The Michigan Union reopened its doors this January following an 18-month renovation. Full Spectrum Stained Glass of Colon, Michigan handled the renovation of the Union’s stained glass work, a portion of which is shown here. The order included restoring 100 windows, 1,250 individual sashes, 5,218 leaded glass panels, and 21,528 individual pieces of glass. The process returned the look and feel of the Union’s stained glass work to its original 1919 glory, while also bolstering the facility’s environmentally friendly efficiency.

To learn more about the Michigan Union’s renovation and the future of the space, visit uunions.umich.edu.

PHOTO BY MARK GJUKICH
Dear Friends,

Last month, E. Royster Harper (BSEd ’73, AM ’74) retired after four decades of service to the University of Michigan. As vice president for Student Life, Dr. Harper worked hand-in-hand with multiple generations of Wolverines. She leaves behind a University of Michigan that is a more equitable and supportive home for its students.

In reflecting on more than 40 years with Michigan, Dr. Harper had this to say about our university: “With all of our imperfections, we’re the kind of place that works diligently to live into our values. Our university community truly believes in and is committed to excellence in all we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.”

Here at Leaders & Best, we’ve been trying to live up to that lofty aspirational mantra, too. Since last winter’s Victors for Michigan campaign edition, we’ve been busy reinventing our book-collecting stories, and designing an all-new labor of love just for you, dear donor. We polled our readers, spoke with our community, and argued a lot among ourselves. Ultimately, we came up with this: a reimagined journal of philanthropy for the University of Michigan. A maize and blue storybook that speaks to your awesome generosity and your unrivaled commitment to your university.

Welcome to the first issue of an all-new Leaders & Best. This is our organic case statement and ongoing impact report for you, the University of Michigan: “With all of our imperfections, we’re the kind of place that works diligently to live into our values. Our university community truly believes in and is committed to excellence in all we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.”

What we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK
Dear Friends,

Last month, E. Royster Harper (BSEd ’73, AM ’74) retired after four decades of service to the University of Michigan. As vice president for Student Life, Dr. Harper worked hand-in-hand with multiple generations of Wolverines. She leaves behind a University of Michigan that is a more equitable and supportive home for its students.

In reflecting on more than 40 years with Michigan, Dr. Harper had this to say about our university: “With all of our imperfections, we’re the kind of place that works diligently to live into our values. Our university community truly believes in and is committed to excellence in all we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.”

Here at Leaders & Best, we’ve been trying to live up to that lofty aspirational mantra, too. Since last winter’s Victors for Michigan campaign edition, we’ve been busy reinventing our book-collecting stories, and designing an all-new labor of love just for you, dear donor. We polled our readers, spoke with our community, and argued a lot among ourselves. Ultimately, we came up with this: a reimagined journal of philanthropy for the University of Michigan. A maize and blue storybook that speaks to your awesome generosity and your unrivaled commitment to your university.

Welcome to the first issue of an all-new Leaders & Best. This is our organic case statement and ongoing impact report for you, the University of Michigan: “With all of our imperfections, we’re the kind of place that works diligently to live into our values. Our university community truly believes in and is committed to excellence in all we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.”

What we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK
Dear Friends,

Last month, E. Royster Harper (BSEd ’73, AM ’74) retired after four decades of service to the University of Michigan. As vice president for Student Life, Dr. Harper worked hand-in-hand with multiple generations of Wolverines. She leaves behind a University of Michigan that is a more equitable and supportive home for its students.

In reflecting on more than 40 years with Michigan, Dr. Harper had this to say about our university: “With all of our imperfections, we’re the kind of place that works diligently to live into our values. Our university community truly believes in and is committed to excellence in all we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.”

Here at Leaders & Best, we’ve been trying to live up to that lofty aspirational mantra, too. Since last winter’s Victors for Michigan campaign edition, we’ve been busy reinventing our book-collecting stories, and designing an all-new labor of love just for you, dear donor. We polled our readers, spoke with our community, and argued a lot among ourselves. Ultimately, we came up with this: a reimagined journal of philanthropy for the University of Michigan. A maize and blue storybook that speaks to your awesome generosity and your unrivaled commitment to your university.

Welcome to the first issue of an all-new Leaders & Best. This is our organic case statement and ongoing impact report for you, the University of Michigan: “With all of our imperfections, we’re the kind of place that works diligently to live into our values. Our university community truly believes in and is committed to excellence in all we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.”

What we do. Our mantra—Leaders and Best—is our aspiration for ourselves.
As a university president, I’m often asked about the future. Alumni and friends of Michigan want to hear what lies ahead for our university. They want to know how a public research university like Michigan will enhance the future of our state, our nation, and the world beyond our borders.

Five years ago, I was lucky enough to join the Michigan family at an auspicious moment. We were planning our yearlong bicentennial celebration, looking back on two centuries of academic preeminence and service for the public good. But we didn’t only look back—as leaders and best, we looked forward.

As U-M goes full speed ahead in its third century, we are poised to answer those questions about the future. Right now, there are a number of exciting initiatives that are positioning U-M for even greater leadership in research, education, and service. We will honor and advance our public mission by serving our students, cultivating transformative innovation and discovery, and broadening our deep commitment to helping solve society’s biggest problems.

Reflecting on my first five years as U-M president, the initiative I’m most proud of is our Go Blue Guarantee. It’s remarkable to see the impact that program is already having on our student body here in Ann Arbor.

In the program’s first year, applications from some of our state’s lowest-income students increased by 24%, and more than 1,700 students had their tuition covered in full thanks to the Go Blue Guarantee. This fall, more than 27% of in-state undergraduates receive financial aid. By supporting our students and increasing economic diversity in our student body, we ensure that our university will continue to serve as an engine of opportunity and thrive as a space for intellectual discourse and world-class education.

As a great public research university, we also embrace our responsibility to focus our academic strength on the challenges and opportunities that face the public we serve. For an institution with more than 200 years of driving growth and opportunity in our state, there is no place we’ve been doing this longer than in our birthplace of Detroit.

In the fall, we were proud to announce that U-M will add to and enhance our legacy of service in the city by accepting Mayor Mike Duggan’s invitation to partner on the Detroit Center for Innovation (DCI). The DCI will help us determine how best to solve the problem of injuries caused by firearms in the public health perspective; and a comprehensive approach to firearm injury prevention.

Our efforts to serve society and meet real-world challenges don’t end in Detroit. Exciting new endeavors at Michigan include the beginning of a comprehensive arts initiative; a Firearm Injury Prevention Research Initiative; and a growing number of other initiatives, including engaged learning, educational technology, and educational science.

In its effort to meet society’s greatest problems, U-M also recently launched a $5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the development of a world-class fire and injury research center.

In the fall, we were proud to announce that U-M will add to and enhance our legacy of service in the city by accepting Mayor Mike Duggan’s invitation to partner on the Detroit Center for Innovation. The center to build on its success, supporting faculty in curricular innovation, educational data and research, and educational technology.

In its effort to meet society’s greatest problems, U-M also recently launched a $5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the development of a world-class fire and injury research center.

In the fall, we were proud to announce that U-M will add to and enhance our legacy of service in the city by accepting Mayor Mike Duggan’s invitation to partner on the Detroit Center for Innovation. The center to build on its success, supporting faculty in curricular innovation, educational data and research, and educational technology.

In its effort to meet society’s greatest problems, U-M also recently launched a $5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the development of a world-class fire and injury research center.

In the fall, we were proud to announce that U-M will add to and enhance our legacy of service in the city by accepting Mayor Mike Duggan’s invitation to partner on the Detroit Center for Innovation. The center to build on its success, supporting faculty in curricular innovation, educational data and research, and educational technology.

In its effort to meet society’s greatest problems, U-M also recently launched a $5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the development of a world-class fire and injury research center.

In the fall, we were proud to announce that U-M will add to and enhance our legacy of service in the city by accepting Mayor Mike Duggan’s invitation to partner on the Detroit Center for Innovation. The center to build on its success, supporting faculty in curricular innovation, educational data and research, and educational technology.

In its effort to meet society’s greatest problems, U-M also recently launched a $5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the development of a world-class fire and injury research center.
Our ability to partner internationally, exchange ideas, and provide opportunities for faculty and students that cross borders is at the core of our history and our future. Through our efforts, we are forging ahead and enhancing a legacy that is unparalleled in higher education. We’re a Michigan that is ambitious in the pursuit of knowledge, equity, impact, engagement, and excellence. And a Michigan that is willing to change to continue to lead the way in society.

Thank you all for your imagination—and for your passion and commitment to research, to education, to service, and to our great University of Michigan.
The University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA) and its apse are a testament to the rich aesthetic and architectural history of the university. In Alumni Memorial Hall, the apse’s towering 40-foot skylight and classical columns have served as the backdrop for more than a century’s worth of art exhibitions, poetry readings, concerts, weddings, yoga lessons, and—well, the list goes on. Now, as the apse takes on a new title in honor of Lizzie (AB ’94) and Jonathan Tisch, Leaders & Best revisits the history of the museum and one of its iconic exhibition spaces.

UMMA’S ORIGINS
The story begins in 1855, six years before Abraham Lincoln’s inauguration, and decades before civic museums like The Toledo Museum of Art, The Art Institute of Chicago, and The Detroit Institute of Arts began springing up around the Midwest. Henry Simmons Frieze, a U-M professor of Latin who would serve three times as acting president of the university, set off for Europe in search of teaching materials. He began purchasing ancient plaster casts, terra cotta statuary, and fragments of architecture—works that would expand his students’ understanding and imagination of the classical world.

The following year, the majority of Frieze’s collection was put on display in South College (the South Wing of University Hall), while other pieces were scattered about the Ann Arbor campus. It was a humble beginning for the oldest public art gallery in Michigan. No one—maybe not even Professor Frieze—would have guessed that his modest collection would grow to such proportions, let alone that it would mark the beginning of one of the country’s most impressive university art collections.

