The End of an Era

A LOOK BACK AT THE TENURE OF PRESIDENT F. JAVIER CEVALLOS, FROM JULY 2014 TO JULY 2022, REVEALS A PERIOD OF GROWTH, INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY
Thank you

The nearly eight years I have served as president of Framingham State University have been some of the most fulfilling of my life. Josée and I are so grateful for the way in which we have been embraced by this wonderful community.

This will be the final issue of Framingham State Magazine during my tenure as president. I never imagined that the last two years of my presidency would occur during a global pandemic. It has certainly been an incredible challenge, but it has also left me with a profound sense of admiration for the resiliency and hard work of our students, faculty and staff. The passion and energy they bring every day to this campus inspires me and is what I will miss most.

Thank you for the support, friendship and guidance you have provided me during my time as president. Framingham State University will always have a special place in my heart.

BEST WISHES,
F. Javier Cevallos, PhD
President
Framingham State University
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DISCLAIMER
All photos featured in Framingham State Magazine were taken either prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 or in a very safe and controlled environment that included social distancing among all individuals and face coverings on anyone not in the frame. FSU adheres to the strictest COVID-19 safety guidelines.
**The snapshot**

**FSU Senior Gabriela Mendez-Acevedo Holds Community Upcycling Project**

When people talk about sustainable fashion, they often think about thrift shopping or producing pricey garments from sustainably sourced materials. But sustainable fashion is more than that, according to FSU senior Gabriela Mendez-Acevedo ‘21. “Those things are great,” she says. But sustainable fashion is more to understand sustainability from a different point of view. People like me.”

So Mendez-Acevedo, a Fashion Design major with a concentration in Merchandising, launched a Community Upcycling Project last fall to educate the community and to raise clothing for a local homeless shelter. She put out a call to the FSU community to donate used clothing that was still in perfect condition. “We sourced these clothes directly from the FSU community and got them into the hands of people who really need them,” she says. “Clothing makes such a difference. Think about how often people look down on the homeless simply for how they are dressed.”

The community came through in a big way, filling up a large box Mendez-Acevedo put out for donations five times. The community came through in a big way, filling up a large box Mendez-Acevedo put out for donations five times.

**Digital Humanities Center to Launch in Whittemore Library**

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded Framingham State University a $192,000 grant to launch a digital humanities center that will serve as the inaugural director of the DH center. “Digital humanities provides access to hundreds of thousands of books from a particular moment, or across time, allowing us to look for trends that might be harder to see close up.”

The digital humanities can also open new doors for employment and career opportunities for humanities students by teaching them how to work with digital tools and methods that aren’t always emphasized in the traditional classroom.

“It provides students with one more important tool in their arsenal,” says Brinkman. “These skills complement traditional humanities skills, such as reading, writing and critical thinking.”

**Senior Samantha Frost ’21 Earns National Prize from Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society**

History major Samantha Frost’s honors thesis on the gender implications of the homespun movement during the American Revolution has earned the prestigious Nels Andrew Cleven Founder’s Paper Prize from the Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society. The national award is for outstanding papers written by members of the honor society. Her paper examining the homespun movement began as an assignment in Professor Maria Bollettino’s American Revolution class. Given Frost’s interest in material culture, Bollettino recommended homespun, which was part of the Colonies’ resistance to British taxation on goods leading up to the Revolutionary War. Women would create clothing using material available at home, rather than relying on textiles from Europe. “The clothing these women created had a major cultural impact at the time,” says Frost. “It created a sense of nationalism and it was a political symbol, because it represented the rejection of British goods.”

Frost expounded upon the initial assignment for her honors thesis and, with the encouragement of Dr. Bollettino, submitted it for the national award from the Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society.
Professor Joseph M. Adelman Receives Prestigious Appointment from Omohundro Institute

The Omohundro Institute of Early American History & Culture (OI) recently announced that Framingham State University Professor Joseph M. Adelman will be assisting the OI with planning and programming related to the 2026 semi-quintenntenial (250th anniversary) of American independence.

Founded in 1943, the Omohundro Institute is sponsored by William & Mary and Colonial Williamsburg. It is the leading hub for research in early American history, broadly understood as all points in the Atlantic World between roughly 1450 and 1820, and supports and publishes the leading research into this vast Early America.

In his capacity as project coordinator for the OI’s Across America, 1776 program, Adelman will serve as the representative on the 250th project committee of the American Association of State and Local Historians, write posts on the theme of the American Revolution and current commemorations of it for the Uncommon Sense blog, chair a regular online meeting of journalists and academics looking to write public-facing pieces on the history of the American Revolution, develop programming for a podcast series on the topic and liaise with regional historical associations.

“This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity when the entire country is thinking about one moment in its past and how we remember it,” Adelman says of the appointment. “I’m excited and honored to be part of the planning process to help shape that conversation.”

Jasmine Lees '21

When the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of her boyfriend’s baseball season in the spring of 2020, Jasmine Lees held out hope that the virus would pass before the start of her senior year and the fall soccer season. But as the reality of the pandemic continued to emerge throughout the summer, it became clear there would be no athletics that fall.

“It was pretty devastating,” says Lees, who majored in Criminology during her undergraduate years at FSU. “My entire family was kind of in shock. We all had a strong connection to the team.”

