UPDATE TO THE BOARD

in advance of the September 24, 2021
Board of Trustees Meeting

Key Updates

Northwestern Plans Multimillion-dollar Technology Accelerator at 1801 Maple
Northwestern will create a multimillion-dollar technology accelerator in downtown
Evanston to support startup companies led by Northwestern faculty in health, life
sciences and related fields. The accelerator will generate scientific discovery and
innovation by supplying laboratory space, networking opportunities, and management
training. The Illinois General Assembly appropriated $50 million for this project as part
of the state’s 2022 capital budget. Trustee Kimberly Querrey, chair of the Innovation
and Entrepreneurship Committee, made a special $25 million gift to Northwestern to
support the project. The accelerator, at 1801 Maple Avenue in downtown Evanston, will
be named in her honor.

Research Funding Hits Record $893 Million
Even during a protracted and disruptive global pandemic, Northwestern’s research
enterprise once again demonstrated strong performance, with annual sponsored funds
reaching a new record high of $893.4 million for the fiscal year that closed August 31,
2021. This represents an increase of 1 percent from last year’s total and continues a
decade-long trend that has positioned Northwestern among the nation’s most
prestigious research institutions. Since 2011, the University’s research funding has
increased more than 74 percent as Northwestern approaches $1 billion in sponsored
support.

Sir András Schiff Awarded 2021 Jean Gimbel Lane Prize by Bienen School
The Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music has awarded Sir András Schiff the
$50,000 Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance. Established in 2005, the
biennial Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance honors pianists who have
achieved the highest levels of national and international recognition. Sir András Schiff is
world-renowned as a pianist, conductor, pedagogue, and lecturer. Schiff’s many honors
include the international Mozarteum Foundation’s Gold Medal (2012), Germany’s Great
Cross of Merit with Star (2012), the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Gold Medal (2013), a
Knighthood for Services to Music (2014) and a Doctorate from the Royal College of
Music (2018). In addition to the cash award, the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize includes a
public recital and two nonconsecutive residencies at the Bienen School of Music.

William Bolcom Named Winner of 2021 Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Music
Composition
American composer William Bolcom, National Medal of Arts recipient, Pulitzer Prize
and Grammy Award-winner, has been awarded the $100,000 Michael Ludwig Nemmers
Prize in Music Composition from the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music.
Established in 2003, this Nemmers Prize recognizes classical composers of outstanding
achievement who have significantly influenced the field of composition. Bolcom’s
composition work includes sonatas, symphonies, operas, and music for the stage, film scores, fanfares as well as an extensive catalogue of chamber, choral, and vocal works. His “Twelve New Etudes” for piano won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1988, and his setting of William Blake’s “Songs of Innocence and of Experience” won four Grammy Awards in 2005. Over 2022-23, Bolcom will participate in two on-campus residencies at Northwestern. These will include performances of his works by Bienen School ensembles as well as other activities, such as coaching student ensembles, meeting with student composers and participating in moderated discussions.

Top Faculty Recruits
Hasan Alam, MD, Professor of Surgery, joins Northwestern from the University of Michigan, where he was Professor of Surgery and served as Section Head for General Surgery. Alam is widely recognized for his contributions to traumatic injury and resuscitation research. He was recruited to Northwestern to provide leadership as Chair of the Department of Surgery.

Shana Kelley joins Northwestern from the University of Toronto. She received her Ph.D. in Chemistry from the California Institute of Technology. Professor Kelley is recognized in the broader chemical sciences community for the development of innovative and translational bioanalytical approaches. Her most well-known method is nucleic acid detection using high-surface area nanoscale gold-based sensors. Kelley’s work is routinely published in the world’s top journals including Nature Chemistry, Nature Nanotechnology, and Nature Biomedical Engineering. She has been elected as a Fellow of the American Institute for Biological and Medical Engineers and most recently, a Fellow the Royal Society of Canada, the equivalent of the National Academy of Sciences.

Ted Sargent will join Northwestern in 2022. He received his Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Toronto. Professor Sargent is a University Professor at the University of Toronto, where he also serves as the Vice President of Research and Innovation, and previously served as the Vice President of International, and the Vice Dean of Research in the School of Applied Science and Engineering. Ted’s research is multidisciplinary and relies heavily on state-of-the-art inorganic and physical chemistry that has resulted in fundamental advances in nanotechnology and materials chemistry as well as novel engineering devices for energy harvesting, light sensing and emission, and medical diagnosis. He has pioneered solution-processed solar cells that absorb the sun’s full spectrum, including both visible and infrared components. He is also an Elected Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society of Canada, the equivalent of the National Academy of Sciences.

VS Subramanian, Professor of Computer Science, joins Northwestern from Dartmouth. He earned his Ph.D. from Syracuse. VS is a pioneering leader with hugely significant technical accomplishments in several areas – logic, probabilistic databases, artificial intelligence, data mining, and now with recent work on anti-terrorism and cybersecurity. He is an established scientist with a very strong publication record that includes published papers in all of the top conferences in his field. His software systems have made a serious mark in the field as well with wide media coverage of his work. His ideas and contributions are sought after by industry leaders, policy makers and governments.
Vikrant Vig, Professor of Finance, joins Northwestern from the London Business School where he was Professor of Finance. Professor Vig’s research interests lie in the area of financial contracting and include: financial intermediation, firm choice of optimal debt structure, corporate governance, and law and finance. His papers have been published in leading journals, including the American Economic Review, the Quarterly Journal of Economics, the Journal of Political Economy, the Journal of Finance, the Journal of Financial Economics and the Review of Financial Studies. He was previously Editor of the Review of Finance and currently serves on the advisory board of that journal. He is also currently an Associate Editor of the Journal of Financial Intermediation. Professor Vig has won several awards for his research and his work has been featured in leading media outlets, including the Economist, the Financial Times, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal.

Leadership Updates
Bruce Layton Retiring After Two Decades Leading Government Relations
Bruce Layton, special assistant to the president, will retire on December 31 after nearly two decades leading Northwestern’s government relations programs, President Morton Schapiro announced on September 2, 2021. Layton’s time at Northwestern has been marked by dramatic growth in the level of support from government agencies for the University’s mission. Jennifer Kunde will serve in the role as interim special assistant to the president.

Craig Johnson Elevated to Executive Vice President
Craig Johnson was elevated to the title of Executive Vice President in July 2021. This change in title reflects the vast scope of responsibilities Craig assumed during nearly three years as Senior Vice President. A double alumnus of Northwestern, Craig previously held budgetary and administrative roles of ever-greater responsibility at Northwestern, including several years as the Vice Dean for Finance and Administration at the Feinberg School of Medicine. Craig has distinguished himself as an impactful, strategic, and collaborative leader and has been essential in stabilizing the University before and during the global coronavirus pandemic. His leadership has and will continue to accelerate Northwestern’s trajectory as a top institution for teaching, research, and public service.

