong friendships?
- Are you a legacy Tiger? Are there other Tigers in your family?

Your stories will be preserved in a book that celebrates the impact RIT has had on your lives and who you are today.

Your participation is voluntary, but we would absolutely love to include you. *We'll be collecting stories until May 2, 2025.*

Share your story. Preserve your RIT Tiger legacy.

Visit rit.edu/TigerStories or scan the QR code for more information, or call 1-888-848-8197 to get started.



Class Notes

Abbreviations

CAST

College of Applied Science and Technology (now CET)

CAD

College of Art and Design

CCE

College of Continuing Education (now SOIS)

CET

College of Engineering Technology

CHST

College of Health Sciences and Technology

CIAS

College of Imaging Arts and Sciences (now CAD)

CLA

College of Liberal Arts

COS

College of Science

FAA

Fine and Applied Arts (now CAD)

GAP

Graphic Arts and Photography (now CAD)

GCCIS

Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences

KGCOE

Kate Gleason College of Engineering

NTID

National Technical Institute for the Deaf

SOIS

School of Individualized Study

SCB

Saunders College of Business

SVP

NTID "Summer Vestibule Program"

About Class Notes

Class Notes are edited for space, clarity, and style. Share information by going to rit.edu/alumni/class-notes.

1961



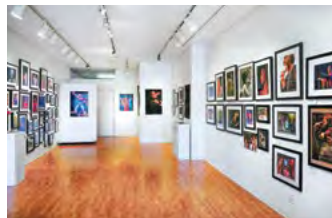
Frank Cicha '61 (GAP) announced his engagement to Judith Ann Hunt, formerly of Knoxville, Tenn.

1975



James Vitalone '75 MBA (SCB) joined Brown Harris Stevens in New York City as a residential real estate salesperson.

1977



Alan Frohlichstein '77 (GAP) participated in the gallery show "Women of the Blues" in Evanston, Ill. The show featured photography of blues performers from around the world, spanning many decades. Frohlichstein was honored to have seven images included in the show.



Fern Schwartz '77 (SCB) was named to the 2024 *Forbes* Best-in-State Wealth Advisors list. She is a Merrill Lynch wealth management advisor and the managing director at her firm, The Schwartz Group, in Pittsburgh. She has fostered a meaningful, successful career helping families pursue their unique wealth needs.

1979



Photography work by **Collette Fournier '79 (GAP)** was honored for Black History Month by The Social Documentary Network and curated by diversity adviser Lisa DuBois. In 1979, Fournier photographed James Augustus Van Der Zee, pictured, who documented portraits of ordinary life of African Americans in Harlem, N.Y. Fournier was also acknowledged for the "Queen Mother of Progress" series she photographed in Ghana, while touring with Chiku Awali African Dance, Drum, and Culture.



Daniel Szabo '79 (KGCOE) retired after 10 years at Apollo Computer and 30 years at Massachusetts College of Art and Design, MassArt. The photo of Szabo is from 1978.

1980



Kenneth Kuzia '80 (CCE) has been retired for more than 20 years, but is still active in amateur astronomy, genealogy, genetic ancestry, photography, and digital artistry—authoring, editing, and illustrating books by friends. Kuzia is working on his third book and maintains a website and gallery of recent artwork.

1987



Anne Marino '87 (FAA) was featured as a Responsible Designer to Watch in the October issue of *Graphic Design USA*, which recognizes creative professionals who use design to make the world a better place. Marino works at Phillips Academy, where she was lead designer of the

giving day fundraising campaign that won four awards in 2023. In addition, she serves on the board of directors at the Windham Endowment for Community Advancement.

1988

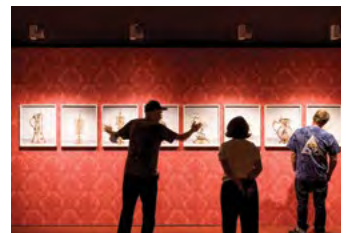


Jim Hamilton '88 MS (GAP) has written and illustrated a new book, *Falling: Amazing Survival Stories*, which recounts true stories of individuals who survived extremely long falls without the benefit of a working parachute.

1989



The Fly Creek Cider Mill and Orchard, owned by **Bill Michaels '89 (CAST)** and **Brenda (Palmer) Michaels '88 (CAD)**, was awarded the title of Best Cidery in the U.S. by readers of *USA Today*. At the cidery, located in Fly Creek, N.Y., visitors can witness cider being made on the historic 1889 water-powered, water-hydraulic press, which produces over 20,000 gallons each fall. Since 2002, the mill has offered hard ciders and apple wines.



Walid Raad '89 (CAD) is presenting "Two Drops Per Heartbeat" at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. The artist invites visitors to accompany him as he enters into a

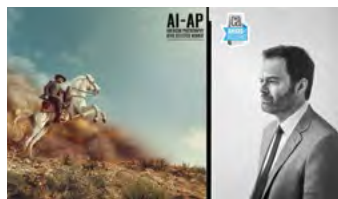
web of unexpected coincidences in which fiction and reality, space and time, and history and fantasy overlap, giving rise to a vertiginous reflection on the legacy of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collections and their connections with the history of art. The program is Dec. 8, 2024.

1992



Lou Iannone '92 (FAA) has been working as an independent museum exhibit designer/fabricator for the last 20 years via ASAGEDesign. His latest projects and clients include a flexible, multipurpose museum for the Centro Culturale Italiano di Buffalo, a hands-on space called SENSErie at the Buffalo Museum of Science, and a full bar/green room and shop rebuild for the Road Less Traveled Productions theater company.

1994



Kwaku Alston '94 (CIAS) was recognized for work in photography. His favorite images from the past year were selected for the *American Photography 40* award book. Additionally, he won an Award of Excellence through *Communication Arts* magazine for a photo of Bill Hader that was used in *The New Yorker*.



Mike Janssen '94 (CAST) was promoted to the city manager of Las Vegas. In this role, he functions as the CEO and oversees 3,800 staff and an annual budget of \$2.2 billion for the 24th largest city in the U.S.

1995



Jeremy Sniatecki '95 (CIAS) was featured on the *Svengoolie* show. It was related to the Svengoolie lunchbox Sniatecki designed and illustrated for the Toykn collectibles company, along with many other lunchboxes he has done, including *Rocky IV*, *Dune*, and *Golden Girls*.

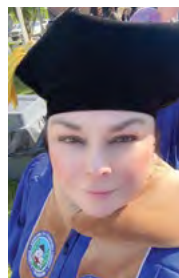
1996



Jon Gippe '96 (CAST) completed an MBA as a Welch Scholar and began a new role as associate director of

Network Construction with Verizon's Global Network and Technology organization, addressing all Verizon Business Wireline facilities for the Eastern U.S. and Puerto Rico.

