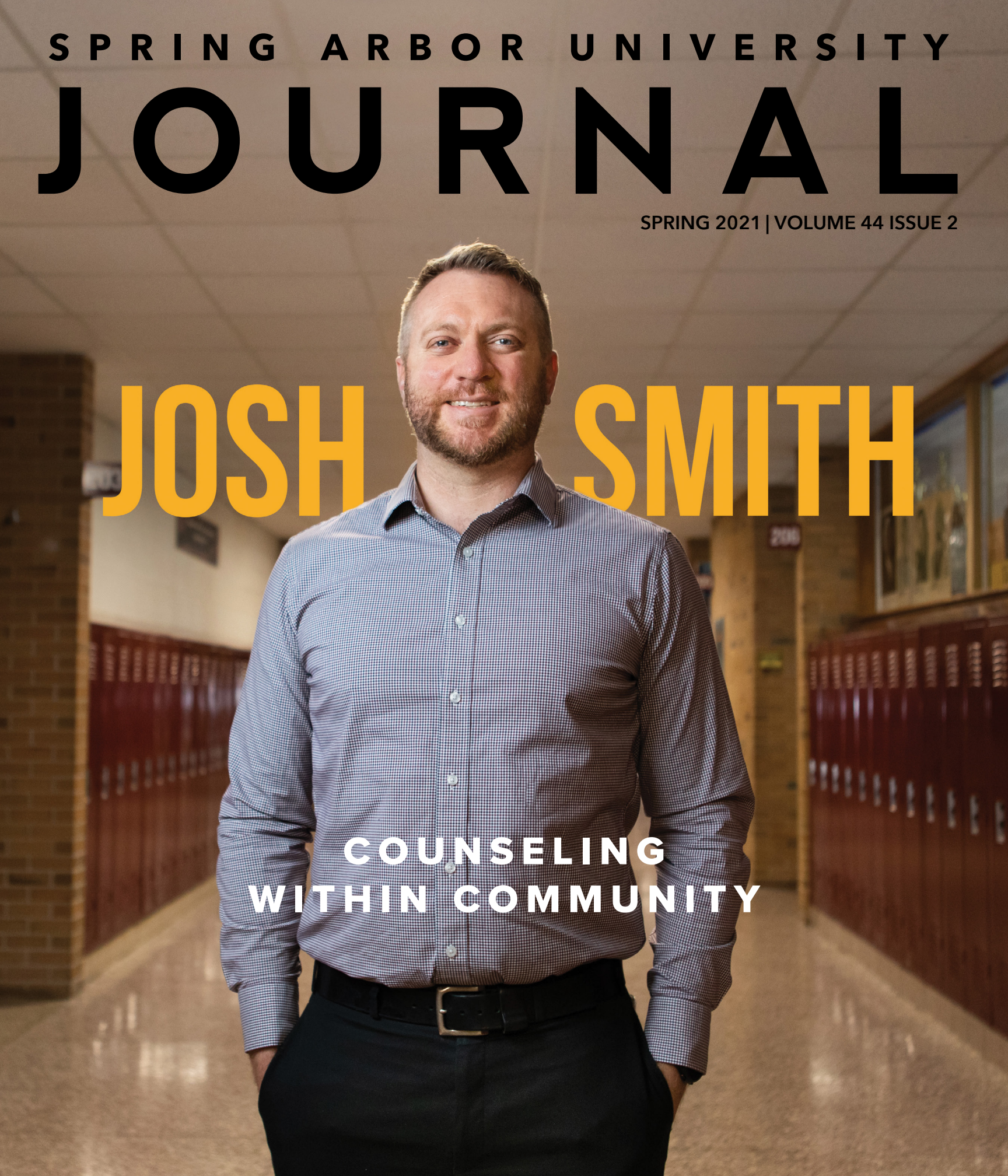


SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY
JOURNAL

SPRING 2021 | VOLUME 44 ISSUE 2

JOSH SMITH

**COUNSELING
WITHIN COMMUNITY**





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DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

To simply state that the last year created challenges never observed within higher education would diminish the phenomenal work of our faculty, staff and administration. In March of 2020, we determined the most prudent step forward for the SAU community required sending our traditional student body home, mandating our employees to work remotely and moving the totality of our instruction to a virtual format. By the time August 2020 rolled around, confidence in our ability to provide a safe living and learning environment led us to welcome students back to our main campus. Although major restrictions limited co-curricular events, classrooms were once again populated (utilizing social distancing and mask usage) and face-to-face instruction began. Now, as we conclude this tumultuous academic year, I desire to publicly give credit to hundreds of faculty and staff, who never wavered, always said “yes” in the face of presenting challenges and offered a level of certainty and normalcy to our student body.

As we look toward the 2021-22 academic year, we are filled with hope and expectancy. Enrollment projections remain strong, new academic programs provide excitement and opportunity for current and prospective students and many traditional academic programs have refreshed and retooled to meet society’s current desires and demands.

The one thing, however, that never wavered and remains resolute is our commitment to Christ as the perspective for our learning. As Peter wrote in his first epistle, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.’ And this is the word that was preached to you.” This same word guides us, compels us and provides perspective and a measuring line for whatever challenge might present itself. Please pray for our ability to remain steadfast in our commitment to Christ and that through our diligent and focused work, students might grow deeply in their faith as well as learn and understand their academic disciplines, in order that we are able to send them into society as critical participants in the contemporary world.

Grace and peace to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brent Ellis".

Dr. Brent Ellis
PRESIDENT



EDITORS

Derek Devine '14
Katlyne Heath '16

DESIGN/PHOTOGRAPHY

Calla Bilhorn

WRITERS

Chris Bauman
Derek Devine '14
Hannah Gilliam '20
Katlyne Heath '16
Erin Scroggs

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Jon Bahr
Vice President

UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

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For information on alumni, the Arbor Fund, major gifts, planned giving or external relations or to change contact information, please call or email Sherry Keeler in the Office of University Advancement at 517.750.6396 or sherryk@arbor.edu.

alumni@arbor.edu
517.750.6673

University Admissions
517.750.6684
arbor.edu

THE CONCEPT

Spring Arbor University is a community of learners distinguished by our lifelong involvement in the study and application of the liberal arts, total commitment to Jesus Christ as the perspective for learning, and critical participation in the contemporary world.

Many images represented in this issue of the Journal were taken before the coronavirus pandemic and therefore do not reflect Spring Arbor University's current policies regarding social distancing and mask usage.