Derrick Gragg Named Combe Family Vice President for Athletics and Recreation
Long-time athletic director and diversity and inclusion leader Derrick Gragg was named Northwestern’s new Combe Family Vice President for Athletics & Recreation in early June 2021. Previously the NCAA’s senior vice president for inclusion, education, and community engagement, Gragg served as AD at Tulsa and Eastern Michigan, and was a football student-athlete at Vanderbilt.

Undergraduate Admissions
As the 2021-2022 academic year begins, admissions numbers continue pointing to a stellar incoming class. As of August 25, 2021, the first-year class enrolling for fall 2021 totals 2,094. Northwestern has received deposits from 121 Chicago Public Schools students (down from 135 last year) and 16 Evanston Township High School students (down from 23 last year). Preliminary numbers also indicate African American students make up 12 percent of incoming students (up from 10 percent from last year), while
Hispanic/Latinx students account for 16.8 percent of known domestic students (up from 15.6 percent last year). In total, Northwestern received 47,636 first-year undergraduate applications for fall 2021 admission, a 21.3 percent increase from last year’s applicant pool and a 35.7 percent increase from five years ago. Due to the testing challenges created by COVID, Northwestern is test-optional for the Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 application cycles.

COVID Updates
The COVID-19 landscape continues to evolve, and the following summarizes the current planning assumptions for the fall as of August. The University is actively tracking developments related to the delta variant but still plans for a full in-person campus experience. Courses are being delivered primarily in person and schools and units will return faculty and staff to campus in hybrid work arrangements starting after Labor Day. The current planning parameters are discussed below.

Vaccination Requirement
The University is requiring vaccination for all students, faculty, and staff, subject to limited exceptions for personal health reasons or sincerely held religious beliefs. Ramifications for non-compliance are significant. Students will not be able to register for classes or have access to campus facilities. Staff will be escalated to unpaid leave of absence and termination. Faculty will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the faculty handbook, which may include suspension and termination.

Testing
The University testing centers at Jacobs and 345 Superior will remain open with free, rapid testing available to all Northwestern community members. Any students, faculty, or staff with an approved vaccination exception are required to test twice per week, and otherwise will be escalated for discipline following similar protocols as vaccination non-compliance.

Contact Tracing
The CDC revised its contact-tracing guidance, and the University updated its processes to reflect these changes. Vaccinated individuals who are deemed close contacts do not need to quarantine but do need to be tested following that exposure. Unvaccinated individuals are still required to complete a full quarantine process if identified through contact tracing.

Quarantine and Isolation Housing
The University will enter the fall with a reduced capacity of 136 quarantine and isolation beds. Because of the high level of vaccination amongst residential students, the expectation is that most beds will be needed for isolation and not quarantine.

Masking
Masking indoors is still required following guidance from the CDC and IDPH, regardless of vaccination status. Masking guidelines will continue to be revisited as public health guidance changes.
Financial Update

The finance team continues to track projections for FY 2021 financial performance in a fiscal year with many one-time impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, both positive and negative. As discussed at the July 2021 Executive Committee, the updated FY 2021 Q3 forecast, with inputs from schools and units across the University, anticipated positive operating performance of over $91 million. This represents an improvement of almost $77 million from the Q2 forecast, due to continued slowed hiring following the hiring freeze, the slow ramp-up of travel and on-campus activities and events, and improved revenue in categories such as tuition and fees in Kellogg executive programs and grants and contracts across several schools. There is additional potential upside in the forecast in compensation expense and private gifts revenue.

Based on the positive financial forecast, and to address employee morale, a one-time University-wide bonus program was implemented for faculty and staff at 3 percent of base salary for those with salaries up to $100,000 and 2 percent for those over $100,000. The total cost was estimated at approximately $23 million.

Liquidity and Debt Management

Treasury, Investments, and Budget and Planning continue to collaborate closely with respect to liquidity monitoring, planning, and debt management in support of the University’s operating and capital needs.

Investment Management

The preliminary market value of the Long-Term Balanced Pool on June 30, 2021 was $14.8 billion. For the quarter ended June 30, 2021, the Pool returned 7.5 percent. This preliminary return includes over 80 percent of the second quarter valuations for the illiquid portfolios. For the twelve months ended June 30, 2021, the Pool returned an estimated 40.9 percent. For the fiscal year period from September 1, 2020, through July 31, 2021, the Pool returned 34.7 percent versus the policy benchmark return of 28.8 percent. For the fiscal year period through June 30, distributions from illiquid investments have been robust and have outpaced calls by $389.5 million.

Alumni Relations and Development Update

We are still obtaining donor approvals for announcements and booking final Campaign gifts. As such, July 31, 2021 the following amounts are preliminary. Northwestern raised $692.3 million in new gifts and commitments towards the $520 million fiscal year goal, compared with $375.2 million last year at the same time. The net amount raised without giving to Northwestern Medicine’s related entities is $391.4 million, compared to $258.9 million for the same period last year. The preliminary “We Will” Campaign total is $5.69 billion, or 113.8 percent of the $5 billion goal.
Research Update

Research Award Funding
Northwestern’s research award funding through the third quarter of FY 2021 reached $467 million, a 3.2 percent decrease from the previous year’s third quarter year-to-date amount. The number of awards totaled 2,084, a 4 percent decrease from last year’s total through the third quarter. The dollar volume of proposals submitted through the third quarter of FY 2021 was $2.9 billion, a 14 percent increase over the prior year. The number of proposals submitted (2,761) decreased 2 percent from FY 2020. Typically, 30 percent of annual awards arrive in the first half of the fiscal year, followed by 25 percent in the third quarter and the remaining 45 percent arriving in the final quarter of the fiscal year. The timing of large awards can significantly skew year-over-year comparisons. Proposals tend to be distributed evenly across all four quarters of the fiscal year.

At the end of the third quarter of FY 2021, the dollar volume of awards from the National Institutes of Health reflected a 7 percent increase (to $250.2 million) while that from industry sponsors was down 18 percent (to $90 million). The dollar volume of proposals submitted to the National Institutes of Health was up about 11 percent (to $1.9 billion), while that to industry sponsors was up 10 percent (to $101.9 million).

Implantable ‘living pharmacy’ could control body’s sleep/wake cycles
A Northwestern-led research team has signed a 4.5-year, $33 million cooperative agreement with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop a wireless, fully implantable device that will control the body’s circadian clock, halving the time it takes to recover from disrupted sleep/wake cycles. Combining synthetic biology with bioelectronics, the team will engineer cells to produce the same peptides the body makes to regulate sleep cycles, precisely adjusting timing and dose with bioelectronic controls. Jonathan Rivnay, principal investigator of the project, is an assistant professor of biomedical engineering in the McCormick School of Engineering. Other Northwestern members of the interdisciplinary team are: professors Fred W. Turek, Martha Hotz Vitaterna, Josiah Hester, Guillermo Ameer, Peng Jiang and Phyllis C. Zee — representing the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, McCormick, and the Feinberg School of Medicine. Beyond controlling circadian rhythms, the researchers believe this technology could be modified to release other types of therapies with precise timing and dosing for potentially treating pain and disease.