1999



Kara Calandrelli '99 (CIAS) obtained a doctorate in healthcare administration from the University of Lynchburg in 2023.



Laura Glazer '99 (CIAS) graduated from Portland State University with an MFA in art and social practice. She is the design and

publications director and program manager at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. School Museum of Contemporary Art. She was a 2022-2023 artist fellow at the New York Public Library (NYPL) Picture Collection. A book about Glazer's project at the NYPL Picture Collection is available on Amazon.



Elan Lee '98 is watching his card game Exploding Kittens leap from the tabletop to the TV screen.

Game created by alumnus debuts on Netflix

The bestselling card game that RIT alumnus Elan Lee '98 (computer science) created nearly 10 years ago is exploding into a universe.

Exploding Kittens, the animated series based on the game, premiered on Netflix July 12. The nine-episode first season brings characters from the game to life and introduces new ones. It also coincides with updates to the Netflix *Exploding Kittens* mobile game and new show-adapted merchandise from Lee's company.

"When we started Exploding Kittens, our goal felt very similar to Marvel's model, which is ultimately telling good stories," said Lee. "What's unique about our game is that we have characters—every single card is a one-panel comic. So we get these amazing, fully fleshed out personalities and attitudes, but you've never seen any of them move before now."

Lee, a former chief design officer for Xbox at Microsoft, created the Exploding Kittens tabletop game along with his friend Matthew Inman, a cartoonist who runs *The Oatmeal*. The game is a version of Russian roulette powered by cartoon kitties.

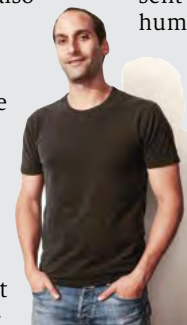
They launched the game in 2015 and raised almost \$9 million on Kickstarter in 30 days. Since then, they've sold 40 million games globally and published dozens of other tabletop games, digital games, and merchandise.

The animated Netflix comedy follows the ultimate fight between good and evil when God and Satan are sent to Earth to live with humans—but as talking cats living with a dysfunctional family of humans.

The series stars Tom Ellis as Godcat and Sasheer Zamata as Devilcat. Executive producers include Lee, Mike Judge and Greg Daniels of *Bandersnatch* Entertainment, and Chernin Entertainment.

Lee said his day-to-day job is working as CEO of the Exploding Kittens company, which now has 100 employees. They've been developing the show and its related products for the past five years.

Next up, Lee said they are always working on new games. One new tabletop game will involve sword fighting and a new VR game will allow players to experience the Exploding Kittens world in a way that nobody's ever seen before. They are also already working on season two of the show.



Lee is executive producer of the *Exploding Kittens* show and CEO of the Exploding Kittens game publishing company.

Scott Bureau '11, '16 MBA



Sue '74 and Bob Mather '74 recently celebrated their 50th anniversary in Alaska.



During her time as a student, Sue Mather distributed pins with the ASL sign for "I love you." Her efforts led to increased awareness and appreciation of Deaf culture among hearing students.

RIT, that many of the university's hearing students were upset about the benefits deaf students received. These benefits included vocational services for reducing tuition and the cost of books.

"Growing up, Dick was not encouraged to learn sign language," said Sue. "We had a typical sibling relationship mixed with rivalry and some shared activities and used gestures for communication."

Sue was dedicated to promoting Deaf culture and combating negative stereotypes about deaf people on campus. She organized a "Listen to the Deaf Week" event in Rochester, aimed at raising awareness and fostering understanding. She also distributed colorful pins featuring the ASL sign for "I love you," helping to introduce this sign to more people. Her efforts led to increased awareness and appreciation of Deaf culture among hearing students.

"People often ask what NTID means to me," said Sue. "NTID provided a connection to my brother. NTID is where we could talk with each other using sign language."

After graduating, Bob continued on to law school with Sue as his confidante.

"There were many times when others doubted me. I wondered whether I could really become an attorney. But Sue was always in my

corner and so positive. After I finished law school, it was my turn to support Sue as she completed her master's and doctoral degrees in linguistics," said Bob.

The Mathers, who live in Maryland, have two grown children. Their daughter, Roberta, an NTID alumna, was recently promoted to chief communications officer for the International Labor Affairs Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, and their granddaughter, Savannah, is attending NTID this fall. Sue's brother also met his wife, Sharon, at RIT. They, too, are celebrating a milestone wedding anniversary.

Reflecting back at his time at NTID, Bob is grateful for the opportunities.

"At one point, deaf people were told that we could do some things, but not all things. But, at NTID, we were encouraged to grow, and we were suddenly given opportunities to dream. There were no limitations, and the world opened up for us."

Vienna McGrain '12 MS

New major leads to lifetime of love

Bob Mather '74 will forever remember the summer of 1970. He was attending a visual performance in American Sign Language at RIT's National Technical Institute for the Deaf and Sue Mozzer '74 was signing.

"I'll never forget her smile," Bob said. "That's when I fell in love."

Although he wouldn't get that first date with Sue until years later, the two eventually made their way to the altar and are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this year.

During his first few months at NTID, Bob changed his major twice before committing to the social work program. Sue was also enrolled in the social work program. Coincidence? Not according to Sue.

"I was really independent and wanted to focus on my studies," she said. "My best friend tried to set us up several times, but I wasn't interested. After Bob transferred into social work, we hung out as friends and study partners for nearly three years."

The turning point came when Bob planned a surprise birthday party for Sue.

"We graduated with our bachelor's degrees in 1974 and got married later that summer," said Sue. "The rest is history."

Sue arrived at NTID two years after the college began its operations; Bob came the following

year. They witnessed the growing pains of bringing together deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing students. Sue learned from her hearing brother, Dick, who also attended



The Mathers were engaged in 1973.

2004



Megan Lessard '04 (CIAS) was recently promoted to head of Digital Projects and Metadata at Providence College's Phillips Memorial Library.

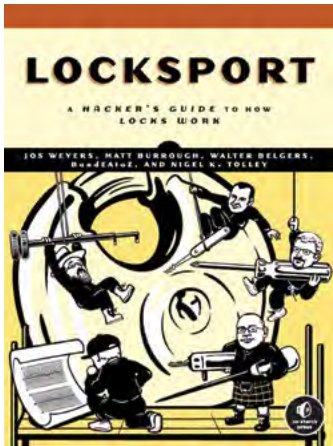
JoAnne Ryan '04 (CAST), president and CEO of the Rochester Ronald McDonald House Charities, was honored in the *Rochester Business Journal* Circle of Excellence. Honorees are women whom other women want to emulate, women who broke the glass ceiling, and women whose success has impacted the next generation and the Rochester community. She currently sits on RIT's CHST National Council.