In the waning years of the Civil War, a group of alumni veterans came together with the idea of creating a memorial building to honor alumni who died serving in the war. Determined to pay tribute to their fellow veterans, the group raised thousands of dollars from alumni and friends of Michigan. But after raising about half of the subscriptions required to fund the memorial’s construction, momentum slowed. Eventually, plans came to a full stop. Alumni Memorial Hall would have to wait a few more decades to be built.

Meanwhile, the university’s art collections only continued to grow. Thanks to generous donations and a modest budget for purchasing new works, a more-than-modest museum began to take shape.

One of the museum’s early acquisitions was of Randolph Rogers’ exquisite marble sculpture, Nydia, The Blind Flower Girl of Pompeii. Purchased with funds raised by community members, Nydia became a prized piece for the museum and the Ann Arbor community. It held a special place in UMMA’s collections not only for its craftsmanship, but also because Rogers spent his childhood in Ann Arbor before gaining international acclaim as a sculptor.

The collections also welcomed a large bequest from Henry Clay Lewis of Coldwater, Michigan. Lewis was a banker who had amassed considerable personal wealth, and with no formal education in art, decided to build his own collection. Lewis was an altruist; his primary interest was increasing his community’s exposure to fine art, and his public collection became one of the first open galleries in the United States. Lewis’ eventual contributions to the university included numerous
original works and statuary from European galleries, including a marble bust of George Washington (also by Rogers) that can often be found watching over the apse.

By the end of the 19th century, Nydia, Washington, and most of the museum’s other works had found a home on the second and third floors of the Old University Library. But as the library collection expanded, the likes of Nydia and Washington began bumping shoulders with the stacks.

Thankfully, plans for Alumni Memorial Hall were once again gaining traction. A Memorial Committee of the Alumni Association was formed to drive the project. Soon enough, the Board of Regents committed funds and the real estate to construct the hall, under the conditions that it would also have space to house the university’s art collections.

By May 1910, the University of Michigan Museum of Art was poised to become a world-class art museum. More than 50 years after its inception, the neoclassical Alumni Memorial Hall looked out over State Street for the first time, with the apse as its central exhibition space.

Later that year, the university’s first exhibition was on display. The exhibition was sponsored by esteemed art collector and Detroit native Charles Lang Freer (AMHon 1904), who offered an intimate look at his robust collection of Asian and American art. Though UMMA was not its own unit yet—it would separate from the Museum of Archaeology in 1946—it was already displaying some of the world’s most sought-after works. Today, you can visit his collection in the renowned Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

A MODERN UMMA

Time marched on. History saw its way through two world wars. By the 1950s, postwar America was booming. Rock ‘n’ roll was on the radio. Families were growing. The stock market was climbing. And midcentury modern style was in vogue.

To modernize Alumni Memorial Hall and accommodate the museum’s growing role in the Michigan community, UMMA installed Unistrut scaffolding in the apse. The web of metal frames gave the apse additional gallery space and a large central staircase to the second floor. The open elegance of the apse that echoed classical ideals of order and symmetry became a modern metallic construction of spatial efficiency. Despite these renovations, UMMA once again outgrew its living quarters.

In response, the museum officially inhabited all of Alumni Memorial Hall in 1966. For 20 years, UMMA and its esteemed collections had been living with roommates. Now, they finally had a space of their own.

Aesthetic taste had changed, and UMMA wanted to ensure that the museum no longer felt like it was “only one of several tenants in the building,” as former UMMA director Brett Waller described it. So along with other renovations, all of the Unistrut scaffolding—including the two-story staircase—was removed.
Between the programs, classes, and collections housed in Alumni Memorial Hall, UMMA put its renovated space to good use. Yet, booking schedules were tight. Events had to be put on hold. Guests could only view about 3% of the museum’s collections—the rest had to be kept in storage due to a lack of exhibition space.

By the 2000s, UMMA started exploring how it could further accommodate and extend its impact in the community. In 2009, the museum opened a 33,000-square-foot addition—the Maxine and Stuart Frankel Family Wing—and updated Alumni Memorial Hall thanks to generous support led by Maxine (AB ’66, DFAHon ’16) and Stuart Frankel (BBA ’61). Renovations restored the apse’s skylight, original moldings, and other structural components, bringing to life the space most emblematic of the UMMA we know today. All told, the project allowed UMMA to display 10% of its collections, and opened space for the museum to host over 900 annual public programs, attracting around 240,000 visitors each year.

Over the course of a century, the University of Michigan art collections went from “homeless” to one of the most extensive and celebrated art museums in the country.

**The Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Apse in 2019**

Today, the spirit of support for the arts at Michigan—first sparked by the likes of Frieze, Simmons, alumni veterans, and so many others—carries on. Recently, Lizzie (AB ’94) and Jonathan Tisch donated more than $2.8 million to UMMA to enhance the museum’s exhibitions program. “Jon and I are thrilled to support UMMA and arts engagement at U-M,” Lizzie said. “We believe that providing opportunities for students to engage with art during the formative years of their university experience is essential to their development as global citizens.”

In recognition of the couple’s ongoing support, one of campus’ most cherished spaces will take on a new title: the Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Apse.

Apropos of the Tischs’ gift, UMMA launched its first major reinstallation in the apse in over a decade. The “Collection Ensemble” is an intentionally eclectic exhibition, featuring works by 41 artists. It exchanges the previous focus on European and American painting for a broad mix of American, European, African, and Asian art from across the museum’s remarkable, disparate holdings. You’ll see works like Rogers’ Nydia on display alongside other works making their first-ever appearance in an UMMA exhibition.

“The exhibition recasts the role of the collection as an active, creative, sometimes startling source of material and ideas, open for debate and interpretation,” said UMMA’s Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Vera Grant.

“Collection Ensemble” also marks a turning point in installations in Alumni Memorial Hall. “We love Alumni Memorial Hall and its history, but for the last 10 years, its display has been static and narrow in scope. There was no art by living artists, and no art by anyone outside Europe and the United States. We wanted our diverse public to see the breadth and complexity of what we have and to also see work by artists of color and women,” said UMMA Director Christina Olsen.

“Collection Ensemble” is a rich example of how support like the Tischs’ impacts UMMA exhibitions. As its title suggests, the “Collection Ensemble” brings together disparate parts of UMMA’s collections, much in the way it hopes to reach a broader community by making the museum more relevant and accessible for guests. “When I first arrived at UMMA, many students and visitors told me that they felt excluded from the museum and that the art on view was very removed from their life or concerns. I wanted to change that,” Olsen said.

Creating a more inviting and inclusive space is central to the museum’s mission. UMMA is a gathering place for the entire Michigan community. It’s where the intersection of life and art happens—where centuries of art is enjoyed, discussed, and celebrated.

And philanthropy has helped transform that space since day one. What began as a mobile collection of classical art and architecture has bloomed into a world-class nexus of global artwork. From the grassroots movement of a group of Civil War veterans to the transformational support of families like the Tischs, acts of philanthropy have defined the University of Michigan Museum of Art.

With exhibitions like “Collection Ensemble” gracing the Lizzie and Jonathan Tisch Apse, it’s clear that UMMA will continue to be a dynamic hub for the arts for years to come.
WHY DOES GIVING FEEL SO GOOD?

Have you ever wondered why giving feels so good? We explored the science of philanthropy with U-M alumna Sara Konrath (MJ ‘06, PhD ’07). As it happens, giving may feel good because it’s actually good for you.

By Danny McAlindon (AB ’14)
A number of studies find positive correlations between prosocial behaviors and well-being. Whether you’re offering your time, talents, or treasure to somebody in need, studies show that you’re likely reaping a myriad of unexpected benefits.

Sara Konrath (MS ’06, PhD ’07) is an affiliate professor at U-M’s Institute of Social Research and an associate professor of philanthropic and nonprofit management at the University of Indiana’s Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. Konrath has led research into volunteerism, prosocial spending behaviors, and their ensuing effects on givers’ well-being. Her research—and hundreds of other supporting studies—suggest that living life more altruistically has a number of positive perks.

Konrath had been volunteering since she was young, so she already knew how good it feels to give. But at U-M, she was interested in learning of the potential health benefits of giving, volunteerism, and empathy. That’s how she and her colleagues began studying the physiological implications of prosocial behaviors. “We looked at changes in oxytocin and stress hormones like cortisol to try and see what changes occurred in the moment that people help others,” she says. “That’s when I really got curious.”

As it turns out, her postgraduate work at the Institute for Social Research and decades of corroborating research illustrate a simple truth: it feels good to give because giving really is good for you.

An abundance of research suggests that volunteering, donating to others, and practicing empathy all have positive effects on the mind. A nine-year-long study tracking over 900 adults found that the more money subjects donated at the beginning of the study, the higher their psychological well-being was nine years later. Those effects persist “even when controlling for baseline well-being, physical health, income, education, religion, and general social integration,” the study says.

Another study asked participants to merely recall a time that they had given money to others and a time that they had spent money on themselves. Those who recalled a time when they spent on others were significantly happier—regardless of the amount spent.

So we know that prosocial behavior has profound effects on the mind, but what about the body? Could it boost your immune system, or even extend your life?

“Those effects persist ‘even when controlling for baseline well-being, physical health, income, education, religion, and general social integration,’” the study says.

Konrath had been volunteering since she was young, so she already knew how good it feels to give. But at U-M, she was interested in learning of the potential health benefits of giving, volunteerism, and empathy. That’s how she and her colleagues began studying the physiological implications of prosocial behaviors. “We looked at changes in oxytocin and stress hormones like cortisol to try and see what changes occurred in the moment that people help others,” she says. “That’s when I really got curious.”