It was Lees’ dad who first mentioned that Framingham State University offered a Counseling Psychology graduate degree that paired nicely with her career interests. Because she maintained her year of NCAA eligibility, Lees could play her final season of soccer as a graduate student, which is exactly what she did, serving as one of the team’s co-captains last fall. The team advanced to the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference (MASCAC) tournament semifinals with a thrilling win in penalty kicks versus Salem State University.

“I technically wasn’t supposed to meet this year’s freshman class, but I’m so happy I got to play with them and be captain of the team,” she says. “It was an honor, and we made it farther than we ever had since I’ve been here.”

Lees is among a handful of athletes who returned to FSU as graduate students and got the chance to play out their final year of NCAA eligibility after losing their senior seasons to COVID. With soccer behind her, she is now fully focused on earning her graduate degree in Counseling Psychology. She is exploring a number of different professional fields, including sports psychology, addiction psychology and victim advocacy.

“I have enjoyed my time at Framingham State and have met so many people who will be in my life for a long time,” she says. “I appreciate Coach (Kristina) Kern. I came in as a walk-on my sophomore year, and she gave me a chance.”
Whittemore Library Expands Its Impact and Presence on Campus

Located on the northeast corner of campus, the Henry Whittemore Library is one of Framingham State University’s unique buildings, featuring a large open area of interweaving mezzanines surrounded on the outside by offices and classrooms.

While its façade may be reminiscent of a bygone era, what’s happening inside the building has never been more relevant. Interim Dean Millie Gonzalez sees the library as much more than a place where members of the community can study and access educational resources: it plays a central role in three key initiatives — enhancing student wellness, ensuring FSU’s commitment to antiracism and reducing the cost of education.

On the third initiative, the library is the leading organization overseeing an innovative effort aimed at increasing the number of college courses utilizing free Open Educational Resources (OER) rather than costly textbooks. The project, funded through a $441,367 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is testing the hypothesis that underrepresented students will achieve higher academic outcomes if free, culturally relevant course materials that reflect their experiences are utilized. Student savings on textbooks over the three-year grant period are projected to be more than $800,000, and the goal is to create a new model that will provide continued savings long into the future.

“We want to provide training, funding and support for faculty to create or adapt textbooks to make learning more equitable and affordable at our institution,” says Gonzalez.

Whittemore Library also recently opened a new wellness area called the Rams Renew Space, a private room where members of the community are encouraged to recharge, meditate and even make use of a massage chair. The new space was made possible through the generosity of alumna Joan Murtaugh ’61.

The library has also been at the forefront of FSU’s commitment to antiracism, compiling online resources for the community and hosting events that center the voices of the BIPOC community.

Last fall, a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) funded a series of events celebrating Native American Heritage Month using Joy Harjo’s book of poems, An American Sunrise, as the center of discussions. It culminated with a special event featuring Harjo, who is the first Native American to be named U.S. Poet Laureate.

Finally, the library is the home of the University’s new Digital Humanities Center, which was also funded by a grant from the NEH. The rapidly growing field of Digital Humanities (DH) combines traditional humanities subjects, such as English, history and philosophy, with digital computing tools that expand upon our ability to ask and to answer age-old humanities questions about identity, history and more.

“We have so much going on right now,” says Gonzalez. “I encourage members of the FSU and Framingham community to take advantage of our many resources, which include a large collection of ebooks and other online materials. We want to be a learning hub for the greater community.”

Friends of Whittemore Library

Framingham State is excited to announce the establishment of the Friends of Whittemore Library, a fundraising and outreach group supporting programs and activities at the library. The group has been a longtime dream of former director and current Dean Emerita Bonnie Mitchell, who will serve as Chair of the Board for the organization.

“The group will work not only as a fundraising arm, but also as a way to reach out to our alumni and the wider community to highlight things going on at the library and to seek their input and engagement on different activities and functions that they would like us to offer,” says Interim Library Dean Millie Gonzalez. Anyone interested in learning more can reach out to Millie Gonzalez at VGONZALEZ@FRAMINGHAM.EDU.
Faculty Spotlight

Vandana Singh

“Change, the stories are often so dark, they can leave you with a sense of hopelessness. The stories foretell of a dystopian world with rising oceans that consume coastal cities.”

The doom and gloom is justified,” Framingham State Professor Vandana Singh says matter-of-factly. “We can’t escape that things are going to be difficult and are already difficult for marginalized communities. But the climate problem is also a problem of the imagination. We are stuck in a certain way of thinking about the world. Speculative fiction can free us from our old ways of thinking. When our imaginations are free, then we can better engage with these problems.”

Singh is an author of speculative fiction, in addition to being a physicist and an interdisciplinary researcher on the climate crisis. That’s why Arizona State University’s Center for Science and the Imagination selected her as one of four global Climate Imagination Fellows, charged with writing a series of fictional short stories—inspired by reality and science—that imagine how we might successfully adapt and respond to the climate crisis in the future.

“We are so entrenched in old ways of thinking, old paradigms,” says Dr. Singh. “Speculative fiction doesn’t give us a blueprint for the future. That’s up to communities, civic society, scientists, policymakers and the like. But spec fic informed by science can, through story, immerse us in alternative realities, get us out of the trap of the imagination so that we can creatively strive for a livable future—we can confront the power structures that got us into this mess, and also work on alternative ways of living that are socially, as well as ecologically, sustainable.”