2006



Jason Rodriguez '06 (SCB), '07 (MBA) was promoted to executive director at Morgan Stanley Wealth Management.

2007



Matt Burrough '07 (GCCIS) completed a second book, *Locksport: A Hacker's Guide to Lockpicking, Impressioning, and Safe Cracking*. The book is a collaboration between some of the best competitive lock pickers, safe dial manipulators, and impressioners in the world. He said the book aims to get more people interested in this fascinating sport.

2008



Michael Saffran '08 (MS) retired as communication lecturer emeritus from SUNY Geneseo, after 11 years.

He is the editor and a columnist for *The Wedge* newspaper and a part-time DJ and traffic reporter for Stephens Media Group (WRMM-FM, WFKL-FM, WZNE-FM). He now considers himself semi-retired.

2011



Reggie Clark '11 (CAST) recently took on the Tail of the Dragon in Tennessee, which is 318 curves in 11 miles. He made sure to wear his favorite hoodie/security blanket for the ride.

2014



Jaclyn Pytlarz '14 (CIAS) and the International Telecommunications Union were recognized with a 2023 Engineering, Science, and Technology Emmy Award for the standardization of high dynamic range television.

2015



Mercedes Castro '15 (CIAS) made her dream of owning a full-time photography business a reality. She provides product photography,

portraits of team members, and interior designs of businesses to promote brands from the inside out. She is looking forward to this new chapter. Her work can be viewed at MercedesLaceCastro.com.

Grad's film screens at South by Southwest



Diane Catsburrow Linnet '24 created *Tadpole*, an animated short that screened at South by Southwest.

Diane Catsburrow Linnet '24 MFA (film and animation) began dipping her toes into animation when she was still pursuing printmaking and oil painting as an undergraduate student. She did some independent research and applied for an internship at Pixar.

While that first attempt seemed to lead to nothing, it eventually inspired her to pursue an MFA in animation at RIT. And, in 2023, she ended up spending the summer at Pixar as an animation intern.

On campus, Linnet worked almost three years as the producer for MAGIC Spell Studio's Overshoot Animation Productions (previously AniMAGIC), a student team that executes professional animation projects for outside clients. She was also the graduate teaching assistant for various classes and workshops, as well as a 2D concept artist for *That Damn Goat*, MAGIC's published video game.

The animated films Linnet has made while at

RIT, including *The Snowman* and *Put It Back*, have screened at dozens of festivals around the world. In March, Linnet's 360-degree animated short film, *Tadpole*, traveled to Austin, Texas, for South by Southwest (SXSW)—the Academy Award-qualifying festival that is among the biggest in the world.

This was its third showing after two international selections in the U.K.—Aesthetica Short Film Festival and Manchester Animation Festival.

"I can't speak enough about how I found so many opportunities, connections, and experiences that I didn't even imagine," Linnet said.

After graduation, Linnet stayed at MAGIC as a creative project director working with Finger Lakes Visitors Connection to produce an interactive virtual museum experience on historical and cultural heritage sites throughout Ontario County, N.Y.

Aaron Garland

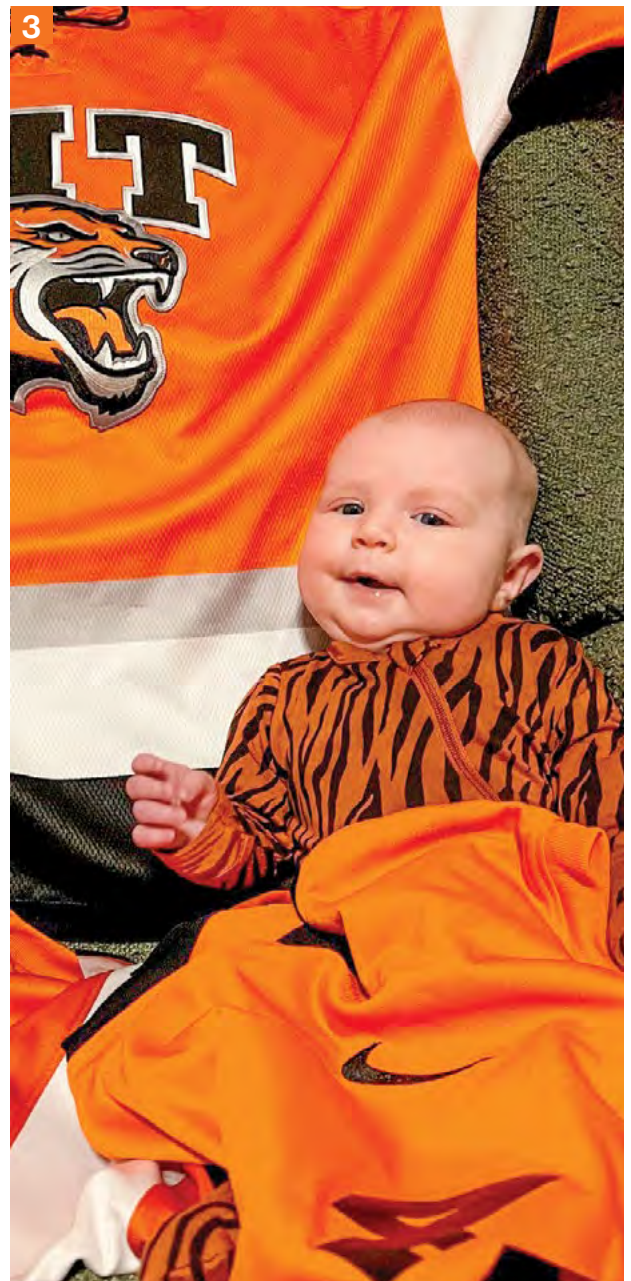
Tiger Cubs



1



2



3

1 Audrey (Lallier) Braun '05 (SCB) and husband Jordan welcomed their second child, a baby girl named Sydney, in February 2024.

2 Renee Reeves '07 (COS) and husband Scott welcomed their second child, Scarlett, in December 2023.

3 Benjamin Boseck '17 (KGCOE) and **Emily (Marris) Boseck '17 (CHST)** welcomed their firstborn daughter, Charlotte Sue Boseck, in December 2023. Charlotte is the first grandchild of **James Boseck '01 MBA (SCB)**.



