

NORWICH RECORD

THE MAGAZINE OF NORWICH UNIVERSITY

SUMMER 2020

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The creator of star drug-discovery algorithms for
Pharma brings big data—and big ideas—to campus

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Stability



“Allison and I chose to create a Norwich Charitable Gift Annuity, which will allow us to have a fixed-rate income with an outstanding rate of return, plus a substantial charitable tax deduction. This annuity is a great investment that provides peace of mind when the market proves volatile. The best part, however, is that the money is used to support Norwich and its students.”

—Julian “Chuck” Vitali, Class of 1965



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NEW YORK CITY

MARCH 12, 2020

What a difference a pandemic makes. John Hardee '24 leaves the 57th Street Subway Station on a trip to Manhattan over Spring Break. The first-year cadet and area resident traveled to Midtown to catch an NUCC Regimental Band performance at Carnegie Hall later that evening. For Hardee, it would be his last get-together with Norwich friends for the foreseeable future. Just a few days later, Norwich announced that campus would close for the semester and classes would resume online.

Photograph by Matt Furman

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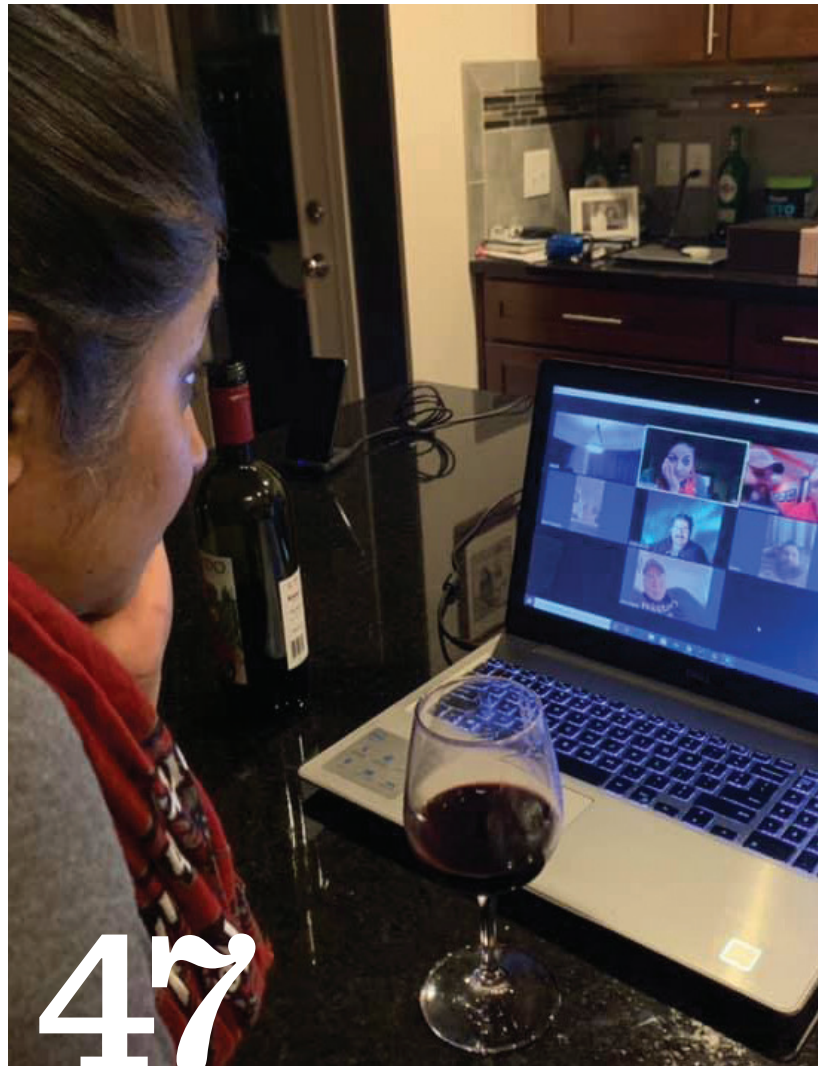
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NEXT-GENERATION SAVIORS

Medical research is having a moment. So are neuroscience major Shawnae Evans '21 (*right*) and biology major Halee Lair '21. Evans is an Air Force ROTC scholar. Lair is in the Honors Program. Mentored by Chemistry Prof. Tom Shell, the pair investigated Trojan Horse-like drug delivery molecules that could help the treatment of Parkinson's disease and cancer. Beating fierce national competition, their study earned them a spot at the Council on Undergraduate Research showcase Posters on the Hill at the U.S. Capitol. April's in-person gathering was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. So the duo shared their research poster on Twitter instead.

FUN FACT

Profs. Travis Morris and Amy Woodbury Tease invited students in their first-year honors course to create interactive teaching modules for the International Spy Museum in Washington, D.C. Credit an alumni connection with museum Executive Director Chris Costa '84.





IN BRIEF

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

Remote-learning didn't stop nearly 60 scholars from celebrating their undergraduate research projects in a showcase of student research and creative projects, now in its 18th year.

In a video kick-off, English professor and undergraduate research program director Amy Woodbury Tease said, "Our student scholars are ambitious, creative, and innovative people with fresh perspectives and a contagious curiosity that drives them to ask questions and take risks to discover something new."

Research by engineering major Nirmal Tamang '21 examined the effect of particulates in air pollution in Kathmandu, Nepal. The title of his report reveals his findings—that electric public transportation would be the pathway to clean, better air quality in the city.

Tamang said his faculty research mentor pushed him to excel. "It has been really crucial to help me identify what I wanted to do in my future, and what path should I take."

Mathematics major Raymond Kavombwe '21 applied his skills to analyze therapeutic strategies for major depressive disorders. In the process, Kavombwe says he learned that you don't need an advanced degree to make vital scholarly contributions.

"Even as an undergraduate, I am empowered to share my knowledge and experience in an impact to the world."

D.C. TOUR

In March, a dozen criminal justice majors visited the White House, U.S. Supreme Court, and other federal agencies in Washington, D.C. Alumni at the FBI, Fish & Wildlife Service, and Secret Service spoke about their organizations and careers.

"It's good to put students in situations in which they might be uncomfortable, they lack experience in," said trip coordinator David Sem, an adjunct professor of sociology. "They will discover themselves in that process. They will discover what they're very good at and what they need to improve upon."

ARTIFACT

After spending eight weeks at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City over the summer to repair a broken knuckle guard and other damage, a 19th-century eagle sword owned by Capt. Alden Partridge is back and on display at the Sullivan Museum & History Center.

"It is unclear when the sword came into the collection or when the damage occurred," said Asst. Prof. Katherine Taylor-McBroom, Sullivan Museum curator of exhibits and collections. "It is truly a unique piece in our collection."

Reporting by Matthew Crowley, Sean Markey, and Katherine Taylor-McBroom



Re: “The End of An Era” (Spring 2020):

[Your] exceptionally well researched and written [profile of Pres. Richard W. Schneider] ... really captured the essence of both our president and the man who for 28 years has been the soul of Norwich. Having worked with him for nearly 24 years and also become his friend, the article also reminded me just how much I’m going to personally miss him and how fortunate we’ve all been to have him as our president. I hope everyone is staying well and that no one at Norwich gets this damned virus. Shirley and I are social distancing, walking in our neighborhood for exercise, and otherwise staying happily isolated at home.

Best,
Carlo D’Este ’58

I enjoyed your most recent edition of the *Record* with its praising article about retiring Pres. Schneider, who has done so incredibly much for Norwich. Never in all my 32 years of serving as a citizen-soldier on active duty in the NYNG and USAR, including many summer tours in the Pentagon, have I ever met such an outstanding leader—so energetic, so inspiring, so compassionate, and who has accomplished so very much.

At our Class of 1951 55th Reunion in 1986, my best friend Gerald “Buck” Bovee was inducted into the NU Athletic Hall of Fame. After the awards were given, Gerald said to Pres. Schneider, “Sir, I don’t know what to call you—President, Admiral, General, or Mr. Schneider?” Smiling graciously, his answer was, “Buck, you can call me

Rich.” With all those titles, that answer indicates just what a great human being he really is.

And I, like all who have had any contact with Pres. Schneider, wish to congratulate and thank him very much for all he has accomplished for our beloved NU and to wish him a happy and well-deserved retirement. As a former sailboat racer, I would like to say, “Well done, Admiral, very well done indeed!”

Also, my sincere congratulations to our newly selected president, Col. Mark Anarumo. He has big shoes to fill, but we alumni certainly wish him the very best as he takes charge.

Norwich Forever!
Col. Peter W. Cuthbert ’51, USAR (Ret.)
East Moriches, Long Island

Re: 1923 Polo Team Photo (Spring 2020):

My grandfather, Laurence E. Eaton, appears in the picture of the 1923 polo team (first row, second from left), looking so competitive! My father Stephen E. Eaton and my uncles Robert P. and Laurence G. Eaton all graduated from Norwich. My brother Stephen and I believe my cousin Jane Eaton attended Norwich as well. We were very fortunate to have been raised in a close family, spending many holidays with my grandparents and extended family. We traded stories, often laughed about how well we all could march, and were proud of our family tradition—Norwich! (My dad especially.) He played on the Norwich Hockey team in the 1950s, I think, and was honored in *Who’s Who in American Colleges*. So long story short, we love to read the *Norwich Record* and keep certain memories alive. (P.S. I

would like to get a photo of the 1923 polo team and frame it at home for all to see.)

Thank you,
Kristine Eaton Finch, Rye, N.H.

I join the chorus of compliments on production of the *Norwich Record*. It has come a long way since I read my first copy in 19... (Never mind that.) Interesting enough, though, I occupied the chair in the 1970s, when the number of our living alumni was small. The *Record* was printed on white sheets, folded, and mailed. Living at the time were the true Norwich horsemen—WWII greats, who were instrumental in conversion of the military from hooves to wheels and tracks (i.e., Johnson, Harmon, and White.) These were men defined by the time in which they lived, courage, leadership, and Norwich “swagger.” Norwich men led the charge in the waning years of the cavalry and the best of them played polo... [as seen in the] picture of the 1923 Norwich Polo Team on page 52 of the Spring 2020 edition. And oh yes, a huge “well done” to the man in the front office, who is leaving us this year. I don’t think the Coast Guard had horses, but his influence as a Norwich man goes down with the best. *I Will Try*.

Allan “Big Al” Leavitt ’69, ’76 & ’79

VIETNAM VETERANS

The Sullivan Museum & History Center would like to hear from NU Vietnam Veterans or their families for an upcoming exhibit. “We are looking for artifact donations, artifact loans, photos, and/or stories.” Contact curator Katherine Taylor-McBroom: Tel: (802) 485-3288, Email: ktaylor@m@norwich.edu.

ATHLETICS

Amanda Conway '20 Named Best U.S. Women's Hockey Player

NU's all-time leading scorer signs pro contract with the Connecticut Whale

BY DEREK DUNNING



Photograph by Chandler Mosher '21

Adding to the Cadets' sweep of top national hockey player and coaching honors in April, standout senior forward Amanda Conway was picked as the nation's best Division III women's ice hockey player by the American Hockey Coaches Association (AHCA).

Conway finished her stellar, four-

year collegiate career as NU's all-time leader in goals (116), points (188), power play goals (27), and game-winning goals (20). She also set single-season records for goals (34) and points (59—twice).

On the ice, Conway was a peerless offensive powerhouse. She tied her own single-season points record this past season, tallying 32 goals and 27 assists.

Along the way, she helped lead the Cadets to their fourth straight NEHC Tournament title and a first-round NCAA Tournament win over Amherst.

The team notched a 14-game unbeaten streak heading into the NCAA Division III championship quarterfinals, before the tournament was abruptly canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During that stretch, Conway's standout play included a staggering 37 points, with 21 goals and 16 assists.

The Methuen, Mass. native says the top-player award wouldn't have been possible without her teammates. "I can't thank them enough for pushing me every day," Conway credits her coaches for their help during her four years as a Cadet. "I also can't thank my mom and dad enough," Conway said. "They never missed a game and were my biggest supporters from day one. I'm so fortunate to have such amazing parents."

Women's hockey head coach Sophie Leclerc '10 said Conway's award comes as no surprise to the players and coaches who know her. Citing her "passion for the game, dedication to her team, and natural scoring ability," Leclerc, who just finished her first year as head coach, said it had been an "honor" to work with and learn from Conway during the season.

"[I] cannot thank her enough for what she has done as a person and player for the Norwich women's hockey program and community," Leclerc said.

In April, Conway became NU's first three-time All-American after she was named to the CCM First Team East Region All-American squad for the third straight season.

In April, Conway became the first player in program history to be drafted by a professional women's hockey team, signing with the Connecticut Whale of the National Women's Hockey League. ■

ATHLETICS

Hockey Standout Tom Aubrun '20 Signs Pro Contract

BY DEREK DUNNING



The good news just keeps coming for men's hockey goalie Tom Aubrun. In April, the senior phenom was named National Division III Player of the Year by the American Hockey Coaches Association, taking home its Sid Watson Award.

Ten days later, the management major from Chamonix, France, signed a two-year deal with the Illinois-based Rockford IceHogs, the American Hockey League affiliate of the NHL Chicago Blackhawks.

Aubrun was the only NCAA Division III men's player to sign with an AHL team this year as of press time and was one of only six collegiate goaltenders in any division to sign with a professional team. He is now the third Cadet in men's hockey program history to be named national player of the year.

Aubrun's deal with the IceHogs follows an epic, record-smashing final season, in which he set five new NCAA Division III records and carried a nine-game, 572-plus consecutive minute shutout streak into the NCAA Tournament before it was canceled due to COVID-19.

"Tom had one of the best seasons I have ever seen a goaltender have at any level," said Cadets men's hockey head coach Cam Ellsworth. "His play was strong and consistent all year and deserving of this opportunity."

"Rockford took an interest in Tom very early and put forth a development path that he is very excited about," Ellsworth added. "Tom is a first-class person and athlete."

Aubrun backstopped the Cadets to their 14th NEHC Tournament title and set new NCAA Division III all-time records for consecutive shutouts (9), shutout minutes (572:31), and the most shutouts in a single season (13). He also became the NCAA Division III all-time leader in career save percentage (.946) and goals against average (1.27).

A former member of the French national U18 and U20 teams, Aubrun spent a year playing U.S. junior league hockey with the Rochester Jr. Americans before starting his collegiate career at Norwich four years ago.

He expressed gratitude to NU and its "great hockey program [which] gave me four of my most amazing years." He also thanked the coaching staff and singled out head coach Cam Ellsworth "for always trusting my abilities and for pushing me to be the goaltender that I am today."

Attributing his player of the year award to the "result of a great team effort," the senior thanked his friends and teammates "who always gave a 100 percent on and off the ice for the success of our team."

Aubrun shares National Division III Player of the Year honors with former Cadets standouts Keith Aucoin '01 and Kurtis McLean '05, both of whom went on to enjoy long professional careers in the NHL. Fans hope Auburn follows their lead. ■



Cam Ellsworth Nets Coach of the Year Honors

BY DEREK DUNNING



Photograph by Chandler Mosher '21

Caping a standout year for the men's hockey program, head coach Cam Ellsworth was named the country's best Division III coach by the American Hockey Coaches Association.

His win marks a record seventh time that a Norwich men's ice hockey coach has received the Edward Jeremiah Award. Ellsworth thanked his fellow coaches, his family, and the university administration, fans, and Northfield community "for making our student-athletes' experience here one-of-a-kind."

The award wouldn't have been possible without the "great players" he is so privileged to coach, Ellsworth said. "I'm humbled every day by the passion and work ethic they display. The commitment they have to our program and to each other makes it a joy to come to the rink every day."

Senior captain Matt Burchill described coach Ellsworth as a "natural-born leader" and role model, adding that there wasn't a mentor more deserving of coach of the year honors. "The one thing he asks is to give 100 percent effort on and off the ice, and it is easy to

do because he brings it every day."

During the 2019–20 season, Norwich broke nine individual and team NCAA Division III all-time records as Ellsworth led the Cadets to a 24-2-2 overall record and their second straight New England Hockey Conference Tournament title.

Carrying an 18-game unbeaten streak heading into the NCAA Tournament, the Cadets were scheduled to play in the quarterfinals on March 21. But the tournament was canceled due to safety concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic.