Research News and Faculty Updates
Northwestern plans major facilities projects to bolster academic and research efforts
Northwestern will embark on two major capital projects on the Evanston campus designed to advance the University’s strategic vision and mission by providing new and renovated spaces for cutting-edge research laboratories and interdisciplinary social sciences. The projects include completing the 77,000-square-foot interior build-out of Mudd Hall to include new research space by Fall 2023 and transforming the Donald P. Jacobs Center into a dynamic academic platform for Northwestern’s social sciences, initiatives in data science, and rapidly expanding global engagement — anchored by the Roberta Buffett Institute for Global Affairs.
Two more prestigious prizes for chemist Chad Mirkin
Chad Mirkin has been named the winner of the Royal Society of Chemistry’s de Gennes Prize, which celebrates the most exciting chemical science taking place today. Mirkin won the prize for contributions to supramolecular chemistry and nanoscience, in particular the invention and development of methods for nanolithography, high-area rapid printing, and photocontrol in nanoparticle synthesis. He will also receive the 2022 Acta Biomaterialia Gold Medal Award, recognizing outstanding contributions to the science and engineering of biomaterials, for his work on spherical nucleic acids (SNAs), which are three-dimensional nanostructures that can cross biological barriers and actively enter human cells for the detection and treatment of disease. The award, which includes a $10,000 prize, will be presented at the Society for Biomaterials annual meeting in April 2022. Mirkin is the George B. Rathmann Professor of Chemistry in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern and director of the International Institute for Nanotechnology, one of 40 interdisciplinary University Research Institutes and Centers (URICs).

Two Northwestern faculty receive inaugural Stoddart Award
Northwestern’s Omar Farha and Mark C. Hersam have received the inaugural AAAFM-Stoddart Award from the American Association for Advances in Functional Materials (AAAFM). Named for Northwestern chemistry professor and Nobel Laureate Sir Fraser Stoddart, the award recognizes two dynamic young researchers for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the field of functional materials. Farha received the award for his “seminal contributions to the field of metal-organic frameworks (MOFs),” accelerating their potential for applications that could help reduce energy consumption, protect human health, and counter climate change. Hersam received the award for his “pioneering contributions to the synthesis, surface science, chemical functionalization, and application of low-dimensional nano-electronic materials.” Farha is the Dow Chemical Company Professor of Chemistry in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, a member of the International Institute of Nanotechnology (IIN), and an associate editor of ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces. Hersam is the Walter P. Murphy Professor of Materials Science and Engineering in the McCormick School of Engineering, director of the Materials Research Center and member of IIN. He also holds faculty appointments in chemistry, applied physics, medicine and electrical engineering. His research interests include nanomaterials, nanomanufacturing, scanning probe microscopy, nano-electronic devices, biosensors, and renewable energy.

Julia Kalow named Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar
Julia Kalow, an assistant professor of chemistry in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, is one of 16 honorees across the nation selected for the 2021 Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award. The Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation, a leading nonprofit devoted to the advancement of the chemical sciences, awards the unrestricted $100,000 grant to young faculty with a demonstrated commitment to continuing outstanding contributions to both research and teaching. Kalow’s lab focuses on the interface of organic synthesis, polymer chemistry, and materials science, with practical applications including sustainable polymers and responsive hydrogels for biomedicine.
Megan Roberts receives University’s annual Walder Award
Megan Roberts, associate professor in the School of Communication (SoC), has been named the 20th recipient of the Martin E. and Gertrude G. Walder Award for Research Excellence. Roberts is a pioneer within her field, helping to make critical interventions available sooner to the families of children with developmental delays. Roberts leads the Early Intervention Research Group in SoC. Her practice and research — both of which focus on parent-mediated interventions for children with hearing loss, children with autism, and children with language delays — centers around families who are the experts on their child’s development, according to Roberts.

Sossina Haile and Dimitri Krainc awarded Ver Steeg Fellowship
Northwestern professors Sossina Haile and Dr. Dimitri Krainc have received the 16th annual Dorothy Ann and Clarence L. Ver Steeg Distinguished Research Fellowship Award. Bestowed by the Office of the Provost, the $40,000 award for each recipient supports scholarship and research by tenured Northwestern faculty whose work enhances the University’s national and international reputation. Haile is the Walter P. Murphy Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at the McCormick School of Engineering and co-director of the Institute for Sustainability and Energy at Northwestern (ISEN), one of 40 Northwestern interdisciplinary University Research Institutes and Centers (URICs) that attract talent from across all schools. She is a fuel cell pioneer whose work focuses on energy sustainability and has established a new class of fuel cells based on solid acid electrolytes and demonstrated record power densities for solid oxide fuel cells. Krainc is chair of the Davee Department of Neurology at the Feinberg School of Medicine, director of the Simpson Querrey Center for Neurogenetics, and is the Aaron Montgomery Ward Professor of Neurology. He is an investigator in the field of neurodegenerative research whose groundbreaking work — including discovery of transcriptional dysregulation in Huntington’s disease — has paved the way for investigations into novel therapeutics.

Corey Byrnes named Radcliffe Institute Fellow
Corey Byrnes, associate professor of modern and contemporary Chinese culture, comparative literary studies, and environmental humanities in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, was selected as a 2021-2022 Radcliffe Institute Fellow. Based at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, the Radcliffe Institute Fellowship Program annually supports the work of 50 leading artists and scholars and has rapidly become one of the most competitive programs of its kind in the world. Byrnes’ project, “China as Threat,” examines the relationship between China and a global environmental imaginary in which it is increasingly treated as an existential threat. Byrnes is also the co-founder and co-director of Northwestern’s Kaplan Institute for the Humanities’ Environmental Humanities Workshop, where faculty and graduate students take on pressing environmental issues.

Northwestern researcher Austin Evans named a 2021 Schmidt Science Fellow
Northwestern graduate student Austin Evans has been named a 2021 Schmidt Science Fellow. The Schmidt Fellowship supports early career scientists and engineers in interdisciplinary collaboration to advance solutions to long-term societal challenges, such as climate change, infectious disease, and biodiversity loss. Evans is the fourth fellow to be selected from Northwestern. Evans has earned his Ph.D. in the
Northwestern Department of Chemistry before transitioning to be a postdoctoral research scientist at Columbia University. His work in the William Dichtel Research Group at Northwestern focused on covalent organic framework materials within the field of supramolecular chemistry, which have potential application in gas storage, gas separation, and organic electronics.