Mariah Texidor '15 (CIAS) started a new position as head of Circulation and Adult Services at Wallington Public Library. She also serves as a faculty member at the International Center of Photography.

2016



Shannon Hogan '16 (CLA) was recently named promotion director for the East Coast for MCA Nashville. In this role, Hogan works closely with country radio stations to generate superstars. MCA artists include Jordan Davis, Sam Hunt, Kacey Musgraves, Parker McCollum, Vince Gill, Reba McEntire, and George Strait.

2017

Tampa Bay Times enterprise reporter **Lauren Peace '17 (CLA)** won the Paul Hansell Award for Distinguished Achievement in Florida Journalism for her work in 2023. The award, from the Florida Society of News Editors, is for the most distinguished journalist in the state.

2019



Megan Detwiler '19 (COS) was honored by the Manufacturing Institute as a recipient of the

Emerging Leader award, given to 30 women under 30 who have achieved unique accomplishments at the start of their careers. The recognition underscores her dedication to championing equality and accessibility in semiconductor manufacturing, alongside her unwavering commitment to maintaining exceptional chip quality.



Brittany Mieth '19 (CET) and **Josh Dranoff '15 (GIS)** got married in October 2022, surrounded by friends and family.

2020

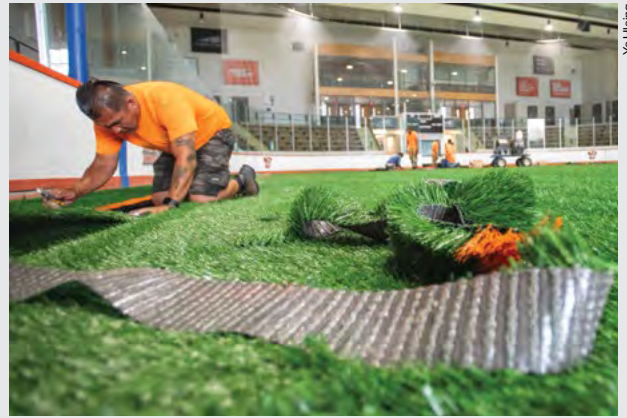


Amelia Hamilton '20 (CAD), '25 (NTID) got married Oct. 14, 2023, in Lyons, N.Y. Hamilton said it was a joy seeing RIT/NTID alumni from the 1970s to recent years coming together to celebrate their love.

2023



After graduation, **Ivan Jacobs '23 MS (GCCIS)** embarked on a new chapter as the vice president and head of Artificial Intelligence Capability Development–Cyber at ST Engineering Singapore. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in artificial intelligence at the University of Luxembourg, delving deeper into AI research.



Ritter Arena has been transformed into an athletic training arena.

Ritter gets new life as an indoor turf arena

For decades, Frank Ritter Arena was an ice hockey arena, where countless games, practices, and recreational skating opportunities awaited the RIT community.

Last summer, Ritter had synthetic turf installed on its floor and has been transformed into a new space for athletics. It will host university functions, wellness classes, practices, and recreational activities, and be available for rent from outside interests.

“The arena will serve as the primary indoor venue for RIT Athletics and intramural and club sports during cold and inclement weather and special events,” said Jacqueline Nicholson, executive director for Intercollegiate Athletics. “With the addition of a turf field surface in Ritter Arena, the university will be able to address a pressing facility need, while simultaneously taking a step that could bolster its athletic programs and enhance the recreation offerings.”

Dedicated in 1968, Ritter hosted five NCAA championships, most recently the women’s Division III final in 2011.

Since the 4,000-seat Gene Polissen Center opened in 2014, hockey practices and games have moved there. During construction of the

SHED, Ritter served as a temporary housing area for library materials.

Ritter’s transformation brings back memories for alumni, who faithfully attended hockey games at the old arena.

Henrietta Supervisor Stephen Schultz '07 (computer science) said that Ritter offered RIT players a big home-ice advantage.

“The fans were right on top of the action. The home bench was next to the penalty boxes, meaning when a penalty expired, the Tiger player could just hop to the bench, whereas the opposing player had to cross the width of the ice to get to their bench.”

David “Big Goon” Faas has been a member of the Corner Crew hockey fan club since 1989. He recalls the first hockey games he attended were two championships in Ritter in the late 1980s. He still attends games in the Polissen Center.

“The atmosphere in Ritter was electric,” Faas said. “Though I am sad that Ritter will never have ice again, I am happy that it will be used to help future Tiger athletes be the best they can be. And Ritter will always have a place in my heart.”