Athletics Director Tony Mariano is himself a former Cadets men's hockey head coach and coach of the year award winner. He said Ellsworth's leadership since arriving at Norwich two years ago has enabled the men's team to achieve outstanding results.

"Cam has not only continued the great success of the Norwich hockey program, but has elevated them to be the best in the country," Mariano said. "His relationship with his players and his desire to make sure they are taken care of both on the ice and off has created an environment that will only continue to bring great success to our program. There is no one worthier to receive this award than Cam."

The award marks Ellsworth's second coach of the year honor. He took home the New England Hockey Conference's Coach of the Year award—another career first. He was also named the New England Coach of the Year by the New England Hockey Writers Association.

After tending goal for Michigan Tech and a brief professional career, Ellsworth began his coaching career with a three-year stint with the USHL in Sioux City, Iowa. He spent the next seven seasons at UMass Lowell, where his teams skated to some of the best seasons in program history.

Ellsworth has already built on that momentum in just two short years at Norwich. ■



Cyleigh Gaynor '21 outside Carnegie Hall in New York City, site of a March 12 performance by the NUCC Regimental Band.

Photograph by Matt Furman

PHILANTHROPY

HOW A GIFT HELPED TURN CYLEIGH GAYNOR'S DREAMS INTO REALITY

Former Regimental Commander Gene Ward '49 established a scholarship in memory of his wife, Grace. It helped Cyleigh Gaynor '21 stay in school

BY SEAN MARKEY

Cyleigh Gaynor began playing music when she was five. In fifth grade, she picked up the flute, which she has played in the NUCC Regimental Band since freshman year. But never in all that time, not once—not even in her wildest dreams—did she ever imagine that one day she would perform at Carnegie Hall.

“Growing up in Arizona, Carnegie’s more like a dream, not a reality, because it’s just so far away,” Gaynor said in a phone interview from her sister’s home in Sarasota, Fla. where she was completing the remainder of her spring semester remotely.

But in early March, just before the COVID-19 pandemic upended life in NYC and around the country, Gaynor joined her fellow Regimental Band musicians to play at the storied venue. The experience was “amazing” and “crazy exciting,” she said.

It’s not the first time Norwich has helped Gaynor reach beyond her wild-

est dreams. The mechanical engineering major says her time on the Hill has been nothing short of “life changing” and transformational on nearly every level—physically, emotionally, and intellectually.

She lost 60 pounds as a rook. She also grew far more confident. Having cast her natural shyness aside, she is now comfortable leading small groups. Currently on an Air Force commissioning track, she plans to become an aircraft maintenance officer after graduation.

It is career aspiration hatched from a very early age while growing up near Arizona’s famous aircraft boneyard, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. “I fell in love with planes,” she recalled. “My goal since I was very little [was] to learn how planes work and build them and fix them.”

Gaynor says candidly that she comes from a poor family and that she had to take out a big loan to cover her first year

at Norwich. She wasn’t sure that she could do that again the following summer in order to return her sophomore year.

But thanks to Gene Ward '49, she didn’t have to. Gaynor received a scholarship endowed by the former regimental commander in memory of his wife, Grace. “It wasn’t a massive amount, but it made a huge difference,” Gaynor says. Staying at Norwich enabled her to continue her personal transformation and growth, she says, and now anything seems possible.

Ward planned to attend the Regimental Band’s March concert at Carnegie Hall. But he wisely scrapped those plans as the coronavirus pandemic grew more serious. Gaynor says she is disappointed that she didn’t get to meet Ward personally to thank him. But if she had, this is what she wanted to say: “Thank you for the chance, for making sure I was able to stay at Norwich. It’s been ... life-changing.” ■

INSIGHT

THE POWER OF NU JOB FAIRS

BY KATHRYN PROVOST

Norwich boasts a strong alumni network, and the proof extends to the job market. As director of the campus Career and Internship Center, I know firsthand about our alumni's strong commitment to hiring our graduates.

One fine example can be found in the Concord Police Department. For nearly two decades, the N.H. agency has often attended at least one, if not two, of our biannual career fairs. When it does, the department sends two or three officers to talk with students, who line up to learn about pursuing a law enforcement career. Yes, criminal justice is Norwich's largest major. But those lines of enthusiastic students looking for jobs and internships are only a small part of what keeps the Concord Police Department returning to recruit time and time again.

As any recruiter will tell you, a career fair's success is less about the *quantity* of students that attend than their *quality*. Questions that run through recruiters' minds include whether or not students are academically prepared to do the job, have previous internship or work experience, ask good questions, can carry on a conversation, and seem like a good "fit" for their company or agency.

When I asked police officer Dana Dexter '03 why his agency recruits at



Concord Police Department officer Dana Dexter '03
 Photograph by Aram Boghosian

Norwich, he said, "Speaking as a member of the Concord Police Department, we have consistently used Norwich as a resource for our recruitment. The values that Norwich instills in its students are directly in line with what we are looking for in our police candidates."

(An aside: having very similar values, relative to the mission and vision of a company or agency, is what makes a person "fit" within the organization.)

"Of course, we also value the strength of the criminal justice program at Norwich—professors with strong law enforcement and teaching credentials, a high number of students with internships on their resumes, and so on," Dexter added. "In fact, when we're recruiting at Norwich, we see a lot of other law enforcement agencies in attendance, too. They come from local police departments, state police forces, and even several federal agencies. Seeing that depth and variety of agencies confirms for us that we are recruiting from the right school and bringing highly sought-after graduates

to our local police department."

Having spoken with dozens of human resources representatives from a wide variety of employers, I know that many agree with Dexter's sentiments. Although some employers send Norwich alumni to recruit at our career fairs, other employers send their human resources professionals to manage the recruiting. They come to Norwich because they already employ Norwich graduates and want to hire more folks just like their current employees.

The proof is evident when reviewing the list of employers from the past two career fairs: 79 percent were represented by an NU alum or had an NU alum currently working for their company.

Noting the quality of Norwich candidates, Dexter says his agency will stick with what has worked so well for his agency. "Concord PD has a long history of hiring Norwich students and alumni, and we will continue to build on this strong partnership." ■

Midnight in Chernobyl Wins 2020 Colby Award

In April, judges announced that first-time author Adam Higginbotham would receive Norwich University's 2020 Colby Award for his book, *Midnight in Chernobyl: The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Nuclear Disaster*.

The award recognizes the year's best book-length work of fiction or nonfiction on military history, intelligence operations, or international affairs by a first-time author.

"Adam Higginbotham's superb account of the deadly 1986 nuclear disaster at Chernobyl for the first time reveals the full story of the terror, the tragedy, and the cover-up of this earth-shaking event," said author Carlo D'Este '58, a judge of the 21st Colby Award and co-founder of the Norwich University Military Writers' Symposium. "In the field of investigative journalism, *Midnight in Chernobyl* stands out as a masterpiece of great writing."

Based on exhaustive archival research, investigative reporting, and eyewitness interviews, Higginbotham's book reconstructs the nuclear disaster in chilling detail, from prelude to aftermath.

"The result is superb, enthralling, and necessarily terrifying," writes Jennifer Szalai in a recent *New York Times* book review.

His book, Szalai adds, explores the "almost fanatical compulsion for secrecy among the Soviet Union's governing elite ...[that] made the accident not just cataclysmic but so likely in the first place."

An English-born journalist based in New York City, Higginbotham is a

former U.S. correspondent for *The Sunday Telegraph Magazine* and editor-in-chief of *The Face*. His narrative nonfiction and feature writing has appeared in *GQ*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. Many of his pieces have been optioned for television and film.

The Colby Award is the latest prize for *Midnight in Chernobyl* (Simon & Schuster, 2019), which also received the 2020 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction and a nod from *The New York Times* as one of its "10 Best Books of the Year."

Other finalists for this year's Colby Award included *American Cipher* by Matt Farwell and Michael Ames and *Scholars of Mayhem* by Daniel C. Guiet and Timothy K. Smith.

Established at Norwich in 1999, the award is named for the late ambassador and former CIA director William E. Colby. Previous winners include then first-time book authors James Bradley, Dexter Filkins, Paul Scharre, and NU professor and Civil War historian Steven Sodergren.

In a statement, Higginbotham thanked Colby Award judges for recognizing *Midnight in Chernobyl*. "It's an honor to be in the company of the previous winners and finalists of this award—debut authors from such an impressive range of backgrounds and disciplines," he said.

Higginbotham will formally receive the Colby Award, along with its \$5,000 honorarium, at Norwich during the Norwich University Military Writers' Symposium on Oct. 7–8. ■



Investigative journalist and first-time book author Adam Higginbotham re-creates the 1986 Soviet nuclear disaster in chilling detail.

CAREER STRATEGY

How to Network With Your Fellow Alumni

Author Randall H. Miller '93 & M'07 offers advice to Norwich underclassmen and recent graduates on making and maintaining professional contacts—insights that apply to alumni of any age

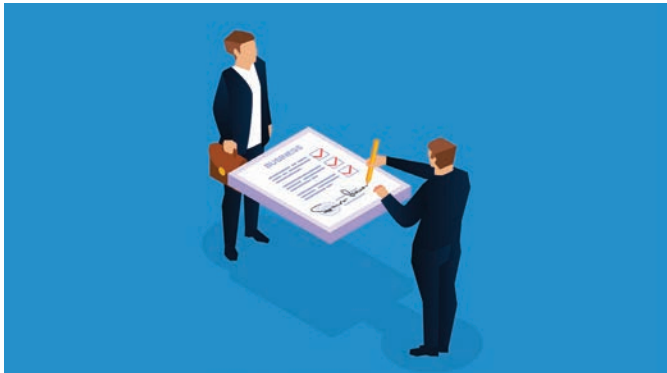


Illustration by iStock

First, play the long game. The entire point of your Norwich experience is to graduate and go on to accomplish extraordinary things. Think of your four years on the Hill as earning your dues card. Once you graduate, you'll be in the club with access to all the benefits that come with membership. But those benefits won't just show up on your doorstep. You have to be the person to make it happen.

So don't wait—get involved and start developing a network *now*. You can do that by attending alumni events on and off campus. Networking skills aren't taught in high school, and it can be hit or miss whether or not you develop them in college. So here are a few tips about how to make the most of your next Norwich networking event.

1.

Don't just stand there, texting with a drink in your hand. Put your smartphone away, shake hands, and look people in the eye. I know you're a student or just graduated. By definition that means you have no money, job, or influence. But you have something almost all of the older grads in the room lack—youth and recent, real-time experience on campus, whether in the Corps or as a civilian student.

That makes you somewhat unique. Be outgoing. Share positive news from the Hill. (Skip the negativity.) When someone asks you what you want to do with your life, have a good answer.

2.

Don't discount anybody. If you're an electrical engineering major or a soon-to-be-commissioned Army officer and end up standing next to the clam chowder

talking to a gym teacher, keep in mind his Norwich roommate and lifelong friend might be a two-star general or own an engineering firm.

3.

If you meet someone and have a meaningful conversation, ask for a card. If they don't have one, ask for the best way to make contact and keep in touch. Trust me—unless you acted like a complete jackass—nobody will say no.

4.

Show common sense. Just because you're in an elevator with someone doesn't mean they want to hear your elevator speech. Yes, you should always have one prepared in case the obvious opportunity to give it arrives. But sometimes it's better to be the young woman who politely interrupts, introduces herself, and asks for permission to make contact at a later date. "Ms. Buffum, I know you're busy, so I don't want to ambush you. I have some ideas on how to pay off the national debt and bring lasting peace to the Israelis and Palestinians. Do you mind if I email you? May I have a card?" This shows respect for her time and makes you look cool. Whereas, launching into your canned elevator speech might make her pull the fire alarm.

5.

For God's sake, follow up. I've lost count of how many students/grads I've taken the time to speak with at events over the years. We chat. We laugh. We share stories. I know their name; they know mine. A year later, they send me a LinkedIn request with no note. Seriously? A digital connection is not a relationship. The former is accomplished with a lazy click of the mouse. The latter requires time, effort, and nurturing. Put in the time and you'll reap the rewards.

6.

After you meet someone, wait a few days before sending them a very brief note. "It was a pleasure meeting you at the Norwich event, and I enjoyed our conversation about vegan polar bears." Keep it simple.

7.

Keep in touch by sending the occasional note. Again, keep it brief. "I came across this article on vegan polar bears and thought of you."

8.

Consider offering something. "I'm on campus so let me know if you ever need anything from the Hill. Attached is a picture of my platoon receiving the Most Awesomest Platoon in Norwich History Award." Now that you have made some effort and cultivated the relationship, if you ever need a favor (i.e., advice, an introduction, etc.), go ahead and ask for it.

9.

Be worthy. The diploma gets you a seat at the table, but there are no guarantees. You need to earn it. Be the kind of person I could recommend and not lie awake at night wondering if you're going to do something stupid and embarrass me. I'm fully capable of doing that on my own.

Randall H. Miller '93 & M'07 is a former Norwich cadet and Army officer with the 82nd Airborne and 2nd Infantry Divisions, who lives in Andover, Mass. The author of seven books, including two on Norwich history, his most recent novel is *Turning Point*, the fourth in his Amazon best-selling Mark Landry series of international thrillers. This column was based on his earlier blog post, "Tips for Parents of a Norwich Cadet," which can be found on his website randallhmill.com.

#NORWICALUMNI

We asked alumni on Facebook to share their career advice with the Class of 2020. Here are eleven of our favorite highlights:

My class graduated seven months after 9/11. Uncertainty is out there, but know one thing: Norwich has prepared you to make a difference. **This is your moment.**
—STEVE VEE '02 & M'12

No one is going to do it for you. Work hard at building a network. Showcase failures as an opportunity to learn. Strive for excellence and keep your ethical compass true.
—CHRISTOPHER ROSS

Things aren't going to go the way you planned. Whatever it is that happens, keep trying. It makes all the difference.
—ZACHARY GIBSON '19

Sharks die if they do not keep swimming forward. Be the shark. **Keep swimming forward.**
—KEITH WILEY M'18

Remember, you don't know [squat.] Be humble and learn from other senior NCOs. Keep your head down, ears open, and mouth closed. You guys are going to be great!
—VLAD GUTIERREZ '02

All entry-level jobs are tedious. That's why they're entry-level. Stick with it, and don't quit.
—MARIA BURNS '94

Never stop giving back, [you'll] not only enrich your career but the communities you belong to. Stay in touch with your friends from Norwich. At the end of the day, you will be remembered for who you have inspired. That will be your legacy.
—DAVID STEVES '02 & MBA'14

Keep all options open. Be humble. Every experience will be a learning experience. Volunteer for undesirable tasks, and don't be afraid to leave your hometown!
—TOM WALTON '89

Keep in touch with each other. Network—a lot. You have made it this far. Now it's time to put it to use. Your work ethic will get you the invite to the party. But how you play the political game, will get you on the dance floor.
—NICK JACOBS

Rule number one: Take care of your family. When (*insert service branch or company*) is done with you, they're done with you. You don't want to get to the end of your career, check six, and find nobody there.
—DAN CORINDIA '00

Don't get discouraged easily. Don't let yourself feel too lost. ... You WILL figure it out, just as you figured it out when you entered college. Just take it one day, one opportunity, at a time.
—ARIELLE ANN (EATON) '14



INTERVIEW

NORWICH PRESIDENT COL. MARK ANARUMO, PHD, USAF (RET.)

The university's new president on why NU beats the service academies, his bet on quantum computing, and the power of empathy

INTERVIEW BY SEAN MARKEY

It's been said that great leaders rise during times of extreme crisis. And while no university president would wish for a crisis of any stripe—let alone the tragedy of a once-in-a-century global pandemic and recession—NU's 24th president, Dr. Mark Anarumo, USAF (Ret.) steps into his new role prepared to face the challenge of his career. He arrived on campus ahead of schedule in May, having already blazed a trail as a distinguished military officer, organizational leader, academic, and thinker. Career highlights include his oversight of complex, multinational operations as vice commander of the 39th Air Base Wing at Incirlik Air Base in Turkey and, most recently, as a permanent professor and department head for the Center for Character and Leadership Development at the U.S. Air Force Academy. There, Anarumo grew the research center into a thought and practice trendsetter for individual and institutional leadership. A military officer who first enlisted in the Army then spent 26 years in the Air Force, Anarumo earned his undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees in criminal justice at Rutgers University and is a former National Security Fellow at Harvard University. In January, Pres. Anarumo spoke with the *Record* in a joint interview with Norwich journalism students. The conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

NEXT-GENERATION LEADER

NU's 24th President, Dr. Mark Anarumo, USAF (Ret.) takes questions from students, faculty, staff, and the media in Mack Hall in January 2020.