Singh’s interest in the climate crisis goes beyond hard science and technological innovations. She has developed a pedagogy that marries the scientific aspect of the climate crisis with ethical and social justice issues and concerns from other disciplines. Her work on a justice-centered, transdisciplinary conceptualization of the climate crisis is part of a forthcoming volume from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

 Singh and the three other Climate Imagination Fellows—who are from China, Mexico and Nigeria—are scheduled to publish their short stories this spring.

New Teacher Residency Program Aims to Support Diversity in the K-12 System

Framingham State University (FSU) is partnering with Framingham Public Schools (FPS) and the National Center for Teacher Residencies to develop a new residency program that will guide applicants from bilingual and underrepresented backgrounds toward teaching careers at the early, elementary or secondary level.

A teacher residency program is a hands-on learning experience that embeds a candidate in a school district with a professional mentor and academic coursework that is directly related to their classroom experience. It is similar to the model used in the medical profession.

Planning for the residency program, which aims to launch in fall 2022 with an initial cohort of 15 to 20 candidates, is being funded through a $74,855 grant from AmeriCorps and the Massachusetts Service Alliance. The grant proposal was written by FSU English Professor Kelly Matthews, who co-authored the grant application with Education Professor Wardell Powell and Framingham Public Schools Assistant Superintendent Joseph Corazzini. “AmeriCorps will assist us in writing the larger three-year grant proposal.”

In Massachusetts, the public school teacher workforce is 89 percent white, while students of color make up 42.1 percent of the state’s public school population, according to data provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Yet, many people of color face systemic barriers to attaining Massachusetts teacher licensure at the initial level, including the financial cost of paying college tuition for teacher preparation coursework during an unpaid practicum experience in a K-12 classroom.

“The planning grant is a major vote of confidence from AmeriCorps that enables us to partner with the National Center for Teacher Residencies,” says FSU English Professor Kelly Matthews, who co-authored the grant application with Education Professor Wardell Powell and Framingham Public Schools Assistant Superintendent Joseph Corazzini. “AmeriCorps will assist us in writing the larger three-year grant proposal.”

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“Our planning proposal aims to directly address these barriers,” says Matthews. At Framingham Public Schools, more than 80 percent of the teachers are white, despite the fact that white students make up less than 50 percent of the population.
Growing up in war-torn Lebanon, the prospects of getting a good education and going on to a successful career were bleak for Yara Khoury. But the opportunity to participate in a Human Rights Conference in Slovakia at age 17 helped change the trajectory of her future.

“I met a lot of people there who encouraged me to get out of Lebanon and pursue my education somewhere else,” says Khoury, who ultimately made the difficult decision to leave her family and join her older brother in the United States.
The End of an Era

Kevin Foley ’84 vividly remembers interviewing F. Javier Cevallos for president of Framingham State University back in 2014. “Interviews took place over a weekend,” recalls Foley, who now chairs the Board of Trustees. “Javier was the last person we spoke with. What stood out for me was his confidence, his expertise—at the time, he was president at Kutztown University [Pennsylvania]—and his warmth as a person. When I left that day, I remember thinking, ‘This is the person that can lead Framingham State into the future.’”
that feeling proved to be prophecy. Fast forward eight years, and Foley points to Cevallos’s track record of success. “On campus, he’s worked effectively within his executive team and is highly visible to students. Externally, he’s done a great job building relationships and is well thought of by our legislative delegation and community partners.”

Conversations with students, faculty, administrators and others about his impending retirement only reinforce those points. It’s clear that when the next history of Framingham State is written, the chapter on the Cevallos years will chronicle progress in people, places and programs.

RIGOR AND STRENGTH

Framingham State in 2022 is a larger university than when Cevallos arrived in 2014—not in terms of enrollment but rather in programs and facilities. Top on that list is the 2016 acquisition of the Warren Conference Center & Inn in Ashland. “To acquire such a large parcel of land that’s a five-minute drive from Framingham State is going to be a major contribution to the growth of the University in the decades ahead,” observes Professor Desmond McCarthy ’81, who directs the Journalism program. The addition of the Warren Center led to the launch of the Hospitality and Tourism Management major in 2019, the first of its kind in the state university system. Natural Science and Environmental Studies majors will also benefit from the property’s 100 wooded, lakefront acres.

Another example is the 2016 merger with the Danforth Art Museum, a partnership that has brought richness and depth to the offerings of both the museum and the University. When the Danforth at Framingham State opened its doors in 2019 in the beautifully renovated Jonathan Maynard Building on Centre Common, Juan Rodriguez ’78 hailed it as a triumph. “If the museum had closed, the community would have lost that resource,” says Rodriguez, former principal at Framingham’s Fuller Middle School and current member of the FSU Foundation Board. “But because Javier and Framingham State stepped in, it’s now a resource for both the University and the community.”

CHANGING COMPLEXIONS

Cevallos is also widely credited for championing inclusion on campus through a wide range of efforts. In 2017, for example, he hired the University’s first chief diversity officer. “He then elevated that position to vice president for diversity and inclusion in 2019 to show the value that the University puts on it,” says Vice President for Enrollment and Student Development Loretta M. Holloway, PhD.