Greg Livadas

In Memoriam

Alumni

1943

Dorothy (Fisher) Johnson '43 (SCB)
Nov. 24, 2023

Ruth (Bown) Sachs '43 (CAST)
April 5, 2024

1946

Dorothy (Herrick) Blundell '46 (GAP)
Feb. 20, 2024

Barbette (Searls) Leavens '46 (FAA)
Jan. 20, 2024

1947

Leonard Zoref '47 (GAP)
March 15, 2024

1948

Maryln (Fenton) Britt '48 (COS)
July 8, 2023

Alice Ingram '48 (SCB)
Feb. 5, 2024

Mary (Ciardi) Maggio '48 (SCB)
Jan. 20, 2024

1949

Kenneth Christian '49 (KGCOE)
June 5, 2024

John Fichtner Jr. '49 (CCE)
Feb. 10, 2024

Alexander Gilbert '49 (KGCOE)
Nov. 29, 2023

Richard Humphreys '49 (KGCOE)
June 20, 2024

Harold Richter '49 (GAP)
April 17, 2024

1950

Alma Harmer '50 (COS)
Nov. 26, 2023

Priscilla (Nielsen) Russell '50 (CAST)
Jan. 19, 2024

1951

Willard Arnold '51 (COS)
Dec. 2, 2023

Jay Brauer '51 (GAP)
April 16, 2024

Harold Cassety '51 (FAA)
April 4, 2023

Marvin Finkelston '51 (GAP)
Dec. 20, 2023

L. Clark Patterson '51 (GAP)
July 17, 2023

Joseph Ritacco '51 (GAP)
May 27, 2023

Beverly (Willard) Walsh '51 (SCB)
Dec. 2, 2023

1952

Karl Grohs '52 (KGCOE)
Feb. 13, 2024

Geoffrey Sowers '52 (GAP)
June 12, 2024

1953

M. (Foley) Edinger '53 (CAST)
Dec. 9, 2023

Donald Green '53 (KGCOE)
March 25, 2024

Michael Pukish '53 (KGCOE)
March 7, 2024

1954

Rosemary (Klee) Contois '54 (SCB)
March 22, 2024

1955

Nancy (Haenel) Bettinger '55 (SCB)
Dec. 4, 2023

Richard Forsey '55 (GAP)
March 27, 2024

Kenneth Georger '55 (KGCOE)
Dec. 17, 2023

Noreen (Doyle) Tymkin '55 (SCB)
June 15, 2024

1956

Francis Chillemi '56 (KGCOE)
Jan. 9, 2024

Richard Clark '56 (COS)
July 6, 2024

Gary Fraser '56 (KGCOE)
March 29, 2024

John Frey Jr. '56 (GAP)
March 24, 2024

Margaret (Bennet) Kuhn '56 (FAA)
Jan. 13, 2024

Janice (Clark) Rhinehart '56 (SCB)
April 4, 2024

Mary Wallman '56 (SCB)
March 30, 2024

1957

Ralph Annucci '57 (SCB)
April 30, 2024

Donald Rollo '57 (GAP)
July 8, 2024

John Scafetta '57 (KGCOE)
Oct. 22, 2023

June (Johnson) Siebach '57 (SCB)
June 30, 2024

Celia (Morgenberger) Syer '57 (SCB)
Feb. 27, 2024

Charles Tholstrup '57 (KGCOE)
April 30, 2024

Lloyd Vela '57 (GAP)
May 11, 2024

James West '57 (GAP)
May 7, 2024

1958

John Baccoli Jr. '58 (GAP)
March 18, 2023

Evelyn Bell '58 (COS)
Dec. 4, 2023

Frederick Moss '58 (GAP)
March 20, 2024

Michael Schwartz '58 (SCB)
Jan. 9, 2024

Morton Shecter '58 (GAP)
March 9, 2023

1959

Gordon Blomfield '59 (FAA)
March 11, 2024

Paul Grenzebach '59 (GAP)
Feb. 17, 2024

Stephen Hopkins '59 (SCB)
March 2, 2024

Barr Ingle '59 (CCE)
Feb. 15, 2024

Paul Patterson Jr. '59 (GAP)
April 1, 2024

Arcadia (Bedrij) Pilskalns '59 (COS)
Jan. 16, 2024

Dana Rittenhouse '59 (SCB)
April 14, 2024

Gordon Smith Sr. '59 (COS)
April 18, 2024

Robert Spink '59 (KGCOE)
May 1, 2024

1960

Alvin Arvio '60 (GAP)
Dec. 25, 2023

Robert Barnes '60 (SCB)
Aug. 11, 2023

Mary (Fasino) Dimuro '60 (CCE)
May 16, 2024

Mary (Hendrickson) Kirchoff '60 (FAA)
July 29, 2023

Dean Wildrick '60 (KGCOE)
April 17, 2024

1961

Patricia Brown '61 (SCB)
March 14, 2024

Patricia (Owen) Coleman '61 (CAST)
Dec. 21, 2023

Chester Gillingham '61 (GAP)
Feb. 20, 2024

Dwight Kitchen '61 (KGCOE)
Dec. 16, 2023

James Leicht '61 (KGCOE)
June 17, 2024

Donald Naylor '61 (SCB)
March 31, 2024

Richard Platten '61 (KGCOE)
Dec. 15, 2023

Neil Rice '61 (GAP)
Feb. 15, 2024

Gerard Rossner '61 (GAP)
July 4, 2024

Richard Scudder '61 (GAP)
Jan. 22, 2024

Louis Vancheri '61 (CCE)
June 20, 2024

1962

Edwin Baldwin Jr. '62 (KGCOE)
May 29, 2023

Betty (Barricelli) Marianetti '62 (COS)
July 12, 2024

Robert Williams '62 (CCE)
Nov. 20, 2023

Sandra (Leppert) Wing '62 (FAA)
Nov. 30, 2023

1963

George Kanda '63 (GAP)
March 14, 2024

Alaine (Matthies) O'Connor '63 (SCB)
Nov. 22, 2023

Roger Rottkamp Jr. '63 (GAP)
May 25, 2024

John Short '63 (COS)
Feb. 15, 2024

1964

Beverly Allardice '64 (SCB)
Dec. 26, 2023

Jack Benvenuto '64 (MFA (FAA))
July 15, 2024

Timothy Butler '64 (FAA), '65 MFA (FAA)
Feb. 12, 2024

Annabel Doll '64 (SCB)
Jan. 15, 2024

Frederick Ellsmore '64 (GAP)
Jan. 26, 2024

Otilija (Vosylius) Kasparaitis '64 (SCB)
Jan. 2, 2024

Robert Keough '64 (MFA (GAP))
April 11, 2024

Alan Leimberger '64 (CCE)
Dec. 1, 2023

Bryan Sammartino '64 (GAP)
Nov. 11, 2023

Lyle Strassle '64 (KGCOE)
Nov. 25, 2023

Larry Sweeney '64 (SCB)
Dec. 13, 2023

Gerald Vanhorne '64 (CCE)
Dec. 8, 2023

1965

Richard Chadwick '65 (KGCOE)
Dec. 29, 2023

Victor Derefinko '65 (KGCOE)
Dec. 1, 2023

G. Fulmer '65 (GAP)
Dec. 2, 2023

Roger Kramer '65 (GAP)
May 13, 2024

Pierre Weimer '65 (GAP)
Jan. 15, 2024

George Widman '65 (GAP)
March 8, 2024

1966

Joe Apodaca Jr. '66 (MFA (FAA))
April 25, 2024

Kathryn (Obriest) Colucci '66 (SCB)
Feb. 10, 2024

J. David Gallahue '66 (KGCOE)
June 11, 2024

Donald Grube '66 (CCE)
March 25, 2024

Dianne (Rizzo) Langone '66 (COS)
Dec. 1, 2023

J. Dennis Norman '66 (GAP)
Dec. 21, 2023

Richard Poole '66 (FAA)
May 21, 2024

Raymond Rignel '66 (GAP)
March 22, 2024

David Saeva '66 (CCE)
Oct. 26, 2023

Carmen Spofford '66 (SCB)
Nov. 2, 2023

H. Totten Jr. '66 (SCB)
March 12, 2024

1967

Joseph Butera '67 (CCE)
April 19, 2024

William Harp '67 (GAP)
Jan. 19, 2024

Richard Jefferys '67 (GAP)
March 5, 2024

Frank Kruppenbacher '67 (CCE)
July 2, 2024

Richard Nadwodny '67 (CCE)
Nov. 19, 2023

William Radford '67 (SCB)
Jan. 17, 2024

Roger Smith '67 (CCE)
March 8, 2024

Charles Wentworth '67 (CCE)
April 28, 2024

James Witham '67 (FAA)
Nov. 13, 2023

1968

Birean Doerfler '68 (SCB)
April 10, 2024

Howard Gralla '68 (GAP) Feb. 8, 2024
H. Douglas Laughton '68 (GAP) March 11, 2024
Norma (Taylor) Pollard '68 (SCB) Jan. 30, 2024
John Staab '68 (GAP) Nov. 19, 2023
Ray Unger '68 (GAP) April 21, 2023
Donald Vragel '68 (CCE) Jan. 27, 2024
Alfred Wild '68 (CCE) March 23, 2024