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INSIDE FEATURES



GROWING YOUR FAITH ON 89.3 THE ARBOR

Students gain valuable broadcasting experience through SAU Radio's new programming.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: MYESHIA JONES

From Jackson County RoseQueen to Director of Community Engagement at Henry Ford Allegiance Health, **Myeshia Jones '19** has embarked on a journey of faith and self-discovery.



JOSH SMITH: COUNSELING WITHIN COMMUNITY

Western High School counselor and three-time cancer survivor **Josh Smith '04, '07** helps shape Michigan's plans for K-12 learners during the pandemic.

IN EVERY ISSUE

10 COUGAR ZONE

22 ALUMNI TODAY

“THROUGH
BRIDGING THE GAP,
I HAVE SEEN
REMARKABLE TRUTH
UNCOVERED.

I am no longer afraid of exploring my judgment and times that I ride the waves of ignorance, misunderstanding and assumption, and I invite others to do the same in love. Because of Bridging the Gap, I have become a critical participant in the contemporary world — even before I’ve crossed the graduation stage.”

— ELIZABETH STEWART —
SENIOR, COMMUNICATIONS MAJOR

Learn more about Bridging the Gap at
arbor.edu/BridgingTheGap.





GROWING YOUR FAITH ON



**89.3
THE ARBOR**



**BY ERIN SCROGGS
SENIOR, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION MAJOR**

Last year, Spring Arbor University launched a new radio ministry through SAU Radio. This brand-new programming, called 89.3 The Arbor, was created to share the story of SAU through student broadcasting and Christian music.

Radio has been a part of SAU's history since 1963, when the university debuted its first licensed FM radio station on campus through the generosity of E. Harold (Hal) Munn Jr. and C. Ella Munn. In recent years, students have fine-tuned their broadcasting skills on SAU's professional station, 106.9 HOME.fm. Since 2005, HOME.fm has played Music That Makes You Feel Good® while giving SAU students the opportunity to learn from broadcasting professionals.

The launch of HOME.fm sister-station 89.3 The Arbor allows students to get involved with station development in new ways, by researching current music, programming playlists and recording interviews. Students host daily shows, newscasts and campus sport updates on the new station.

The idea for 89.3 The Arbor was the result of a continued conversation between SAU Radio employees **Rachel (Ryder) Buchanan '03, '12** and **Tom Davis '98**. Buchanan and Davis both worked for SAU Radio while they were students at SAU. Together, they developed a proposal for a new radio format through which current students could have some of the same valuable experiences that they had as student broadcasters.

On top of broadcasting experience, 89.3 The Arbor offers volunteer opportunities and paid positions to students currently studying at SAU. Students who aren't interested in going on-air can still work alongside SAU Radio's professional staff through internships in social media and community relations.

"I am very thankful that I work at 89.3 The Arbor," says sophomore broadcaster **Katie Rankin**. "Beyond the technical aspects of the job, I have been able to strengthen my communication and time management skills, which will be beneficial in any career. The Arbor has already connected me to so many people I can reach out to after college if I need anything related to radio."

89.3 The Arbor has been running 24/7 since its September 2020 launch. With the slogan, "Growing Your Faith," the station airs Christian music, weekly Chapel services and segments that emphasize spiritual development.



"I feel like I'm actively changing the campus ... I've created something that can last for longer than I'll be at Spring Arbor."

— AUSTRALIA SMITH, JUNIOR

The broadcast is filled with prayers and uplifting messages from SAU faculty and staff, as well as prominent spiritual leaders from around the world. Student broadcasters can talk about how God is working in their lives, offer words of encouragement and lift up prayers for different people and situations.

In January, a new gospel music show claimed the name of a previous SAU Radio station format, Power Praise FM. In partnership with SAU's Office of Intercultural Relations, "Power Praise" was proposed as a way to highlight the diversity of SAU's campus population.

"I love my experience with Power Praise," says the show's student host, junior **Australia Smith**. "I feel like I'm actively changing the campus, and others are hearing it throughout Michigan. I've created something that can last for longer than I'll be at Spring Arbor. I have something to call my own, and it's been a blast working to make it a reality!"

Other shows include a morning show called "Rise N' Shine" and an evening hip-hop and rhythmic music show called "Breakaway." Through a blend of genres and styles, 89.3 The Arbor is opening doors to connect with believers of all ages and backgrounds.

In the short time that the station has been on-air, 89.3 The Arbor has already been able to grow the faith of listeners, share the evolving story of SAU and impact the surrounding community.

89.3 The Arbor's non-commercial format airs in Jackson County at 89.3 FM, with seven translator signals across south-central Michigan. Listeners can also tune in online and through a free app. A program guide and additional information is available at 893thearbor.com.



COUGAR ZONE

SAU COUGAR ALUM NATHAN MARTIN MAKES HISTORY

Former Spring Arbor University standout **Nathan Martin '13** made history in December 2020 when he joined the country's other top marathon runners for The Marathon Project, held in Chandler, Arizona.

Racing against an elite field of athletes, Martin finished the 26.2-mile race in ninth place with a time of 2:11:05. Not only was his time more than three minutes faster than his personal best, but it was also the fastest time ever set by a U.S.-born, Black marathon runner, breaking a 41-year-old record set by Herman Atkins (2:11:52) in 1979. Martin's record-setting time places him 49th on the all-time U.S. marathon list.

"I don't think I realized how big of a deal it was at first," said Martin in an interview after the race. "It wasn't a benchmark for me or something that I was concerned with heading into the race, so when people were telling me after the race that I broke a record, it didn't sink in."

Records and honors aren't what motivate Martin, however. What drives him is using his gifts and talents to encourage others.

"It's an awesome feeling to know that I broke a record that has stood for more than 40 years, but I don't motivate myself with what records I broke or whose time I beat. What motivates me, and what I do take a lot of pride in, is inspiring others, and I hope that's what this accomplishment does for future runners."

The Marathon Project was created to fill a void created by COVID-19, which caused the cancellation of four of the six major marathons, including those held in Boston, Berlin, Chicago and New York. The race's field consisted of 88 invited men and women, including some of the top finishers from the 2020 Olympic Marathon Trials, which Martin also participated in last year.

Martin currently resides in Jackson, Michigan, where he works as a full-time substitute teacher and serves as the cross country coach at Jackson High School. He is the most decorated athlete in SAU's cross country and track and field program history.



5 COUGARS EARN ALL-AMERICAN HONORS AT NAIA NATIONALS

Five members of the SAU track and field teams secured All-American status as competition concluded at the 2021 NAIA Indoor Track & Field National Championships.