As it turns out, her postgraduate work at the Institute for Social Research and decades of corroborating research illustrate a simple truth: it feels good to give because giving really is good for you.

An abundance of research suggests that volunteering, donating to others, and practicing empathy all have positive effects on the mind. A nine-year-long study tracking over 900 adults found that the more money subjects donated at the beginning of the study, the higher their psychological well-being was nine years later. Those effects persist “even when controlling for baseline well-being, physical health, income, education, religion, and general social integration,” the study says.

Another study asked participants to merely recall a time that they had given money to others and a time that they had spent money on themselves. Those who recalled a time when they spent on others were significantly happier—regardless of the amount spent.

So we know that prosocial behavior has profound effects on the mind, but what about the body? Could it boost your immune system, or even extend your life?

Konrath and her peers, giving of ourselves literally gets under our skin, with striking implications for our long-term health. Research into prosocial behaviors expands every year, and exciting new findings are constantly coming to light. We have a lot to learn. But the early research has shown us that giving not only feels good in the moment, but that it’s good for us in the long run, too.

I’m passionate about this because we get to study something that can actually make a difference in people’s lives,” Konrath says. “We’re able to help people understand how they can live a good life—not just by helping themselves, but by helping others. That’s a powerful thing.”

Konrath’s most recent research explores individual motivations for charitable giving. She and colleague Emily Handy employed 823 Amazon Mechanical Turk subjects who reported giving to charity in the previous year. A 54-question survey helped Konrath and Handy establish six common motivations for giving. They’re artfully distilled it down to a handy acronym: TASTE: For Charity. What motivates you?

Trust: This survey found that individuals are more likely to donate to organizations they trust. Donors not only trust the organizations to act with integrity, but to take their donation and use it to make a positive difference in the world.

Altruism: Many donors reported giving because they deeply felt compelled to help others’ needs. Konrath and Handy’s work reinforced earlier findings by other scholars, who found that the most important reason for volunteering is just that: an altruistic concern for others.

Social: Others gave because they knew their donations matter to someone close to them—or, in some cases, Konrath and Handy cite donors who donate to medical research because they know someone who has a serious disease. Social giving is the foundation for modern fundraising efforts.

Taxes: Taxes don’t talk. Tax breaks are a phenomenal incentive for many donors. Have you claimed your earned gift?

Egoism: Some donors offered as reasons they choose not to give. They simply feel they can’t afford it, or they confess that every little gift counts. “And if you don’t give, you,” she says, “then give your time.”

Financial Constraints: Other donors offered as reasons they choose not to give. They simply feel they can’t afford it, or they confess that every little gift counts. “And if you don’t give, you,” she says, “then give your time.”

We’re able to help people understand how they can live a good life—not just by helping themselves, but by helping others. That’s a powerful thing.

SARA KONRATH (MS ’06, PhD ’07)
“CHAD WINKS”

The story of pediatric brain cancer's silent heroes and the hope for treatment

BY MADELINE SWANSON

“Rare” is a loathed word for any family with a child plagued by a brain tumor. “Rare” is one reason for so little funding and so few researchers studying tumors like Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), the deadly pediatric brainstem tumor that occurs almost exclusively in children under the age of 10. And while the condition is rare—there are around 350 new cases in the United States each year—that’s little consolation for the families stricken by its presence. With no viable treatment options, the condition is a childhood death sentence. And “rare” is one reason that the last four decades have generated little progress toward treatment.

That was until DIPG came for Chad Carr, the youngest son of Tammi Carr (AB ’97) and former Michigan quarterback Jason Carr (AB ’95), and grandson of former Michigan Football coach Lloyd Carr and former All-American Michigan safety Tom Curtis (AB ’70). Chad was diagnosed with DIPG in 2014; his diagnosis and death ignited a national movement. Today—over four years, thousands of donors, and millions of dollars later—researchers at U-M are testing novel cancer treatments that may have promising implications for pediatric brain cancers like DIPG. Thanks to Chad and the Carrs, U-M may finally push DIPG research forward after four decades of silence.

Leaders & Best sat down with the Carrs to learn how grassroots philanthropy is propelling that pioneering research forward. We also interviewed the husband-and-wife research duo behind one of the many promising new therapies emerging at U-M. This is the story of a relentlessly inspiring Michigan family and the silent heroes bringing hope to families facing this deadly disease.

“Rare” is a loathed word for any family with a child plagued by a brain tumor. “Rare” is one reason for so little funding and so few researchers studying tumors like Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), the deadly pediatric brainstem tumor that occurs almost exclusively in children under the age of 10. And while the condition is rare—there are around 350 new cases in the United States each year—that’s little consolation for the families stricken by its presence. With no viable treatment options, the condition is a childhood death sentence. And “rare” is one reason that the last four decades have generated little progress toward treatment.

That was until DIPG came for Chad Carr, the youngest son of Tammi Carr (AB ’97) and former Michigan quarterback Jason Carr (AB ’95), and grandson of former Michigan Football coach Lloyd Carr and former All-American Michigan safety Tom Curtis (AB ’70). Chad was diagnosed with DIPG in 2014; his diagnosis and death ignited a national movement. Today—over four years, thousands of donors, and millions of dollars later—researchers at U-M are testing novel cancer treatments that may have promising implications for pediatric brain cancers like DIPG. Thanks to Chad and the Carrs, U-M may finally push DIPG research forward after four decades of silence.

Leaders & Best sat down with the Carrs to learn how grassroots philanthropy is propelling that pioneering research forward. We also interviewed the husband-and-wife research duo behind one of the many promising new therapies emerging at U-M. This is the story of a relentlessly inspiring Michigan family and the silent heroes bringing hope to families facing this deadly disease.
On a warm June morning in 2015, the Centennial Park and Farms subdivision bustled with activity. The normally serene neighborhood—tucked down a quiet road on Ann Arbor’s south side—was gearing up for its biggest event of the year. Tammi and Jason Carr busily gathered old clothes, toys, and other treasures for a neighborhood garage sale. Alongside 70 other Centennial Park families, the Carrs were preparing for the first official fundraiser for what would become The ChadTough Foundation. Following Chad’s diagnosis, the Carr family devoted their lives to raising money and awareness in hopes of finding a treatment and eventually a cure for DIPG. "We call them ‘Chad winks,’" she said. "Chad just puts the right people in our path. It’s amazing.”

The memory of Chad is strongest in his childhood. Two months later, Castro received a phone call. It was a development colleague calling with news that she had received an incredibly generous donation from a man Castro had apparently met in a buffet line. The donor had used his 60th birthday as an occasion to host a small backyard barbecue to raise money for Castro’s work. Much like Ron Weiser arriving in the Carrs’ backyard with a $10,000 check, a seemingly random act of philanthropy removed a barrier to progress, bringing Castro one piece of equipment closer to moving research forward.

Tammi has a name for serendipitous moments like these. "We call them ‘Chad winks,’" she said. "Chad just puts the right people in our path. It’s amazing.”

In these disparate, ordinary moments in time, at garage sales and in buffet lines, Chad’s generous spirit is seemingly at work. The memory of Chad and children like him connects people to a cause greater than themselves. The memory of Chad is strongest in his childhood home. As Tammi welcomed the Leaders & Best team into her home, I can’t help but notice Chad’s smiling face in family photos lining the shelves, consoles, and walls. Pillows and blankets display...
As Jason puts it, “If you wanted to make a change

Unlike other pediatric brain cancers, this inoperable tumor spreads throughout a child’s brainstem, leaving patients and families few options for treatment. This was the case for the Carrs.

A few days before his 4th birthday, Chad fell and broke his nose, prompting a trip to the emergency room at C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital. After a basic examination, doctors sent Chad home and assured his parents that his nose would heal on its own. But it wasn’t long before Tammi and Jason noticed he was “a little off.” Convinced Chad had a concussion, they returned to Mott for an MRI.

The MRI was supposed to take only a couple of hours, but when nearly four hours had passed, panic began to set in for Chad’s parents. The doctors had found something, and they told the Carrs that Chad would be spending his 4th birthday in intensive care.

Tammi and Jason began bracing themselves for the worst, not knowing that the worst was beyond what they could imagine.

“You’re saying to yourself, ‘The worst thing could be cancer,’” Jason says. “So I’m gearing myself up for the fact that he’s going to have to undergo radiation or go right into surgery.”

After what felt like days, Valerie Oppari, MD, arrived alongside a team of doctors. Oppari is the Ravitz Foundation Endowed Professor of Pediatrics and Communicable Diseases and, at the time, was the chair of the Department of Pediatrics. As a close friend of the Carrs, she wanted to be there in person to offer her support in what was to come. As Tammi and Jason anxiously hovered over a digital image of Chad’s brain, the doctors pointed to his brainstem.

“I just looked up and said, ‘Are you telling us he’s going to die?’” Tammi recalls, tears streaming down her cheeks. “They said, ‘The prognosis is about four to nine months.’”

The weight of those words knocked Tammi to the floor.

PLANTING THE (GRASS)ROOTS OF CHANGE

Overwhelmed with unimaginable grief, Tammi remembers waking up the next morning with an epiphany and new sense of purpose.

“We have to do something. We have to make this big,” she declared to Jason and their family.

Tammi is a strong, incoherently energetic, positive woman: a “mama bear” she warms with a smile. When DIPG attacked her youngest son, she channeled her grief to rally a community of supporters who would help fight back with ferocious intensity.

“Ask me anything. I just want to help,” Tammi says. Shortly after Chad’s diagnosis, the Carrs created the ChadTough Fund at Mott to support pediatric brain cancer research. The fund has since received support from more than 1,500 donors, including many faculty and staff who were touched by the Carrs’ plight. ChadTough quickly gained steam within the local and U-M communities, and before long, grew into a national movement: Chad was becoming the face of DIPG.