Photograph by Mark Collier

You get to introduce yourself to many Norwich alumni for the very first time. What is your message?

I grew up—professionally, personally, academically—as a tremendous fan of Norwich. I believe in its mission. I believe in its identity. The excellence that this school has generated both for our nation and the world and for the students that we serve is profound. I have worked with Norwich graduates in the Army and the Air Force. They were exceptional. They were exceptional officers and exceptional human beings. So Norwich is doing things right.

I will not, as the next president, come in and change a whole lot. This school is already operating at a high level of excellence. What I plan to do is leverage the current foundational excellence that the school is at right now and use it as a springboard to start some significant work to improve the school. Not to change it, but to build.

We've been left a remarkably stable foundation for the school. That doesn't often happen for a new president. All the problems that we're talking about in higher education—the birth dearth, the increasing demographic challenges in the Northeast—these are all things that can be flipped to be a benefit for Norwich because of what we are. We're so different. It's a different delivery model. It's a different identity. It's a different regional affiliation for a senior military college. All the other senior military colleges are in the South. There's so much about Norwich that we can leverage for excellence. Norwich alumni will be key to all this.

So how should Norwich pitch itself to the next generation of students, the next generation of leaders?

We're in the age of truncated communication. It's very brief. It's very staccato. You've got to be early. You've got to be aggressive, and you've got to be short. Leveraging platforms like Snapchat, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc., to reach college-age kids and kids who will enter college is going to be critical. We start building up our freshman class by contacting them when they're freshmen or sophomores in high school.

Who pays the bills for college typically? The parents. So we've got to reach out to them. As a parent of a student that just went through the process, I can tell them, "Hey, Mom and Dad, Norwich is the place you want to send your son and daughter. Your daughter will thrive here. We will challenge her. She'll be tested with leadership. We'll put her out front. She will go through a crucible experience that'll make her a better citizen, a better person, a better adult. And when she graduates from Norwich, she will have a remarkable resume to be fully employable. Your son will come here, and he will be tested. The kind of things that he's looking for and the challenges that you may not be aware of, Mom and Dad, he will get at Norwich. We hope he will go into the

Corps. He will have work experience. He will do phenomenal things. He'll go through a recognition and come out of that feeling like a remarkable adult. He won't get that literally anywhere else." I think that message resonates with parents. I can tell you that, as a parent, this is what I would've wanted for my kids.

Obviously, I'm coming to Norwich from the Air Force Academy. It's a similar experience. But a service academy is not for everyone. It's also very tricky, given the Congressional distribution and the law of who gets to go to the service academies. It's difficult to get a nomination. You could be fully qualified for a service academy but be in the wrong Congressional district for that year and not get in. It's a complex formula. But Norwich offers so much. So my message will be, "The service academies are great. We're better, and here's why."

You led the Air Force Academy's Center for Character and Leadership Development. What insights from that work will you bring to your presidency at Norwich?

The importance of emphasizing leadership and character development in all phases of the student experience, from academics to sports. Take sports, for example. Obviously, they bring the community together and provide students the crucible of athletic competitions, so they'll learn to win with class and lose with dignity. But athletics are also a character development experience and, especially, a leadership development experience. Every sport experience brings that out, including peer leadership.

One of the tricks that we've discovered through our leadership center's work is that peer leadership is critical, but so is followership. Being a poor follower means you're going to be a poor leader. You must learn to follow before you can lead. That's a very important feature of leadership development that we easily lose track of. Because very few of us are going to be truly luminary, high-level leaders. But anyone who reaches that level has dozens or hundreds of peer-enabling followers and subordinate followers. It's something we actually encourage. Before you can lead, you must learn to follow, and you must learn to do that with a high level of dignity. At Norwich, that's in the curriculum everywhere. It's in the classroom. It's on the field, and it's through the commandant's work with the Corps.

Among your many professional interests is a keen focus on institutional culture. Why is that important? What sparked your interest?

Taking over organizations and seeing which were healthy and what was more predictive of success or failure started to fascinate me. Because I would take over an organization that, by all performance metrics, was doing very well. But you felt it in the first five minutes that it had a bad culture. Then you realized it was a house of cards that was going to fall apart the first time something went wrong.

I've led a lot of international teams and anti-terrorism organizations. Incirlik Air Base is not an American Air Force base. It's a NATO base run by the Turkish Air Force where the United States Air Force has a presence. Talk about complexities—we're supporting the Kurds in that base, while the Turks are in active operations against the Kurds from that base. It was very complicated. But I've learned that if you build an effective culture, things work.

When I started reading about culture, I realized—studying organizations—that you can have all the talent in the world and you can have all the resources in the world, but if your culture is wrong, the organization fails every single time.

There are a lot of sports team analogies. For example, some professional teams buy all the talent in the world. They have the largest payroll in whatever sport they're in. Yet they fail, because they never built effective culture. Hockey's a great example. This is a hockey school. You need grinders. You need the skilled players. You need defensemen that will stay at home and don't want any glory. You need the offensive players that will move the puck well. So you're building a culture around people sharing their skillsets to build up a team. That's really it. The phrase is, "Talent and strategy will be eaten by [the buzz saw of] culture every day."

Fixing and building effective culture always results in success, even in the face of decreased talent, decreased resources. It's very interesting. My academic background was in criminal justice, terrorism, and political violence. That's my PhD. But those aren't terribly happy programs. As I was [studying and thinking about] terrorism all the time, I realized that as much as I found it interesting, there was something else calling to me. I realized it was thinking about leadership, character development, organizational culture, what kind of environment you want to build—those kinds of things.

What's your leadership style?

It's funny because we have phrases now like emotional intelligence or emotional quotient or empathetic leadership. When I was reading through the literature to see what works and what doesn't, I realized that those were things that I'd always done. I went to the FBI Academy and there's a very simplistic personality test called True Colors. Based on your

answers, you get assigned one of four colors: blue is empathetic leadership; gold was high-achieving with structure; green and orange were more scientific, analytical, or thrill-seeking behaviors. It's not the end-all, but it's a very interesting foundation. Of the 300 people in the room, me and one other person were blue. Most of the people were gold, with a mix of the rest.

But my style is empathetic leadership. Some of it is a connection, it's instinctive leadership. But it's the high level of empathy. I realized through looking at literature that oh, well, that probably was the basis of my past successes, but I didn't even know it. Now, all these things are in the literature that are fairly obvious. But it can still be an "aha" moment for people.

What are you looking forward to most in your new role as president?

Just learning the culture and trying to find how I can be most supportive of the school and the different constituency groups. How do I most support the cadets? What do they need from a military training standpoint? How can I most support the civilian students? What do they need from me? How about the faculty? Do they need me to go find endowed chairs and other funding lines for academic excellence? Do they need me to maybe get a donor interested in publishing an academic journal from Norwich, which is a great strategic vehicle for the school? Or the athletic department—what do they need from me in supporting their goals? So really, to answer your question, figuring out what people need me to do to help them be successful—that's what I'm most looking forward to.

Are there new areas you'd like to see Norwich push into?

As we build up new revenue streams, there's a lot of money to be had from the government every year that we can go pursue. Norwich has a high level of excellence in several areas, including cyber and cyber defense. Everything now has a cyber component. So what's our role in that?

Elsewhere, what about artificial and augmented intelligence? We're not going to build autonomous systems here. We won't have the facilities. But we can certainly delve deeply into what are the ethics of legal applications, all those things. Quantum computing is the key to everything for the next two generations. The first country that achieves quantum supremacy, their place in the world will be similar to where the United States was after World War II as the only country with a nuclear weapon. That's how profound quantum is. I'm going to hit this one most aggressively. We have got to figure out how Norwich is going to get to influence that community. Quantum is not a new way to do computing. It's a totally *different* way of doing computing. If you look at

“You can have all the talent in the world and you can have all the resources in the world, but if your culture is wrong, the organization fails every single time.”


things like the prediction of a coin toss, a regular computer can predict a coin toss 51% of the time, because there's a probability model that throws it. But 51% is still not very good. A quantum computer can predict the outcome of a coin toss 99.7% of the time. How do you ask? Because it's a completely different way of computing.

Are we going to build the quantum computer in Northfield, Vermont? Probably not. But we can get involved with the coding, with some of the engineering challenges. And we can send our students and faculty to spend time with Google or IBM, or other parts of private industry that are developing machines, because they want to host students and faculty from universities so they can get some fresh ideas in. So that would be the area I'd probably very aggressively start looking at early.

Any parting thoughts?

Just that the level of humility and honor that I'm feeling for being selected as the 24th president of Norwich, I don't have words for it. I have not been this excited to do anything since I first put on the uniform 30 years ago. It's been a long time since I felt this level of infusion of energy.

I've had a lot of jobs. I've commanded at every level in two services, been in combat zones during very dangerous and very important missions. Caring for my people has always been a priority, whether deployed or during some very tragic events, where I had to bring remains back to families. Those kind of things have always been my calling—roles that demand passionate attention, ones I knew I must never fail at. But as I'm transitioning to take this role as president of Norwich, I literally have not felt this passionate or excited about anything except the time I rode the bus from the recruiting station to the airport to get dropped off at Fort Knox, Kentucky. I'm that excited to take over this post. I'm looking forward to working with everyone. ■



The Genius of Data Science Prof. Ahmed Hamed

The creator of star drug-discovery algorithms for
Pharma brings big data—and big ideas—to campus

BY SEAN MARKEY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT FURMAN

By save, the data analytics wunderkind means save us from the coronavirus pandemic. Researchers sequenced the genome of SARS-CoV-2 just 43 days after it first emerged in humans. But only by using data science. And data science will empower every breakthrough and hoped-for breakthrough as scientists race to find antiviral treatments, cures, and, God willing, a vaccine—thus safeguarding the lives and livelihoods of nearly every human on Earth, all 7.8 billion of us, from personal extinction.

Hamed is a computer scientist who joined the Norwich faculty last summer to stand up new programs in data science. Before he arrived, he spent a decade and a half working on the forward edge of the revolution in big data, machine learning, networks, and data analytics. Among his talents is the ability to develop complex network algorithms that creatively mine huge data sets, from libraries of scientific research to billions of tweets in the Twittersphere, to make novel discoveries.

He has an uncanny knack for hitting on the next big idea, followed by a half-dozen more. Ones that leave a trail of highly regarded academic papers if not industry patents in their wake. Then there are the accolades that defy easy categorizing. Like the time in 2016 that the editors of *Fast Company* magazine named him to their annual list of the 100 “Most Creative People in Business.”

What makes Hamed’s field both possible and necessary is the ocean of data, vast and growing by the second, that encircles our world. Every device we own, from our computers to our smart phones to our cars, trails clouds of data. Every day we create billions of social media posts, to say nothing of scientific research, which is a data-generating engine running at warp speed. A case in point: In just four months, scientists published nearly 15,000 studies related to COVID-19. Which is to say, there is more information than ever. If only we could find the right bit, the right insight to make new discoveries.

“You could be working on some-

thing very specific to your field, to your grant, to your research,” Hamed says, “and you could easily overlook so many different things that overlap if you don’t have some sort of a machine intelligence of what people are doing around you.”

Enter the world of big data and data analytics.

Over the course of his career, Hamed has hopscotched back and forth between industry and academia. The diversity of his work experience, coupled with his intellectual restlessness, has become, in hindsight, a strength. “I was always creating something, leaving it behind, and moving on to the next level,” he says. “I didn’t want to stop.”

Partway into his PhD program at UVM, Hamed hit the pause button to work in private industry for a tech start-up that develops software and websites for in-store and online grocery sales. While he was there, Hamed wrote an algorithm that “played the guessing game” of what you planned to make for dinner, based on the items in your cart. The payoff came when his algorithm could correctly guess “pot roast” and spot that you forgot to buy the rosemary.

Soon after, Hamed resumed his PhD, where he became the protégé of Xindong Wu, PhD, a pioneer in data mining. One of Hamed’s early PhD projects was the creation of an AI-powered social bot that could chat with smokers on social media. A rare early example of a benign social bot, it was designed to recruit smokers to cessation programs.

After that project, Hamed says he grew increasingly interested in Twitter and how its millions and billions of posts could be mined for insights. At the time, medical marijuana was in the news. Hamed was curious about how it might adversely interact with other medications. Mostly he was just curious. He says he didn’t have any preconceived ideas about what he was looking for or even hoping to discover. “I had a landscape that I wanted to walk around and see what the land-

If there has ever been a moment when the world needs data science and data scientists, it is now. “The world has been shutting down. People are unable to travel. Cities and countries are entirely [closed] down,” says Assistant Prof. Ahmed Abdeen Hamed, PhD. “The only thing that’s going to save us right now is data science.”

scape was going to tell me,” he says.

Working with colleagues at UVM and the Albany College of Pharmacy, Hamed created software to systematically search billions of tweets in the massive data repository of the Twittersphere. His “aha” moment came when his algorithm revealed links between “medical marijuana” and the hashtag “#Alzheimer’s.” Using the tool to dig more deeply, Hamed found tweets which suggested that taking Ibuprofen stopped the memory loss associated with medical marijuana. Such loss is an early risk factor for Alzheimer’s disease. Hamed and his colleagues went on to develop the tool as a means to search social media posts to discover unknown drug interactions. It was that work that prompted the editors of *Fast Company* to name Hamed to their list of “Most Creative People in Business.” In his typical stepping-stone fashion, it also laid the foundation for future breakthroughs.

“His doctoral research is a great example of exactly why big data can create knowledge,” says Aron Temkin, dean of NU’s College of Professional Schools, which houses the School of Cybersecurity, Data Science, and Computing where Hamed teaches. “If you gather anecdotal evidence from a dozen people, it’s just storytelling. But if you gather it from millions of people, right, then it’s not surprising that you can start to see patterns.”

“I don’t want people to think that I’m bragging,” Hamed says. “I mean, it’s cool. [But] I don’t want to gloat. I want science. But the point is, I’m coming back with all of this richness and all these ideas. And now I’m at Norwich, and we’re creating a new data science program.”

Last fall, Hamed taught the program’s first data analytics course, adding a second course in Python, the go-to coding language for data analytics, in the spring. He is already designing and planning additional courses in machine learning, algorithms, and artificial intelligence.

Hamed radiates and induces ener-

“If you gather anecdotal evidence from a dozen people, it’s just storytelling. But if you gather it from millions of people, right, then it’s not surprising that you can start to see patterns.”

gy and enthusiasm for the field, says faculty colleague Matt Bovee, PhD. The director of the School of Cybersecurity, Data Science, and Computing audited Hamed’s first data analytics class last fall. “Every time I’ve seen someone come into [his] class and start asking questions about their own particular area, they get really excited about what they can do,” Bovee says.

Sarah Eriksson ’19 is one such student. A cybersecurity major from Danbury, Conn., who graduated in December, she was a high school freshman when the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre happened in Newtown, Conn., 20 minutes from her home. That experience inspired her to work on a data analytics project in Hamed’s class to trawl Twitter to identify potential school shooters. Eriksson, who now works in cybersecurity for Honeywell, says she loved the course and Hamed’s committed teaching style, pointing to his Saturday “data-thons” and instant replies to email—whatever the time, even at midnight.

Dean Temkin says, “We were really looking for somebody who didn’t just want to teach a bunch of specialists, but could be enthusiastic and excited about all of the ways that big data and data analytics could be used as a tool. Ahmed’s fantastic for that, because his enthusiasm for the subject’s really palpable. He thinks very broadly. He’s very interested in writ-

ing courses that can be reached by students in many different disciplines.”