1969

Donald Comstock Sr. '69 (GAP) June 7, 2024
A. Cottrill '69 MS (CCE) Sep. 24, 2023
Gerard Flanders '69 MS (CCE) Jan. 7, 2024
James Monje '69 (CCE) Feb. 14, 2024
Edward O'Grady '69 (SCB) March 14, 2024
James Paul '69 (SCB) Jan. 5, 2024
Henry Pouliot '69 (COS) Nov. 12, 2023
Frank Svet Jr. '69 MS (KGCOE) July 14, 2024

1970

David Bardeen '70 (KGCOE) Jan. 3, 2024
Michelle (Coolbaugh) Frey '70 (SCB) March 3, 2024
Robert Halton '70 (CCE) Dec. 9, 2023
Jerry Hendler '70 (SCB) Aug. 12, 2023
Henry Lurch '70 (KGCOE) April 28, 2023
Ronald Maphey '70 (SCB) July 10, 2024
Richard Marvin '70 (COS) June 6, 2024
David Maslanka '70 (GAP) Dec. 15, 2023
Donald Milton '70 (CCE) Dec. 6, 2023
Bernard Sullivan '70 MS (CCE) Aug. 14, 2023
Jack Wheeler '70 (SCB) June 20, 2024

1971

Roger Buckmann '71 (KGCOE) Dec. 12, 2023
Charles Gross '71 (CCE) July 7, 2024

Robert Haubner III '71 (SCB) Dec. 1, 2023
Kenneth Hutchinson '71 (KGCOE) March 19, 2024
William Moore '71 (CCE) May 8, 2024
Jack Shirman '71 MBA (SCB) June 2, 2024
George Singleton '71 MBA (SCB) April 28, 2024
Vincent Speed '71 MBA (SCB) Feb. 24, 2024

1972

Francis Abel '72 (CCE) Dec. 1, 2023
Stephen Arlington '72 (SCB) Nov. 29, 2023
Thomas Camiolo Jr. '72 (SCB) June 5, 2024
Dennis Copeland '72 (CCE) Jan. 23, 2024
William Eve '72 (SCB) June 14, 2024
Robert Hamilton '72 (CCE) Jan. 2, 2024
Thomas Hoggard '72 (GAP) July 28, 2023
George Measer III '72 (GAP) April 16, 2024
Richard Miller '72 (CCE) March 10, 2023
Edward Minozzi '72 (CCE) Nov. 14, 2023

A. Robert O'Brien '72 MBA (SCB) Dec. 27, 2023
Karl Pucher '72 (SCB) March 23, 2024
Francis Reynolds '72 MBA (SCB) Dec. 13, 2023
Howard Schlang '72 (NTID) Jan. 11, 2024
Christine (Hiller) Stanny '72 (SCB) May 9, 2024
Richard Sullivan '72 (CCE) May 10, 2024
Andrew Surdovel '72 (KGCOE) Nov. 9, 2023

1973

Louis Bouchard Jr. '73 (CCE) Nov. 25, 2023
Kimball Brown '73 (FAA) Aug. 9, 2023
John Croke '73 (KGCOE) Jan. 12, 2024
Roy Hanna '73 MBA (SCB) Feb. 18, 2024
Blake Komoda '73 (GAP) May 4, 2023

Conrad Lind '73 (CCE) Feb. 20, 2024
Joseph Litzelfelner '73 MS (KGCOE), '79 MS (CCE) April 3, 2024
William Perkins '73 MS (COS) March 15, 2024
Jack Sauer '73 (GAP) May 24, 2024
Raymond Shepard '73 (CCE) Nov. 21, 2023
Kenneth Spencer '73 (KGCOE) March 22, 2024
Merlyn Stowe '73 (CCE) April 26, 2023
Gerald Thomas '73 MS (CAST) Jan. 16, 2024

1974

Johnnie (Wright) Boaford '74 (CLA) Dec. 25, 2023
Jan Brederson '74 (KGCOE) Feb. 13, 2024
George Brydges '74 (CCE) Dec. 23, 2023
Douglas Dulen '74 (SCB) Dec. 7, 2023
John Groves '74 MS (GAP) March 11, 2024
Stephen Hoellrigl '74 (CCE) Feb. 5, 2024
David Kochersberger '74 (CCE) March 2, 2024
James Nealon '74 MBA (SCB) Nov. 29, 2023
William Putnam '74 (KGCOE) Nov. 22, 2023
Philip Roy '74 (CCE) June 24, 2024
David Shultz '74 (GAP) Dec. 30, 2023

Paul Snell '74 (CCE) March 10, 2024
Felice Sorrentino '74 (KGCOE) Nov. 14, 2023
Sidney Wheat '74 (CCE) July 3, 2023
William White Jr. '74 (CCE) Feb. 15, 2024
Wayne Wietz '74 (CCE) Jan. 12, 2024
Michael Yare Jr. '74 (SCB) June 20, 2024

1975

James Frintner '75 (GAP) March 25, 2024
William Grosso '75 (SCB) June 2, 2024
Virginia Krembel '75 (CCE) May 3, 2024

Edward Niles '75 (CCE) May 12, 2024
Robert Raufeisen '75 (CCE) June 30, 2024
Carl Simmons '75 (FAA) Nov. 27, 2023
Kenneth Trotta '75 (SCB) July 14, 2024
Edward Vanleuven '75 MBA (SCB) June 24, 2024

1976

Bruce Dannels '76 (GAP) March 16, 2024
Eldon Newman '76 (NTID) May 31, 2024
Martin Toper '76 (CCE) May 18, 2024

James Wilson '76 (KGCOE) Nov. 11, 2023

1977

John Baker '77 (NTID) Feb. 13, 2024
Patrick Cullen '77 (SCB) Jan. 29, 2024
Earl Doser '77 MBA (SCB) Feb. 12, 2024
D. Robert Keeler '77 (GAP) May 31, 2024
John McKinley '77 MS (KGCOE) Feb. 10, 2024
Bernard Rhoades '77 (CCE) June 27, 2024
Nancy (Brown) Roderick '77 (CLA) Nov. 16, 2023
Karen Schory '77 MFA (FAA) Feb. 7, 2024
Thomas Sweeney '77 (CCE) Aug. 14, 2023