THE END OF AN ERA

Student government president McKenzie Ward ’24 has been impressed by Cevallos’s commitment to making Framingham State an antiracist institution. “I’ve-seen President Cevallos remind us countless times that we are an antiracist campus and really work to pull us together when we face difficult times. It shows his strong leadership and dedication to our BIPOC [Black, Indigenous and people of color] community,” she says.

Rodriguez points to an innovative partnership with MassBay Community College, the MetroWest College Planning Collaborative (CPC), as another of Cevallos’s inclusion success stories. In 2014, Cevallos picked up on plans in place to create the joint college planning center to help area families think about college. “As a retired middle-level principal, I can tell you that that connection is vital. It’s a fantastic program,” says Rodriguez.

“During Javier’s tenure, we have become a more diverse campus in every way...”

—PROFESSOR DESMOND MCCARTHY ’81

Through the CPC, “we are serving a number of schools and districts, and it’s helping us recruit students from underrepresented and economically disadvantaged backgrounds,” Cevallos notes. “This program will continue to pay dividends in the years ahead.”

It’s already made a substantial difference, as the sidebar, “Diversity by the Numbers,” shows. “During Javier’s tenure, we have become a more diverse campus in every way—a much more welcoming campus for faculty and students from underrepresented groups. It’s an example of the president setting a goal, focusing on it and showing how important that goal is,” McCarthy notes.

COMMUNICATOR IN CHIEF

In addition, Cevallos is praised as being a highly accessible president, particularly to students. “If you walk by his office and his door is open, you can walk right in and talk to him,” says Holloway. “And he answers his own emails.”

McCarthy has witnessed this in action as editor to The Gaspurit, the independent student newspaper. “Thursday night is layout time at the paper. Student editors can email Javier and get a response. Now I don’t encourage that as an advisor—because hopefully articles are finished by seven o’clock on Thursday night—but I can tell you that you cannot be more responsive than that,” he says.

Cevallos’s accessibility extends into the broader MetroWest community. “I think Javier’s greatest accomplishment as president has been to re-engage with the community,” says Holloway. “He’s really been all over promoting Framingham State.”

DIVERSITY BY THE NUMBERS

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<th>Undergraduate degree-seeking underrepresented students</th>
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<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<td>Fall 2021</td>
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Undergraduate degree-seeking underrepresented students
“We are a public institution, which is a responsibility and an obligation,” Cevallos explains. “We give back through different centers like the MetroWest Economic Research Center, the Stalker Institute and the Christa McAuliffe Center. We also give back in practical ways. I encourage my executive team to serve on the boards of local non-profit organizations.” Cevallos himself serves or has served on the boards of the United Way of Tri-County, Jewish Family Service, MetroWest Hospital and the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce.

Rodriguez, who teaches leadership for the Association for Middle Level Education, observes that leading by example is one of Cevallos’s strengths. He also cites his ability to build collaboration. “Javier is a very sincere and honest person, quick to acknowledge the work of others. I have seen him sometimes minimize his role and maximize the role of others because he wants to create a sense of community. His ability to lead stems from the level of trust he is able to create.”

For his part, Cevallos says there is much he is going to miss about Framingham State when he retires: “student theater performances, the annual fashion show, dance performances, watching the enormous success of our men’s and women’s athletic teams,” he says with a smile. “Every morning, I’ve looked forward to getting out of bed, coming to work and seeing what is happening on the campus.”

“I’ve enjoyed being part of a fantastic administrative team,” he continues. “But most of all, I’m going to miss the energy on campus. I already know that because during COVID, we all missed that campus energy. Before the pandemic, I used to get home at eight or nine o’clock at night and say, ‘Wow, today was one long day.’ And then, in COVID, I missed those long days.” He and his wife, Josée Vachon-Cevallos, look forward to staying in the area and taking advantage of the wealth of offerings from Boston to Worcester. Ever the collaborator, Cevallos credits Josée for his success. “It’s a partnership,” he concludes. “I’m grateful to her as well as everyone who has been a part of my team here at Framingham State.”

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— Loretta M. Holloway, PhD, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Development
### ALUMNI PROFILE

**Dan Dowd ’90**

Dan Dowd has always considered himself an artist. But more than a decade after he graduated from Framingham State, Dowd found himself working at jobs that did not interest him and left him with little time to pursue his passion.

So in 2001, he left Massachusetts and headed north to Maine. “I moved to Maine to escape the Massachusetts rat race and pursue my life as an artist,” Dowd says. “I wanted to spend less time working for someone else and spend more time making artwork.”

Today, Dowd is recognized as one of the region’s most talented assemblage artists. His exhibition, *Found and Gifted*, was on display at Framingham State’s Danforth Art Museum from October 2021 through March 2022, alongside an exhibition of the work of fellow FSU alum Jaune Quick-to-See Smith.

The exhibition features several items he started accumulating from a transfer station near his home in Maine, where people can pick and choose from wood and metal piles.

“The exhibition includes galvanized wash tubs, rubber, wool, velvet and other found objects, as well as many items that were gifted to Dowd. Each gifted assemblage represents an important person in his life. Exhibiting alongside Smith has been a "coming full circle" moment for Dowd. During his senior year at FSU, he undertook a directed study that involved cataloguing parts of the University’s art collection. Some of those pieces included work from Smith.

“The exhibition has been a really nice way to reconnect with the college,” says Dowd. “It’s been a bit of a homecoming for me.”