Some of the richness that Hamed brings to campus is tied to the three and half years he spent in a Boston-area research office of Merck, one of the world’s top pharmaceutical companies. His official title was senior applied computer scientist. But really his job was to invent. Shortly after he landed, Hamed learned about the company’s “Better Molecules Faster” initiative. Most of us can be forgiven if we have only the vaguest idea of what drugs are. But for pharmaceutical researchers, the work is really about discovering new molecules. Each one is a potential new treatment for a disease or illness. Other molecules might be repurposed in new ways. An example from today’s headlines would be Remdesivir, an experimental drug that failed to treat Ebola but is now being used as a moderately effective antiviral against COVID-19.

Intrigued by the task of discovering molecules, Hamed saw a potential way to leverage his skills: Suppose he wrote an algorithm that enabled scientists to search private company and public academic research databases for every known drug molecule and rank them based on their potential to treat a particular disease or condition? Hamed knew that, as a “mere computer scientist,” working with the medical literature was beyond his capabilities. So he teamed up with Agata Leszczynska, a pharmaceutical scientist and PhD based in Prague. For the next two years, the pair collaborated from different time zones, video conferencing weekly as they worked on their novel molecule-ranking engine, which they dubbed MolecRank.

How to sort the most promising molecules proved tricky. But Hamed and team eventually landed on the idea of specificity. The more specifically a molecule affected a specific organ or cell type or cell line or even a gene, the greater its potential as a possible treatment. The converse was also true.



“The idea was to identify the molecules based on how specific they are,” Hamed said. “If it targets the wrong cell, then you have an undesirable side effect. It could kill the person.”

To determine whether or not a potential drug is dangerous, pharmaceutical companies can spend millions of dollars designing tests and clinical trials that can last three to five years. “We thought we could do a preliminary analysis just from [existing] publications and what people have [already] done.”

It took two and a half years to prove, but they were right. MolecRank opened new avenues of knowledge discovery to researchers. Hamed was credited as first inventor on its patent. The pandemic spotlights the algorithm’s timeliness and import, he says today, especially for drug repurposing and the quest to find existing drugs that can effectively treat the coronavirus.

While he was at Merck, Hamed was tasked with another Mensa-sounding project—serving as the quantum com-

puting lead for problems known to be intractable. The field involves a set of as-yet unanswered, fundamental questions about the chemical structures and substructures of molecules. The problems are so challenging they “cannot be solved on the most powerful computers that exist on Earth,” Hamed says. For now, those questions remain unanswered.

Hamed has always wanted to make the world a better place and his affinity has always been for application over theory. Shortly after he finished his master’s degree at Indiana University, a friend lent him a DVD set of *Planet Earth*, the BBC nature documentary series hosted by David Attenborough, one the world’s leading naturalists. Hamed fell in love with the world’s biodiversity and grew angry that it was in such peril. So he did what he often does. He had an idea. Suppose he wrote an algorithm? One that leveraged Twitter to generate a real-time status report for endangered

species? His plan changed. But its spark speaks to his ethos. “I do not care about symbols, and I do not care about designing the next programming language that makes people really excited about being programmers. I am interested in actual problems.”

More than a decade later, Hamed still spends much of his time thinking about problems. But not all of it. He finds time to play the oud, the Middle Eastern stringed instrument he first taught himself to play 25 years ago and sometimes plays for his teenage daughter. He is also a rabid fan of English Premier League soccer, specifically, Liverpool, F.C., the club that paid £36.9 million (about US\$45 million) in 2017 for Mo Saleh—the phenom Egyptian forward who, according to Wikipedia, is among the greatest players in the world and who, according to Hamed, is more simply “a legend.” Hamed himself still plays pickup soccer nearly every week. Or used to, before the pandemic. He looks forward to playing again. When it’s safe, when data science has saved us all. ■



CONFRONTING THE PANDEMIC

Norwich students, faculty, and alumni take
on the greatest challenge in a generation



WHAT WOULD ROSIE THINK?

By Reina Pennington, PhD

The author is a Charles A. Dana Professor of History and a former Air Force intelligence officer.

Military historians have a tendency to see everything through the lens of war. The public does too: The War on Poverty. The War on Drugs. The War on Terror.

But I would say this of our present struggle with COVID-19: It's not a war. A fight, yes. One of the biggest fights ever. But not a war.

This is not a war, and it is not good versus evil. This is a fight against a non-living infectious agent that threatens all human beings. Unlike a war, this fight transcends politics, religion, race, and ideology.

Calling it a "war" implies there are military solutions. It provokes people to start looking for human, rather than viral, enemies. It incites some to "wag the dog" to divert our attention and resources to false targets. But there is no military solution.

Yes, there are front lines. The front line is our medical professionals, working on a shoestring. Those who drive and ship and deliver things so more of us can stay at home and flatten the curve. Those who invent and produce and research.

Most of us can't serve on those front lines right now. In this crisis, for many people the best way to serve is to stay in, stay out of the way. We can do our part in this fight by not aiding and abetting the virus, which needs us to spread it to others. If a person with coronavirus infects just three others, and each of them also infects three more, within ten cycles 59,000 people are infected.

"Rosie the Riveter" was the symbol of American women who left their

homes and went to work in factories during the Second World War. Fighting the COVID-19 pandemic requires a different kind of effort. Women and men alike—people of all ages—are asked to stay home. If Rosie had been told she could best serve her country by staying home, that’s where she’d be.

“Typhoid Mary” was an asymptomatic carrier of typhoid who infected 51 people in New York in 1906 (3 died). Mary Mallon didn’t know, at first, that she was a carrier. After she was identified, she was required to live in isolation. She got tired of that, and in 1915 was discovered working as a cook in a maternity hospital, where she caused more infections and more deaths.

Choose your role model: Rosie the Riveter or Typhoid Mary?

We can learn from wars, certainly. America is already repeating patterns from previous wars. We enter late; we are not the first in the fight. Others take the first blows. We don’t think we have a stake in things when the disaster is far from our shore. There is a pattern of denial about how bad things are. Our own survival is rarely at risk. We sit back and hope it will go away. We are poorly prepared. Only when we feel personally threatened do we recognize that global threats can threaten our nation as well. We shed our isolationism and get into the fight.

America was often late to the game in war-time—but we came through. We fought not just for ourselves, but for others—because it was the right thing to do.

In the past, America rarely faced a threat on its own soil, to its civilian population. We are used to safety and relative comfort. Wars were good for America economically; the Second World War catapulted us out of the Great Depression. We planted victory gardens, but in Leningrad people ate bread made from sawdust and meat made from . . . best not to say.

But the coronavirus fight is not like those wars. COVID-19 is not good for the economy, and the death toll to our civilians is already disproportionately high. At this writing, unemployment is presently around 5 percent. But some analysts believe

it could approach 25 percent, a figure not seen since the Depression.

When Roosevelt famously told Americans in his 1933 inaugural address that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself” he wasn’t talking about war; he was referring to the Great Depression.

Fear. Watching panicked individuals fighting over toilet paper was not a proud moment for our country. I had to wonder: What would Rosie think?

“Fear is the mind killer,” science fiction author Frank Herbert would later write in *Dune*. Before either FDR or Herbert, Marie Curie wrote that “Now is the time to understand more so that we may fear less.”

We can learn more from past epidemics and pandemics than from past wars. The great plague of Athens in 430 BCE. The Black Death of the 14th century. The flu pandemic¹ of 1918–20, which infected half a billion people and killed between 17 and 100 million.²

America knows how to lead from the front. It may take us a while, but we usually get there. We need to lead from the front, not as warriors, but as healers. Learn from those who are presently fighting more effectively than we are. We can draw on the resolve and shared sacrifices of previous wars and previous epidemics. We need community, collaboration, teamwork—not war.

As FDR told us in 1933: “This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously.”

Author and Charles A. Dana Professor of History Reina Pennington specializes in military, Russian, and European history. A former Air Force intelligence officer, she served as a Soviet analyst with F-4 and F-16 fighter squadrons, Aggressor squadrons, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Alaskan Air Command and as a presidential counselor for the National WWII Museum.

¹This so-called “Spanish Flu” was spread by war and military forces and may have originated in the United States.

²The first two waves of this flu, in 1918, acted very differently. The first wave was a lot like “regular” flu, killing mostly the old and infirm. But almost half the deaths in the second wave, in the fall of 1918, were among people under the age of 40.



FROM JUBILANCE TO WORRY

Isabela Ferraro '22 spent her spring break volunteering in Puerto Rico. Then, like everyone else, her life was upended by the pandemic

By Khdeejah Hughes '22

Twenty-year-old cadet Isabela Ferraro '22 spent her spring break in Puerto Rico, volunteering with the NU Center for Civic Engagement to help island residents still rebounding from 2017's Category 5 Hurricane Maria.

An international studies major from Wilbraham, Mass., Ferraro was in good spirits knowing she was doing a world of good for locals. Halfway into her trip, she learned that Norwich was extending spring break—to keep students and campus safe and buy time as the novel coronavirus pandemic in the U.S. began to escalate.

At first, Ferraro was glad for the extension, working vacation or not. She and her fellow NU students had spent much of the trip helping to scrape and paint the home of an elderly woman. They had also trimmed back the rain forest to clear a road and pitched in at a local Boys and Girls Club. The extra break from school meant that Ferraro, who serves in the Corps, would get to spend more time visiting with relatives on the island and family members who had flown in from Boston.

But Ferraro's excitement quickly changed to dejection when she learned that in-person classes on campus were over for the semester, due to concerns about the COVID-19 virus. "[Initially] I was like, 'Cool. I can stay here with my family and then just go back the next week,'" Ferraro said. "But, then, my mom was like, 'No, you're not doing that.'"

Ferraro flew home to Massachusetts, and drove with her family to Norwich to collect her personal belongings.

She returned a second time to shift her Army gear.

For Ferraro, studies continued online. But there were major disappointments. She didn't get to see Corps friends from the Class of 2020 graduate. "There's not really much closure," Ferraro said. "They're just gonna kinda disappear, and then, next year, they just won't be there."

The Army ROTC scholar also missed out on her spring Field Training Exercise to say nothing of the impact of remote-learning on her Corps experience. Ferraro said she worried about becoming a platoon sergeant next year, noting that the second year of cadet training is where leadership development truly starts. She also worried that the early end to her sophomore year may have taken away from her training.

"Being away from school so long, I won't be out of the loop, but I'm worried that I'll be rusty in general," Ferraro said. Despite her concerns, Ferraro said she was glad that she returned from Puerto Rico when she did.

A few days after she left, the U.S. territory recorded its first cases of COVID-19. The news immediately shut down the island, Ferraro said. "It was pretty gradual here [in the mainland U.S.] with things slowly closing," she said. "But there it was like, nobody's going anywhere. So, I would have been trapped."

Safely at home in Massachusetts with her father, sister, and mother—who is an essential worker—Ferraro did her best to make the switch to online learning. Keeping track of what needed to

She didn't get to see senior Corps friends receive their diplomas at graduation. "There's not really much closure," Ferraro said. "They're just gonna kinda disappear, and then, next year, they just won't be there."

be done could be challenging. "It's a lot harder to keep on top of things. Like, it should be fine. But I just constantly feel like I'm behind," Ferraro said.

Even with all the pandemic-induced stress, Ferraro still has things in her life that keep her spirits up. She has used the video-sharing site TikTok to entertain herself during this time of social isolation. As a platform rep at Norwich, she was still getting shipments of TikTok merchandise that she had no way to give out during the outbreak. Instead, it has piled up at her house in Massachusetts. "I'm like, 'Why are you still sending me stuff?'" Ferraro said. "Now I have one giant box sitting in the living room with TikTok stuff."

Between video chats for classes and TikTok rep assignments, Ferraro managed to stay social during a time when it is easy to feel isolated. Her interaction with people is what Ferraro values most—and she is glad that she still has that, even if it's virtual.

Khdeejah Hughes '22 is a staff writer for the *Norwich Guidon*. NU's student newspaper published the original version of this article in April.



The author is a professor and director of the graduate programs in diplomacy and international relations at the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies.

As the novel coronavirus spreads around the world, it has become clear that some states are better prepared for pandemics than others. Some success stories are truly surprising, and so are some failures. There is one thing that most well-prepared countries have in common: they used to occupy security border regions during the Cold War—the 20th-century global rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union that made war more likely among their allies. Some of these countries continue to be in the most volatile regions of the world. This more than any other factor has forced them to be well organized in the face of such massive national challenges.

To effectively deal with pandemics such as COVID-19, a country needs a rationally organized national health-care system, a national strategy to deal with epidemics, and effective leadership to implement the national strategy. A rational organization is necessary to decide what aspects of national health-care and public health infrastructure need to be centralized and what has to be decentralized. Germany, for example, has a centralized national health-care system, while their laboratories for disease control are decentralized; each German lander, or federal unit, has one of its own. The United States, however, has these things the other way around. There is no national healthcare system here. Healthcare lies in the hands of thousands of discrete private and public entities, while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is cen-

THE GEOPOLITICS OF COVID-19

By Lasha Tchantouridzé, PhD

tralized. As a result, we've seen that Germany's federal disease control labs could respond much quicker to viral outbreaks in their own jurisdictions by both developing the necessary testing kits and conducting tests in their respective populations. They also cooperated and helped each other. As of this writing, Germany has identified more than 60,000 cases of COVID-19. Yet, it has recorded fewer than 450 deaths, far fewer than most other European countries. Here at home, the initial CDC failure to develop a workable test kit has proved extraordinarily costly.

Like Germany, South Korea was poised during the Cold War to become a battleground between the East and West. Even today, the South Korean political and military leadership are never certain what their volatile and dangerous neighbor, North Korea, may do in its rivalry with the United States or Japan. South Korea has responded to COVID-19 effectively. In addition to their national healthcare system, South Korea has a national strategy to deal with pandemics. As soon as it became clear that the virus had spread from China to their country, South Korean health authorities began widespread testing to identify those infected, to isolate and care for them, while keeping vulnerable populations under observation. South Korea was the second country after China to see the novel coronavirus cases infect its population in large numbers, and as of this writing it is getting ready to deal with a second wave of infections. Despite this, the COVID-19 cases are fewer than 10,000 in South Korea, while the deaths have not exceeded 150. Most remarkably, the country avoided large-scale infections and deaths without shutting down everything and stopping the economy.

Perhaps the most surprising success story in the fight with COVID-19 has taken

place in the Republic of Georgia. In executing its response, its national government has closely followed the advice and suggestions of a triumvirate of specialists composed of a doctor, a public health official, and a specialist in infectious diseases. Frequently harassed by its neighbor to the north, Russia, the former Soviet state is not known for its effective political leadership. Quite the contrary: its leadership has often been fractious and disorganized. However, in dealing with the current pandemic, they have shown good organization and leadership and have managed to rally the entire country for the cause. Why? Georgia was one of the leading states in the former Soviet Union in the study and treatment of infectious diseases. It also sits between Russia and Turkey, a major NATO member, which the Soviet Union viewed as a major threat on its southern border. Georgia has preserved its knowledge base and laboratories specializing in the fight against bacterial and viral diseases. In 2011, with the help of the United States, the country opened a new center for public health research named after former U.S. Senator Richard Lugar. The Lugar Center, as it is commonly known, is one of the best laboratories in the world for biomedical and biosafety research. Currently, it plays the leading role in Georgia's fight against COVID-19. While the novel coronavirus is widespread in neighboring Iran and Turkey, Georgia has exhibited only 90 cases of coronavirus infections with no deaths as of late March.

Those who believe geopolitics to be a field of study of world affairs determined by geography and current political history like to say that "geography is destiny." This is most certainly an exaggeration. Geography is not destiny. Yet, countries can make their destinies by effectively addressing the challenges handed to them by geographic and historical realities. Fears and anxieties of the Cold War forced countries located in geographic proximity with the other side to be better prepared for major homeland security challenges, including massive public health emergencies, such as the current pandemic.

Prof. Lasha Tchantouridzé serves on the advisory board for the Peace and War Center at Norwich University and as a Davis Center associate at Harvard University and a research fellow with the University of Manitoba's Center for Defence and Security Studies.



The author is an associate professor at the School of Nursing.