Doctoral candidate Marzouq Alnusf awarded Newcombe Fellowship
Marzouq Alnusf, a doctoral candidate in philosophy in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, has been named a Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellow. The fellowship is the nation’s largest and most prestigious award for Ph.D. candidates in the humanities and social sciences addressing questions of ethical and religious values. Alnusf’s research interests include social and political philosophy, philosophy of race, and modern Arabic philosophy. His dissertation explores the relation between capitalism, race, and justice.

Medill inducts seven into its Centennial Hall of Achievement class
Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications will welcome seven inductees into its Hall of Achievement for 2021 during a fall celebration in Evanston. As the school marks its Centennial, the honorees represent the highest levels of achievement among the school’s alumni. The honorees are: Peter Alexander (BSJ98), Emmy Award-winning journalist; Melissa Brotz (BSJ90), Abbott’s vice president of global marketing and external affairs; Duchesne Drew (MSJ94), strategy, programming and operations lead for Minnesota Public Radio; Ed Filipowski (BSJ83), former co-chairman of public relations firm KCD; Sheinelle Jones (BSJ00), the co-host of the 3rd Hour of TODAY; Julie Pace (BSJ04), Washington Bureau Chief and assistant managing editor for The Associated Press, directing AP’s coverage of the presidency, politics and the U.S. government; Charlotte Tsou (IMC02), a multinational leader with more than 20 years of communications experience in the U.S., Asia, and Latin America.

Research Highlights
Implanted wireless device triggers mice to form instant bond
In a pioneering effort, Northwestern engineers and neurobiologists have wirelessly programmed and then deprogrammed mice to socially interact with one another in real time. The breakthrough is thanks to a first-of-its-kind ultraminiature, wireless, battery-free and fully implantable device that uses light to activate neurons. This study is the first optogenetics (a method for controlling neurons with light) paper exploring social interactions within groups of animals, which was previously impossible with current technologies. The thin, flexible, wireless implant allows the mice to look normal and behave normally in realistic environments, enabling researchers to observe them under natural conditions. With previous technologies, researchers were unable to observe multiple animals interacting in complex environments because they were tethered. Because the human brain is a system of nearly 100 billion intertwined neurons, it’s extremely difficult to probe single — or even groups of — neurons. Introduced in animal models around 2005, optogenetics offers control of specific, genetically targeted neurons in order to probe them in unprecedented detail to study their connectivity or neurotransmitter release. The research was published May 10, 2021 in the journal Nature Neuroscience. Yevgenia Kozorovitskiy, who designed the experiment, is the Soretta and Henry Shapiro Research Professor of Molecular Biology and associate
professor of neurobiology in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. John Rogers, who led the technology development, is the Louis Simpson and Kimberly Querrey Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, Biomedical Engineering and Neurological Surgery in the McCormick School of Engineering and Feinberg School of Medicine and the director of the interdisciplinary Querrey Simpson Institute for Bioelectronics.

COVID-19 vaccine does not damage the placenta in pregnancy

A new Northwestern Medicine study of placentas from patients who received the COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy found no evidence of injury, adding to the growing literature that COVID-19 vaccines are safe in pregnancy. The study authors collected placentas from 84 vaccinated patients and 116 unvaccinated patients who delivered at Prentice Women’s Hospital in Chicago and pathologically examined the placentas whole and microscopically following birth. Most patients received vaccines – either Moderna or Pfizer – during their third trimester.

Good bacteria can temper chemotherapy side effects

A new Northwestern study found that specific types of gut bacteria can protect other good bacteria from cancer treatments — mitigating harmful, drug-induced changes to the gut microbiome. By metabolizing chemotherapy drugs, the protective bacteria could temper short- and long-term side effects of treatment. Eventually, the research could potentially lead to new dietary supplements, probiotics, or engineered therapeutics to help boost cancer patients’ gut health. Erica Hartmann, the study’s senior author, is an assistant professor of environmental biology at McCormick School of Engineering.

Rare mineral from rocks found in mollusk teeth

For the first time, Northwestern researchers have discovered a rare mineral hidden inside the teeth of a chiton, a large mollusk found along rocky coastlines. Before this strange surprise, the iron mineral, called santabarbaraite, only had been documented in rocks. The new finding helps understand how the whole chiton tooth — not just the ultrahard, durable cusp — is designed to endure chewing on rocks to feed. Based on minerals found in chiton teeth, the researchers developed a bio-inspired ink for 3D printing ultrahard, stiff and durable materials. The study was published in June in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. Derk Joester, the study’s senior author, is associate professor of materials science and engineering in McCormick School of Engineering and a member of the Chemistry of Life Processes Institute, one of 40 interdisciplinary University Research Institutes and Centers that attracts talent from across Northwestern.

New ‘Swiss Army knife’ cleans up water pollution

Inspired by Chicago’s many nearby bodies of water, a Northwestern-led team has developed a simple one-step way to repeatedly remove and reuse phosphate from polluted waters, where phosphate can cause algae blooms that starve fish and aquatic plants of oxygen. The researchers liken the development to a “Swiss Army knife” for pollution remediation as they tailor their membrane to absorb and later release other pollutants. The team’s Phosphate Elimination and Recovery Lightweight (PEARL) membrane is a porous, flexible substrate (such as a coated sponge, cloth, or fibers) that selectively sequesters up to 99 percent of phosphate ions from polluted water. The
research was published in June 2021 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*. Vinayak Dravid, the study’s corresponding author, is the Abraham Harris Professor of Materials Science and Engineering at McCormick School of Engineering, the founding director of the Northwestern Atomic and Nanoscale Characterization Experimental Center (NUANCE), and director of the Soft and Hybrid Nanotechnology Experimental Resource (SHyNE). Dravid also serves as the director of global initiatives for Northwestern’s International Institute of Nanotechnology.

**Study identifies genetic variants associated with COVID-19 severity**

In collaboration with Northwestern Medicine investigators, an international multi-center study has identified genetic factors associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection and COVID-19 severity, according to findings published July 8, 2021 in *Nature*. Genetics are instrumental in determining susceptibility and responsiveness to viral infections, in conjunction with other environmental, clinical and social factors. In the case of SARS-CoV-2, identifying the precise role of human genetics could reveal critical insights into the development of the disease and the effectiveness of treatments, according to the authors.

**Human microbiome could shed light on higher morbidity rate in minoritized populations**

A new Northwestern study is the first to explicitly address the gut microbiome as a pathway to understanding how environmental inequities could lead to health disparities. Despite a rich body of literature documenting environmental impacts on the microbiome, and the microbiome’s impact on human health, the links among structural discrimination, altered environments, microbiome structure and health disparities have not been comprehensively outlined. The new study calls for a better understanding of how structural discrimination that exposes minoritized populations to “unhealthy” environments — from altered diets, pollution, sanitation, and lack of access to green space — impacts the human gut microbiome, which in turn affects almost every aspect of human biology and health.