You can check out Dowd’s work on Instagram: @DANDOWDART

### ALUMNI PROFILE

**Kristen (Surette) Mulrooney ’07**

Kristen (Surette) Mulrooney recently returned home from Ohio where she spent two weeks at the Marriott on the University of Dayton campus being pampered and catered to while enjoying free time to work on her upcoming book of humor on parenting.

“It’s less of a guide to parenting and more of an anti-guide to parenting,” Mulrooney says of the collection of essays and satirical pieces.

The two weeks away from her husband and three children were provided courtesy of the Erma Bombeck Anna Lefler Humorist-in-Residence Program, which offers grand prize winners a hotel stay with free room service, catering and the gift of time to write. Mulrooney was one of three winners chosen for the residency among 283 people who applied by pitching their ideas for a comedy project.

Mulrooney has always enjoyed writing but never considered it as a career until after she gave up her job teaching English to start a family.

“I didn’t trust my skill or talent,” she says. “But after I left my job, I found that I didn’t have a disability.”

“Now I’m trying to help promote more awareness about adaptive clothing to today’s students.”

“You can check out her writing and learn more at: KRISTENMULROONEY.COM

### ALUMNI PROFILE

**Keisha Greaves ’08**

Keisha Greaves was a graduate student in the early 2000s when she began noticing weakness in her legs that led to her falling down on occasion. She initially didn’t believe it was anything too serious; but after her doctor referred her to a neurologist, she received the startling diagnosis of muscular dystrophy, a chronic disease that causes progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass.

“My world turned upside down,” says Greaves, who today requires a wheelchair to get around.

Greaves started blogging about her experience. After overcoming her initial grief, she set about creating Girls Chronically Rock (GCR), an adaptive apparel company aimed at helping and inspiring those with chronic disabilities.

“I am a true believer in things happening for a reason,” says Greaves, who has a degree in Fashion Design and Retailing (FDR) from FSU.

Adaptive clothing is designed specifically for people with disabilities who have trouble putting on or wearing traditional clothing. Greaves’ dream is to collaborate with major designers to get her GCR adaptive line into major retailers. She also launched the GCR Adaptive Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that partners with Framingham State’s FDR program and other fashion schools to raise money for supplies and teach current fashion students about adaptive fashion.

“When I was in school, I didn’t know anything about adaptive fashion because I didn’t have a disability,” Greaves says. “Now I’m trying to help promote more awareness about adaptive clothing to today’s students.”

To learn more about GCR, visit GRC Seymour Rock.com

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Her work has appeared in The New Yorker, McSweeney’s, The Belladonna and more. She is also a co-author of the official Gilmore Girls Cookbook, which comes out this spring.

You can check out her writing and learn more at: KRISTENMULROONEY.COM

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## Making an impact

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Today, Dowd is recognized as one of the region’s most talented assemblage artists. His exhibition, *Found and Gifted*, was on display at Framingham State’s Danforth Art Museum from October 2021 through March 2022, alongside an exhibition of the work of fellow FSU alum Jaune Quick-to-See Smith.

The exhibition features several items he started accumulating from a transfer station near his home in Maine, where people can pick and choose from wood and metal piles.

“The exhibition includes galvanized wash tubs, rubber, wool, velvet and other found objects, as well as many items that were gifted to Dowd. Each gifted assemblage represents an important person in his life. Exhibiting alongside Smith has been a "coming full circle" moment for Dowd. During his senior year at FSU, he undertook a directed study that involved cataloguing parts of the University’s art collection. Some of those pieces included work from Smith.

“The exhibition has been a really nice way to reconnect with the college,” says Dowd. “It’s been a bit of a homecoming for me.”

You can check out Dowd’s work on Instagram: @DANDOWDART
Class notes

1980s
Kevin O’Connell ’87 was sworn in as chief of the Waltham, Massachusetts Police Department. Previously, Kevin was deputy chief of the department and had been a police officer for nearly 30 years.

1990s
Patrick Gamere ’97 joined Goodwin Group in Boston as their multimedia artist.

2000s
Bette Rivero LaMay ’00 became senior vice president of Sales & Marketing for Bspoke Title Holdings last September.

2010s
Michelle Pete G ’11 is a principal of Fairview Veterans Memorial Elementary School.

Youth & Family Support Network

IN MEMORIAM

Catherine Haggerty ’64 8/26/2021
Shirley (Masie) Blishar ’46 9/25/2021
Emilia (Calafato) Smith ’47 8/30/2021
Alice (Murphy) Tauck ’49 9/30/2021
Louise Toler ’49 2/25/2021
Irma Lubowski Shaw ’50 9/20/2021
Laura (Strick Briggs) ’51 12/3/2021
Doris (Reponen) Hurley ’51 8/20/2021
Nancy (Cassey) Smith ’51 6/22/2021
Ann (McCubin) Colbert ’53 1/17/2022
Patricia (O’Leary) Roth ’52 12/23/2021
Ruth King ’53 9/22/2021
Rita (Conway) Smith ’55 8/20/2021
Michael (Quinn) Davis ’57 8/22/2021
Samantha (Palis) Conlin ’57 5/2/2021
Marylin (Baldwin) Conlin ’57 5/2/2021
Barbara (Sniffen) Davis ’57 5/2/2021

Talor Kahwajian ’16 became the marketing coordinator for the Boston Motor Fabrication.