Junior **Kyara Black** finished as the national runner-up in the high jump, while senior **Jasmine Harper** and sophomore **Emily Westrick** placed seventh and eighth in the mile. On the men's side, senior **Max Whittredge** took eighth in the 800 meters and sophomore **Tomme Smith** grabbed seventh in the 1000 meters.



2021 HALL OF FAME CLASS ANNOUNCED

Two former SAU student-athletes and one coach were selected for induction into the Spring Arbor University Athletic Hall of Fame.

The class of 2021 includes:

- **Andrea (VanderHorst) Deihl '01**
Women's Basketball (1996-00)
- **David Getsinger '87**
Cross Country / Track & Field (1983-87)
- **Tom Britsch**
Head Women's Basketball Coach (1991-06)

SAU was unable to host its traditional Hall of Fame ceremony due to the coronavirus pandemic but plans to properly honor and celebrate our inductees with their friends, family and former teammates present at a future date.

For updates on our Cougar athletic teams, visit saucougars.com.



SAU Cross Country Team



MEN'S SOCCER CAPTURES CROSSROADS LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

After a thrilling overtime, SAU earned a come-from-behind victory over Grace College to secure the Crossroads League Men's Soccer Tournament Championship. The season's challenges were immense, but this resilient team finally captured the elusive tourney title.

The win gave the Cougars their third tournament title overall, and first since 2016, and it secured their spot in the NAIA Men's Soccer National Championship, which is slated to begin April 22.

FROM THE SAU FACULTY

Spring Arbor University offers its community a universe of exploration within a Christian framework that is difficult to encounter elsewhere. As a chemistry professor at SAU, I routinely hold discussions with theologians, historians, writers, philosophers, sociologists, poets, scriptwriters, actors and others on campus. I find such conversations to be mutually beneficial as my colleagues, my students and I investigate the vast array of human knowledge, and what lies beyond our knowledge: the abstract, the concrete, issues of societal importance, the wonders of the physical universe, philosophy, current politics and the nature of God.

The chaos that we all experienced in 2020 — and beyond — allowed me to appreciate the practical value of these interconnected conversations in a way I'd not done before. While I was often physically separated from my colleagues due to the pandemic, we found ourselves reaching out to each other more than ever before to hold these discussions — mostly via Zoom, of course! I felt so very fortunate to be able to reach out to expert historians, sociologists, biochemists, theologians and other sages at SAU as I navigated the information overload we all faced during the worldwide pandemic, coupled with the political unrest in the United States. I am so very fortunate to have fellow intellectual sojourners at SAU who help me make sense of the world.

DR. TOM KUNTZLEMAN

*Professor of Chemistry
Dean, School of Natural Sciences*







ALUMNI
SPOTLIGHT:

Myeshia Jones

BY DEREK DEVINE

Myeshia Jones '19 may have the most vibrant personality on the planet. She has a bright smile and has worn a flower in her hair every day for the last 15 years. Her love for people is contagious, and her desire to make a difference in her community is unmatched. Jones is enjoying life, but she is the first to admit that this hasn't always been the case.

Raised by a single mother, Jones is the eldest of 11 children. Her family moved from Albion, Michigan, to Jackson, Michigan, when she was 13. It was in Jackson that Jones experienced bullying for the first time.





*“Flowers remind me of myself ...
I was nothing but a cast-out seed
until God gave me a place
of sunshine ...”* — MYESHIA JONES

“I was bullied badly, to the point where I had to sit in the front seat of the bus. I can remember girls throwing gum and pencils in my hair,” says Jones. “It was a difficult experience that led to some bad decisions.”

In the seventh grade, Jones was expelled from Jackson Public Schools. She fell into a deep depression and isolated herself from the outside world.

“I felt like I had no one. I didn’t get out of bed. I didn’t go outside. I had this fear of people seeing me and saying something bad about me,” says Jones. “At a young age, I was asking myself whether I wanted to live or die.”

A suicide attempt placed Jones in the hospital, where she woke up to the sound of her mother praying in the hallway, crying out to God for help. Outside of attending church, Jones didn’t have much of a relationship with God, yet she found herself praying and asking for his presence in that moment.

“God, if you help me through this, if you give me a ‘why,’ if you give me something to look forward to, I promise I’ll listen.”

Jones found God in her hospital room that day. She decided to spend the rest of her adolescence learning about herself and seeking her purpose. She had the opportunity to return to the public school system, and after graduating, she started working at a local bank. During her time as a bank teller, she met a woman who asked if she would consider participating in the Jackson County RoseQueen Pageant.

“I said, ‘Girl, no way! Look at me, I am not pageant material,’” says Jones. “Then she hit me with some magic words and told me that whether I won or lost, I would get scholarship money. I said, ‘Sign me up!’”

Jones went on to win the RoseQueen Pageant in 2015 — making her the first African American and plus-sized woman to win the crown. Over the next year, she traveled to more than 100 events as the RoseQueen, all while working and taking college classes full-time.

“Winning the pageant was instrumental because I struggled with my identity and physical appearance,” says Jones. “I became empowered to share my story with others who had similar experiences.”

The RoseQueen Pageant instilled in Jones a passion for loving others, serving her community and building meaningful relationships. It also strengthened her desire to teach others about the importance of diversity, inclusion and equality.

After a year of serving as RoseQueen, Jones accepted a job as a success navigator at American 1 Credit Union. She became engrossed with her work of facilitating tough but

necessary conversations among her coworkers. Although she was making a change at the individual level, she was presented with a new opportunity by which she could generate change at the corporate level.

Last spring, at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Jones was hired by Henry Ford Allegiance Health as the director of community engagement. One month into her new role, the George Floyd murder brought discussions about race and equality to the forefront of her work.

“I remember asking God, ‘Why? I thought I was going to leave this type of work behind?’” says Jones. “I could hear him speaking to me, reminding me of my life experiences and my ability to walk into any space and create conversations with people, no matter what they look like or what their story is. So, I submitted to him.”

Jones’s professional role encompasses a lot, but at the core, her job is to love people, create a space for individuals to have a voice and bridge the gap between community and healthcare. Her personal life is an extension of her work, as she seeks out opportunities to influence positive change within the community.

Jones currently serves on the executive team for the Jackson County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), on the board for the Da Vinci School District and as an active member of the Jackson Young Professionals. She also hosts a talk show, called “Mondays with My” on Facebook Live, in which she eats seafood and talks about real-life issues surrounding diversity, equality and inclusion with a variety of guests.