**Novel smart cement can be used to build more durable roads and cities**

Northwestern researchers have formed a smarter, more durable, and highly functional cement by introducing nanoparticles into ordinary cement. Researchers used an innovative method called scratch testing to predict how materials fracture. The novel method, which takes less time than traditional fracture testing, allowed researchers to test several different materials at the same time, leading to the discovery of adding graphene nanoplatelets to cement. By adding the nanomaterial, researchers improved the fracture resistance of ordinary cement.

**New material removes air-borne droplets**

Northwestern researchers have developed a new transparent material that can capture virus-laden respiratory droplets and aerosols, effectively removing them from air. The clear, viscous liquid can be painted onto any surface, including plastic, glass, wood, metal, stainless steel, concrete and textiles. When droplets collide with the coated surface, they stick to it, get absorbed and dry up. Plexiglass, by comparison, merely deflects droplets, causing them to bounce away but remain in the air.
First-ever transient pacemaker harmlessly dissolves in body
Researchers at Northwestern and George Washington universities have developed the first-ever transient pacemaker — a wireless, battery-free, fully implantable pacing device that disappears after it is no longer needed. The thin, flexible, lightweight device could be used in patients who need temporary pacing after cardiac surgery or while waiting for a permanent pacemaker. All components of the pacemaker are biocompatible and naturally absorb into the body’s biofluids over the course of five to seven weeks, without needing surgical extraction. The device wirelessly harvests energy from an external, remote antenna using near-field communication protocols — the same technology used in smartphones for electronic payments and in RFID tags, eliminating the need for bulky batteries and rigid hardware, including wires (or leads). Northwestern’s John A. Rogers led the device’s development. Dr. Rishi Arora, a cardiologist at Northwestern Medicine, co-led the study with Dr. Igor Efimov, the Alisann and Terry Collins Professor of Biomedical Engineering at George Washington.

Buffett global group tackles environmental challenges in marginalized communities
A Global Working Group including researchers from 10 disciplines across eight Northwestern schools along with experts from the World Wildlife Fund, Nature Conservancy and Argonne National Lab are working to identify creative approaches to addressing some of the world’s most pressing environmental challenges. The group, born out of the Northwestern Roberta Buffett Institute for Global Affairs’ Idea Incubation Process and co-led by Northwestern faculty members Jennifer Dunn (chemical engineering) and Kimberly R. Marion Suiseeya (political science), is exploring how historically marginalized communities can mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Astrophysicists detect first black hole-neutron star mergers
A long time ago, in two galaxies about 900 million light-years away, two black holes each gobbled up their neutron star companions, triggering gravitational waves that finally hit Earth in January 2020. Discovered by an international team of astrophysicists including Northwestern researchers, two events — detected just 10 days apart — mark the first-ever detection of a black hole merging with a neutron star. The findings will enable researchers to draw the first conclusions about the origins of these rare binary systems and how often they merge.

First 3D simulation of rat’s complete whisker system acts as a tactile ‘camera’
Northwestern engineers have developed the first full, three-dimensional, dynamic simulation of a rat’s complete whisker system, offering rare, realistic insight into how rats obtain tactile information. Called WHISKiT, the new model incorporates 60 individual whiskers, which are each anatomically, spatially, and geometrically correct. The technology could help researchers predict how whiskers activate different sensory cells to influence which signals are sent to the brain as well as provide new insights into the mysterious nature of human touch.

Vaccine ‘2.0’ quickly kicks immune system into high gear against COVID-19
In a new Northwestern Medicine study in mice, researchers took one of the current COVID-19 vaccines, which is based on the novel coronavirus’ spike protein, and added a different antigen, the nucleocapsid protein, to form a new, potentially improved version of the vaccine. The nucleocapsid protein, which is an internal RNA-binding protein, may
help kick the immune system into high gear much more quickly than the spike protein is capable of since it is among the most rapidly and highly expressed proteins in coronaviruses. The combination vaccine improved protection against breakthrough infections in mice. It is the first study to compare side by side the efficacy against breakthrough infection of a current, spike-based vaccine with a vaccine that includes an additional antigen, in this case the nucleocapsid protein. Researchers also are interested in determining whether vaccinated individuals who have a breakthrough COVID infection develop long-term neurological symptoms. In this study, the scientists found evidence of viral infection in the brains of mice that were immunized with a current spike-based vaccine.

Coffee and vegetables may protect against COVID-19
A new Northwestern Medicine study shows coffee consumption, being breastfed as a baby, and eating lots of vegetables may offer some modest protection against COVID-19. The authors believe this is the first study using population data to examine the role of specific dietary intake in prevention of COVID-19.

New material offers ecofriendly solution to converting waste heat into energy
A team of scientists from Northwestern and Seoul National University in Korea now has demonstrated a high-performing thermoelectric material in a practical form that can be used in device development. The material — purified tin selenide in polycrystalline form — outperforms the single-crystal form in converting heat to electricity, making it the most efficient thermoelectric system on record. Similar technology is used to power Perseverance, NASA’s 2020 Mars rover, by converting heat from the radioactive decay of plutonium into electricity, but the device’s conversion efficiency is only 4-5 percent. The polycrystalline tin selenide could be developed for use in solid-state thermoelectric devices in a variety of industries, with potentially enormous energy savings, particularly for power plants and the automotive industry. More than 65 percent of the energy produced globally from fossil fuels is lost as waste heat.

New technique identifies proteins in the living brain
For the first time, researchers have developed a successful approach for identifying proteins inside different types of neurons in the brain of a living animal. Researchers designed a virus to send a soybean-based enzyme to a precise location in the brain of a living mouse. The enzyme genetically tags its neighboring proteins in a predetermined location. After validating the technique by imaging the brain with fluorescence and electron microscopy, the researchers found their technique took a snapshot of the entire set of proteins (or proteome) inside living neurons, which can then be analyzed postmortem with mass spectroscopy. Now that this new system has been validated, researchers can apply it to mouse models for disease to better understand neurological illnesses and potential treatments.

Research argues older workers in U.S. should pay higher taxes than younger workers
A new research paper from Northwestern and the University of Kent claims that, on average, workers become more productive over their working life, as they are able to learn by doing and accordingly should pay a higher rate of tax as they become older. Using a model capturing the key features of the U.S. economy, researchers determined that the average tax rate paid by earners in the age bracket 45-65 should be 5 percent
higher than the average tax rate paid by workers in the age bracket 20-44 in the United States. The research advises that reforming the current U.S. tax code by adopting such tax differences across age brackets could bring welfare gains to each taxpayer equivalent to those brought in by a 4 percent increase in annual consumption throughout their entire work life. The paper’s co-author, Alessandro Pavan, is a professor of economics at the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences. Miltos Makris, professor of economics at Kent, co-authored the paper.