Samantha D’Alessandro ’17 and Andrew McShane recently started the Wild Roots Plant Truck. They plan to bring to area farmers’ markets and fairs.

Kevin O’Connell ’87, of South Weymouth and Harvard, formerly of Milton, passed away on his 70th birthday after an eight-year battle with pulmonary fibrosis. He was the beloved husband of Louise Toler. Dick had a long career in health information administration. He founded and was CEO of Medical Records Associates, Inc.

Beloved Alum and Longtime Trustee Dick Logan Passes Away

Richard C. “Dick” Logan ’70, of South Weymouth and Harwich, formerly of Milton, passed away on his 70th birthday after an eight-year battle with pulmonary fibrosis. He was the beloved husband of Louise Toler. Dick had a long career in health information administration. He founded and was CEO of Medical Records Associates, Inc.

He was a proud alumnus of Framingham State and a strong supporter of the University. His family’s connection to FSU spans four generations of teachers. His mother, Marion Anthony, graduated in 1949, followed by Louise and her sister, Ruth. Elizabeth Olson ’47. Next came Louise’s daughter, Peggy (Toler) Richard ’76, and her granddaughter, Linda Richard ’10.

She was a proud alumnus of Framingham State and a strong supporter of the University. Her family’s connection to FSU spans four generations of teachers. Her mother, Marion Anthony, graduated in 1949, followed by Louise and her sister, Ruth. Elizabeth Olson ’47. Next came Louise’s daughter, Peggy (Toler) Richard ’76, and her granddaughter, Linda Richard ’10.

Youth & Family Support Network
Help Find the Next Generation of the fRAMily!

Do you know someone who would make a great Ram? As an alum, you know firsthand the transformative power of a Framingham State experience. The Refer a Ram Program provides the opportunity to waive the $50 application fee for prospective undergraduate and graduate students with a simple referral. Refer someone today — there are no limits on the number of students you can refer.

Share this gift with anyone considering FSU, including family, friends and colleagues. Referred students will be contacted immediately by the Admissions Office and will receive priority consideration when they submit their application.

Learn more at: FRAMINGHAM.EDU/REFER-A-RAM

Anita Goncalves ’98
Recognized with Inclusive Excellence Alumni Achievement Award

For more than 20 years, Anita Goncalves ’98 has dedicated her life to serving blind children and young adults (and their families), helping them to live independent lives through her work at Perkins School for the Blind and currently with the Boston Public Schools. As the coordinator of residential living at Perkins, a role she held for more than 12 years, Goncalves coordinated the administrative and operational aspects of living for students and also attended to the direct care, medical and behavioral needs of students in residence. During her time at Perkins, she twice received the Staff Quality Recognition Award and was also awarded the Excellence in Performance Award.

Today, she is a paraprofessional in the Boston Public Schools, serving as a teacher and a mentor to a blind student and English Language Learner. In recognition of her outstanding career, the Alumni Association is honored to present her with the Alumni Achievement Award for Inclusive Excellence.

Travis Landry ’19
Completes 5th Year as Appraiser on PBS’s Antiques Road Show

Travis Landry has been passionate about collectibles for as long as he can remember. But the moment he realized it could become more than a hobby came at age 13 when he convinced his dad to loan him $700 to purchase a collection of Transformers on Craigslist. “I kept the best toy out of the collection for myself and doubled my money selling the rest,” says Landry. “From that point on, I was totally hooked.”

Today, Landry is the director of Pop Culture and an appraiser at Bruneau and Co. Auctioneers in Cranston, RI. He is also the youngest expert appraiser invited to appear regularly on the hit PBS series Antiques Road Show, a title he has now held for five years running.

Appearing on television comes naturally to Landry, who in middle school stopped playing football so he could pursue the performing arts. “I enjoyed tap dancing, singing and acting,” says Landry. “Being on Antiques Road Show is a dream come true. I grew up watching that show with my parents. The first day going on the set of the show I felt like I knew everybody. It was a surreal experience.”

His first television appearance came on a show called Toy Hunters in 2012 when he was still a teenager. He applied to share a toy collection on the show. The executive producers were so impressed that they hired him to be the sidekick to featured dealer Jordan Hembrough as he traveled the country in search of rare toys. Toy Hunters, which appeared on the Travel Channel, went off the air in 2014, but by that time Landry was already starting to make a name for himself.

Being an appraiser requires spending a lot of time doing research and keeping your finger on the pulse of the latest trends. Landry says one of the skills to being a successful appraiser is to have the instinct and intuition to know when to investigate an item further. “Anything today can be valuable, but you need to know what to look for,” he says. “I don’t feel like I work a day in my life. I spend my time looking at comics, toys, art, furniture and jewelry. I’m going to auctions and finding other people’s mistakes, buying the item and reselling it.”

In addition to his work at Bruneau and Co., Landry and his brother Kyle Landry ’09, a PhD and president at Delavie Sciences LLC, also run an art business on the side. Both brothers have been the recipient of Framingham State University’s Young Alumni Achievement Award in recent years. “It’s been great being able to combine our different skills in that effort,” says Landry.
Artist Julie (Siler) Olander ’82, G’90 Pays It Forward

Julie (Siler) Olander credits her degrees from Framingham State University with helping her lead a career focused on her passion for performing and fine arts.