“I’m doing what I love, professionally and personally,” says Jones. “I’m thankful that God has given me this opportunity to share my story and make a difference in my community and the lives of others.”

As for that flower she’s been wearing for 15 years?

“Flowers remind me of myself,” says Jones. “They start as seeds and need water and sunshine to evolve into something beautiful. I was nothing but a cast-out seed until God gave me a place of sunshine and people started pouring into my life. Over time, I flourished into the person that God created in his beautiful image.”

A VIEW TO THE FUTURE

The project to enhance the campus border and common spaces at Spring Arbor University sprang from the vision and generous support of donors within our community. They wanted the university's campus to leave a lasting impression on visitors and community members alike. This new front entryway, made possible by their loving gifts, will set SAU apart and allow the physical appearance of campus to reflect the beauty of the community and the excellence of the students within.





Arbor
UNIVERSITY



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JOSH SMITH

COUNSELING
WITHIN
COMMUNITY

BY KATLYNE HEATH

Josh Smith '04, '07 has built his career around helping others succeed. "I've always enjoyed helping people," he says. "I've always had an interest in how people think and why people do what they do."

As an undergraduate student at Spring Arbor University, Smith, a Springport, Michigan, native who commuted to campus, found his place in the education department, where he studied to teach history and psychology at the secondary level. After graduating in 2004, Smith began his career as a high school teacher, staying close to home by taking positions at Will Carleton Academy in Hillsdale, Michigan, where he spent his first year, and Northwest High School in Jackson, Michigan, where he spent the next three.

Although Smith enjoyed teaching, he aspired to take on a different role within the high school setting — one in which he could offer more personalized guidance to students. He decided to return to SAU to earn his Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC).

Going back to school can be challenging, especially for someone working full-time as a high school teacher. Smith dedicated three years of Monday nights to the MAC program — and considers it one of the best career moves he could have made.

"I loved the MAC program," says Smith. "I left those three years feeling ready to begin counseling, to help people and to enter that next stage of life."

"[The MAC] classroom was a very practical environment. It was more than just looking at textbooks and listening to lectures. Our professors would put us in situations that would challenge us, but also give us the real-world experience of being a counselor."

After completing his master's degree in 2007, Smith began work as a school counselor at Western High School in Parma, Michigan. He has now served in this role for over 13 years. It's his full-time job — but it isn't the only way he has engaged with his community through counseling.

Smith enjoyed his experience in the MAC program so much that he later considered it a privilege to return to the program for a few years as an adjunct

instructor, helping to lead others through the courses that changed his career. "After going out into the real world, I was able to come back and do some teaching in the program, which was a lot of fun," he says.

Smith found another opportunity to educate other counselors through the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN), an extension of the Michigan Department of Education that trains hundreds of school counselors each year to help them prepare students to pursue their college and career goals after high school. Smith spent four years working with MCAN, helping to equip school counselors across the state with information and resources they could use to help students find post-graduation success.

Smith tries to emulate Christ by empowering the people around him to go out and help others.

Within the Jackson community, Smith has served for three of the last six years as president of the Jackson Counseling Association, which unites local school counselors and counseling agencies for mutual support.

Additionally, Smith serves alongside SAU alumnae **Terri Tchorzynski '10** and **Elizabeth Kanagawa '06, '11** on the Governing Board for the Michigan School Counselor Association.

"God has given me some unique opportunities," says Smith. "Hopefully, I'll be able to use them to be a light."

Smith dedicates time during his evenings and weekends to serve as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) for people of all ages and walks of life at A Healing Place in Jackson. By working at a private practice, Smith can help others address a breadth of challenges and situations. "I really like the variety of people that I get to work with and the ways in which I get to see people helped through their different struggles," says Smith.

As a counselor, Smith has seen and helped others through numerous difficult situations that he had never been exposed to or encountered before going into counseling. He's often reminded of how hopeless many people feel in our fallen world. Although his work is rooted in his faith, Smith knows that because of the setting of his work, he

“ Hopefully, co-workers and people that I come in contact with

WILL SEE THE PEACE,
WILL SEE THE JOY,
WILL SEE
CHRIST IN ME.”

can't always “just come right out with it” and offer Christ to his clients and students. Instead, Smith aims to be a consistent and stable presence in the lives of those around him.

“The goal would be that my faith would provide an opportunity to showcase a sense of strength and security that can only come from Christ,” says Smith. “Hopefully, co-workers and people that I come in contact with will see the peace, will see the joy, will see Christ in me.”

Smith does all of his work for the glory of God and seeks to be a strong Christian witness within his community. “As Christians, we hope that we're shining lights in our neighborhoods and communities,” he says.

In 2020, Smith answered Governor Whitmer's call for applications to her COVID-19 Return to Learn Advisory Council, which was to work alongside the governor in charting a path forward for K-12 students in Michigan during the pandemic. Smith was selected from among 18,000 applicants. “They told us in the first meeting that there was a better chance of getting into Harvard than there was of getting on that committee,” he says.

The committee was comprised of 27 professionals from across the state of Michigan. They were superintendents, principals, board members, doctors, athletic directors, parents, senators and counselors. As the only school counselor on the committee, Smith represented the student-aged population as a mental health expert.

The Return to Learn Advisory Council worked urgently to develop a plan for Michigan's students and schools. All of their meetings were virtual. Smith served on a subcommittee focused on the general mental health and wellbeing of students. Together, he and other subcommittee members created a universal screening that teachers and schools could use to identify which students needed extra help and counseling during the pandemic. They spent a lot of time discussing which questions to ask and how to equip teachers to evaluate their students' mental health. Eventually, they set up a modified version of the University of Michigan TRAILS program by which every student in the state of Michigan could receive an evaluation.

Smith has seen firsthand the incredible amount of mental stress that COVID has placed on students and teachers. “It has brought to light some cultural and societal issues that we have as a nation, state and community,” he says. “It has brought to the forefront the need for good parenting and good family networks and structures.”

Smith's work on the Return to Learn Advisory Council led to his selection for the governor's 2021 Student Recovery Advisory Council, which was designed to further help Michigan students who had been impacted by the pandemic. On this diverse council, Smith serves as a representative of mental health experts in Michigan.