1978

Anne Barker '78 MS (CCE) June 18, 2024
Joseph Bonafede '78 (CCE) Dec. 18, 2023
Thomas Carr '78 (CCE), '81 MS (CCE) June 9, 2024
Mark Dion '78 (FAA) Feb. 26, 2024
Daniel Fennerty '78 (CLA) June 26, 2024
Thomas Kolb '78 MBA (SCB) Jan. 10, 2024
James Miles '78 (CCE) Feb. 17, 2024
Richard Milton '78 (CCE) April 25, 2024
Gordon Pickering '78 (NTID) Dec. 8, 2023

Douglas Stanek '78 (CCE) Jan. 24, 2024

1979

Roy Battle '79 (CCE) Feb. 28, 2024
Marcelino Bernardo Jr. '79 (COS) June 10, 2024
Stephen Giardino '79 (CCE), '82 MBA (CAST) Dec. 4, 2023
Daniel Hackenberg '79 (CAST) May 7, 2024
William Hildebrand III '79 MBA (SCB) April 2, 2024
Charles Lewis III '79 (CAST) Nov. 25, 2023
Neil Patterson '79 (CCE) Nov. 5, 2023
Daniel Scalzo '79 MBA (SCB) Dec. 13, 2023
Rodger Sullivan '79 (SCB) April 3, 2024

1980

Dennis Ayling Sr. '80 (CCE) April 27, 2024
Joseph Benenati '80 (SCB) May 10, 2024
William Breitling '80 MBA (SCB) May 4, 2023
Kenneth Kressler '80 (NTID) Dec. 26, 2023
Edwin Leggoe '80 (GAP) Jan. 2, 2024
Joyce (Woelfle) Lehmann '80 MST (FAA) Nov. 6, 2023
William Lenhart '80 (CCE) June 8, 2024
David Scherer '80 (CAST) Feb. 21, 2024

1981

Daniel Cory '81 (CCE) April 22, 2024
John Fee '81 MBA (SCB) June 16, 2024
David Hall '81 (GAP) June 23, 2024
Richard Marion '81 MS (CCE) June 10, 2024
Michael Wallace '81 (SCB) Dec. 11, 2023

1982

Annlouise (Voellinger) Gent '82 (FAA) Dec. 24, 2023
George Glady '82 (CCE) July 28, 2023
Richard Kamp '82 (SCB) Jan. 3, 2024