WHEN **THE RISK** IS NO LONGER THE PATIENT'S ALONE

By Llynne C. Kiernan, DNP

For my entire professional career there has existed an almost absolute divide between the patient and the healthcare provider. The patient had the illness, and the provider devoted all their energies toward curing the patient and alleviating their suffering. As the provider, I operated from a position of near invulnerability. The patient with diabetes was not going to give me diabetes. The patient with a myocardial infarction posed no danger to my heart. A patient with HIV or Hepatitis C could conceivably infect me, too. But such an occurrence would be extremely rare and would require a major break in

Nursing majors volunteer at a pop-up medical clinic for migrants in Costa Rica. Photograph by Karen Kasmauski.

technique, like sticking myself with a contaminated needle. And even then, my infection would at least be treatable.

With the coronavirus, everything has changed. Even with the most scrupulous use of personal protective equipment (PPE), this virus can jump the provider-patient divide, and it can kill you. You can also bring the infection home to your family, placing them at risk. For patients, nursing care has always been a high-stakes activity. Which is why patient safety has been the cardinal principle underlying all my instruction. Now some of this risk has rebounded back upon the provider—and their family. For those working in hospitals today, the stakes have been raised immeasurably. Before the pandemic, our School of Nursing graduates were like graduates from a peacetime Officer Candidate School heading into a peacetime military. Now, our nurses are going to war, with the real personal risk that implies.

For 16 years, my professional life has been devoted to preparing the next generation of nurses to enter the medical arena. As a nurse with extensive experience working on medical and surgical wards and in intensive care units (ICUs), the challenges posed by infectious diseases, the use of aseptic techniques and PPE, and the importance of infection control are all concepts I have felt confident about imparting to our students. They begin learning about PPE during their sophomore year in their required Fundamentals of Nursing class. Their progress continues through to their senior year as they become familiar with various types of isolation precautions and the appropriateness of each in use.

COVID-19 has several modes of transmission, including via droplets, aerosols,

and contamination of surfaces. Full personal protection requires gowns, gloves, eye shield, and mask. The N95 mask which has been so much in the news at this writing must be fit-tested to the user's face to provide the maximum protection. Even then, the mask only blocks 95 to 99 percent of airborne particles. The potential for infection is only lowered, not eliminated.

Practice environments for medical staff during the pandemic have changed rapidly. Hospitals have barred visitors. Elective surgeries have been canceled. Staff have their temperature taken before they can enter the healthcare environment. If it is over 100 degrees, they cannot work. Anesthesia machines are being repurposed as ventilators for patients in ICUs. Physicians and nurses are being pulled from their usual areas of practice to reinforce critical areas like ICUs and emergency departments.

In this time of uncertainty, various nursing boards are working on emergency legislation to grant temporary licenses to graduating nurses. They can sit for their exams later. Our own School of Nursing graduates will be on the front line of patient care. They will share the worry about becoming infected, about bringing this virus home to their families and loved ones. Our students have received the instruction required to enable them to rise to this nursing challenge and to keep themselves as safe as possible. I feel privileged to have served as their instructor and humbled by the sense of responsibility this pandemic makes so inescapably apparent.

Llyne C. Kiernan is a licensed registered nurse with a doctorate in nursing practice, who has taught at the School of Nursing since 2004. She has received grants and awards from the Charles A. Dana Category I Grant fund, the Freeman Foundation, the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, and the Vermont Genetics Network funded by the National Institutes of Health. She is married to Joseph R. C. Kiernan, MD, a general surgeon working on the front line of patient care during the pandemic.

With the coronavirus, everything has changed. Even with the most scrupulous use of personal protective equipment (PPE), this virus can jump the provider-patient divide, and it can kill you.

AN OPEN LETTER TO COVID-19

By Edward Kohn, PhD



The author is a professor of history and dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Okay, you made your point.

You caught us sleeping, and complacent. Like our cat chasing mirror reflections on the wall, we were easily distracted by the newest shiny thing, like AirPods or the Amazon Echo. “Hey Alexa, how many people in Vermont have died from coronavirus?” “Hey Alexa, where can I buy toilet paper?” “Hey Alexa, tell me how to cure my feeling of profound isolation from humankind?”

We have paid a heavy price in death and disruption: thousands dead, hundreds of thousands sick, and millions without jobs. Our children are home from school, as we all compete for household WiFi. A simple trip to the store is not simple anymore. A dinner out with the family? Nope. A drink with friends? Not going to happen. There is something terribly eerie about watching a line outside a store where everyone wears face masks and stands six feet apart. Will we ever shake hands again? “Social distancing” will go down in history as one of the cruelest oxymorons ever. “Antisocial distancing” is more like it; “lonely and withdrawn distancing.”

Still, don’t be too proud of yourself.

We may be a campus closed, **but we are a community engaged.**

You are still the smaller, weaker sibling of Black Death or the Spanish Flu. You are Arnold Schwarzenegger's little brother, Meinhard. You are Tito of the Jackson Five. You are Ringo Starr.

In the 14th century the "Black Death" of bubonic plague possibly killed a quarter of the world's population and half of Europe's. It took two centuries for the population of Europe to recover. The 1918–20 Spanish Flu pandemic infected a quarter of the world's population causing as many as 50 million deaths. Malnutrition and poor hygiene caused by the First World War fostered the pandemic, while wartime censorship misled the public as to the flu's effects. Was the Spanish Flu "Spanish"? No. Because Spain was neutral during WWI, newspapers were free to report on the flu's effects in that country, making Spain seem uniquely affected. The pandemic was no more "Spanish" than you, *Meinhard*, are "Chinese."

Let's face it, Tito, you are a classic bully. You go after the old and sick, and those with underlying immune or health issues. Is that the best you can do, pick on my parents? Leave them alone. Because the unhealthiest Americans are the weakest members of our society, you have also taken a particularly brutal toll on people of color. Congratulations, really, for preying on the most

helpless among us. No one likes a bully; no one admires the tornado for destroying a trailer park.

I won't deny there have been scary moments. A close colleague of mine just texted me saying her coronavirus test came back negative. My wife had to be tested for coronavirus and self-isolate for one anxious weekend in March, before the test came back blessedly negative. And stories from our students are heartbreaking. Students and their families have fallen ill. Others have returned to find parents furloughed and have been forced to work 12 hours per day at the local Big Box store to support their entire family. Students who came to Norwich for the structure and support, for the Corps and athletics, and for an atmosphere of social learning, now find themselves isolated at home with the end of spring semester looming. We may never be able to measure the profound trauma experienced by our students. My heart aches for them.

So, yes, you have hurt us. But really, *Ringo*, you have not disrupted Norwich University as much as you think you have. We may be a campus closed, but we are a community engaged. We may be apart, but we are closer than ever. Putting 2,400 students and 400 faculty fully online took us only a week. Virtual check-ins with faculty and staff warm

my soul, as we drink our coffee, hold babies on our laps, and shush our barking dogs. How quickly we have adapted! How flexible we have become with each other, and with our students!

And that, COVID-19—you cringing coward, you "Virus the Lesser" among your pandemic cousins—that will be your real legacy. Once we have developed a vaccination to put you in your place, what will we say about you? That you brought Norwich, or Vermont, or the United States, to its knees? No. Instead, we will tell the story of how we came together as a community, and how we emerged from the crisis with a better understanding of ourselves and one another.

And the next pandemic, or the one after that? Norwich University will create the generation of scientists, researchers, political leaders, medical practitioners, and first responders to battle the next inevitable health crisis.

Norwich has your number, C-19. We know who you are and where you live. It's your turn to be afraid.

A Teddy Roosevelt scholar and the author of numerous books on the 26th U.S. president, Edward Kohn, PhD, has appeared on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*. He is a graduate of Harvard, Victoria University of Wellington, and McGill.

WORKING IN THE **HOT ZONE**

Intubating COVID-19 patients in a Connecticut hospital, nurse anesthetist Michael Wilhelm '98, DNP, reflects on working in one the most dangerous jobs in medicine—and how he got there

Interview by Sean Markey



Michael Wilhelm, of Southbury, Connecticut, holds a doctorate in nursing practice and serves on the Board of Fellows for the NU School of Nursing. He works for the University of Connecticut John Dempsey Hospital in Farmington and is the owner of Alpine Anesthesia Services. The following account, edited for length and clarity, is based on a telephone interview he gave to the Norwich Record on April 7, 2020.

I think it was the end of December, beginning of January, we heard about this one doctor, I think he was actually in China. He came back, didn't think anything of it because COVID-19 was not as big of a problem yet. He was in the hospital, and he tested positive for the virus. It was starting on the west side of the state. We knew then that we were going to start getting some cases. We started to see things coming a little bit at a time. People weren't too worried. But now we're getting to the point where we're getting busier. We've been doing a lot of 16- and 24-hour shifts.

We feel right now we're still on an upslope. We haven't plateaued that peak yet. We're preparing for a worst-case scenario. We have a 20-bed ICU in our hospital, which is a 137-bed university hospital. We have more than enough ventilators. But we're already preparing to use our recovery unit as an ICU if need be—even using anesthesia machines as ICU ventilators. It's not what they're really designed for. But that's our game plan.

I am a nurse anesthetist. If you go in for surgery in the United States, you're most likely getting anesthesia by a nurse anesthetist—not a solo anesthesiologist. With COVID patients right now, since this is a droplet virus, we have the greatest exposure. Because we slip in a tracheal tube to protect your airway during surgery, we're getting all those secretions that are coming from the lungs. So, we're considered the most exposed. If we have to do emergency surgeries, we are trying to view every patient as potentially COVID-19 positive.

Michael Wilhelm '98, photographed earlier this year, worked as an ICU nurse during the 2002–04 SARS outbreak.

At our hospital, we have a separate team each shift right now that all they do is intubations on COVID patients. When the COVID patients get to a certain point of oxygen deprivation, we respond to the emergency. I'm on that rotation. In order to intubate and prepare them for a ventilator, you have to paralyze the patient. But first you have to give them some kind of anesthetic, some medication to put them to sleep. We give them the paralytic agent, so the vocal cords can't close and then we can slip the tube past. I've already directly worked on six COVID patients. The pace is increasing. More and more patients are winding up on a ventilator. That's how we know we're on an upswing. We're thinking that possibly by next week, probably around Easter time, we may have to start bringing people to backup ICUs set up in what had been our recovery rooms.

For whatever reason, my wife, who is also a nurse, and I have always been pretty fearless. I don't know what it is. We've been following the recommended guidelines. I only go out when I need to go out if I'm home. My kids are home from school. So on top of dealing with all this, I have to deal with them being schooled at home at the same time. My boys are four and six years old. So it's not like, "Hey, go do your math homework." It's like you got to actually go through it with them.

When I come home from work—and my wife does the same thing—we just go into the basement. We have a separate bathroom there. We take off our clothes and take a shower down there. All the laundry goes right into the washing machine. We have a sanitary cycle. I'm pretty sure it's going to shrink all our clothes. That's what we're doing to prevent it from spreading at home.

At the hospital, it all depends on what I'm doing. Typically, if I go in to intubate a COVID patient, we put on what's called a PAPR, a powered air-purifying respirator. It goes over my head. It's like a space helmet. It filters the air that's drawn into it. We also wear an N95 mask underneath that. We also wear gowns. We actually wear two, because they open in the back. We put one on one way and one on the other way. That way, we're

completely covered. We cover our neck, put on two pairs of gloves, and go into the room. Once you enter, you don't leave until you're done. When we do come out, we have a little section where we can take everything off. Everything gets wiped down. Somebody comes and wipes you down, and that's that.

Now, a situation happened the other day when I was working. There was a guy—they've been using the term "patient under investigation," which means that they have symptoms of COVID; so they're being tested, but they've not tested positive yet or the test didn't come back yet—the guy was in cardiac arrest. In cases like this, you don't have time to put on your PAPR and all this other stuff—because the guy is arresting. You need to be *in* the room. So, I went in wearing just an N95 mask and gloves and a gown. One of my colleagues was concerned for me. I said, "That's why we change afterwards." You go back down to the locker room, get a new pair of scrubs, dump the old pair. Some of our guys take a shower in between. That's what we're doing right now.

A couple of colleagues had a few scares, where we thought they were positive. They turned out to be OK. So, that's a good sign. Whatever we're doing is working right now. Whereas in the other hospital systems, I know there's one hospital in Connecticut, they have 20 anesthesia providers that were infected by the virus. That's what we're trying to prevent. We don't want there to be an exposure, and then find that half our department has taken ill.

It works as long as you have the right protective equipment. That's the problem that we're hearing about in New York City, that people don't have the right equipment. The CDC has recommended at this point that surgical masks are enough. But surgical masks only help prevent the spread of the virus. I think if you're directly taking care of these patients, I think that the N95 mask is critical. So are goggles. You don't want anything to get in your mouth. You don't want anything in your eyes or your nose. But we're still not 100 percent sure exactly how the virus works and spreads.

At our hospital, we have a separate team each shift right now that all they do is intubations on COVID patients.

The thing that's kind of funny is that I'm not that worried. I feel that the guidelines that are coming out are good. I think that we're doing the best that we can. It's obviously scary when you read about it. But there's just something about me and my wife, that we just don't have that fear factor. I don't know what it is. Am I worried about getting it? Sure. But I also know that I'm young—I'm 43—and healthy, relatively healthy. I worry more for people like my parents. I told them to get out of New York City and go to our property in upstate New York. They went upstate for three days. They were like, "We're going to head back down." I said, "No, no, no!"

How I became a nurse is kind of an interesting story. My family is from Queens. I grew up there. I went to Norwich and graduated with an electrical engineering degree. I did that for many years. Loved the job, loved the thought process behind it.

In 2001, I was working for Siemens as an engineer in New Jersey. I had also just started with the Glendale Volunteer Ambulance Corps. I always love telling this story, because people don't believe it sometimes. I still remember on the morning of 9/11—when we saw that planes had hit the towers of the World Trade Center—how I told my bosses, "I got to leave." They said, "You're not going to be able to go anywhere." I said, "Well, I got to leave."

I was in New Jersey driving home. Just before I got onto the George Washington Bridge, I pulled over and there's a Port Authority building. I walked up and I asked if I could help. I wound up going in with a group of paramedics from Newark-Passaic. We first went to an area where they had the

ferry services bringing people over from Manhattan. Then we went to Chelsea Pier, where we were staged until the last building came down. Then it was deemed safe for us to go in. So we went in. It was kind of funny—everybody else is in their EMS garb, and here I am in a shirt and tie and pants walking around. I remember a couple of times I got stopped by people. The other guys were like, “No, no. He’s with us.”

It was a sad time. I still remember going down the West Side Highway and everyone’s cheering and everything. Signs up thanking all the first responders for what they are doing. It was a tremendous, amazing experience. I remember when we went in there thinking, *all right, we’re going to save some people*. Then hours pass and you’re like ... *all right, maybe we will give families some closure*. That didn’t happen for a long time.

It wound up getting to the point that we were just running a triage station for the people that were digging. Another situation where no one had masks, no one had protective gear. All these guys were getting corneal abrasions from the dust and everything. For hours we were just washing out people’s eyes, so that they could go back out.

Then about two to three days later, we got back to the Port Authority station. I was involved with some volunteer work with the NYPD. I had called the captain of the precinct that I lived in. He got on the phone with a state trooper from New Jersey, and I got an escort over the bridge. I was driving really fast, over a hundred, and I still remember the state trooper pulling ahead of me. Then I got home. I don’t think I worked my regular engineering job for days, weeks after that, but I continued to volunteer and help the community.

After Siemens, one of the companies that I worked for did all the rebuilding for the PATH train. I was down there for another two years doing that, got laid off, had another job, got laid off. Around that time, I felt that there was just a void in my life. There was something more that I needed. I wanted to give back to the community, especially after 9/11. I thought to myself, it’s time for a change. My wife was my biggest advocate for

going into health care. She was an accountant who had gone into nursing herself.

My GPA at Norwich was not the best. Probably some of that was down to trying to balance the Corps and education and everything else. Our electrical engineering program was not easy. My GPA suffered a little bit for that. But in the long run, the problem was I didn’t think I was smart enough to get into nursing school. But I wound up getting accepted at NYU’s School of Nursing, which I never thought was going to happen in my life. They had an accelerated program and I finished in 15 months. My experience on the ambulance helped a lot. I wound up getting a job right away. I got an ICU fellowship for a year, which was an amazing experience. There was a lot of classroom training, mentoring, and patient experience. Then I worked in an ICU for about three years. I still wanted to do more. A conversation with my wife led me to discover nurse anesthesia. It was one of the best things that’s ever happened to me. It’s one of those jobs where I wake up, I look forward to going to work. I’m happy about what I do. I enjoy it. In fact, sometimes I even work too much.