“He came down here with a job to do,” Tammi says. “And we’re just trying to keep it up.”

“The support we’ve had from our local community and the Michigan community… I don’t have words for how great it is,” Tammi says. “But when people give up their time, their abilities, and their resources—and they’re so passionate about it—that just keeps you going.”

There are many barriers to treating DIPG. Surgical removal of the tumor from the developing brainstem would kill the child immediately. Chemotherapy is ineffective. Radiation is especially toxic to children. Instead of traditional treatments, a highly advanced combination of therapies—from immunotherapy to genetic sequencing—is required to attack the inoperable tumor.

Nearly 60 years ago, astronaut Neil Armstrong’s daughter, Karen “Shuffle” Armstrong, died of DIPG. Even such a high-profile death didn’t prompt funding and DIPG awareness. While the field of pediatric cancer research has seen a number of breakthroughs in recent years, DIPG has experienced little progress. In the U.S., only a sliver of federal research dollars are allocated to all pediatric cancers combined. And with so few children diagnosed with DIPG, little is known about the lethal tumor, leaving patients and families few options for treatment.
When Tammi first met Ron Weiser, just months before the official launch of the Chad Tough Foundation, she saw that he knew the central role he and other philanthropists would play in the movement. The foundation was established in December 2013. “It was really organic and grassroots as it came,” she says. “It was never us saying, ‘We have to start this foundation.’”

“It was really more like, we can’t not start this.”

He came down here with a job to do, Tammi says. “Of course, when you get Ron Weiser engaged in something, the next thing you know there’s a campaign, and we’ve raised $30 million.”

In 2014, Michigan Medicine and the Chad Tough Foundation announced at the foundation’s Champions for Change gala that the U-M Board of Regents had approved the Chad Carr Pediatric Brain Tumor Center (CC-PBTC). Thousands of supporters from across the country had come together to raise the $30 million needed to establish and name the center in Chad’s memory.

Today, the center is led by Dori Popecki, Shuangzhi, and Eric Fournier, MD, PhD, the Emmanuel N. Maisel Professor of Oncology and Royal Cancer Center director. It unites experts from multiple specialties and schools across campus, including pediatrics, radiology, neurosurgery, radiation oncology, genetics, cancer metabolism, neuroscience, epigenetics, and pathology, as well as engineering and public health, to accelerate research on DIPG and other pediatric brain tumors. The CC-PBTC’s monthly DIPG and pediatric brain tumor focus group brings together experts from nine labs in eight departments, divisions, and programs at U-M: Pediatrics, Molecular and Integrative Physiology, Chemical Biology, Radiation Oncology, Hematology and Oncology, Neurosurgery, Internal Medicine, Pathology, and the Michigan Center for Translational Pathology, as well as visiting expert faculty from other institutions. Funding from a variety of sources, from private donors to corporate support, propelling advancements in cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas.

For years, U-M has had a robust pediatric brain cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas. “Without philanthropy, this never would’ve happened,” Castro says. “We went from having no resources to work on DIPG to donors funding the work that allowed us to go to the NIH—the final seal of approval that this group at U-M is doing good work in this space.”

Donors have also provided numerous tools for Castro and Lowenstein and “show her the microscope!” Castro says to Lowenstein. As they’ve laid through a sea of black-lit tables, computers, and other high-tech equipment.

“The fact that we don’t have a treatment doesn’t mean we don’t have it yet.”

For years, U-M has had a robust pediatric brain cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas. “Without philanthropy, this never would’ve happened,” Castro says. “We went from having no resources to work on DIPG to donors funding the work that allowed us to go to the NIH—the final seal of approval that this group at U-M is doing good work in this space.”

Donors have also provided numerous tools for Castro and Lowenstein and “show her the microscope!” Castro says to Lowenstein. As they’ve laid through a sea of black-lit tables, computers, and other high-tech equipment.

“The fact that we don’t have a treatment doesn’t mean we don’t have it yet.”

For years, U-M has had a robust pediatric brain cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas. “Without philanthropy, this never would’ve happened,” Castro says. “We went from having no resources to work on DIPG to donors funding the work that allowed us to go to the NIH—the final seal of approval that this group at U-M is doing good work in this space.”

Donors have also provided numerous tools for Castro and Lowenstein and “show her the microscope!” Castro says to Lowenstein. As they’ve laid through a sea of black-lit tables, computers, and other high-tech equipment.

“The fact that we don’t have a treatment doesn’t mean we don’t have it yet.”

For years, U-M has had a robust pediatric brain cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas. “Without philanthropy, this never would’ve happened,” Castro says. “We went from having no resources to work on DIPG to donors funding the work that allowed us to go to the NIH—the final seal of approval that this group at U-M is doing good work in this space.”

Donors have also provided numerous tools for Castro and Lowenstein and “show her the microscope!” Castro says to Lowenstein. As they’ve laid through a sea of black-lit tables, computers, and other high-tech equipment.

“The fact that we don’t have a treatment doesn’t mean we don’t have it yet.”

For years, U-M has had a robust pediatric brain cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas. “Without philanthropy, this never would’ve happened,” Castro says. “We went from having no resources to work on DIPG to donors funding the work that allowed us to go to the NIH—the final seal of approval that this group at U-M is doing good work in this space.”

Donors have also provided numerous tools for Castro and Lowenstein and “show her the microscope!” Castro says to Lowenstein. As they’ve laid through a sea of black-lit tables, computers, and other high-tech equipment.

“The fact that we don’t have a treatment doesn’t mean we don’t have it yet.”

For years, U-M has had a robust pediatric brain cancer research program that has received generous donor support, propelling advancements in treatment of DIPG and other high-grade gliomas. “Without philanthropy, this never would’ve happened,” Castro says. “We went from having no resources to work on DIPG to donors funding the work that allowed us to go to the NIH—the final seal of approval that this group at U-M is doing good work in this space.”

Donors have also provided numerous tools for Castro and Lowenstein and “show her the microscope!” Castro says to Lowenstein. As they’ve laid through a sea of black-lit tables, computers, and other high-tech equipment.
PROPELLING PROGRESS at the Chad Carr Pediatric Brain Tumor Center

This timeline depicts how financial support from a variety of sources has helped increase the breadth and scope of DIPG research at the CC-PBTC and across U-M. Below you’ll learn about a small slice of the research underway, and two of the many researchers at U-M working on this interdisciplinary effort. Funding at the CC-PBTC has supported advancements in genetics, metabolics, immunology, and more.

2013
- U-M researchers were not exclusively studying DIPG in 2013, although U-M researchers had been studying other pediatric brain cancers for years.
- Decades of research leads to Castro and Lowenstein’s Phase I Clinical Trial to test a novel therapeutic approach for adults with high-grade gliomas.

2014
- Chad Carr is diagnosed with DIPG.
- Tammi and Jason Carr, along with family and friends, begin sharing Chad’s story in hopes of raising awareness.
- The Carrs establish the ChadTough Fund at U-M’s C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital, inspiring support from the community.

2015
- On Nov. 23, Chad dies of DIPG.
- The ChadTough Foundation is officially established in December.

2016
- Support from the ChadTough Foundation enables Castro and Lowenstein to gather data that allows them to apply for future grants.

2017
- $600K in funding for DIPG at the CC-PBTC
- 6 ongoing funded DIPG projects at U-M
- 6 U-M researchers working on DIPG
- Projects include preclinical trial research, genomics, metabolics, immunology, and more.

2018
- The Chad Carr Pediatric Brain Tumor Center (CC-PBTC) is established at U-M, thanks to 1,549 donors giving 2,181 gifts, totaling $30M
- 12 ongoing funded DIPG projects at the CC-PBTC
- 10 U-M researchers working on DIPG
- 300% increase in new patient referrals to the CC-PBTC
- $1.25M in funding for DIPG at the CC-PBTC

2019
- In April, a DIPG grant from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (a department within the National Institutes of Health) enables Castro and Lowenstein to implement a historic therapeutic approach in mice to eventually be used in pediatric patients.
- The ChadTough Foundation has given more than $2.7 million to Michigan Medicine, funding the first DIPG professorship and more.
- The ChadTough Foundation has given more than $2.7 million to Michigan Medicine, funding the first DIPG professorship and more.

The CC-PBTC’s monthly DIPG Focus Group brings together experts from nine labs in nine areas at Michigan Medicine, in addition to collaborations underway with the College of Engineering and the School of Public Health.
In the room stands a donor-funded confocal microscope, which researchers use to study the behavior of tumor cells over time. Lowenstein points to the shades of red, pink, and violet on a computer screen an arm’s length away, where 3D images from the microscope actually show the cancer cells moving inside a living tumor.

The cells they study are donated by patients like Chad. "You are trying to do science, and science is the world’s largest alumni base in the world working to help the Carrs "make this big. "The Michigan team is paving the path to DIPG treatment through powerful collaborations—from every donor and researcher, to every athlete, coach, and alumnus that supports the effort in ways big and small."

"We're going to be doing what we're doing—even when we don't necessarily want to be doing it. We know it's what we're meant to do," Tammi says. "It was Chad's job, and we're just continuing it."

Steady progress toward treating DIPG at Michigan shows no signs of stopping, thanks to expert scientists, a strong community of supporters, and the largest alumni base in the world working to help the Carrs "make this big. "The Michigan team is paving the path to DIPG treatment through powerful collaborations—from every donor and researcher, to every athlete, coach, and alumnus that supports the effort in ways big and small."

"Weird! Giving anything to have him back and not do any of this, but he had a job to do, and it was a big one," she said. "We really believe one person can change the world, because Chad's doing it—and people are jumping in with him."

With new knowledge, funding, and a potential treatment for DIPG being tested, there is hope that survival rates will increase, representing critical advancements since Chad lost his battle with the disease. While progress won't bring back their son, Tammi and Jason say that Chad's legacy has provided a new perspective on life.