John Koch '82 (CCE)
April 19, 2024

John McFarlan '82 MS (GAP) July 1, 2024

Jo Ann (Kimble) Stack '82 (CLA) Dec. 30, 2023

Christopher Steubing '82 (SCB) April 10, 2024

Richard Viscome '82 (CAST) Feb. 24, 2024

1983

Rebecca Banko '83 (SCB) Feb. 12, 2024

Brian Benamati '83 (KGCOE), '87 MS (KGCOE) May 26, 2024

Mark Paladino '83 (CCE) April 14, 2024

Ellen Phillips '83 (CLA) April 13, 2024

Thomas White '83 (GAP) Dec. 1, 2023

1984

Michael Kiwus '84 (GAP) March 14, 2024

Brian Miller '84 (KGCOE) Feb. 23, 2023

Robert Shepherd '84 (CCE) April 26, 2024

Anthony Weston '84 (CLA) June 16, 2024

1985

David Ernsthansen '85 (SCB) March 27, 2024

Michael Hocter '85 (CAST) July 11, 2024

Richard Larkin '85 (CAST) April 8, 2024

Lauren Spence '85 (CCE) April 6, 2024

Lynn Tackentien '85 (CAST) Dec. 10, 2023

Linda Tolan '85 MS (CAST) Feb. 16, 2024

Joseph Watson Jr. '85 (KGCOE) May 6, 2024

1986

Michael Antoine '86 (NTID) June 7, 2024

William Goodman '86 (CAST) May 22, 2024

Gene Herbert '86 (GAP) April 9, 2024

Leonard Maley Jr. '86 MS (CCE) April 14, 2024

Ann Murphy '86 (SCB) April 10, 2024

Michael Ross '86 (KGCOE) July 3, 2024

Paul Ruston '86 (GAP)
Aug. 8, 2023

1987

Elizabeth Beach '87 MFA (FAA)
March 11, 2024

James Carlucci '87 (CAST) May 2, 2024

Paul Flood '87 (GAP)
Feb. 19, 2024

A. Evan Haag '87 MBA (SCB) Jan. 7, 2024

Shawn Harrington '87 (CAST), '99 MBA (SCB)
Dec. 31, 2023

Anne Mikels '87 (CCE)
Sep. 22, 2023

Martin Ohman '87 (CAST) Dec. 30, 2023

1988

Stewart Mayott '88 MS (CAST) April 1, 2024

Patricia Novitskey '88 MS (CCE) Nov. 25, 2023

Linda Pain '88 (NTID)
Aug. 12, 2023

Douglas Robords '88 (CAST) Dec. 6, 2023

1989

Robert Diehl '89 (GAP)
Jan. 7, 2024

John Francis '89 (GAP), '89 MS (GAP)
April 11, 2024

Peter Marron '89 (FAA)
May 4, 2024

Rick West '89 (KGCOE)
Nov. 12, 2023

1991

Gerald McCarron '91 (SCB) Nov. 18, 2023

Edwin Stone '91 MS (CAST) Feb. 16, 2024

Paul Vanbrocklin '91 (KGCOE) Dec. 13, 2023

1992

John Beattie '92 MS (CAST) April 21, 2024

Marilyn Hughes '92 (NTID) April 28, 2024

Helen Walther '92 (CAST) Aug. 14, 2023

Pierina Zicari '92 (CCE)
March 29, 2024

1993

Eric Brooks '93 (GAP)
Dec. 23, 2023

Jeffrey Enoch '93 (FAA)
Dec. 26, 2023

Eugene Nieminen '93 MFA (CIAS) Feb. 27, 2024

1994

Douglas McCrossen '94 (CAST), '96 MBA (SCB)
Nov. 30, 2023

Michael Slade '94 MS (CAST) May 14, 2024

1995

Bernard Allen '95 MBA (SCB) Dec. 7, 2023

Joanne Mason '95 (CCE) Feb. 11, 2024

William Slutzky '95 (CIAS) March 5, 2024

1996

Phyllis Ruth Hoffman '96 (CCE), '99 MS (CIAS) Nov. 24, 2023

Mark Komar '96 (CAST)
Dec. 9, 2023

Cameron McKee '96 MFA (CIAS)
June 4, 2024

1997

Robert Kelsch '97 MS (CAST) Nov. 10, 2023

Apurva Varia '97 (KGCOE) April 24, 2024

1998

Timothy Arnold '98 (CAST) April 3, 2024

Julie Chirdon '98 (CAST), '03 MS (CAST)
Feb. 8, 2023

Virginia Gibson '98 MFA (CIAS) Jan. 11, 2024

Patricia Nelson '98 MS (CAST) Nov. 24, 2023

Phillip Rogerson '98 (KGCOE), '03 MS (KGCOE) Dec. 30, 2023

Brian Stevens '98 (CAST) Dec. 27, 2023

2000

Michael Krais '00 (CAST) April 15, 2024

Conan O'Neil '00 (CIAS)
Dec. 19, 2023

2001

Gregory Collier '01 (CAST) Dec. 30, 2023

Frank Griffin '01 (CAST)
Jan. 20, 2024

Charmian Sercu '01 (CAST) Jan. 14, 2024

Kenneth Van Alst '01 (CAST) June 1, 2024

2002

Weixia Huang '02 MS (GCCIS) Jan. 25, 2024

2003

Jill Silverstein '03 MFA (CIAS) April 17, 2024

2005

Mitchell Bacot '05 (COS), '07 MS (NTID)
March 14, 2024

Kathleen Gilpin '05 (CLA) May 11, 2024

Donald A. Johnson '05 (SCB) May 3, 2024

Tiffany Karlik '05 (KGCOE) April 22, 2024

Philip Kellogg '05 (SCB)
April 2, 2024

Yiwen Yang '05 MS (GCCIS) Dec. 16, 2023

2006

Moira Finley '06 MS (CIAS) April 9, 2024

Timothy Reichgott '06 (CAST) Jan. 1, 2024

2007

Frank Colavecchia '07 (CAST) July 2, 2024

Michael Cox '07 MS (CAST) March 12, 2024

2008

Nicholas Russo '08 (GCCIS) June 10, 2024

2010

Jenna Shepard '10 (COS) Dec. 9, 2023

2012

Ethan Ciccotelli '12 (CAST) Dec. 19, 2023

2013

Brian Peterson '13 (CIAS) Aug. 9, 2023

2014

Courtney Hancock '14 (CAST) Feb. 15, 2024

2019

Raymond Czapkowski '19 (CAD) Dec. 28, 2023

Alexander Toy '19 (GCCIS) April 30, 2024

2020

Justin Bookman '20 (KGCOE) Dec. 13, 2023

2021

David Lapierre '21 (KGCOE) March 11, 2024

Claire Weyand '21 (NTID) April 10, 2024

Faculty and Staff

Mitchell Bacot, NTID faculty member, March 14, 2024

Jack Clarcq, retired NTID professor, June 22, 2024

Katherine (Leitch) Clark, executive director of Sponsored Research Services, April 3, 2024

Brian Cummings, associate director of the Gordon Field House, June 23, 2024

James Fleming, former CLA professor, July 19, 2024

Marty Golia, teaching and learning consultant, July 6, 2024

Suella Habbersett, retiree, April 24, 2024

James Halavin, retired COS professor, June 15, 2024

James Hart, retiree, June 11, 2024

Gene T. Herbert, retiree, April 9, 2024

Richard Hetnarski, professor emeritus, June 8, 2024

David Hostetter, retired associate chief information officer, Aug. 20, 2024

Phyllis Hunt, retired food service employee, July 2, 2024

Robert Keough, professor emeritus, April 11, 2024

Eugene Lenyk, retired NTID staff member, Aug. 23, 2024

Howard LeVant, retired CAD professor, Aug. 16, 2024

Michael Mastretta, retiree, July 30, 2022

Walter McCanna, retired business dean and professor, Aug. 13, 2024

Pellegrino Nazzaro, retired CLA professor, June 8, 2024

Gail Tobin, retired NTID senior staff assistant, June 22, 2024

David Turner, CAD visiting lecturer, June 18, 2024

Thoughtful planning provides for loved ones, supports the causes you care about, and ensures your ultimate wishes are carried out. A bequest in your will or trust offers a flexible way to support organizations like RIT, ensuring future generations benefit from a transformative education.

Mitch Koppelman '73 knows the value of giving back to the institutions that shape our lives. His career in photojournalism began at RIT, and he is passionate about supporting scholarships for students with financial need.

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585-475-3106
plannedgiving@rit.edu
rit.edu/MitchK

Why I Give



I know what it's like to put children through college. If we can help those who don't have the resources but have the skills and the desire to come to RIT, they could become leaders in their chosen profession."

– Mitch Koppelman '73

RIT | Planned Giving

Connecting through comics

Every generation of RIT students has its comic book fans and creators who resonate with the art and design, the narrative, and the medium.

RIT's original comic book club met for the first time on Feb. 18, 1975, at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

Founding members John Mozzer '78 (graphic communications) and Bob Green '75 (art and design) started the club at the encouragement of Salvatore Mondello, professor in the College of General Studies, now the College of Liberal Arts.

Mondello taught a popular comics class, "The History of Popular Culture in America," and became the club's faculty adviser. Mozzer and Green put the word out about their new club dedicated to comic books and the hobby of collecting them, and students showed up.

Green, who was president of the club, recalls the interest it sparked at RIT.

"It was something fresh on campus," he said.

Mozzer brought his Kodak Instamatic camera to the first meeting and took these snapshots.

Susan Gawlowicz '95



Read more about comics
RIT's growing comics archive helps students understand the creative process in the creation of comics.

rit.edu/news/comics-go-college



RIT history professor **Salvatore Mondello**, right, taught an early pop culture class using comics. He served as faculty adviser for the comics club.



Club president **Bob Green '75**, left, and comic dealer **Dave Belmont** meet at the RIT comics club.



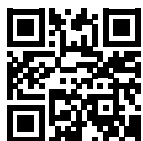
RIT students pore over comics at a club meeting in 1975.

Why I Give

With her Sentinel Society gift, proud alum **Beitris McKeon '14** hopes to be part of keeping RIT's College of Health Sciences and Technology on the cutting edge of medicine and ensure the next generation of Tigers have the support they need.

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I want students to know that there are people out there—who they may not even know—who were once in their shoes and are cheering them on from afar.

I decided to become a member of the Sentinel Society because I was a student who succeeded with help from generous individuals. I want to be able to help the next generation believe in themselves and take a small burden off their plates through financial support.”

**– Beitris
McKeon '14**





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