Over the last several years, Smith has pressed forward in his counseling work even as he has faced significant personal challenges. In 2014, Smith, a husband and father of four, received some upsetting news. “The cancer diagnosis was a complete shock,” he said. “I was 32. I was healthy. But I noticed that something wasn't quite right.” Smith visited his doctor's office for a physical exam soon after he noticed that something was amiss. The exam went well, but his doctor recommended he get an ultrasound. Within three days of his ultrasound, Smith was in surgery. He had been diagnosed with testicular cancer.

Though all of the cancer in Smith's body had been removed during surgery, a routine scan eight months later revealed that the cancer had spread. This time, Smith would need to undergo chemotherapy. The treatment successfully eliminated his cancer but caused life-threatening lung toxicity in the process. Smith was able to recover, hoping to put the experience behind him.

In 2018, four years after his initial cancer diagnosis, Smith went to the emergency room as he encountered significant stomach pain. The doctor discovered a tumor in Smith's colon. Within three days, Smith was again in surgery. Part of



“THERE WAS A STRANGE PEACE THAT I HAD IN KNOWING THAT GOD IS IN CONTROL.”



his colon was removed, and he spent five days at the hospital. Although the surgery went well, Smith still had to undergo several more rounds of chemotherapy.

As of today, Smith is cancer-free. “I honestly feel like there’s been a tremendous amount of blessing as a result,” says Smith.

“There was a sense of peace when I was going insane on the inside. There was a strange peace that I had in knowing that God is in control, and the Holy Spirit is living inside of me and Jesus Christ is right there with me, too.”

During his journey with cancer, Smith has learned a lot — and experienced God in new ways. Having been through his own personal valley, he feels better equipped to help others through their struggles and anxieties.

Smith himself has received counseling to help him work through his cancer-related anxiety. “Every time I have an ache or a pain, or something just doesn’t feel right, I’m pretty sure I’ve got cancer again,” he says. “It definitely tests your faith, but it strengthens it at the same time.”

Smith is thankful that his cancer was caught early each time, and that his treatment was highly effective in stopping its spread. “I can say God is good because my cancer is gone, the treatment worked and they caught it early, but the reality is that God is good and God is faithful, even if it had turned out badly,” he says.

“I would never wish it to happen, but because it did happen, I have opportunities like this to share and hopefully witness in ways I couldn’t have before.”



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ALUMNI TODAY

1940-1949

1 Lois (Smith) Snyder '48 and her husband, Keith, are happily retired. Since retirement, they have enjoyed the privilege of several overseas trips in which they have worked alongside missionaries and locals. They have four children, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Lois and Keith live in Penfield, New York.

1960-1969

Jon Fruytier '61, '65 serves as an assistant pastor at Bad Axe Free Methodist Church. He also serves as a librarian and paraprofessional for Harbor Beach Community Schools. Jon and Linda, his wife of 49 years, currently live in Harbor Beach, Michigan.

1970-1979

Brenda (Mabry) Custodio '70 serves as an adjunct professor at The Ohio State University. Her third book on working with immigrants and refugees was recently published by the University of Michigan Press. She resides in Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

Jack Andrews '75 recently retired but still serves part-time as an ordained elder/minister. He and his wife, **Kathleen (Burns) '75**, will welcome their eighth grandchild in 2021. They live in Michigan City, Indiana.

Dr. Renée (Munn, Lavrack) Runyon '79, '02 works as the worship coordinator for Vista Grande Villa retirement community, and her husband, **Dr. Dan Runyon '76**, serves as the preaching chaplain. Renée earned a Doctor of Worship Studies degree in 2018. She also teaches piano and voice at SAU and serves as the accompanist for the SAU choirs, a position she has held since 1984. The Runyons live in Spring Arbor, Michigan.

1980-1989

Dr. David Fryman '81 married **Sharon Rupert '86** in November 2019. David is in his 31st year as a family physician at Indiana University (IU) Health. He also teaches family medicine at the IU School of Medicine. The two live in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Dr. Mark Dexter '82 works as a speech and language pathologist for Montgomery County Public Schools. He resides in Bethesda, Maryland.

1990-1999

Bruce Martin '91 serves as superintendent for Saginaw Township Community Schools. He lives in Clio, Michigan.

2 Mary (Collins) Davis '92 serves as a professor at Hartnell College. In 2020, she completed her Ph.D. in nursing education. She resides in Seaside, California.

3 Margaret Berkousen '96 recently published the third book in her “Komodo Trilogy,” “Return to Komodo Island,” which tied for second place in the “Middle Grade Fiction” category of the 2020 Purple Dragonfly Book Awards. She lives in Ottawa Hills, Ohio.

Robert Chisholm III '97, '18 serves as the graduate medical education coordinator at the Medical University of South Carolina. He lives in Isle of Palms, South Carolina.

Dwain Dennis '94 recently retired from his work as a medical examiner investigator at Sparrow Hospital. He lives in Lake Odessa, Michigan.

Josh '99 and **Meran (Miles) '01 Khon** recently relocated to Armada, Michigan. Josh teaches middle and high school students, and Meran works as a K-5 Library/Technology/STEAM/Makerspace teacher at Memphis Elementary School. She was recently awarded a grant by the St. Clair County Community Foundation.

Thomas '99 and **Amanda (Grams) '00 McMurray** live and serve in Colombia as missionaries with The Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA). Thomas serves as the regional developer for Latin America with CAMA Services, the relief and development specialization of the Alliance.

2000-2009

4 Kari (Christner) Swartzentruber '02 serves as the director of operations at the Swartzentruber family's in-home daycare. Kari and her husband, Travis, live in Sugarcreek, Ohio.

5 Bri (Minalga) Dothager '06 serves as the director of sales operations and effectiveness at Nevco. She also serves as a board member for Restore Network. Bri, her husband, Steve, and their two children live in Greenville, Illinois.

6 Del Belcher '07 and his wife, Stephanie, welcomed Georgia Quinn into the world on June 23, 2020. Georgia joins big sister Carly Joan (age 3) at the family's home in Spring Arbor, Michigan. Currently, Del works as the marketing manager at Commonwealth Associates, Inc. Stephanie serves as the manager of performance analytics at Henry Ford Allegiance Health.

Shelley (Reed) Mannor '08 serves as a vice principal for Vandercook Lake Public Schools. Shelley resides in Jackson, Michigan.

Adam Anastasoff '09 works as a jail diversion clinical supervisor at the Monroe Community Mental Health Authority. He lives in Ida, Michigan.

Chelsie (Rigterink) Kreitzman '09 and her husband, Jack, married in October 2020. Chelsie serves as an administrative assistant at Southern Hills United Methodist Church. They reside in Lexington, Kentucky.