One of the things that I always felt guided me in everything that I’ve done—from 9/11, going into nursing, going into nurse anesthesia, even now with this COVID thing—is the idea of the citizen-soldier, which was what Norwich founder Alden Partridge was all about. I want to say that philosophy always sticks in my head. I’ve always been the type of person that wants to help and try to help and try to do and be the best that I can.

One of my friends, my best man at my wedding, described me as, “Mike’s the guy who jumps into a pool without checking that there’s water in there first.” He said that at my wedding, and I still think about that. He’s right. That’s absolutely how I am. I don’t think I ever think about myself first. I always just do whatever I can. Even with this pandemic situation, with potentially bringing the virus home, I try to be safe. I try to be professional about it. I do what I can do, and I just hope that everyone will be safe—in my household and in my community. ■

I feel that the guidelines that are coming out are good. I think that we’re doing the best that we can.

A satellite image of Iraq, showing the country's borders and major geographical features like the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The image is in shades of brown, tan, and green, with some white clouds visible in the upper right corner.

Taking Baghdad

A memoir of the 2003 invasion of Iraq

BY AARON MICHAEL GRANT M'14

Historian and former U.S. Marine Aaron Michael Grant graduated from the Masters in Military History program at the College of Graduate and Continuing Studies in 2014. His most recent book is *Taking Baghdad: Victory in Iraq With the U.S. Marines* (Köehlerbooks, 2019). Part memoir, part history, his account recalls his experience as a Marine corporal and tank mechanic with Bravo Company, 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Grant served on the crew of "Hells Wrecker," a lightly armored, 70-ton M-88-A2 Hercules tank recovery vehicle. When not fighting or rescuing and repairing the broken-down tanks of his fellow Marines, Grant kept a detailed journal. His new book draws upon those sand-covered pages to portray one man's experience of the war and the moral questions it raised. The following excerpt has been edited for length.

On March 23, Third Battalion, 5th Marines ran into trouble close to Ad Diwaniyah on Highway 1, pinned down by a surprisingly coordinated ambush. In a hail of automatic machine gun fire, 1st Lt. Brian R. Chontosh commanded his vehicle to drive off the road, straight toward Iraqi trenches. RPGs and mortars sliced the air as he rolled up to the enemy, where he dismounted and emptied his ammunition, killing, with the help of another Marine, over 20 Iraqi fighters. "It's nothing like TV," Chontosh told a reporter at *Newsweek*. "It's ugly. It's contorted. People fall how they fall. It's not like the bullet hits and they're blown back or anything like that."

The fight was so intense Chontosh and his fellow Marine were obliged to pick up Iraqi weapons, silencing a greater part of the battlefield and making safe the rest of the convoy. The stiff firefight was within earshot as the convoy moved slowly north, and the lieutenant later received the Navy Cross and two Bronze Stars for his heroism in the face of heavy fire that day.

Back at my position, the sky changed from bright blue to a dusty, thick orange. Outside the M-88, sand brushed gently against my face. Since making our way west from Rumaila and north past An Nasiriyah and Ur to our current position east of Ad Diwaniyah, we had traveled primarily under the cover of darkness. Conserving energy during the day, running the columns ever northward at night had taken its toll. Days and nights blended together as one memory, one giant day full of events that one could scarcely track. The

heat of day did not lend itself to sleep, nor did the Marines favor living in a nocturnal state. The orange sky signaled the precursor to a sandstorm. In the lull before it arrived, I took time to pen a thought in my journal:

It seemed like a dream; one of those that you could not discern from fantasy or reality. Like a fairy tale, how they depict the surroundings totally foreign and unique from ours. I have never before seen skies like this.

Hopping up on Hells Wrecker, I assumed the machine gun position on the sweltering commander's hatch. The storm came slowly, the M-88 sealed to prevent the dust from raiding the inside.

I sat on top alone, standing watch behind my .50 caliber. Fastening helmet and fixing my goggles for the onslaught, I waited. "This damn M2!" I swore aloud. "If they only could fire from the inside!" These thoughts did not save me. A tidal wave of sand clawed its way toward me, engulfing all in its path, so fierce it appeared to have purpose. Papers and debris accompanying the storm could well have traveled hundreds of miles to where I sat now. It surrounded me.

I pursed my lips and suddenly realized it would be impossible to make a shot in any direction to defend myself. I had underestimated this storm; I attempted to see the hand in front of my face. Quickly tying a bandanna around my sand-salted mouth, I realized that every crevice of my person would be invaded with sand. I accepted my fate, sitting immobile on the gigantic, 70-ton mechanical log that was Hells Wrecker. My mind wan-



“I pictured being in a different place at another time. Images of the ancient armies of Sargon the Great ... came to me, marching in this same parched land.”



dered, peaceful with the lack of sight. In the rush of wind and orange earth, I pictured—though I don’t understand why—being in a different place at another time. Images of the ancient armies of Sargon the Great and the mighty Hammurabi came to me, marching in this same parched land. Their faces blasted like my own, salty rings around thousands of dry mouths. This sand carried their story. I envisioned history in the grit between my teeth.

A powerful wind slammed my body; I looked through my green-lensed goggles down to my person. No difference in fabric, only a flat shelf of orange. I had become a dune. Though the sand infil-

trated into my uniform at an incredible rate, I sat still.

The storm was almost over. I could see again, forcing imagination back down to earth. I stood, the sand rolling off my hands as fast as it came. The scattered trash that the convoy produced had been carried along with the storm, its sole companion for another hundred miles.

The storm encompassed the entire theater of operations for about an hour.

God has always used the weather to intervene in human events. I later discovered that satellite images from that exact time picked up extensive enemy movement while the entire coalition



Marines use an M-88-A2 Hercules (left) to repair an M1A1 Abrams tank engine. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Martin.

remained still. It was no simple act of nature. What was foiled because of the sandstorm, or what was done because of it, had infinite possibilities.

Recalling a story from the Revolutionary War, I remembered how George Washington and his retreating army crossed the East River in the Battle of Brooklyn Heights in 1776. He took advantage of the night to move his army in boats across the river to Manhattan but didn't have nearly enough time to complete the task. At dawn, a deep fog suddenly settled, so thick one could barely see a foot in any direction. The British, hot on his heels, could do nothing but wait it out. By the time it lifted, the

Americans had long crossed the river in one of the greatest, most organized military retreats in history, saving nearly 10,000 Americans and the revolution itself. Thanks to God, and God only. It was apparent God was doing the same in this war, lifting the enemy from bunkers and foxholes so we could engage after the weather cleared. It also allowed the Iraqis to adapt to their perilous situation without harassment from us. God designs the outcome of battles.

Around this time, a blessing landed on Hells Wrecker. Hearing a commotion on back of the M-88, I looked back and met the gaze of a pigeon under the orange sky. I wasn't surprised until he

“Up until that point, I had not seen a single bird in Iraq, and here one was acting like it had brain damage, nestling into a cap hanging on the bulkhead.”

hopped down into the commander's hatch. The shining purple-and-pale-gray creature searched, oblivious to all of us inside staring at it. Up until that point, I had not seen a single bird in Iraq, and here one was acting like it had brain damage, nestling into a cap hanging on the bulkhead. He fluffed himself up, circled a few times, and fell asleep. And there he stayed for three days. He became "Willie," and he let us pet him, feed him, put him on our shoulders, and every evening he would return to his cap and fall asleep when we did. Writing in my journal about him, I knew he was more than he seemed:

In the direction I was looking, a pigeon landed on the tank. Some people see things as a simple coincidence, an act of chance. Others see [events] as more [than] chance; they see a sign. I am the latter, and this fearless creature is a sign. My spirit, as of late, has run too fast. Too little time to focus and see like I normally do. "He's probably someone's pet," I tell myself. He reminds me of how simple life can be, and how content you can be if you let yourself. Who knows when he'll leave; for the time being I will enjoy his company as he does mine.

For the days we had him, Willie reminded me to be content. Looking at him sleeping in the smelly Hercules, regardless of the firefights, he made me think of faith. Have faith. God would teach me later in life to be content, and I see now he sent this messenger to show us all that if a bird, who we could squash at any time, could be content with us, then we should be content and have faith we could deal with a few Iraqis.

The sandstorm cleared. Bravo Company spotted a civilian vehicle coming directly at them on the highway, traveling at a high rate of speed. The tanks fired a warning shot with small arms. No reaction. The vehicle sped directly

for us. We tensed as we surmised the car could be packed with explosives. Another shot was fired. This time it ricocheted off the pavement directly in front of the car and buried itself in the chest of the passenger. The car wheeled and arced to a complete stop directly in front of the tanks. Tankers dismounted and pulled the wounded driver from the car. He was a deserter, and the man with a gaping hole in his chest was his uncle. "Why didn't you stop!?" screamed the Marines.

No one could understand what he was blubbering. The man sitting dead in the seat caused the Marines to shout obscenities. He wasn't a combatant, and there he was dead, and the deserter crying.

No one could figure out why they were moving so fast directly for the tanks. They had no explosives or firearms. They were afraid of something ahead. Pulling the dead man from the car, someone produced a tarp to drape over him, and there he lay for days. I looked at his lifeless arm dangling with a wedding ring on it. What an idiot, I thought. What were you running from?

I had a good idea why they were running. There was not a single friendly unit ahead of us. There were artillery strikes, 2,000 sorties by Apache helicopters, jets, and bombers, and Baghdad had been hit by cruise missiles. The Army was currently fighting in As Samwah, west of An Nasiriyah, and Najaf to the west of Ad Diwaniyah, and securing local airfields. If that didn't make the deserter flee, it was the Ba'ath militia or Fedayeen, who forced Iraqi troops to fight, that scared the hell out of them. In either case, the deserter and his uncle found making a suicidal run toward the American tanks preferable to what lay ahead.

And there was something ahead.

"No one could figure out why they were moving so fast directly for the tanks. They had no explosives or firearms. They were afraid of something ahead."

The morning of March 27 dawned crisp. We passed countless homes made of mud brick, their occupants gazing from within with innocent eyes. Occasionally, following in slow pace with the tanks, we were entertained by crowds of civilians gathered to watch the fabled U.S. Marines. They were as unknown to us as any outsider in the context of war. I had been told that the Iraqis believed that killing someone was part of Marine Corps recruit training. They thought we were bloodthirsty, though most had never killed anyone.

Arab faces thrust from every corner. I was amazed at their quietness, the colors, their mystery. I cursed myself for not learning Arabic in Kuwait, where I had plenty of time to do so. It was not only the culture that was shocking but also not knowing what information they had of the enemy's movements around us. If we just could communicate with the civilians, the invasion would have been easier. Light eyes hidden under a purple veil here, small children whispering to one another there. I sensed questioning hearts.

The Marines in Iraq were like a closed society—a counterculture even—with its own values and language floating about the desert. It was impossible to know the Iraqi through the lens of Americanism, which clashed directly with Iraqi nationalism. Truly, if not for the ever-present language barrier, we could get over the rest.

The language killed us and the culture shocked us. We did not know that the Iraqi was fiercely tribal, that his loyalty was to his neighbor, not Saddam, though he wouldn't speak of it to avoid the secret police. Could the Marines—the wolfpack, the counterculture—truly understand the Iraqi? We understood tactics, the bullets flying, and the bombs. From that alone we understood the motivation—and

ineptitude—of the Iraqi military. But outside of that, the civilians hiding in the shadows or squatting beneath trees were an enigma.

An us-and-them complex developed very quickly, as if the people were beyond understanding. It was convenient. When we looked at them it was easier to see something less than a human being, an enemy who was simply waiting for the opportunity to strike, informing his friends on our movements, taking advantage of the language barrier to hide his true intentions. Yes, the Iraqis were a finger's touch away from us and couldn't be farther at the same time.

They became objects, barely more than the shadows they cast upon the desert—one and the same, every face a complete mystery.

Some of the houses were fortresses; a sizable home in the center accompanied four towers in each corner connected by walls. I wondered as we passed why they needed such fortification. Children played in the fields close to the earthen ramparts under the careful eye of a mother resting in the shade. Under the palm tree, I caught her eye wandering from beneath her veil. She faltered in the attempt not to notice the invading army, gazing through us without discomfort or surprise. The M-88 passed through an underpass when word came over the speaker that a civilian was waving forward, as if warning us of something ahead. Our menacing caravan of tanks kept cautious, until our anxiety soon elevated.

A call erupted from Capt. Gunn notifying Hells Wrecker that an ammunition box was lying on the left side of the road. The captain's tank ahead had just passed the large wooden box; it was up to the M-88 to destroy it. Before entering Iraq, general instruction was given to destroy Iraqi munitions so they could not be utilized by the enemy. Our M-88's commander traversed the M2 over the

left side—the same machine gun that had been jamming when test fires were attempted. I lifted my eyebrows out of sight, knowing that it would simply jam again. I touched the M-16 rifle at my side, readying myself to perform the task that our unreliable, dirty main gun couldn't.

As soon as the captain breathed his order, shots rang out from the left. Rounds impacted Hells Wrecker all around me. The whiff each round made danced around my torso. Unaware that rounds had struck the metal near his head, our driver continued on his straight course. An oil jug riddled with bullets spewed its hot contents onto the blacktop, splattering the hull. I bolted out of my hatch fully exposed. Muzzle directly in front of our driver's nose, I began firing at the innocent grass field making the attempt on our lives. The familiar jamming and cursing of our M-88 commander barely registered, my sole focus on the gentle sway of a green ocean. Nature was my foe, a shield to the heart that so coveted my demise. He was in there somewhere.

The familiar chugging of Hells Wrecker overcame my senses within seconds. Momentarily, there was peace. I hurriedly grabbed more ammunition inside, grazing by Willie dead asleep in his cap.

Total concentration, which I had never experienced, glazed my eyes. Adrenaline pumped in my veins.

The convoy ahead staged tanks to the right and left side of the road, in the familiar herring-bone defensive formation that we were all accustomed to. We heard shots and numerous transmissions that the enemy was attacking with small arms fire from either side of the road. It was an ambush. The forward elements of the convoy, tanks, AAVs, then the M-88 stopped fully and engaged various targets utilizing "recon

by fire.” I fired at anything that looked suspicious.

Shots continued from everywhere—from motionless tall grass and seemingly vacant mud-brick homes. It struck me then that nobody knew exactly what we were engaging. The homes became littered with machine gun fire. Pocks and wisps of smoke exploded from the ground, rounds accurate to the shooter’s erratic aim. Marines cooped up in Kuwait for months now had the chance to unleash on a helpless machine-gun trigger. Though no guerrilla was ever seen during this tremendous volley of retaliation, our minds became red with the yearning to destroy, partly to take back the pieces of our lives that we had thus far spent so miserably here.

“Move on! Move on!” our captain shouted. “Keep pressing forward!”

Tanks wheeled left and right, back into a neat column on the pavement. My eyes, just above the threshold of the hatch, rarely perceived the origin of the shots. Not soon after the first contact, where nerves remained tense, we received word that a white truck had been spotted coming in from the east. I squinted far off to the right, seeing men in black leaping from a pickup, diving into the concealing field. Fed-ayeen Saddam. A hundred yards out, the truck abruptly stopped. I lifted my rifle and took my best aim at the driver: a shot, then one to the passenger. I was an expert shot, and it filled me with adrenaline knowing they were dead. I felt as if I would live forever.

They tried to teach morals in the Marine Corps in the hope that some of it would stick when the time came. It did for me, and I struggle with it every day. I know my comrades do as well, because they know what really happened on the ground in Iraq and keep those truths locked up, seldom revealed. It was the price of accomplishing the mission, which was commonly to root out the combatants from the civilians at any given time. The Iraqi combatant who disguised himself in the civilian population received the most contempt from U.S. forces. How dare the guerrilla attack us from within his loved ones’ reach? He pushed us to the extreme, he pushed us to kill, and doing so destroyed our sense of morality honorably won as fighting men.