“I have really enjoyed my life as a result of getting my degree and loved what I was doing,” says Olander, who is in the process of establishing a second endowed scholarship to support art students at FSU. “It’s important to me to give back and let other people who are less fortunate enjoy those things as well.”

Olander enrolled at FSU in her 30s while raising her children. She was working at the Danforth Art Museum and School at the time when the director noticed how good she was with the children, as well as her talent for art.

“She said ‘Julie, you need to go get a degree in art,’” says Olander.

She would go on to graduate from Framingham State with undergraduate degrees in Art History and Fine Arts. While at school, she served as president of the Art Club and the Hilltop Players. She would return to FSU a few years later and earn her master’s degree in Museum Administration.

Olander worked with dozens of local nonprofits connected to the arts during her career and played a role in the founding of the Framingham Performing Arts Center. Today, she continues to curate art shows and display her own work at venues in Florida, where she has relocated.

Olander, whose art can be viewed at www.juliesilerolander.com, is a talented painter who draws inspiration from nature.

“I grew up near the water,” she says. “I love doing water scenes and floral scenes.”

A few years back, she established The Julie Siler Olander Endowed Scholarship Fund to support undergraduate students majoring in studio art, art history or art education. Today, she is in the process of establishing a second scholarship specifically for graduate students majoring in the arts.

“Many of the scholarships available to students are reserved for undergraduates only,” says Olander. “I thought I should create another one and hopefully help inspire someone to pursue their graduate degree.”

To learn more about supporting scholarships at FSU, visit FRAMINGHAM.EDU/GIVE
When I reflect upon the 2021 fiscal year, I’m left with a profound sense of gratitude for the resilient members of this community. It was undoubtedly one of the most challenging academic years in the history of Framingham State University due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced us to offer the large majority of our courses remotely. For most of the year, athletics and in-person student events and activities were canceled, as we all waited for the nationwide vaccination effort to begin.

Despite the challenges, our amazing faculty trained on the fly to be able to offer meaningful and interesting coursework in a remote environment. Our staff found new and inventive ways to support our students and create a sense of community. And our students persevered through new learning formats to continue toward their college degrees. We facilitated more than 27,000 COVID-19 tests on our campus and maintained a positive rate of just 0.4 percent, far below that of the state and our surrounding community.

Entering the year, no one could say how it was going to play out, or whether we would be forced to shift to 100 percent remote learning. Looking back, I couldn’t be prouder of how our entire community stood up to the enormous challenge.
Academic Affairs

The Academic Affairs Office spent the summer leading up to the academic year preparing to offer the large majority of classes in a remote format. The Education Technology Office played a crucial role in aiding this transition, hosting roughly 50 faculty professional development workshops with as many as 120 attendees in a single session. Whittemore Library also assisted faculty by creating online research guides to support courses.

To help students adjust to remote learning, the Center for Academic Success and Advising (CASA) extended its service hours to seven days a week and by April 2021 had provided more than 900 hours of online tutoring. Faculty in the College of STEM adapted by creating online research guides to help students stay up to date on their work. The Fashion Industry, in order to stay up to date with course content, hosted roughly 50 faculty professional development workshops with as many as 120 attendees in a single session.

Enrollment and Student Development

Framingham State enrolled 3,213 undergraduate students and 1,282 graduate students in fall 2021, for a total enrollment of 4,495. The five most popular undergraduate majors are: Psychology, Management, Criminology, Biology and Computer Science.

The Admissions team was able to waive standardized tests during the pandemic and is now looking at the current policies surrounding how effective standardized tests are in analyzing applications. The Health Center played a major role in keeping the community safe throughout the academic year, operating a COVID-19 testing center in the Athletic gym and performing on-campus contact tracing. More than 27,000 individual COVID-19 tests were administered in FY21 helping the University maintain a positive test rate of just 0.4 percent.

Financial Aid worked with Student Accounts to distribute $1,948,876 in CARES Act emergency grant funding to 3,185 students and $1,948,876 in Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund grants to 2,000 students. Most students received grants of $560 from the CARES Act, and $750 from the relief fund. The pandemic did not allow for Study Abroad opportunities in FY21, but the University still held a series of Virtual Study Abroad Fairs for students in anticipation of the return of international travel in 2021-2022.

Development and Alumni Relations

The Development and Alumni Relations Office raised $2.6 million in private funds during FY21. This money helped enable the FSU Foundation to distribute more than $75,000 directly to students in the form of scholarships.

Substantial gifts to the University included $100,000 from Stop & Shop in order to establish the "Stop & Shop Scholarship for Diversity in the Field of Food & Nutrition," an endowed fund that will provide financial assistance to FSU students studying to become registered dietitians.

Nearly 40 students participated in the annual Coaching Event organized by the College of Business Advisory Board and Alumni Relations Office. The event pairs business students with professionals for networking and guidance. Most alumni events were held virtually during FY21. An exception was Reunion Weekend in early June, 2021, where we happily welcomed alumni back to campus for two days of celebrations and activities.

The Danforth Art School successfully navigated the COVID-19 pandemic through AY21, moving all of their youth programs online. While not the same as in-person learning, students and families appreciated the opportunity to continue learning and creating while quarantined at home. Feedback from families was almost universally positive, and enrollments were strong throughout the year.

Diversity and Inclusion

A major focus for the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement during FY21 was ensuring that the pandemic did not have a disproportionate impact on low-income students and communities of color. To that end, the office compiled resources and guidance for students in need of access to computers and high-speed internet during remote courses.