Largest survey on trans people to launch in Chicago
South Side LGBTQ center Brave Space Alliance (BSA) has launched a first-of-its-kind community-centered research project in collaboration with Northwestern. Called the Chicago Area Trans Survey (CATS), the project aims to be the largest single-population data set collected to date on trans people as a group and will produce research useful to community members and community-based organizations. The project will collect information from 30,000 trans individuals in Cook County on their experiences, needs and lives, which will provide trans people with data to back up requests for services and aid. CATS extends a collaborative relationship between BSA and Northwestern’s Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing, a national leader in LGBTQ research and one of Northwestern’s 40 cross-disciplinary University Research Institutes and Centers. The Institute’s Evaluation, Data Integration and Technical Assistance (EDIT) program has extensive experience in local community-centered research and evaluation, as well as the study of population-level health disparities among LGBTQ groups.

Addressing Chicago’s ‘unfathomable’ gun violence
During the August 6-10, 2021 American Sociological Association’s (ASA) virtual annual conference, Northwestern sociologist Andrew Papachristos was part of a distinguished panel of academics, violence interrupters, and public officials examining the entrenched roots of violence in Chicago communities, as well as efforts to prevent gun violence. ASA’s current president, Northwestern sociologist Aldon Morris, the Leon Forrest Professor of Sociology and African American Studies in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, organized and presided over the meeting. “Chicago is a city where gun violence is concentrated in a small number of neighborhoods that have been surveilled, locked up, and otherwise left out of economic, political, and social and education investments,” said Papachristos, who co-directs Northwestern’s Neighborhood and Network Initiative or Northwestern’s Neighborhood and Network Initiative (N3), which is affiliated with the University’s Institute for Policy Research, takes a network science approach to exploring how to improve Chicago neighborhoods, the city, and the region. Approaching gun violence from an epidemiological perspective allows researchers and organizations to make data-informed decisions about how to bolster and refine the services that offer the best chance of stemming the tide of gun violence.

U.S. freight railroads bolstered supply chain resilience during pandemic
Even as other parts of the U.S. supply chain faced disruptions and setbacks, the freight rail industry demonstrated resilience and reliability during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new report by the Northwestern University Transportation Center (NUTC). Despite the particularly volatile period, railroads met consumers’ and businesses’ unexpected surge of demands, reliably delivering goods such as agricultural
products, personal protective equipment, and online retail merchandise, and ultimately highlighted the rail industry’s role as an essential component of the U.S. economy. Among their findings, the researchers noted that freight rail kept goods moving while facing supply chain disruptions — such as port congestion, chassis shortages and truck freight load rejections — whereas other methods of transport were constrained or delayed.

**Social isolation declining since the introduction of vaccines**
An ongoing inter-institutional research study involving Northwestern faculty has surveyed the disparate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across the U.S. over the past 14+ months. One of the latest survey insights shows that social isolation — which is strongly associated with moderate to severe depressive symptoms — remains greatest among those with low income and education. Researchers surveyed more than 185,000 individuals from all 50 states during 12 survey intervals. The results show the percentage of socially isolated respondents declined most among those with high income and education. Researchers observed a faster drop in isolation among religious and older Americans. They found that men are substantially more isolated than women with respect to emotional support. Another COVID States report found that Americans are now more inclined toward vaccinating their children than they were in winter and spring. The trend has been uneven across age and gender, though: Resistance remains highest among mothers of young children, which could impede vaccination progress once the vaccine is available to younger children. Support for school vaccine mandates has grown substantially from 54.4 percent in winter to 61.3 percent in summer, among both Republicans and Democrats, although a major partisan gap remains.

**New policy-focused research examines COVID-19 societal impact**
Northwestern announced the recipients of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation Pandemic Response Policy Research Fund, an initiative launched to evaluate policies and actions during the current pandemic and to advance effective recommendations for the future. Eight faculty members from five Northwestern schools have received a total of $1 million in funding, following evaluation by a University review committee. The recipients are: Tabitha Bonilla, Jennifer Chan, Anthony DeFusco, James Druckman, Charles Nathanson, Terri Sabol, Diane Schanzenbach, Nathan Walter, and Dashun Wang. Projects were selected based on their potential to increase knowledge of the societal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and develop action-oriented solutions to prepare for future pandemics and crises.

**Americans with higher net worth at midlife tend to live longer**
In the first wealth and longevity study to incorporate siblings and twin pair data, researchers from Northwestern analyzed the midlife net worth of adults (mean age 46.7 years) and their mortality rates 24 years later. They discovered those with greater wealth at midlife tended to live longer.
Academic Affairs Updates

2020-2021 Notable Faculty Hires

Feinberg School of Medicine
Amy Heimberger, MD, Professor of Neurological Surgery, joins Northwestern from the University of Texas, where she was Professor of Neurosurgery. Heimberger is widely recognized for her contributions to the understanding and development of immune therapies for tumors, including brain tumors. She was recruited to Northwestern to provide leadership as Scientific Director of the Malnati Brain Tumor Research.

Sunjay Kaushal, MD, PhD, Professor of Surgery, joins Northwestern from the University of Maryland, where he also held that rank. Kaushal is widely recognized for his contributions to the development of therapeutic approaches using cardiac and mesenchymal stem cells. He was recruited to Northwestern to serve as Chief of Cardiovascular-Thoracic Surgery at Lurie Children’s Hospital.

Tara Lagu, MD, MPH, Professor of Medicine, joins Northwestern from the University of Massachusetts, where she was Associate Professor of Medicine and Associate Director of the Institute for Healthcare Delivery and Population Science. Lagu is a health services researcher who works to improve health outcomes for vulnerable patient populations in inpatient and outpatient settings. She was recruited to Northwestern to provide leadership as Director of the Center for Health Services and Outcomes Research in the Institute for Public Health and Medicine.

Booki Min, DVM, Professor of Microbiology-Immunology, joins Northwestern from the Cleveland Clinic, where he was a staff scientist (equivalent to full professor) in the Lerner Research Institute. Min is a leader in the field of immunology whose work will augment and expand upon department strengths.

Rui Yi, PhD, Professor of Pathology, joins Northwestern from the University of Colorado, Boulder, where he was Professor of Molecular, Cellular, and Development Biology. Yi’s research focuses on epithelial biology and is expected to synergize with programs of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences
Vilna Bashi Treitler received her Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is a leading voice in the study of race and immigration and is the author of two path-breaking books, two edited volumes, and a substantial number of articles, book chapters, and other publications. Bashi Treitler’s scholarship is highly theoretical, empirically based, and original. Her work proceeds by revealing the state of knowledge in a given area and then pushing that knowledge in new directions by posing unasked questions and providing answers in a judicious, careful, and systematic manner. She has served as Vice President of the Eastern Sociological Society and Senior Co-Editor of the journal Kalfou: Journal of Comparative and Relational Ethnic Studies.