Felice (Wojewski) Kurzer '09 serves as the outreach and fundraising coordinator at Starlight Ministries. She currently lives in Rockford, Michigan.

ALUMNI TODAY

7 Brad Ward '09 earned his Master of Arts in Management and Organizational Leadership at Spring Arbor University and is now a business professor at Milligan University. He recently wrote and published “The Motivated Worker: A Manager’s Guide to Improving Job Satisfaction,” through McFarland Publishing. He currently resides in Jonesborough, Tennessee.



2010-2019

Kim (Doletzky) Quiggle '11 and her husband, Josh, welcomed their third child in June 2020. Kim serves as a stay-at-home mom. They live in Hillsdale, Michigan.

8 Robert Rife '11 is transitioning to missionary service with The Evangelical Covenant Church in the United Kingdom.

Elise (Arvidson) Schnaars '11 and her husband are expecting their second little girl in May. Elise serves as a stay-at-home mother. Her family lives in Bloomington, Indiana.

William Wray '12, '20 works as a substance abuse therapist through Catholic Charities at Parnell Prison. William, his wife and three children live in Albion, Michigan. They plan to become full-time missionaries in Uganda, Africa.

9 James '13 and Kendra (Lane) '13 Appling welcomed their third child in April 2020. Kendra recently finished her master’s in curriculum and instruction with a focus on mathematics 6-8. Kendra works as a special education teacher at Huron Valley Schools. They live in West Bloomfield, Michigan.

Aaron Gibson '13 works as a manager of people engagement at United Way Worldwide. Aaron resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Derik Heumann '13 serves as lead pastor at Evergreen Church. He and his wife, **Kimberly (Long) '13**, live in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Jennifer (Williams) Leiter '13 recently completed a second master’s degree in behavioral health and a master of science in addiction treatment counseling. She is now a Licensed Independent Chemical Dependency Counselor (LICDC) in the state of Ohio. Jennifer and her husband live in Coventry Township, Ohio.

Renee (Brohl) Walsh '14, '16 and her husband recently celebrated 20 years of marriage. Renee also recently defended her dissertation in nursing education. She serves as a nursing instructor at the University of Michigan-Flint and Spring Arbor University.

10 Laura (Owen) Breckner '15 serves as the dean of student success at Spring Arbor University. She and her husband, Peter, welcomed their first child, Lillian Ellen Breckner, in November 2019. The Breckner family resides in Horton, Michigan.

11 Alexandria Brigham '15 works as a clinical social worker and mental health therapist. Alexandria is recently engaged to Brandon Fagan and lives in Michigan Center, Michigan.

Kayla Chenault '15 published her first novel, “These Bones,” through Lanternfish Press. It will be available in September. Kayla resides in Canton, Michigan.

Rebekah (Harness) Cottrell '15 serves as a licensing and child welfare specialist at Child and Family Charities. She currently resides in Pottersville, Michigan.

12 Kamal Ghazi '15 works as a medical advocacy and Capital Area Sexual Assault Response Team (CASART) coordinator at EVE, INC. He is currently pursuing a Master of Social Work and doctorate in behavioral health. Kamal and his wife, Alexia, will welcome a baby boy in May 2021. They live in Lansing, Michigan.

13 Daisy (Patterson) Holley '15 currently serves as an area coordinator for Oakland University. In August 2020, Daisy and her husband, Donta, welcomed their son, Dash. They currently reside in Auburn Hills, Michigan.

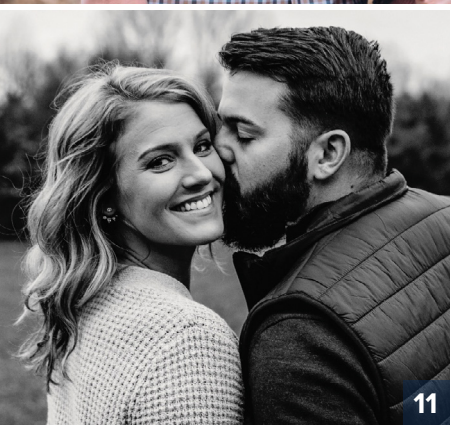
Alika Kingsbury '15 works as a radiation therapist at London Health Sciences Centre. Alika lives in London, Ontario.



LET YOUR *light* SHINE

AMANDA PARRISH '09

*B.A. in Advertising and
Public Relations*



Always ready for the next challenge, **Amanda Parrish** has paved her road to success with hard work, commitment to excellence and faith in God. “SAU prepared me for success by changing my perspective,” says Parrish. “I find confidence in God’s love, humility in God’s forgiveness, strength in God’s faithfulness and purpose in God’s gifts. SAU taught me to carry happiness around, and in my experience, that’s a coveted commodity in the business world.”

As chief operating officer at Fawley Bryant Architecture in Sarasota, Florida, Parrish manages the firm’s day-to-day operations and serves as a trusted advisor. Before her promotion, Parrish served as director of business. “I was unsure about making a leap of this magnitude,” she says. “It was a big change, but throughout my career, I have seen the rewards of accepting new challenges that stretch me beyond my comfort zone. So far, God has blessed me in that.”

Parrish’s new role includes team and human resource management, as well as building business partnerships and community relationships. She is also responsible for the oversight and strategic planning of key administrative support elements of the organization, including technology, facilities and marketing initiatives.

After over a decade of growing her career, Parrish remains grateful for her time at SAU. “SAU’s foundation of faith showed me the importance of self-reflection, self-acceptance and even self-love,” she says. “This inner strength has allowed me to find beauty in all situations. I perceive failure as growth, setbacks as startups and challenges as opportunities. With a positive lens, I can offer myself and others grace, encouragement, optimism and love.”

Parrish recently earned her master’s degree in organizational leadership from Jacksonville University. She lives in Bradenton, Florida, with her husband, **Scott '08**, and two young daughters.



15

Jordan '15 and **Hope (Roelofs) '15 McCain** welcomed their first baby into the world. Hope serves women who have been rescued from human trafficking. Jordan is a church planter for DelCo Alliance Church. Their family lives in Delaware, Ohio.

Kelley (Mullen) Parish '15 recently transitioned into a new role as an e-learning director at Jumpstart Childcare. Kelley lives in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Rebecca (Mason) Treharne '15 and her husband, Eilir, married in June 2019. Rebecca serves as executive administrative assistant and international events coordinator for Bridges for Peace in Jerusalem, Israel.

14 Cecilia (Said) Codd '18 and her husband, Chris, married in July 2020. Cecilia works as the outreach ministry intern at Spring Arbor University. They live in Jackson, Michigan.