A central training focus for dice, in collaboration with Human Resources, was anti-racist training. During FY21, sessions included:

- Engaging in Dialogue about Race in Teaching and Advising
- Daily Mentoring as an Equity-Minded Practice
- A Mental Health Perspective on Understanding and Addressing Racial Trauma

FSU received a $62,000 Grant from the Mass Higher Education Innovation Fund to Organize a Multi-Day Racial Equity Policy Review Institute led by Dr. Sumonendrak.

The university hosted its annual Women Making History Now event in March 2021. The honorees were: Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, District Attorney Rachael Goebel, Colleen Coffey, Executive Director of the MetroWest College Planning Collaborative; Dr. Beverly Edgehill, SVP Organizational Development at the T.J. X Companies, Inc.; Patricia Hohl, Director of Voices Against Violence Framingham; and Tiffany Lillis, Director of Community Resource Development for Framingham Public Schools.

Athletics

COVID-19 forced the cancellation of both the fall and winter athletic seasons in FY21. Students were still provided opportunities to work out and practice with their teammates and also maintained their year of athletic eligibility.

Athletics returned during the spring season, with varsity competitions and conference schedules held for Baseball, Softball, Women’s Lacrosse and Women’s Outdoor Track and Field. The Women’s Softball team finished with a 29-8 record, including a perfect 10-0 mark in league play. The Rams were the 2021 MASCAC (Massachusetts State College Athletic Conference) Regular Season Champions, but suffered a heartbreaking defeat in game three of the MASCAC Championship Series against Bridgewater State.

Women’s Lacrosse also enjoyed another strong season, going 8-2 overall and losing a 15-13 nail-biter to Westfield State in the MASCAC Championship game. First-year attacker Hannah Gower, senior midfielder Hanna McMahon and junior attacker Tara Palermo were selected to the All-MASCAC Team. In other highlights from the spring, first-year pitcher Scott Nosky was named rookie of the year for Men’s Baseball, and senior second baseman Bobby Higgins earned all-conference honors.

Budget

The University was awarded more than $21 million in federal emergency grants to offset costs associated with the pandemic. About half the money was distributed directly to students as emergency grants for their expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the coronavirus. The University was able to utilize the remaining money to offset expenses associated with the transition to remote learning. That included equipping 35 classrooms on campus with added video conferencing capability to broadcast live audio and video.

The University was also able to achieve nearly $6.5 million in savings by restructuring bonds during the fiscal year.

Despite the hardships brought on by the pandemic, including a further drop in enrollment, the University maintains a strong overall financial position and held tuition and fees flat heading into FY22. The FSU Foundation, Inc. endowment ended the fiscal year with $115.4 million in funds, an increase of 17.7 percent (27.2 percent) from the previous year.

The University’s overall endowment ended with a total of $241.3 million, up from $335.3 million in FY20.

The following renovation/critical repairs projects, which directly enhance the student experience, were completed during FY21:

- Center for Inclusive Excellence renovations and furnishing
- Adapting to a COVID-19 environment, modified classrooms and other educational spaces to ensure a safe environment for teaching and learning
- Installed new flooring and/or ceilings in multiple classrooms
- Installed new classroom furniture in multiple classrooms
Economic Impact

TOTAL "ALL FUNDS" (INCLUDING CAPITAL AND FINANCIAL AID) EXPENDITURES
$161,900,000

TOTAL OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES
$118,400,000

TOTAL PAYROLL
$71,740,000

TOTAL EMPLOYEES
842

TOTAL STUDENTS
4,876

UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT
$42.3M University; $15.4M Foundation

UNIVERSITY-FUNDED FINANCIAL AID
$2,182,108

BACHELOR’S AND MASTER’S DEGREES CONFERRED
1,216

Events

MAY 7, 2022
Celebration of President Cevallos
Join us for a special event at the Warren Conference Center & Inn as we celebrate President Cevallos as he prepares to retire. All money raised during the event will benefit student scholarships.

JUNE 2–3, 2022
Alumni Weekend and Reunion, Campus
Our biggest alumni celebration of the year is right around the corner. This is the best weekend of the year to reconnect with old friends and your alma mater. We hope you can join us!

JUNE 5, 2022
University Community Club Kick-off Celebration
Join us at the Warren Conference Center & Inn as we celebrate the kick-off of the University Community Club, a new recreational membership club open to the FSU community.

JUNE 6, 2022
Ram Booster Golf Tournament
The annual Ram Booster Golf Tournament raises funds for FSU Athletics. This year’s tournament will again be held at the beautiful Highfields Golf and Country Club.

Check out all our alumni events, virtual and in person, at ALUMNI.FRAMINGHAM.EDU

Fundraising

Expenditures

OPERATING EXPENSES (IN THOUSANDS) FY20 FY21
SALARIES $54,836 $53,486
BENEFITS $17,743 $18,253
UTILITIES $3,414 $3,225
SUPPLIES & SERVICES/SCHOLARSHIPS $30,167 $25,170
DEPRECIATION $7,446 $7,350
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES $113,609 $107,484
The Library, May Hall, c. 1890

This single room served as the college's library from 1889 to 1937, after which it was moved to Dwight Hall.

(Courtesy FSU Archives)