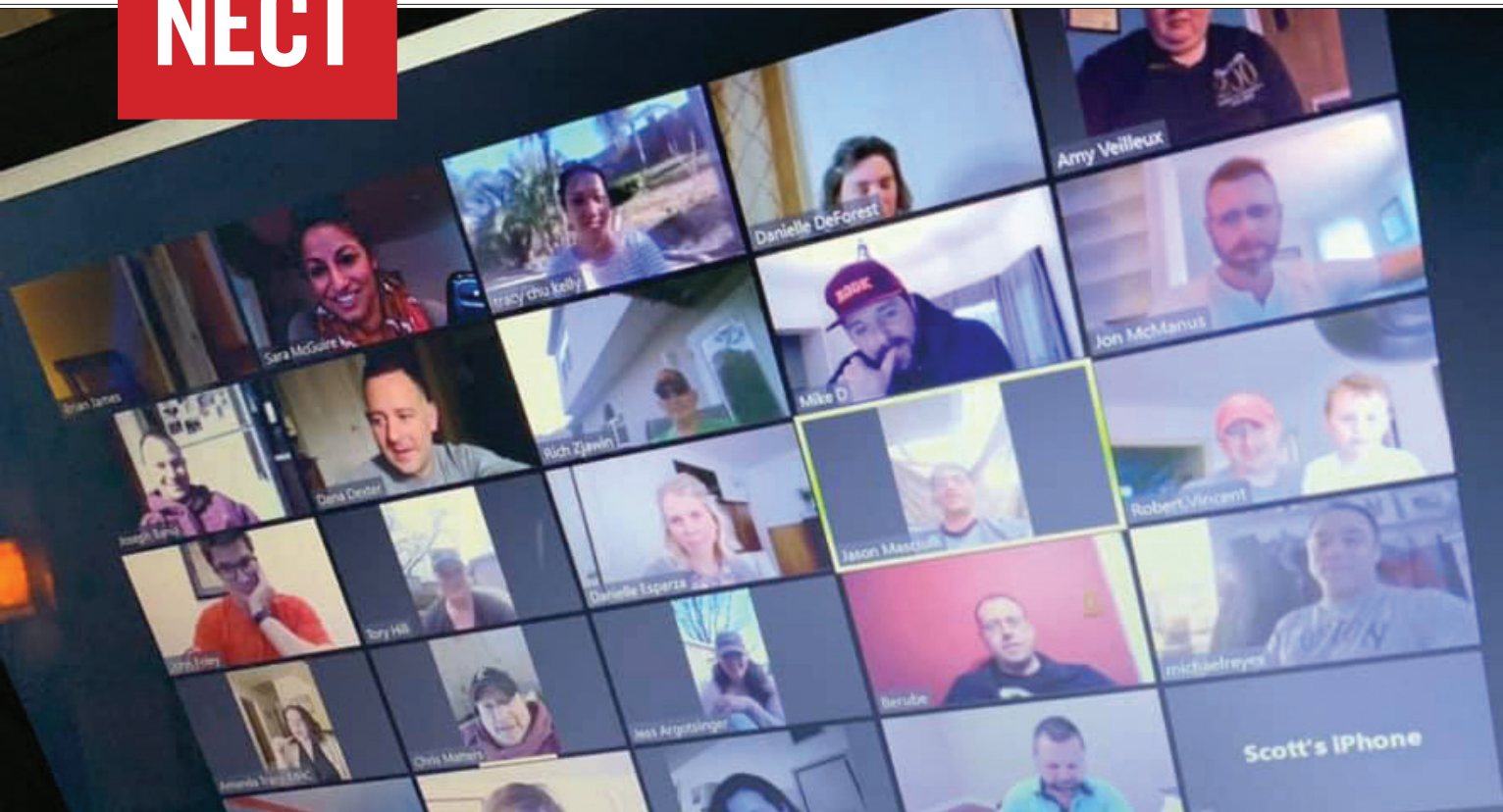
In total war, moral injury strikes everyone. Morals are hard won in life, and you have them if you don’t shed innocent blood, if you are not the “bad guy.” You believe that you are a good American soldier as long as you do what is right—what is chivalrous. American soldiers have been reared to embody the best qualities admired by a peaceable society. A culture that values a good fight so long as it can be stopped at the bell. A culture that doesn’t understand total war; one that frowns on its ugliness, and which hangs up its fighting men, knowing nothing of military matters. The reality of war is something modern society wants kept in the dark. And most of the time, it remains unseen.

But what of the men? Soldiers regret things that they have done to bring war to the enemy; the most effective way to kill a cause, kill their motivation, is to submit them to your will. Destroying homes, destroying the means by which to thrive, bringing the war into the hearts of civilians, was precisely what our enemy was doing.

He was exposing a weakness—or so

“American soldiers have been reared to embody the best qualities admired by a peaceable society. A culture that values a good fight so long as it can be stopped at the bell.”

he thought—in the American military; he assumed that we would not act if civilians were mixed into the fray. In truth, it was his best chance of succeeding against the technologically and numerically superior force. Fear. He exposed fear because he knew we were trained to “do the right thing” in the face of adversity. He wanted war with America, not war for Saddam, and that made it a more personal matter. Our reaction to the guerrilla reflected his success, as it did our seriousness. Total war does not sit well with good men. I had to go deeper. ■



ESSAY

A Happy Hour for Unhappy Times

Stuck at home and missing her Norwich family during the pandemic, Sara McGuire '01 & M'14 organized a virtual cocktail hour gone viral. The first get-together with friends from the Hill lasted nine hours. In the weeks since, the drop-in chats have also become a balm for the isolated and newly unemployed

BY SARA MCGUIRE

With everyone sheltering in place because of COVID-19, I was trying to figure out a way for my Norwich friends and me to stay connected beyond texting or messaging. I heard about Zoom and how companies were using it as their meeting platform. I figured, "Why not try this with the group?" At that point, most of us were on our second or third week of not leaving the house.

I decided to create a private event on Facebook for a Friday night. Knowing

people were working from home all around the country, I picked a time that I thought could work for everyone: 7 p.m. Eastern/4 p.m. Pacific. I invited all my Norwich Facebook friends, even those I hardly talk to on a regular basis. In my invite, I told them to also ask people I may have missed and/or people I am not Facebook friends with. This opened it up to over 300 alums invited the first night we did it. Not everyone who was invited joined. The alums who did ranged in class years. There were

people that hopped on that I didn't know, but someone had invited them. The first night we held it, there were people logged in that I hadn't spoken to in over 20 years. Everyone was in a great mood and happy to see other alumni and classmates, some of whom they hadn't talked to since graduation. It's a cocktail hour, so of course there was plenty of drinking going on. We would make a toast to our Fallen or take a shot (or five) throughout the night just because. The mood was crazy. It was like

being back on campus during Homecoming Weekend. Everyone was sharing stories, throwing on old uniform articles, showing old pictures, and just really enjoying the fact that we all had a platform to get together—even during this pandemic. That first night, the call lasted about nine hours. People would log on just to say “hi” and end up staying for a few hours. Others would log in for a few minutes between dinner and putting their kids to bed. Some had their kids join in to say “hi” as well.

After it was over, I received messages for days from people saying how much everyone loved it and how it took them away from the reality of what was going on in their own life. It was the same effect you experience during Homecoming Weekend—somehow you are just transported back in time. It’s like 20 years had never passed. Everyone’s stories that night brought back so many memories for all of us.

The next week, many alumni messaged me, asking if we were having another “meeting” on Friday night. So I scheduled another private event that Friday, and there were a lot of new alums that logged in. Word was spreading about it and everyone wanted to check it out. I think at one point we had over 40 people on the call at one time. Some have asked how does anyone get a word in? It just works. People are respectful, and if someone is talking, others listen. If there is a group of people talking—like a group of Class of 1999 grads were the second week—the rest of us just let them reminisce as we enjoy the fact that they were able to connect again. People will log on, then leave to eat dinner. Some get called away. But the conversation keeps going.

The third time I scheduled the Norwich Cocktail Hour was on a Saturday. It was Easter Weekend, so I wasn’t sure if anyone would be interested. But they were. We even went international. We



A former U.S. Army officer whose husband serves in the Navy, Sara McGuire moves often. She says she finds friends in her new community through Norwich alumni.

had friends from Germany and Bahrain log in.

I plan to continue hosting the Norwich Cocktail Hour as long as people are interested and as long as this pandemic is going on. A few people reached out to me and said that they are sheltering place alone, and having this meeting each week has helped them. Whether it’s being part of a group or just having someone to talk to, the state of the world that we are in right now can be extremely lonely for those going it alone with no spouse, kids, or family around. If this helps them get through the week, then I did something for the Norwich community—we all did.

Then there are those folks that are stuck with their spouse and kids, working from home with no break. They need the connection with Norwich friends just as much as someone on their own does. It refreshes the soul, and you wake up (quite possibly hungover!) the next day knowing that your Norwich family is there for you.

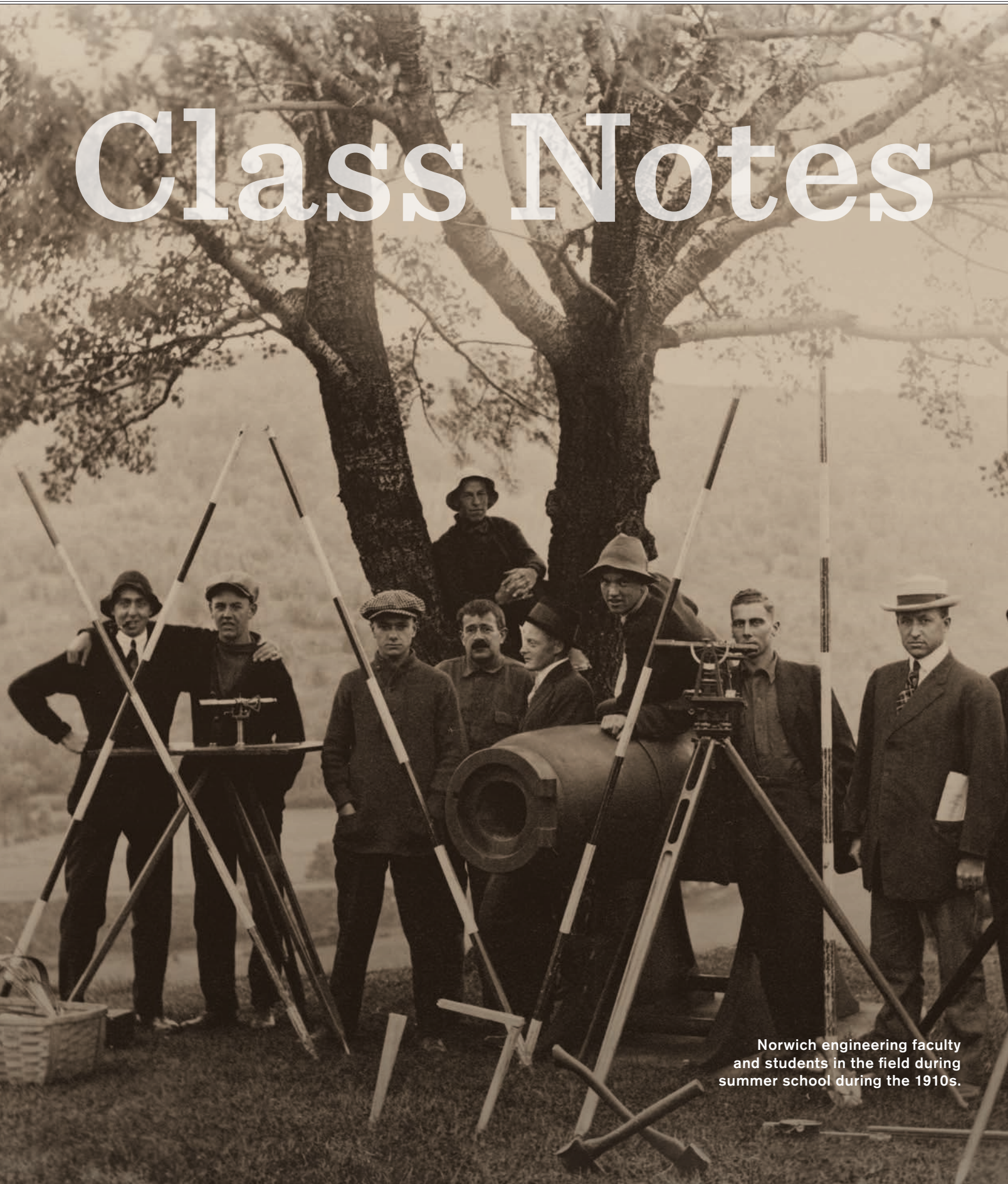
During the first three weeks that we held it, we have learned about people who have been furloughed from their jobs or had to file for unemployment.

Others were experiencing marriage troubles or dealing with the stress of home-schooling their kids while still working a full-time job. Some had worries about their parents. The list goes on. It’s not all jokes and partying. We talk about serious things that are going on in everyone’s life. And everyone just listens and supports.

Since the cocktail hour began, many of us have said (myself included) that while we didn’t know certain alums from their class, we feel a sense of unity among everyone now that we have “met” them. Each week brings a new face that we haven’t seen in years. We had one alum fall asleep last week, and we just kept talking. Before we were about to sign off, we all yelled at him to wake him up. I didn’t want to log off without knowing he was OK. He eventually woke up, and I checked on him the next morning just to make sure he was all right. I’m in Washington state and he is in Massachusetts, which is the funny part. It doesn’t matter where we are, we all have a place to connect. I honestly feel that the Norwich Cocktail Hour is a stress reliever for most; we log in and just hang out. For a few hours each week, we forget about what’s going on in the world and are surrounded by our family. That’s what we all need at this time. ■

Sara McGuire '01 & M'14 is former U.S. Army military police officer who served two tours in Iraq. She lives in Everett, Wash., and works as a corporate investigator for Boeing.

Class Notes



Norwich engineering faculty and students in the field during summer school during the 1910s.



1. Back row (from left): Joe Egolf, Della Halleck, John Manchester, Bob Halleck, Steve Cerjan, Bob McAllister, Bonnie and Mike Elkins. Front row (from left): Holly McAllister, Arlene Egolf, Kate Manchester, Patty Cerjan.

2. From left: Buddha Schlotterbeck '66, Sandra Schlotterbeck, Carolyn Daub, and Gus Daub '66.

3. Dick Goldberg '71 hosts construction management and civil engineering majors in Salem, Mass.

Class of 1952

Warren A. Messner shared a thoughtful letter, reflecting on how the essence of NU's "I Will Try" motto "has real meaning" for the life of cadets striving to accomplish requirements in the classroom, military, and "life itself." He wrote: "That motto should be emblazoned on the mind of each cadet; it means trying to make success happen as he [or] she goes through life. If you do not try, you will not succeed." Warren recalled how the motto saved him during his own studies at Norwich, particularly during his freshman year as he struggled to keep up in the mathematics class of "Mad Mac" Maconnon. "He wrote formulas on the blackboard with his right hand and erased them with his left hand as he continued to write." Warren said the same was true in his sleep-deprived, early-morning chemistry classes with "Shorty Hamilton," the professor who famously towered well over six feet. After his first semester at Norwich, Warren says, the dean wrote his mother to say he didn't think Warren would make it academically. Warren, of course, proved him wrong, graduating in 1952 as an Army lieutenant and later serving with the 47th Infantry Division in Korea, with the war ending one month later.

Class of 1964

Joseph Egolf and friends from the Class of 1964 enjoyed a recent get-together in Sarasota, Fla. *See Photo 1.*

Class of 1966

Kurt Schlotterbeck met friends and fellow car lovers from the Class of 1966 during their annual gathering at the Amelia Island Concours d'elegance. *See Photo 2.*

Class of 1969

Walter Banaszak wrote to say he enjoyed his 50th Reunion during Homecoming. "Many thanks to John H., Brendan, Ron, John M., et al. A very special thanks to Pres. Schneider for all of his hard work and enthusiasm." Walter also shared news about the short tour of Asia he took with his daughters last summer with stops in Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. "While in Singapore we spent one night at the Raffles Hotel—very posh, really top drawer!" *See Photo 4.*

Class of 1971

In November, Dick Goldberg and several other alumni hosted a "busload" of construction management and civil engineering majors for a day of on-the-job training in Salem, Mass. "Dick has bought and is renovating the old Knights of Columbus Hall in downtown Salem into 18 condo apartments and reached out to NU to see if it would be interesting for the students," writes senior development officer Dave Casey '80. With the building framed out, students were able to cycle through stations covering carpentry and construction; financing; masonry and foundations; and development and regulations.