15 Courtney (Kyser) '18 and **Ruben '18 French** tied the knot on Oct. 3, despite the rain — and all the craziness of 2020! SAU Chaplain Brian Kono performed their ceremony, and they were blessed to have several SAU alumni stand beside them, including **AJ Sprague '18**, **Nathan Brown '17**, **Eric Palumbo '17**, **Leah Rose '18**, **Olivia Landis '18**, **Machala Culhane '18** and **Jordan (Guikema) Mueller '18**. **Guthrie Collins '16** took their wedding photos. The Frenches reside in Lowell, Michigan.

Ashleigh (Murray) Skipper '18 serves as an advanced practice registered nurse at Clearway Pain Solutions. She lives with her husband and daughters in DeFuniak Springs, Florida.

16 Morgan (Carter) '19 and **Jeff '20 Beckman** married in the spring of 2020. Morgan serves as a special education teacher at Homer Community High School, and Jeff works as the assistant men's basketball coach at SAU. The Beckmans live in Spring Arbor, Michigan.



16

Shawn Delacourt '19 married his wife, Emma, in October 2020. Shawn works as a special education and student support professional at Swartz Creek Community Schools. He will pursue his Master of Social Work in Fall 2021. They live in Davison, Michigan.

17 Trevor '19 and **Samantha (Kavouras) '20 Marchand** married in March 2020. Trevor works as an admissions advisor at Madonna University, and Samantha works as a communications manager at Comtronics. They reside in Northville, Michigan.

18 Ashley (Parker) Wegener '19 and her husband, Matt, recently married. Ashley works as a goal specialist at Noom. They currently live in Spring Lake, Michigan, with plans to move to Pensacola, Florida.

2020-2021

Emily Bloss '20 works as a K-12 English language teacher at Antigua International School. Emily recently got engaged. She lives in Antigua, Guatemala.

LET YOUR *light* SHINE

DR. BRANDON KATTA '15

B.A. in Pre-Med/Biology

Dr. Brandon Katta's drive, compassion and commitment to Christ have led him to success in serving his patients and their families.

Katta, who hopes to specialize in cardiothoracic surgery, recently started his first year of a five-to-seven-year residency program for general surgery at St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital in Youngstown, Ohio. Starting a residency program during COVID-19 hasn't been easy, especially while serving on the front lines of the pandemic. However, maintaining a strong relationship with Christ and understanding the importance of community has made a huge impact on Katta's work. "It hasn't been easy seeing people suffering, but being able to empathize and pray with them makes a difference in the care I provide," says Katta. "[In] the hard conversations, the long nights, I know that I am doing God's work and that he has me here for a reason."

Katta values his SAU experience and how it has made him a better doctor. "Being an athlete ingrained in me the importance of discipline, and the science faculty were fantastic," says Katta. "Professors like **Drs. Chris Newhouse, Aaron Wyman, Michael Buratovich** and **Tom Kuntzleman** showed so much care for me as a student — being flexible with my baseball schedule and taking the time to teach me how to study well, all while pushing me to be better."

Katta also acknowledges the huge amount of support that his wife, Taylor, has offered him during this season of life. The two met on the first day of grad school and were "couples matched" to the same hospital, both for general surgery. "She not only encourages me in my faith, but she knows exactly what I am going through," says Katta.



Stacy Buratovich '20 works as a financial analyst at Lineage Logistics. She resides in Wixom, Michigan.

Celeste Fendt '20 is a content writer at Ferguson Advertising. Celeste resides in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Olivia Louthan '20 serves as a resident director at Concordia University Wisconsin. She is studying to complete her Master of Arts in Counseling at the University of Wisconsin. She resides in Mequon, Wisconsin.

Jamie Mitchell '20 works as the assistant director of worship at Royal Redeemer Lutheran Church. He lives in North Royalton, Ohio.

Nathaniel Stout '20 serves in the U.S. Army as a military intelligence officer. He currently lives in Spring Arbor, Michigan.

To be featured in future Journal issues, submit your updates at arbor.edu/update.

HOMECOMING WEEK OCT. 4-9

SAVE THE DATE



CONNECT & INVEST

Stay connected with SAU and fellow alumni! Attend regional events, return to the Arbor for Homecoming, embark on an all-alumni cross-cultural experience, help recruit future SAU Cougars or assist current students with their professional journeys. Learn how to get involved with university events, initiatives and volunteer opportunities at arbor.edu/alumni.



CELEBRATE CHAPLAIN RON KOPICKO'S 39 years of service to Spring Arbor University!

Kopicko shared his love of God's word with every student who called SAU home during his almost four decades of ministry. Though he retired in May 2019, Kopicko continues to make a vibrant impact on the SAU community. Now, you can help carry on his legacy by supporting the **Freshman Bible Project**.

Each summer, 250-300 study Bibles are purchased for the incoming freshman class through the generous support of alumni and friends of SAU. Your gift of \$25 to the Freshman Bible Project blesses a student and encourages their understanding of and passion for Scripture.

arbor.edu/give | Select Freshman Bible Project

NEW TO THE **ALUMNI BOARD**



JUBILEE JACKSON '20

B.A. in Digital Media

Admissions Representative,
Spring Arbor University
Spring Arbor, Michigan



JASON ARCHER '94, '12

B.A. & M.A. in Communication

Director of M.A. in Strategic
Communication, Michigan
State University
Jackson, Michigan



**STEPHANIE
(RODRIGUEZ)
SCHIRO '13**

B.A. in Social Work

Project Manager and
Executive Assistant,
United Way of Jackson County
Jackson, Michigan



ANGELA HEFLIN '02

*B.A. in Early Childhood
Education, Health &
Exercise Science*

Associate Director, Michigan
Venture Capital Association
Ypsilanti, Michigan

NEW TO THE **ALUMNI OFFICE**



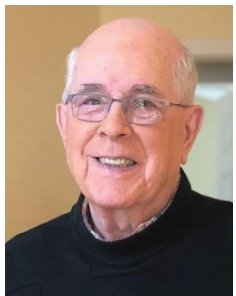
HANNAH GILLIAM '20

B.A. in Business Administration

Alumni and Student Relations Coordinator
Spring Arbor, Michigan

“I am honored to serve in the role of Alumni and Student Relations Coordinator in the SAU Alumni Office. Like many other SAU alumni, my Spring Arbor experience was pivotal to my development. Two of my biggest passions are stories and celebrating. Through this job, I am able to hear the incredible stories of alumni and students — at and beyond Spring Arbor. I am able to make connections within the SAU family across the globe. I also get to celebrate our students and alumni as they reach new accomplishments and use their degrees to continue Kingdom work.”