"We're all a really small part of this giant plan that we don't always understand," Tammi tells me as we sit on their family room couch, a quilt displaying photos of Chad draped over the cushions. "But we've seen the power of hope through this little boy."

"It has crystalized what's really important. Your house doesn't really matter, your job doesn't really matter, your car—none of those things are that big of a deal," Jason says. Maybe Alessi's Brave Little Soul said it best.

"God replied, 'Have you not noticed the goodness and love that is the offspring of that suffering? Look at how people come together, how they drop their differences, and share their love and compassion for those who suffer. All their other motivations disappear, and they become motivated by love alone.'"

"We're all a really small part of this giant plan that we don't always understand," Tammi tells me as we sit on their family room couch, a quilt displaying photos of Chad draped over the cushions. "But we've seen the power of hope through this little boy."

"It has crystalized what's really important. Your house doesn't really matter, your job doesn't really matter, your car—none of those things are that big of a deal," Jason says. Maybe Alessi's Brave Little Soul said it best.

"God replied, 'Have you not noticed the goodness and love that is the offspring of that suffering? Look at how people come together, how they drop their differences, and share their love and compassion for those who suffer. All their other motivations disappear, and they become motivated by love alone.'"
When Vice President for Development Emeritus Jerry May (School of Education ’78) closed the book on 30 years of service to the university, many wondered who could possibly fill his shoes. A national search was set in motion. But as it happened, President Schlissel didn’t have to look far.

In December 2018, the U-M Board of Regents approved the appointment of Tom Baird (AB ’83), assistant dean for advancement at the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, as Michigan’s next vice president for development.

Nearly 12 months into his new role, Baird sat down with Leaders & Best to reflect on his first year. Our conversation ranges from the future of U-M fundraising to the art of work-life balance and the power of positivity.

I meet Tom Baird in his office. The bookshelves are empty and, besides a few framed photos of the Ann Arbor campus, the walls are bare. The office is being renovated because he wants it to be a collaborative space, one that can be utilized by his team even when he’s on the road. The decor is going to be midcentury modern, but at the moment, the office looks like a half-assembled IKEA office display. It’s a work in progress.

He’s wearing khakis and a striped Oxford, sleeves rolled. It’s a casual day for the guy who’s been one of the most dynamic fundraising leaders at U-M for over two decades. Baird has held a number of roles in U-M fundraising. From UM-Dearborn to Michigan Medicine, LSA to the Office of University Development—where he headed plans for the Victors for Michigan Campaign—he’s been the one U-M fundraisers call on to lead their teams.

“I joke that I can’t hold a job,” he says. But the truth is that most of his opportunities have come from other people asking him to apply, and pulling him into interviews. “I didn’t have a direct pathway or plan. You could say I’m organically ambitious.” It was this ambition, curiosity—whatever you want to call it—that first opened the door to the world of fundraising.

When he graduated with a degree from LSA in American Culture Studies, a career in philanthropy wasn’t on Baird’s radar. “I said, ‘major gift officer, what’s that?’” he recalls with a grin. Two weeks later, he was flying to California to meet with donors, and the rest is history.

Today, Baird leads one of the most prolific fundraising operations in the country with a wealth of experience to draw on.

“I know what it’s like planning campaigns and leaning into what’s next,” he says, reflecting on what he learned while launching the Victors for Michigan campaign.

“When we set the goal of $4 billion, I had never run a campaign of that scale before. There’s a point where you have to either run for the hills or just say, ‘Here we go.”’

Baird and his colleagues chose the latter, and the results speak for themselves. Victors for Michigan amounted to a record-breaking $5.28 billion effort that made U-M
"For us to be the leaders and best in fundraising, our work must reflect the diverse world around us.

For every team Baird has led, positive culture has driven results. At LSA, his team exceeded its Victors for Michigan fundraising goals by over 30%, totaling more than $538 million. But high production isn’t the only measuring stick. It’s about maintaining infrastructure and output that can be sustained over time, he explains, reflecting on the role work-life balance played for the LSA team. In terms of sustainability, emphasizing work-life balance is key.

He admits that striking this balance is something he’s still working on as vice president. Since taking the job last January, the pace has been nonstop. Countless meetings, donor events, long flights, and emails absorb his time, and he’s candid about the struggles of balancing a successful career while also being a husband and father.

Baird knows he can count on as U-M donors who will continue to give. But we also have so much untapped potential. The future is bright."
The American West is burning.

With wildfires rising in intensity and frequency, scholars across the country are racing to save the West’s natural landscapes and the at-risk communities that call them home. Here, Leaders & Best highlights the Wyss Scholars and the alumni of U-M’s School for Environment and Sustainability. We explore how U-M could help preserve some of our nation’s most cherished landscapes.

BY KATIE VLOET
Sarah Clawson (MS ’10) was hosting a Sunday afternoon party at her house in Arizona on June 24, 2017, initially unaware that a potential nightmare had just ignited. As guests started to arrive, she received an alert that a fire was nearby. More alerts came through her handheld radio, and, though the topography and vegetation at her home prevented her from seeing it, she sensed this could be a major wildfire.

Like so many wildfires in the western U.S., the Goodwin Fire started as a whisper, then grew to a violent scream. Neighborhoods, then communities, then towns were evacuated. Clawson continued her work of holding in-person and phone meetings, helping to coordinate the response of firefighters and other emergency responders. For several weeks, she slept little and fueled herself with coffee and Uncrustables sandwiches.

On the day the fire began, 150 acres were affected. By the next day, the Goodwin Fire had scorched 1,000 acres of mostly dense chaparral and stands of ponderosa pine. Four days in, the Arizona governor declared a state of emergency as wind gusts up to 30 miles per hour and dry forest land continued to feed the fire. It swept across a four-lane highway. Clawson feared for human lives, as well as native wildlife and plant species such as madrones, coyotes, and mountain lions.

Clawson continued to receive alerts on her radio and soon handed off hosting the party to a friend. Socializing would have to wait for another day; her forest was on fire.

Like so many wildfires in the western U.S., the Goodwin Fire started as a whisper, then grew to a violent scream. Neighborhoods, then communities, then towns were evacuated. Clawson continued her work of holding in-person and phone meetings, helping to coordinate the response of firefighters and other emergency responders. For several weeks, she slept little and fueled herself with coffee and Uncrustables sandwiches.

By the next day, the Goodwin Fire had scorched 1,000 acres of mostly dense chaparral and stands of ponderosa pine. Four days in, the Arizona governor declared a state of emergency as wind gusts up to 30 miles per hour and dry forest land continued to feed the fire. It swept across a four-lane highway. Clawson feared for human lives, as well as native wildlife and plant species such as madrones, coyotes, and mountain lions.

Exhausted but energized by the coordinated effort she witnessed in the incident command center, Clawson pushed forth from one sleepless day to the next. “I looked around at a room of our partners at one point and felt a sense of confidence that all of us would do the best we could because we understood each other, had trained together, and, though we may lose homes, we may lose beautiful parts of our forest, whatever happens—it’s not because we weren’t prepared. We were such a strong group of partners, and I felt a sense of relief that we were going to get through the fire together.”

In the front-line effort that Clawson helped coordinate, firefighters created dozer lines to slow the spread of the fire. DC-10 air tankers dropped 11,000 gallons of fire retardant at a time, while helicopters doused flames with water.

In the end, the fire that began in a 150-acre area on June 24 swept over nearly 30,000 acres. Evacuees returned home by mid-July, and Clawson’s day-to-day work returned to a broader date of forest issues. That work includes overseeing the prescribed burns that are conducted in the Prescott National Forest to decrease the likelihood of catastrophic fires, and studying the ongoing impact of wildfires on the forest ecosystem.

“We are so few from the top of my mind. The impact of climate change

Fire is never far from top-of-mind for many people in the American West. A combination of climate change—in particular the drying out of forest land due to global warming—along with numerous other factors has led to a more than fivefold increase in California’s annual burned areas between 1972 and 2018, according to a study in the journal Earths Future. A National Climate Assessment report stated that half as much forest area would have burned between 1984 and 2015 in a world not warmed by climate change. Summertime forest fires have increased by about 800% in size over the past five decades.

As a result, the ecologies of entire forests have changed. Homes have melted. People and animals have died as wildfires—often behaving like living, sentient monsters—rage closer to front doorways and back decks. Fires so massive they can be seen from satellites in space are forever changing accustomed ways of life.

And while the West has been the most significant of the wildfire hotbeds, other parts of the world and of the country—notably the Southeast—are also expected to see a dramatic increase in the threat of fires in the coming years.

The politics of climate change might be tenuous, but the science is solid. “We are sure that it’s getting warmer and that it’s getting drier,” Overpeck says. “We are sure that those factors are contributing to the wildfires in the West.”

Like Clawson and Overpeck, many alumni, faculty, and students of SEAS are working to draw a figurative and sometimes literal line in the forest floor in order to bring back ecosystems, limit the impact of catastrophic fires, and slow the rapid increase in their incidence.

All of this is occurring in a hypercharged political climate that has had an impact on the willingness of elected officials to address the roots of the threat.

“Part of the problem right now is that the people who don’t want to do anything about climate change have been successful in turning it into a political issue,” says Jonathan Overpeck. Overpeck is the Samuel A. Graham Dean of U-M’s School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS) and the William B. Stapp Collegiate Professor of Environmental Education. “I’m a Westerner. I think most people in the West understand the problem really well. It’s the politicians and the special interests who are trying to cloud the issue.”

“The politics of climate change might be tenuous, but the science is solid. “We are sure that it’s getting warmer and that it’s getting drier,” Overpeck says. “We are sure that those factors are contributing to the wildfires in the West.”

“The politics of climate change might be tenuous, but the science is solid. “We are sure that it’s getting warmer and that it’s getting drier,” Overpeck says. “We are sure that those factors are contributing to the wildfires in the West.”