Class of 1975

In March, **Stephen Hammond** got together with a half dozen Norwich friends, mostly but not entirely from the Class of 1975, for what he described as a “great day of skiing” at Deer Valley Ski Resort in Park City, Utah. All strong skiers, the group “traversed the whole mountain and had a wonderful time, reflecting on the days of skiing at Norwich University’s Ski Area!” See *Photo 5*.

Class of 1985

Air Force LtGen **Thomas Bussiere** was assigned as deputy commander of the United States Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.

Class of 1988

U.S. Army officer **Mark Denton** was recently promoted to colonel at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa. His classmates **Alex Bryant** and **Heather Gillis** were among the friends who joined him at the ceremony. See *Photo 6*.

Class of 2003

Kayla Caron, M’03 was named a partner and principal at Scott Simons Architects in Portland, Maine, where she frequently works on projects focused on master planning, educational facilities, and libraries. “Kayla’s commitment to architecture is grounded in public engagement and in projects that positively impact the community. Her

commitment to client advocacy and attention to nurturing owner relationships enhances each of her projects,” the firm stated in a press release. Since joining the firm in 2013, Kayla has worked on master plans for the Tilton School, Lincoln Academy, the Hill School, and the University of Southern Maine Performing Arts Center. Her community-based projects include renovations of the Bangor Public Library and the Falmouth Memorial Library and conceptual design for the expansion of the Prince Memorial Library and Historical Society in Cumberland. Current projects include the conceptual design for a new community center in Standish, expansions to the Ronald McDonald House in Portland, and the public library in her hometown of Scarborough.

Class of 2004–06

Four NU School of Nursing alumni who commissioned into the U.S. Army following graduation are now playing central leadership roles at Bassett Army Community Hospital in Alaska. Lt. Col. **Victoria Ragan** ’96 serves as the facility’s assistant deputy chief of nursing. Maj. **Lena Fabian** ’04 works as a certified nurse midwife. Maj. **Torry Hook** ’05 is chief nurse method analyst, and Maj. **Robert Fabich** ’06, ’07, a certified registered nurse anesthetist, serves as the hospital’s chief of anesthesia. Located at Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks, the facility is the Army’s most northern hospital. See *Photo 7*.



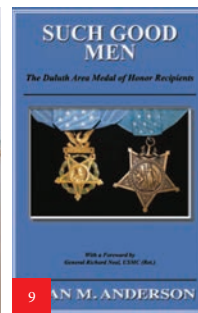
6. From left: Mark Denton '98, Col. Alex Bryant '98, Heather Gillis '98, and Demond Matthews at the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa.



7



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7. From left: Maj. Lena Fabian '04, Maj. Robert Fabich '06, '07, Lt. Col. Victoria Ragan '96, Maj. Torry Hook '05.

8. Derek J. Rondeau '09 (far right) at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France.

Class of 2007

In October, Rich Ohlsen, MBA'07 was appointed as the nuclear material management group manager for the Radiological Control Division at Brookhaven National Laboratory. Prior to his appointment, Rich had worked at the laboratory for 11 years as a senior emergency management specialist for the federal Office of Emergency Management. In his new role, he will facilitate the performance of nuclear materials management responsibilities; coordinate activities with Department of Energy headquarters and field organizations; and manage, plan, assess, and direct the work of the Radiological Controls Division Nuclear Materials Management Section.

Class of 2009

In November, CGCS Master of Arts in Military History graduate Alan Anderson '09 published *Such Good Men: The Duluth Area Medal of Honor Recipients*, a book he wrote for the St. Louis County Historical Society

in Duluth, Minn. The book explores the stories of six area Medal of Honor recipients, including Maj. Richard Bong, America's "Ace of Aces." The foreword was written by Norwich Board of Trustees member Gen. Richard Neal, USMC (Ret.), a former assistant commandant of the Marine Corps. A military historian who lives and works in the Twin Cities, Anderson has law degree from Cornell and a PhD in war studies from King's College London. *See Photo 9.*

In February, U.S. Army infantry officer and Afghanistan combat veteran Derek J. Rondeau was promoted to the rank of major at a ceremony held at Omaha Beach in Normandy, France. Derek was on an exchange program in the country, while studying for his master's degree at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College. Derek is the son of Schelley '86 and Col. Dean J. Rondeau '85, USA (Ret.) of Wolfeboro, N.H. Schelley is a pediatric and public health nurse, while Dean serves as Wolfeboro's chief of police. Both Derek and Dean served in the 16th Infantry

Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, a storied Army unit which stormed the shores of Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944 during Operation Overlord, the invasion of Normandy during World War II. Derek received the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Infantryman's Badge, among other honors, while serving as a light infantry platoon leader and rifle company executive officer in the 1/87 Infantry 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan 2010–11. When not in school, Derek resides at Fort Riley, Kansas, with his wife Stephanie and their three daughters: Olivia, 7; Emma, 6; and Audrey, 4. *See Photo 8.*

Class of 2011

Malcolm Reid, M'11 was recently appointed to a three-year term on the Global Board of Directors for ASIS International. The institution is the world's largest membership organization for the security management profession. In announcing his appointment, ASIS described Reid as "a globally recognized leader in the fields of risk management and cyber

resilience." A member of ASIS since 2005, Reid previously served as the regional vice president for ASIS in Latin America. A graduate of West Point and Norwich, where he earned a master's degree in information assurance with honors, Reid heads Brison, LLC, a Virginia-based risk-management consulting group.

Class of 2012

Chris and Emily Button Kohn welcomed their second beautiful daughter, Lachlan Kit Kohn, into the world on January 3. "We couldn't have imagined a better way to start the new year," they said. Their family of four currently resides in Virginia, while Chris is stationed at Quantico. *See Photo 10.*

Class of 2014

Ryan Mitiguy and Alecia Nickerson '15 met in Crawford Hall in August 2011 and were married on October 12, 2019 in Raleigh, N.C. Many Norwich alumni and Vermont friends were in attendance, including Andrew Linebarger and Tanner and Kayla Jones.

Andrew and Kayla were in the wedding party. *See Photo 11.*

Class of 2015

Ashley Larson wrote to say that her husband—U.S. Army Capt. **Zachary Larson**, a Medical Service Corps officer currently deployed in Afghanistan—has published his first book, a memoir and self-help guide entitled *Overcoming*. “Zachary’s family was traumatized with the passing of his sister years ago,” Ashley said. “His book covers that story and the aftermath that ... [followed]. He’s learned so much throughout his life, especially in the United States military. He shares all of these life lessons with the readers and gives them practical exercises and advice on how to maneuver through this crazy thing called life.” Ashley, who is the twin sister of Zachary’s Class of 2015 classmate **Chelsea Toney**, writes that when he returns from deployment, Zachary plans to apply to a physician’s assistant program to further his studies. *See Photo 13.*

Class of 2018

Col. **Jeffrey S. Yarvis**, PhD, M’18 recently published a book through Oxford University Press entitled *Combat Social Work: Applying the Lessons of War to the Realities of Human Services*. Co-edited by Charles Figley and Bruce Thyer, the book explores the experiences of 13 combat social workers, whose work includes providing military mental health services to members in their unit. Oxford Press describes the book as “a valuable resource for social workers

and other mental health providers interested in the assessment and treatment of trauma with active members of the military and military veterans.” An adjunct professor at Texas A&M University—Central Texas and trained social worker, Yarvis is a 34-year Army veteran and former combat hospital commander. He earned the Bronze Star Medal and Combat Action Badge for leadership and actions taken under fire. *See Photo 12.*

Class of 2019

Ryan Fitzpatrick graduated from Army basic training on February 20, 2020 and started officer training in March with an anticipated completion date of May 2020.

Class of 2020

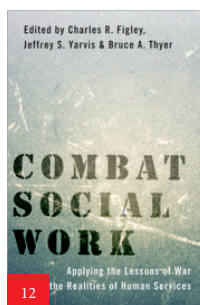
Vermont Army National Guard Sgt. **Trevor McMinn**, a combat medic (68W) with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop in St. Albans, Vermont, helped treat patients at Vermont’s Alternate Healthcare Facility located at the Champlain Valley Expo Center in Essex Junction in response to the novel coronavirus pandemic. “For our soldiers, serving Vermont is our greatest honor and responsibility,” a Vermont National Guard press release said. “We are here supporting Vermonters and assisting our emergency response partners to help flatten the curve ... Sgt. McMinn was one of many who answered the call and we couldn’t be prouder. First Vermont!”



10



11



12



13

11. Newlyweds Ryan Mitiguy '14 and Alecia Nickerson '15.

13. Capt. Zachary Larson '15 has published his first book, *Overcoming*, part memoir, part self-help guide.

ROLL OF HONOR

The following list reflects notifications of deceased Norwich family members received by the university from January 8, 2020 to April 5, 2020. Full obituaries, when available, can be viewed online at alumni.norwich.edu/obituaries. To inform the university of the passing of a member of the Norwich family, please contact the Alumni Office at (802) 485-2100 or inmemoriam@norwich.edu.

1947 George Costes, 97, 3/13/20
 1950 Joseph A. Alari, 91, 12/22/19
 1950 Dallas C. Dodge, 91, 1/12/20
 1951 Marilyn Wilkins, 88, 9/18/19, *Spouse*
 1951 Rosario J. DiSalvo, 90, 1/6/20
 1951 Donald B. Millson, 92, 3/3/20
 1952 John E. Dolphin, 90, 2/20/20
 1953 James R. Baker, 88, 10/7/19
 1953 Anthony J. Pietro, 89, 12/15/19
 1953 Albert A. Ventresca, 88, 2/2/20
 1954 William V. Ouellette, 88, 3/16/20
 1957 James C. Abare, 86, 2/29/20
 1958 Phoebe W. Chapin, 81, 1/15/20, *Vermont College*
 1960 George O. Carney, 82, 12/19/19
 1960 Robert F. Doyle, 81, 1/8/20
 1960 Elaine J. Garrahy, 79, 2/22/20, *Vermont College*
 1960 George Hadgigeorge, 84, 3/15/20
 1961 Sharon Kirkpatrick, 78, 12/23/19, *Vermont College*
 1963 John C. Fischer, 78, 1/8/20
 1963 William D. Sweetser, 81, 2/9/20
 1964 Barbara Smith, 76, 3/16/20, *Vermont College*
 1965 Thomas H. Sullivan, 78, 12/9/19
 1969 Richard A. Wittmeyer, 72, 1/21/20
 1970 Patrick H. O'Brien, 72, 1/6/20
 1971 Paul C. Topalian, 72, 2/10/20
 1973 Deborah Nelson, 66, 1/2/20
 1974 Pamela Harman, 65, 1/3/20
 1975 David H. Hendrix, 67, 11/28/19
 1979 Joan L. Whiting, 60, 2/14/20
 1980 Carol A. Patch, 60, 12/19/19
 1981 Christopher J. Munn, 62, 1/26/20
 1982 Corrinne A. Demoss, 59, 3/3/20
 1984 Glenn R. Stidsen, 57, 2/16/20
 1985 Dana Michael Leach, 58, 3/15/20
 1987 Sarah McCulloch, 98, 2/4/20
 1987 Katherine Martin, 91, 3/12/20
 1989 Henry VanCleaf, 85, 12/5/19
 1989 Patrick A. Hoarty, 54, 1/13/20
 1990 Beth C. Szostkiewicz, 52, 3/9/20
 1991 Jamie M. Sicard, 50, 3/2/20
 2008 Robert K. Dean, 66, 1/5/20
 2013 Sarah K. McCarthy, 28, 2/15/20
 2019 Kelsey B. Crepeau, 24, 1/31/20
 William P. Sullivan, 67, 11/29/19, *Friend & Board of Fellows*

Club News



COVID-19 arrived on the East Coast during Spring Break, just as Norwich|Connects events were underway. The events in Philadelphia, Boston, Connecticut, and Washington, D.C., brought dozens of alumni and students together to network around jobs and internships. However by the time of Annapolis, Md., event, people were heading home to heed recommendations for social distancing.

Ever a social bunch, alumni immediately began thinking about ways to stay in touch virtually. Two dozen NU Club events were ultimately canceled. But by mid-April the Alumni Office, in partnership with the NU Alumni Association and NU Clubs across the country, put together a schedule of virtual events to bring people together. For the past six years, the Legacy of Learning Series has featured presentations by alumni subject-area experts to foster professional development and networking within specific fields. Events were primarily held in Boston and Washington, D.C. The coronavirus provided the impetus to broaden the program by taking it online and expanding the offerings. Within a few weeks, alumni came forward to offer their expertise on a variety of subjects, ranging from the pandemic and cooking with beer to a virtual tour of the International Spy Museum and a talk about a German "ROTC" unit during WWII.



Alumni in Connecticut enjoy a recent Norwich | Connects event.

NU Clubs also stepped up to support their alma mater in other ways. They called families of incoming students to welcome them to the Norwich family and provide support for the Class of 2024. They also contacted members of the Class of 2020 with congratulations and to invite them to NU Club events in the months ahead. Lastly, they reached out to one another with care and support through a challenging time.

In good times and bad, it is reassuring to know that the Norwich family is everywhere. And though we may not always be able to get together, we are never far apart. To connect with your local club or learn more about NU Clubs, visit alumni.norwich.edu/ClubListing.

Norwich Forever!

EDDIE HABECK '99 & M'10
 Director, Alumni & Family Relations



PARTRIDGE SOCIETY

The mission of the Partridge Society is to encourage alumni, parents, and friends of Norwich University to help the university achieve its financial goals and to formally recognize those who do so.

The Partridge Society Board of Directors welcomes the following new and promoted Lifetime and 1819 Circle Members and acknowledges new levels achieved between January 1, 2020 and March 31, 2020.

FOUR-STAR GENERAL MEMBERS

(\$500,000–\$749,999)

Bonnie Chouinard

TWO-STAR GENERAL MEMBERS

(\$100,000–\$249,999)

Blair '84 & Barbara Lavoie P'00

Walter '57 & Suzanne Smith

ONE-STAR GENERAL MEMBERS

(\$50,000–\$99,999)

COL & Mrs. Robert J. Bedell, USA (Ret.) '70

Craig W. Butterfield '55

Kevin Dwan

William M'07 & Susan Gibson

Paula A. Gills

COL & Mrs. William Magdycz, USA, MD '85

Mr. & Mrs. Frederick T. Morsheimer '70

John '70 & Kim Rosado

LIFETIME MEMBERS

(\$20,000–\$49,999)

Heather Bale W'64

John S. Hall, II '69

Paul '75 & Elizabeth '75 Harms

Richard Mitchell P'96

Hubert '66 & Rosemary Spurway

Advertise in the Norwich Record!

For rates or more information,
 visit norwich.edu/record or
 call (802) 485-2403

NEXT



THE ICE QUEEN

Only a pandemic can stop Norwich All-American Sophie Leclerc '10. In her first season as women's head hockey coach, she led the Cadets to the quarterfinal round of the NCAA Division III national tournament before the playoffs were abruptly canceled. In our Fall 2020 issue, go inside the mind and behind the season with one of the coolest coaches in college sports.

Photograph by Matt Furman

In an expression of gratitude for the exceptional leadership of Richard W. Schneider, RADM, USCGR (Ret.), 23rd president of Norwich University, the Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the *Schneider Legacy Project* to celebrate the legacy of Norwich's longest-serving president.

All gifts to the *Schneider Legacy Project* will support the Richard and Jaime Schneider Scholarship and the Norwich Fund, two areas that are important to President Schneider as they will keep the university strong and affordable into its third century of service.

Make your gift today at:
Alumni.Norwich.edu/schneiderlegacyproject

Introducing the



SCHNEIDER LEGACY PROJECT





Cadets women's softball players celebrate senior day during spring training in Myrtle Beach, S.C., on March 13, 2020. Their afternoon game marked the last NU varsity sports event before the spring athletic season was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Photograph by Chandler Mosher '21