IN MEMORIAM



WARD SIPES HS '52, JC '54, '80

*Trustee from 2002-2004
Deceased Oct. 4, 2020 (aged 86)*

Ward Sipes served for 33 years as a pastor within the East Michigan Conference of the Free Methodist Church. He pastored churches in Flint, Bay City, Midland and Davison. Sipes

retired as conference superintendent in 1999.

During retirement, Sipes served on the Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church's pastoral staff. His devotion to the church was matched by his commitment to Spring Arbor University, where he served as a trustee and member of the alumni board. Sipes was the recipient of SAU's 1995 Alumnus of the Year award.

Sipes, his wife, **Bonnie (Burke) HS '53**, and their three children, **Greg Sipes '77**, **Tammy (Sipes) Bailey '80** and **Tadd Sipes '86**, are all SAU graduates.



RON ROBERT HS '52, JC '55

*Trustee from 1996-2003
Deceased Dec. 2, 2020 (aged 86)*

Ron Robart was a lifelong learner and committed follower of Christ. He received degrees from Spring Arbor High School and Junior College, Greenville University, Wayne State

University and Asbury Theological Seminary, and he served in a variety of roles throughout his educational pursuits.

During his career, Robart served at several Free Methodist churches across the country, in Arizona, Kentucky, Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania and Ohio. He and his wife, Marion, also served as missionaries to the Philippines. Over the years, they returned to the Philippines multiple times and considered Butuan City a second home. Additionally, Robart served as an admissions counselor at Greenville University and as the athletic director at Asbury Seminary.

Robart retired to Spring Arbor, Michigan, and served as a Spring Arbor University trustee while pastoring at the Pulaski Free Methodist Church and the First Baptist Church in Jackson. Robart and his wife eventually moved to Jenison, Michigan, to be closer to family.



RUTH STEPHENSON JC '45

*Staff from 1983-1991
Deceased Dec. 14, 2020 (aged 94)*

Ruth Stephenson was a strong supporter and friend of Spring Arbor University, where she served as a librarian for eight years. Before coming to SAU, Stephenson served as a principal for Vandercook Lake Elementary. She was a lifelong member of the Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church. Stephenson was also the aunt of Dale Stephenson, current chair of SAU's Board of Trustees.



DR. MARSHA DAIGLE-WILLIAMSON

*Faculty from 1986-2007
Deceased Sept. 8, 2020 (aged 74)*

Dr. Marsha Daigle-Williamson served as a humanities professor and chair of the English department at Spring Arbor University. Daigle-Williamson loved teaching her students. She received

several Excellence in Teaching awards before her retirement in 2007. After retiring, Daigle-Williamson translated 17 books and served as an English translator to Father Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household.



DR. DAVID RAWSON

*Faculty from 1999-2018
Deceased Sept. 16, 2020 (aged 79)*

Dr. David Rawson taught as a humanities professor at Spring Arbor University for 19 years, leaving a legacy of respect and profound impact. Before teaching at SAU, Rawson served as a U.S. ambassador to the Republics of Rwanda and Mali, most notably during the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Rawson was born in 1941 as the son of medical missionaries from Addison, Michigan. He grew up in Burundi, Africa, and attended the Rift Valley Academy in Kenya. Rawson returned to the U.S. in 1958 and earned his bachelor's degree from Malone College and his master's degree and doctorate from American University.

Before beginning his career with the U.S. Department of State, Rawson taught at Malone for six years. After serving as an ambassador, Rawson spent the remainder of his career teaching full-time at SAU and part-time at Hillsdale College. In 2018, he moved to Oregon to be closer to family. In his final two years, he served as a Scholar in Residence at George Fox University.

Former student **Dustyn Coontz '11**, summed up Rawson in this way: "The man I came to know over the latter half of my time at Spring Arbor was much more than a historical figure. He was just a good man. A humble man. A godly man."

IN MEMORIAM

Esther Rose HS '47 · 10/09/2020
Jean (Snyder) Hendricks HS '47 · 08/02/2020
Charles Stuermer JC '52 · 02/21/2020
Norman Amstutz '65 · 11/27/2020
Maxine Rohrbough '66 · 06/20/2004
Walter Norris Jr. '70 · 09/14/2020
Stephen Patton '70 · 02/01/2021
Douglas Dahl '71 · 07/06/2020
Mary Abbott '79 · 02/26/2001

Russell Bortell '80 · 01/29/2021
Alicia Orourke '84 · 09/04/2004
Stanley Wilk '85 · 12/30/2020
Ernest Gaffner '88, '13 · 12/23/2015
Robert Hawkins '89 · 11/05/2020
Lynna Hassenger '90 · 10/13/2020
Susan Ferguson '91 · 12/28/2020
Troy Wendell '93 · 08/16/2018
William Walbridge '93 · 01/25/2021

Daniel Avery '94 · 03/21/2011
Lee Ingles '94 · 10/19/2020
Sharon Neuner '95 · 11/12/2020
Madeline DeLosh '96 · 03/10/2012
Augustine Abbott '02 · 12/31/2020
Tammy Sue Watt '08 · 02/16/2020
Laura (Bishop) Fox '09 · 10/03/2020
Betty Scheele · 09/11/2020
Robert Lloyd · 01/04/2021



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BLESS SPRING ARBOR
UNIVERSITY WITH
AMAZING STUDENTS!**



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- Served on the front lines of the global pandemic as student nurses and teaching assistants.
- Led Courageous Conversations through the Bridging the Gap program to ensure that every voice is heard, regardless of economic status, gender, race or religion.
- Designed and produced 3D-printed headbands that allow front-line workers to more comfortably wear face masks during long shifts.
- Inspired our community as they continued to serve at local nonprofits like the Jackson Interfaith Shelter, Cascades Humane Society, Jackson Free Methodist Church, Rise Above, SOAR, Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church and several other community organizations.
- Made sacrifices to care for family, friends and neighbors.

We are so proud of our students; they continue to encourage and inspire us as they adapt to this ever-changing world. Soon they will join the ranks of our incredible alumni, and we can't wait to see what else they will accomplish!

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4490 Willis Rd. | Grass Lake, Michigan

8:45 A.M. | MORNING WAVE SHOTGUN START
2:30 P.M. | AFTERNOON WAVE SHOTGUN START

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