Among them are Wyss Scholars for the Conservation of the American West, SEAS students whose work is funded by the Wyss Foundation. “We’ve had 13 years’ worth of Wyss Scholars who have been recognized for their leadership potential. The Wyss Foundation recognizes that in order to protect Western landscapes in the long
run, you have to have a cadre of leaders,” says Steven Taffler (BS ’72, MS ’73). Taffler is a professor of natural resource and environmental policy and the faculty coordinator of the program. “Our alumni are having a significant impact in the West, and the Wyss Scholars are moving into leadership positions in agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups.”

Heath Nero (MS ’99), a Wyss Scholar, says the program formed a sturdy foundation for his career. “Because of SORE [as SEAS was previously known] and the Wyss Scholars Program, I was well prepared for my first job upon graduation, as a program manager at the Wyss Foundation working with our partners to try to protect seven discrete landscapes in the American West,” Nero says. The program “also provided me with the financial resources to complete my Environmental Policy master’s program on time and without the worry of student loans bogging me down in the future.”

The training he received in campaigning has served him well on protection campaigns in the United States, Canada, Argentina, and elsewhere, Nero says. It has also assisted him in his current work; helping to navigate the international negotiations around the Convention on Biological Diversity. “The Wyss Foundation continues to be part of Nero’s life. He currently heads the foundation’s conservation program.

**Fighting Fire with Fire**

Smokey Bear, the long-running awareness and advertising icon of the U.S. Forest Service, was unequivocal: “Only YOU can prevent forest fires!” That slogan ran from 1947 until about 50 years later. Smokey became so popular that a doll version of him was made, the Beach Boys sang about his famous slogan, and his likeness adorned stamps and posters.

Yet Smokey’s seemingly benign message is no small part of why wildfires are so problematic today. “The whole notion of Smokey Bear and putting out any fire as quickly as possible, decades and decades of that being the strategy, has led to overstocked forests,” Clawson says.

What many people don’t understand, she says, is that fires are vital to the health of forests. “Fires clear dead wood, provide nutrition for soil, and set off an ecological succession through which new trees grow and a mature forest develops again. Without regular fires, "you have much more hazardous conditions and a heavier fuel load," Clawson says. "Now, you have this real tension between the risk, and the importance of fires to the ecosystem.”

Mary Mitsos (MS ’95, MA ’95), president and CEO of the National Forest Foundation (NFF), points out that the Forest Service “does an amazing job of suppressing most fires. In the past, they’ve done too good a job.” Trees such as the lodgepole pine, which is common out West, have a shorter lifespan than most trees, Mitsos explains. “Their cones won’t open to produce new lodgepole pine without fire.” Ponderosa and longleaf pines are species that have evolved with fire, and “they rely on small fires coming through and cleansing up the forest,” she says.

“One partial solution is more prescribed fires. ‘You have to treat the forests to be less fire-prone,’” Overpeck says. “With prescribed burns, you light low-intensity fires. You want the understory to burn and just char the trees but not kill them. That way, there’s no fuel for the canopy. Without smaller, natural fires, forests have been able to build up an unnatural amount of fuel.”

Prescribed burns are not a perfect or complete solution, however. “The problem is that they can get out of control. People are very risk-averse to having prescribed burns,” Overpeck says. And even a prescribed burn can trigger breathing problems for people with asthma and other respiratory issues.

In the Prescott National Forest, Clawson says, much of the surrounding population understands the need for prescribed fires. “Sometimes we need to conduct one right next to their property line, so we have to have their buy-in,” she says.

She also needs the citizens’ support in making their properties more fire-resistant and being prepared to evacuate when a fire’s extreme behavior overwhelms even the most well-prepared homes. “You can understand how that messaging can be hard with the public,” Clawson says. “We’re very lucky in the Prescott community and surrounding communities that we have a longstanding relationship with them through education. They are well-versed about what needs to be done.”

Another remedy in the American West, the selective removal of trees and unwanted fuel material from forests. When more space is created between trees, fire cannot spread as easily from tree to tree. Overpeck has thinned the forest around his cabin in Colorado to create a perimeter that is more fire-resistant. On a large scale, through thinning, is very expensive.

“‘That’s why our students and faculty are looking into the alternatives’” Overpeck says. “‘Some of our students and faculty have been looking at the services that forests provide: Water supply. Places to hunt and fish. A place for biodiversity. Specialized timber and other forest products. We are studying all of those services that, in theory, could generate money that could then pay for the thinning.”

“‘That’s what SEAS is all about: scholarly work with a real-world impact,’” Overpeck says.

**The Future**

That educational focus helped prepare Mitsos for her current work and a more thorough understanding that “natural resources problems are complex and interdependent.”

“The classroom education and also from the student body really helped prepare me for the diversity that exists in our natural world and how you can’t take one component like climate change and say, ‘That’s the issue,’” Mitsos says. “It’s much more complex than that.”

Her education and experience have also helped her maintain a sense of optimism about the future of forests. Her organization is not involved in forest suppression, but more in the realm of forest health. “We do a lot of reforestation after fires have taken out the natural seed source,” Mitsos says.
In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit world allow fire one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

In California in 2018, then-Gov. Jerry Brown stated a goal of supporting federal efforts to double the rate of “health and resiliency treatments” in the state from 250,000 acres per year to 500,000 acres by 2020, says Jay Chamberlin (MS ’98), chief of the Natural Resources Division for California State Parks. Much of the increase will be accomplished through an acceleration of forest thinning and the use of prescribed fire.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“We have to adapt and make our communities more resilient in the face of wildfire.”

As somebody who lives in the West and suffered through the impacts of a massive 54,000-acre fire just 8 miles from my house during the summer of 2018, I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades. I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“As somebody who lives in the West and suffered through the impacts of a massive 54,000-acre fire just 8 miles from my house during the summer of 2018, I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades. I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades.

“My wife and I have 193 million acres that I can visit, “ she says. “We have really good, coordinated responses to putting out fires,” he says. “You need the same level of coordinated action proactively. So there’s much more community-level engagement in making the landscape safer and more ecologically healthy.”

SEAS faculty, alumni, and students also want to remind the public of what they are fighting for. “We have to make sure our forests stay forests. ”

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

At the Wyss Foundation, Nero says, the organization has ramped up its ongoing efforts to stem the biodiversity crisis.

“At the Wyss Foundation, Nero says, the organization has ramped up its ongoing efforts to stem the biodiversity crisis.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“We have to make sure our forests stay forests.”

As somebody who lives in the West and suffered through the impacts of a massive 54,000-acre fire just 8 miles from my house during the summer of 2018, I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades. I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

At the Wyss Foundation, Nero says, the organization has ramped up its ongoing efforts to stem the biodiversity crisis.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“At the Wyss Foundation, Nero says, the organization has ramped up its ongoing efforts to stem the biodiversity crisis.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”

In 2018, NFF launched a campaign in which every dollar donated to the nonprofit would allow for one tree to be planted in a national forest. Within months, it had planted a staggering 2.6 million trees.

“As somebody who lives in the West and suffered through the impacts of a massive 54,000-acre fire just 8 miles from my house during the summer of 2018, I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades. I never expected to see the embrace of prescribed fire for decades.

“People are looking for answers, and prescribed fire is one of the few ways to ‘reboot’ many forest systems to restore a natural, less intense fire regime in the future,” Chamberlin says, “because we’ve been practicing fire at this level.”
WHAT IT MEANT TO ME

BY DR. ALEXA CANADY (BS ’71, MD ’75)

In "What It Meant to Me," Leaders & Best invites some of U-M’s proudest sons and daughters to tell their Michigan story. Dr. Alexa Canady is a graduate of U-M’s College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and its Medical School. Following graduation, Canady went on to qualify as the first African American and first woman in the United States to become a neurosurgeon. Here, she shares her U-M experience and how a scholarship offer in the summer of 1970 helped her make history.

When I was a little girl, my mother liked to ask me, "Who wants to be average?" Up until the second grade, that’s maybe what she thought I was—just average. My test scores were.

I grew up outside of Lansing. My father was a dentist and my mother raised the children. We lived a pretty middle-class lifestyle. It was the early 1950s, and my older brother and I had integrated one of the county schools. We knew that we stood out there, but our mother had another saying: “You might be a token, and so what if you are? You take your token and spend it.”

The summer after second grade, my grandmother came to visit us. She was a professor at Lane College in Tennessee, and she’d decided to come up and take a course to further her education (otherwise known as “play with the grandchildren”). Her class was on aptitude testing, and I happily volunteered to be her subject because it meant spending more time with her. A funny thing happened next. When my grandmother’s professor saw my scores, he asked her to bring me in for more testing. Apparently, I’d done abnormally well.

That’s how it came to light that my teacher had been lying about my test scores in school. She’d been switching them with a white girl’s in my class. And just like that, it turned out I wasn’t so average after all. Maybe that kind of thing was just part of life then, but we didn’t know it as children. I didn’t find out about any of this until I was already in college. I didn’t even know my teacher had been fired. All I knew was that I was allowed to skip the third grade, and that was enough to spark a new confidence in me.

By the time I reached high school, I’d set my heart on being a mathematician. I had my heart set on MIT, too, and I was crushed when I didn’t get in. On the other hand, I was thrilled when I was accepted at the University of Chicago. But my mother was less thrilled at the idea of sending a 16-year-old girl to live alone in the city. That left one obvious choice for a student like me: Michigan.

“...and so what if you are? You take your token and spend it.”

Finally, my parents said, “I think your brother’s had enough. He’s off to college and I think he’s earned the right to be by himself.” And so they said I had to stay away from Ann Arbor. But what else could I do? I needed to be somewhere I could thrive, and MIT and Chicago were off the table. Luckily, at sixteen I had a bit of a rebellious streak in me. You bet I sent my application in myself.