Rosemary Braun received her Ph.D. in Physics from the UIUC in 2004 and did post-doctoral work at the National Cancer Institute at the NIH. Dr. Braun has established a
highly successful interdisciplinary research program developing and utilizing powerful mathematical and computational approaches to investigate the complex dynamics of living processes. Her interests lie at the interface of computation, statistics, physics, and the life sciences. Her lab is focused on developing novel algorithms to analyze and model complex biological systems, with the ultimate goal of predicting and modulating emergent phenomena at multiple scales, from the molecular level to the population level. She applies computational methods in close collaboration with experimental labs to understand processes ranging from circadian rhythms to carcinogenesis.

Federico Bugni joins Northwestern from Duke University. He received his Ph.D. from Northwestern in 2008. Bugni has worked on a wide variety of topics in econometrics, with an emphasis on statistical inference and identification in micro-econometrics. Professor Bugni’s research interests are in theoretical econometrics, partial identification, inference, moment (in)equalities, missing data, and stochastic processes. He has received grants from the National Science Foundation. His most recent work has been published in journals like Econometrica. He is currently working on projects the explore the determinants of college graduation, missing functional data, robustness in partial identification, and regression with missing covariates. Bugni is best known for his contributions to the literature on inference in partially identified models.

Jeffrey Coleman received his Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Literatures from the University of Chicago in 2014. Coleman’s work focuses on contemporary Spanish theater, with a special interest in issues of race and immigration in Spain. His recent book project, The Necropolitical Theatre: Race and Immigration on the Contemporary Spanish Stage, explores how national anxieties about immigration and race manifest in Spanish theatrical production from 1991-present. Coleman’s current research explores representations of Black people in contemporary Spain. He is working on a book on the appropriations of Blackness in Spanish popular culture (e.g. Blackface, racist logos, political rhetoric). He describes his goal as seeking “to demonstrate that anti-Blackness in Spain is unique from that of other European nations and even the United States, oscillating between consumption and rejection.”

Walker Hanlon earned his PhD in Economics from Columbia University in 2012. Hanlon is first and foremost an economic historian whose work focuses mainly on Britain and on interactions between Britain, the U.S., and Canada. Professor Hanlon has a specific interest in understanding the factors driving technological development and demographic change from the Industrial Revolution until the end of the nineteenth century. He also studies the negative consequences of industrialization and urbanization, including pollution and infectious disease transmission.

Dayne Swearer received his Ph.D. in Chemistry in 2019 from Rice University, where his research focused on the design, characterization, and optimization of plasmonic photocatalysts for applications in renewable energy. He was an Arnold O. Beckman Postdoctoral Fellow in the Chemical Sciences at Stanford University in the Materials Science and Engineering Department at Stanford University. His research aims to contribute to the chemical knowledge and technological foundation that are important to address how the global energy industry must change in light of climate change.
School of Communication

Moya Bailey, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication Studies, joins Northwestern from Northeastern University. She is the digital alchemist for the Octavia E. Butler Legacy Network and the board president of Allied Media Projects, a Detroit-based movement media organization that supports a growing network of activists and organizers. Her work focuses on marginalized groups’ use of digital media to promote social justice. Bailey is interested in how race, gender, and sexuality are represented in media and medicine.

Melissa Blanco Borelli joins Northwestern as Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre and the new director of the Dance program. She was formerly a senior lecturer in dance in the Department of Drama and Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. Her research interests include Blackness in Latin America, critical dance studies, popular dance on screen, feminist ethnography, auto-ethnography and feminist historiography.

Tommy DeFrantz, Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies, comes to Northwestern from Duke University, where he was a professor in the Department of African and African American Studies and the Program in Dance. His research explores emerging technologies in performance, embracing a value system of anti-racist, proto-feminist, queer-affirming method to construct alternative models of history. Some of his publications include Routledge Companion to African American Theater and Performance with Kathy Perkins, SoC emerita professor Sandra Richards, and Renee Alexander Craft; Choreography and Corporeality: Relay in Motion with Philipa Rothfield; and Dancing Revelations: Alvin Ailey’s Embodiment of African American Culture. He also chaired the program in women’s and gender studies at MIT, led the concentration in physical imagination at MIT, chaired the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke, and served as president of the Society of Dance History Scholars.

Nadine George-Graves, the Naomi Willie Pollard Professor at Northwestern, will chair the Department of Performance Studies with a joint appointment in the Department of Theatre. A Northwestern Alum, her work focuses on the intersections of African American studies, critical gender studies, performance studies, theatre history, and dance history. She wrote The Royalty of Negro Vaudeville: The Whitman Sisters and the Negotiation of Race, Gender, and Class in African American Theater, 1900-1940, and Urban Bush Women: Twenty Years of Dance Theater, Community Engagement and Working it Out. She is the editor of The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Theater, a collection of border-crossing scholarship on embodiment and theatricality.

Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

Heidi Kitrosser, Professor of Law, will join Northwestern in September 2022 from the University of Minnesota Law School. Prior to beginning her career in academia, Kitrosser clerked for Judge William Rea on the U.S. District Court of California and for Judge Judith Rogers on the U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit. She also served as an Associate at Jenner and Block in Washington, D.C. She received her J.D. from Yale Law School. As an educator, Professor Kitrosser teaches or has taught courses in
constitutional law, the Fourteenth Amendment, the First Amendment, government secrecy, and information access.

**Academic Initiatives**

**The Graduate School (TGS)**

**Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP)**
The Graduate School celebrated its 35th year of hosting rising undergraduates from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in graduate education during the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) this past June and July. This seven-week competitive research experience took place virtually with a record 40 participants, 15 of whom were nominated for the Early Admission Decision Process (EADP).

**ELP Foundations**
Fifty-three international PhD and MFA students from 19 countries and 22 programs participated in ELP Foundations this past June and July, a program that provides a five-week online orientation and language course, along with in-person events on campus in the fall. These students were supported by faculty from English Language Programs (ELP) and 12 graduate student peer mentors. Topics included presenting and writing in English, cultural and emotional adjustments to studying abroad, working with advisers and mentors, teaching, practical skills for living in the U.S., academic integrity, and TGS testing and proficiency policies.

**Social Justice Mini Grants**
The Graduate School’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion awarded 12 mini grants of $2,500 each in August to individual TGS students or graduate student affinity groups to advance innovative ideas on social justice and belonging and create a more inclusive environment for Northwestern’s graduate community.

**New Student Orientation**
TGS launched a self-paced virtual orientation for new TGS students on August 23, 2021 and will host a series of virtual Q and A sessions on topics such as funding, fellowships, and health insurance. This will be paired with an in-person resource fair on September 13, 2021 to connect incoming TGS students with the broader community of support at Northwestern. TGS’ Office of Diversity and Inclusion also will host a welcome reception for underrepresented and marginalized graduate students and postdoctoral trainees.