I got in. And boy, that did wonders for my ego. That’s how I ended up at Michigan, and it really was the best place for me. I stayed in Alice Lloyd Hall up on the hill. My first year in Ann Arbor was phenomenal. I have nothing but warm memories of that time—except that I ended up having to take field hockey for my physical education requirement. I’m sorry, but field hockey is just a god-awful sport.

Most of my first two years I was a debater. That was my thing. Debate became truly all consuming, in the way things do when they’re really wonderful. We were traveling all the time, gone most weekends. Bill Colburn was the coach, and he set very high expectations. Debate trained me to sharpen my mind and gave me lifelong skills that I still use today.
I didn’t much go to class; I didn’t much study; for a year I didn’t do much of anything. It wasn’t long before I ended up on academic probation. I badly needed some direction. By the time I got there, I was ready to be a student again—studied every single day, except for Friday. That was my off day. After class was over on Friday, I didn’t have to go to class; I didn’t have to study. That’s what Michigan meant to me.

And that’s how I found medicine. I worked under Art Bloom in his lab and in the genetics clinic at University Hospital. He showed me what a joy the field could be, and I won’t claim to know a thing about zoology, but it helped me get into med school.

That summer I ended up staying in Ann Arbor and taking a job on The Michigan Daily. My first year I was the city reporter, and I ended up taking on the editorial page. It paid about $400 a month, which doesn’t seem like much, but in those days it was. And because I was working as an editorial page editor, I didn’t go into work until five o’clock at night to work on the morning newspaper. It worked for me.

That same summer, between my junior and senior years, I made it to Minnesota for residency, and before I knew it, I was a neurosurgeon. I had achieved my dream. And that’s all it was to me, because being the “first” anything was never my goal. It wasn’t until I started talking to people in the community that I understood that milestone and why it was more important than I realized.

Its importance was twofold. One, it was important for the children who would no longer see neurosurgery as yet another world that they couldn’t belong to. That’s the side everybody appreciates.

But there’s another side to it. For the white residents who trained under me, especially the white male residents, neurosurgery was no longer their world. It became our world. That was equally important in changing society’s expectations. So while being first wasn’t important to me, it was important for many others. I think that kind of impact is a big part of being “leaders and best.”

It’s still gratifying for me to look back and see how Michigan helped me find my passion and support things like debate, the Daily, and minority scholarship programs. A scholarship helped me find my passion and I’m still grateful for the start I got at Michigan. For me, it was a wonderful place. Like a thousand other little steps along the way, pursuing that scholarship changed the course of my life. I’ve been happy to give back where I can because I know Michigan is a good place, and I know that money matters. I don’t have big money, but I give what I can to support things like debate, the Daily, and minority scholarship programs.

Much of who we are depends on who we believe we are. But much also depends on how the world sees us. Places like Michigan help us see our own potential and then fulfill it. They also help us show the world what we’re capable of, and they help us reshape the narratives that society places on us. Before I came through Michigan, neurosurgery was a white man’s world. A scholarship helped me find my passion and I set me on the path to changing that, not just for myself, but for the people who followed in my footsteps.

That’s what Michigan meant to me.
The playwright Avery Hopwood led a life of worldly riches and inner despair—but a troubled life culminated in a powerful, lasting legacy at his alma mater and beyond.

A MASTER OF COMEDY

On August 26, 2018, The New York Times carried this headline: “Neil Simon, Broadway master of comedy, is dead at 91.” The obituary said Simon, creator of iconic hits from The Odd Couple in the 1960s to Billet Blues in the ’80s, “helped redefine popular American humor with an emphasis on the frictions of urban living and the agonizing conflicts of family intimacy” and he had converted those frictions into “expertly tooled laugh machines.”

Exactly those words could have been used to describe the career of Avery Hopwood, a gay Midwesterner with a superb sense of humor who, in the span of a few months in 1903, wrote his first play, graduated from the University of Michigan, and sold the play to a Broadway production company for an advance against royalties of $250.

This combination of quick effort and quick reward set the pattern of his life, leading to worldly riches and inner despair.

It also planted the seeds of Michigan’s reputation as one of the country’s best training grounds for serious young writers. But that only came many years later, after Hopwood died at an early age in the surf of the French Riviera.

“MERELY A WRITER”

As a boy in Cleveland, Ohio, Hopwood wrote later, “I was torn between a desire to preach and to be an actor. Fate spared both vocations. I turned out merely to be a writer.”

He was a reader and a scribbler in notebooks, not an athlete. “I’ve got to write,” he said later. “I realized that at the age, comparatively speaking, when a duck takes to water, for the only thing I can do is to push a pencil.”

His father sold beef and pork for a living. His mother, to whom he would be close his whole life, nurtured Avery’s family intimacy, and he had converted those frictions into ambivalence where “boys like Brown … could enter without anybody asking or caring what church they belonged to … places without any mission—except to be homelike, and inviting.”

Money problems at home forced Hopwood to leave after that first year. He spent his sophomore year at Adelbert College in Cleveland. Then he returned to Ann Arbor.

Everyone was struck by his distinctive looks. His head seemed a little too large for his slender body, and his right eye drooped noticeably, which made him look slightly off-center and sad.

On vacations he would write for eight hours, then read for eight hours. When it was decided he would go to college, his mother sold her diamond engagement ring to help.

Judging from a short story he wrote about a “midfit” freshman, his first year in Ann Arbor was lonely. The story tells of one J.B. Brown, a sickly youngster of humble origins who can’t fit in with the well-to-do set that dominates campus life. He is befriended by a senior girl who wishes for a kinder sort of college “where this wouldn’t have happened,” with places where “boys like Brown … could enter without anybody asking or caring what church they belonged to … places without any mission—except to be homelike, and inviting.”

Philanthropy at Michigan | 47
In his first year at Michigan the fraternities had turned him away. “They all admitted him to be a fine fellow,” a reporter said later, “but said they couldn’t tolerate such an intellectual strain and didn’t care to have his melancholy figure prowling the ‘ frat’ house.” When he came back for his junior year, a fellow Cleve- lender vouched for him, and he joined Phi Gamma Delta.

Later in life it became clear he was gay. But in a place like Ann Arbor in the early 1900s, the stigma associated with being gay was so powerful that one defined it only as a grave risk to one’s reputation.

Impressions of him were strangely at odds. One friend said he was “awkward, bumbling [and] witty,” with an air of preoccupation that “would[ed] off intrusion.” Another called him “a disheveled student, shy, pasty-faced and a bit grimy. He was not a mixer and had few close friends.”

Not so, according to a fraternity brother, who said, “ Avery was always well dressed … He was neat; he was not shy; he was never ostenta- tious and he looked happy as could be … He was a close friend of every member of the chapter and by far the best liked of any of us.”

Yet a professor recalled him as “a lonesome, rather diffident, although brilliant student.”

Hopwood was anything but different about the professor who had the greatest influence on him. This was Fred Newton Scott, one of the first faculty in the country to teach jour- nalism at the college level. Hopwood took five courses with Scott, who had students discuss their writings with each other around a big oak table. They also discussed such classic works of rhetoric and philosophy as Aristotle’s Poetics and Thomas Carlyle’s Sartor Resartus.

It was the latter work—a novel about a writer from a family of limited means could hardly resist. “The more I thought about it,” Hopwood said later, “the more determined I became to try my luck in the field.”

“Mr. DeFoe’s article started me on my career of crime. Think of the havoc he wrought in my life! I've led him on! I've made him believe I care to wait. The result was a play titled Clothes, in which a young woman is tempted by the promise of wealth and luxury to marry a man she doesn’t love. “I deliberately made up my mind to do that crime. ‘The task wasn’t so easy as I had imagined,” he said later. “It took all my time before graduation. I wrote the thing at least ten times.”

The result was a play titled Clothes, in which a young woman is tempted by the promise of wealth and luxury to marry a man she doesn’t love. “I deliberately made up my mind to do that crime. ‘The task wasn’t so easy as I had imagined,” he said later. “It took all my time before graduation. I wrote the thing at least ten times.”

The style was known as “skat- ing on thin ice.” The trick was to administer mild shocks to playwrights raised on Victorian proprieties but eager to feel daring on a Satur- day night at the theater, but without provoking full-on outrage or censorship.

Over the next 10 years, Hopwood mastered the tools of this very specialized trade—how to develop an eye- brow-raising situation around an appealing leading lady; how to create sexual tension without going too far; how to create sight gags and well-timed lines that have appealed to many writers with salable talent and a thin wallet. To pile up a cushion of money to live on, he would, for a time, write plays for the broadest possible audience. Then he would quit the business to write his seri- ous novels.

That was the plan. But the theme of Clothes—the competition between wealth and being true to oneself—was to haunt the years ahead.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

Asked why he robbed banks, the infamous Willie Sutton is said to have replied, “That’s where the money is.” Hopwood felt the same way about Broadway.

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.

WHERE THE MONEY WAS

The market for popular plays was soar- ing. In 1910 nearly 300 plays were staged on Broadway. Most serious drama critics moaned. One of them called Hopwood’s first big hit, This Was Followed by Nobody’s Widow, Judy Forget, Somewhere Else (a musical) and Miss Jenny O’Jones—two hits and two flops—then, in 1915, a major hit, Fair and Warrior. Here, Hopwood had a young husband and wife at each other—and create a classic “compromis- ing situation” to excite the jealousy of their respective spouses. The players mix cocktails, hide under beds, and lock bathroom doors until finally the maid sorts out the mess to leave domestic harmony.
“People love a touch of the risqué just as they love a cocktail before dinner,” he declared. “Drama is a democratic art, and the dramatist is not the monarch but the servant of the public.”