**School of Professional Studies (SPS)**
The School of Professional Studies will now offer a fully online bachelor’s degree starting in the Fall of 2022. The online Bachelor of Science degree will launch with three majors: Enterprise Leadership, Strategic Communication and Computer Information Systems. A major in Social Sciences will be available in Fall 2023, followed by a major in Health Sciences in Fall 2024. Each major will also offer stand-alone certificates that students, as they earn the certificates, can “stack” toward their degree. This program will reach a highly motivated, qualified audience of adult learners, who desire the high-quality of a Northwestern degree, but require the flexibility of a part-time online program to achieve their educational and career goals. Northwestern joins the
University of Pennsylvania as one of the only two COHFE schools to offer completely online undergraduate degrees. SPS will bring its expertise in developing and delivering best-in-class online learning experiences that engage adult learners, with its experienced team of online instructional designers who partner with faculty to create exceptional online courses and a full range of student services, from student advising to 24/7 tech support, specifically designed to create engagement and provide seamless support for online students. SPS worked closely with the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, School of Communications and McCormick School of Engineering in developing an online curriculum and designing a governance structure that will involve leadership from all three schools. Northwestern faculty and instructors will be invited and encouraged to teach and contribute to this online initiative, which will complement the on-ground undergraduate degree completion program offered by SPS since 1933.

Northwestern University – Qatar (NU-Q)
NU-Q announces new student leadership and strategic communications program expansion
Alex Schultes, formerly admissions director at NU-Q, was appointed assistant dean for the student experience and Amira Hariri was named as his successor as the director of admissions. In this new position, Schultes will have overall responsibility for admissions, student affairs—including student life, health and wellness, internships and career services, and alumni affairs— student conduct and equity, and academic advising. Hariri will be responsible for all recruitment and admission functions. Also, a new minor in strategic communication will begin this academic year. Students that enroll in the program will take courses that focus on the fundamentals of strategic communication, including corporate storytelling, media and audience insights, media planning, and social media marketing.

Trustee News and Honors
Christine Brennan Receives Prestigious APSE Red Smith Award
Trustee Christine Brennan, USA TODAY Columnist, received the top award presented by the Associated Press Sports Editors on August 17, 2021 in Las Vegas. She is the 2020 Red Smith Award winner, but her acceptance of the APSE honor was delayed a year due to the pandemic. In introducing Brennan, former Washington Post sports editor George Solomon noted Brennan’s stature as a trailblazer for women in the business and her influence as one of the leading sports columnists in the nation. Brennan is among a group of five women to receive the prestigious Red Smith Award since it began in 1981.

Administrative Update
Government Relations Update
The 102nd Illinois General Assembly completed its spring legislative session on Tuesday June 1, 2021 by passing a $42.2 billion FY 2022 State operating budget, a capital budget, and numerous subject-matter bills. Due to higher-than-expected FY 2021 revenues and federal funding from CARES and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the operating budget requires no new taxes and allows the State to pay down approximately $13 billion in existing debt. Higher education is essentially flat-funded at
FY 2021 levels, with a 6 percent increase in the need-based Monetary Award Program (MAP). The FY 2022 Capital budget includes three projects for Northwestern:

- The new $50 million appropriation (mentioned on page 1) for renovation of 1801 Maple Avenue, which will create a technology incubator for Northwestern start-up companies;
- $5 million (re-appropriated from FY 2020) for equipment at the Simpson Querrey Institute; and
- $400 million (re-appropriated from FY 2020) for facilities at Illinois private colleges and universities, of which Northwestern expects to receive approximately $30 million.

The General Assembly also passed two bills that Northwestern supported:

- SB2338 Name, Image, Likeness - allows student-athletes to capitalize on marketing of their name, image, voice and likeness, and permits student athletes to obtain representation for such marketing. Northwestern joined other Division I institutions in supporting this measure, which goes into effect July 1, 2021.
- SB2664 E-notary – establishes provisions for electronic notarization.

Governor Pritzker has signed all of the above bills.

**Community Relations**

**Northwestern Racial Equity Fund (Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot Program)**

The Office of Neighborhood and Community Relations worked with the 9th ward councilmember to develop a program design for the City of Evanston’s guaranteed basic income pilot and secured an additional $700,000 from the Evanston City Council to expand the program. The guaranteed basic income program is a joint venture between Northwestern and City to provide 165 Evanston residents across a wide range of ages with $500 a month for one year. Northwestern provided seed money for the program through the Good Neighbor Racial Equity Fund.

**American Rescue Plan Act Funding for the City of Evanston**

The Office of Neighborhood and Community Relations partnered with the Mayor, City staff, and the Evanston Community Foundation to host a series of town hall meetings to get input from residents on community needs and funding priorities for the anticipated $43 million in funding Evanston will receive as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

**Global Marketing and Communications (OGMC)**

**Northwestern Media coverage grows**

University experts were featured multiple times in nearly all priority media outlets including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, BBC, and many more.

**Top Northwestern Social Media Coverage**

OGMC continues to lead social media efforts to provide engaging content that best represents the University. While strategically leveraging academics, student life and topical events, Northwestern’s top-level social media presence (Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook) continues to grow in 2021. Total reach across owned Northwestern social media channels was over 25 million from May through July—a 15 percent increase compared to the same period in 2020.
Athletics
Wildcats in #Tokyo2020
Five current and former Wildcat student-athletes competed at the Tokyo Summer Olympic Games. Led by rising junior swimmer Federico Burdisso’s two bronze medals for Italy, in the 200-meter butterfly and the 400-medley relay, the Northwestern contingent also included swimmers Crystal Lara (Dominican Republic) and Jordan Wilimovsky (United States), softball’s Andrea Filler (Italy), and basketball’s Pallas Kunaiyi-Akpanah (Nigeria).

Blais Selected to Serve on NCAA Board of Directors
Deputy Athletic Director Janna Blais was selected to serve a three-year term as the Senior Woman Administrator (SWA) Appointee on the 24-seat NCAA Division I Board of Directors by the Women Leaders in College Sports Board of Directors. The SWA is appointed to broadly represent the senior woman administrator role as it is fulfilled throughout Division I.

Gragg adds Marks, Holland to Executive Staff
New Combe Family Vice President Derrick Gragg made his first two additions to his executive team with the hires of Jesse Marks as Deputy Athletic Director for Development, and Monique Holland as Deputy Athletic Director /Chief of Staff. Marks comes to Evanston after serving as the Executive Director of the Miami Dolphins Foundation, and also has extensive experience at the University of Miami. Holland joins the Wildcats from Auburn University where she was Executive Associate Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Experience and Senior Woman Administrator (SWA).