But others, like Hopwood’s friend Carl Van Vechten—a writer, photographer and cultural impresario—saw “the work of a genius” in Hopwood’s entertainment. “Let those who do not appreciate the virtuosity of this undertaking attempt to write as successful a scene in a similar vein,” Van Vechten remarked.

Audiences ignored the critics and by word of mouth made Hopwood a prince of the box office. At a time when a run of 100 performances classified a play as a hit, Fair and Warmer ran for 377 nights in New York, spawned nine U.S. touring companies, and played 497 nights in London. For a while, Hopwood defended what he did.

“People love a touch of the risqué just as they love a cocktail before dinner,” he declared. “Drama is a democratic art, and the dramatist is not the monarch but the servant of the public.” His plays appealed to “a healthy instinct” in modern audiences, he said. “I refer to the instinct of sex. Prudery and false modesty may pretend to be ashamed of that instinct. I’m not.”

The theme of thwarted sexuality appears in the manuscript of the autobiographical novel that he was drafting in spare hours, an exposé of the theater world in which a young graduate of the University of Michigan aspires to write literature but turns to popular stagecraft. “There was, he found, something very satisfying about making money.”

But he never made a full-time commitment to serious fiction. He was “always finding myself outlining a play when I am talking with a manager or actor, and of course I may never be able to cure myself of this habit—consequently I shall be getting deeper and deeper into the theater.”

IN BOHEMIA
In “The Call to the Playwright,” Lawrence Durrell had opined that few Michigan men entered the theater “because the stage borders upon the strange and uncertain land.”
of Bohemia whose enticing air castles and alluring fascinations college training has a tendency to teach men to shun."

Not so with Hopwood. He immersed himself in the New York neighborhoods that polite society tiptoed past with curious but disapproving glances—Harlem and “Black Bohemia,” where ragtime reigned, and Greenwich Village, just entering its long history as a capital of cultural revolt.

Here Carl Van Vechten introduced him to writers, artists, intellectuals, and musicians. Briefly lovers, Van Vechten and Hopwood remained close friends and fellow partygoers for years, moving as a team through the city’s avant-garde circles, amusing and outraging friends with riotous drinking and razor-edged comic interplay.

Hopwood came to know such figures as the novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald, the dancer Isadora Duncan, the unconventional writer Gertrude Stein, and her lifelong companion, Alice B. Toklas. He was welcome at any wild party as a bon vivant “whose innocent, baby-faced appearance,” wrote Van Vechten’s biographer, Edward White, “was comically out of step with his hedonistic personality and incorrigibly irreverent sense of humor.”

“We adored him,” Toklas said, though Stein remarked that he had “the air of a sheep with the possibility of being a wolf.”

While Van Vechten conducted romances with both men and women, Hopwood, according to White, lived the life of a gay man “as openly as was possible amid the considerable constraints of the time and only pursued relationships with other men.”

Yet he felt compelled by his profession to play a heterosexual role in public. Gossip columnists frequently linked Hopwood, whom they called the “Playboy Playwright,” to beautiful actresses. He did not marry but he was often seen and photographed in the company of women. They provided him with cover for audiences who would have been puzzled, not to say appalled, to learn their favorite chronicler of male/female hijinks was a man attracted only to other men.

Gold Digger

He made more and more money. With the end of the World War I in 1918, Broadway’s popularity rose to new heights. The spread of silent movies meant there was less call in the hinterlands for touring dramatic companies. So playwrights increasingly wrote to suit the sophisticated tastes of New Yorkers without fear of censure on the road. Hopwood led the way.

His goal was to surpass the record of London’s star playwright, Somerset Maugham, who once had five shows running at once. In the 1920-21 season, Hopwood came close, with four simultaneous hits. First came The Gold Diggers—which later inspired a string of hugely popular “talkies”—about young New York women who forthrightly “capitalize what nature has given us” to earn their livings from admiring men.

Next came Spanish Love; then Ladies’ Night (In a Turkish Bath), and Hopwood’s most popular show of all, The Bat, another collaboration with Mary Roberts Rinehart.

The Bat was not a farce but a scary comedy/mystery with a surprise ending. The story line was Rinehart’s, but Hopwood added all the laughs, frights, and special effects. The two split $1 million in royalties, and by 1946 The Bat had been seen by 10 million people.

Earlier, Hopwood had been called “a carpenter in a play factory.” After years on the job, he was now a master craftsman, with producers calling him in at top dollar to reshape the drafts of less adroit writers.

But he regarded his expertise in terms that bordered on self-contempt. He had drunk himself into alcoholism. He also used cocaine. A New York columnist who had watched him at several openings said: “He has made millions laugh … but I’ve never seen him do more than faintly, boredly smile at the most shrieking farces.” The playwright flirted with Hollywood, then told a friend he had decided not to write movies. “I am too high-priced a whore for that.”

Early in 1922, just after the season when he had four simultaneous hits, Hopwood directed his attorney to rewrite his will. He was only 39. But his mind was dwelling on finalities—on the truth, as he perceived it, of his own career and the hope of redeeming it by a gift to the future. But he told no one what he had done. The terms were to be kept secret until after his death.

The Cathedrals of Broadway (1929), by Florine Stettheimer, captures the atmosphere of New York City’s neon-lit theaters in the 1920s.
“TIRED TO DEATH”
Hopwood co-wrote two shows for 1922—The Demi-Virgin and Getting Gertie’s Garter. Both were hits, but the sparkle had dulled. The critic Heywood Broun said Gertie had its moments, “but they are moments which nearly every farce has had for the past fifteen years.”

Eugene O’Neill and other drama -
tists were raising the standard of the American stage, and playgoers’ expectations were rising with it. But “Mr. Hopwood made his reputation as a farce writer back in the days when the favorite sport was skating on thin ice. Since then audiences have learned how to swim.” But no critic was sicker of the fad of bedroom farce than the master farceur himself. In December 1924, at the end of a performance in Baltimore, Hopwood rose to give a drunken speech at the curtain. He told the audience that The Demi-Virgin and Getting Gertie’s Garter were the “dullest plays” he had ever seen, let alone written. He was “tired of death” of concocting such stuff, he said, and he was quitting.

He wrote adaptations of two or three more scripts but no more plays of his own. He spent more and more time in Europe. Friends heard reports of wild escapades and drunken public scenes. Of his novel’s protagonist, he wrote: “He was not ashamed of himself, so long as he kept drinking. . . . [All] that really interested him was the mood into which he could project himself, with the aid of drink or cocaine.”

On July 1, 1926, at the end of a four-day drinking spree, he visited friends at the resort town of Juan les Pins on the French Riviera. After more drinks, then dinner, he stripped to go swimming. In the waves he was overcome by a heart attack and died.

“The New, the Unusual, and the Radical”
A month later, the revised terms of Hopwood’s will were disclosed to the press. By the revisions he had dictated six years earlier, his estate, valued at well over $1 million, would go to his mother, Jule Hopwood. Upon her death, one-fifth of the estate was to endow a program of literary prizes for students at the University of Michigan. “It is especially desired,” the will stated, “that the students competing for prizes shall be allowed the widest possible latitude, and that the new, the unusual, and the radical shall be especially encouraged.”

Jule Hopwood died only a year later, and the bequest to Michigan of $313,836 established the Avery Hopwood and Jule Hopwood Prizes. They became the most prestigious student literary awards in the nation, providing financial and moral support to many who would go on to make significant contributions in the arts. The awards also helped to lay the foundation for Michigan’s Helen Zell Writers’ Program, one of the leading graduate programs for writers in the world.

The list of Hopwood winners includes the novelists Betty Smith (A Tree Grows in Brooklyn); Marge Piercy ( Gone to Soldiers); Eliza-
abeth Kostova (The Historian) and Jenny Ward (Sing, Unburied, Sing); the poets Robert Hayden (an early U.S. poet laureate), Laura Kasischke, Theodore Roethke, John Ciardi, and Dana Smith; the children’s novelist Christopher Paul Curtis (The Wat tson Go to Birmingham, 1963); and the screenwriter and direc-
tor Lawrence Kasdan (The Big Chill; Raiders of the Lost Ark).

The most renowned Hopwood Award winners to date was the playwright Arthur Miller (AB ’38, HLLD ’56), who won awards for drama in 1936 and 1937. Miller said later the cash awards made it possible for him to finish college.

Hopwood’s biographer, Jack Sharrar, noted: “By an irony Hopwood himself would have appreciated, he made his chief contribution to the development of American drama indirectly by extending a helping hand to Arthur Miller, creator of the new tragedy of the common man.” Miller was to do the kind of work Hopwood himself had aspire to but never achieved.”

The unfinished draft of Hopwood’s novel, nearly 900 pages in all, was found among his effects, but it was never published. It’s now in the archives of the Hopwood Room.


For more from the Heritage Project, visit heritage.umich.edu.
The University of Michigan continually ranks among the top public universities in the world, due in part to the diverse group of outstanding students who call this university home. U-M students hail from all 50 states and over 120 countries, and among undergraduates alone, more than half of them receive some form of financial support.

U-M President Mark Schlissel has said he believes “talent is ubiquitous in our society, but opportunity most certainly is not.” A strong tradition of philanthropic support has helped provide opportunities for promising students, allowing them to take advantage of the exceptional experiences our university has to offer—learning from world renowned faculty, conducting groundbreaking research, and immersing themselves in an engaging campus environment.

Given the opportunity, these talented students prepare to become the leaders and best in their fields as they attempt to solve the world’s most challenging problems. Donors ensure a talented and diverse group of the world’s brightest students continues to have access to U-M’s transformative educations, combining academic excellence in the classroom with real-world experiences. Securing support for students remains our top priority.

Thanks to generous donors like you, students from all walks of life receive the resources they need to build upon their Michigan foundation and write their own success stories. Leaders & Best sat down with three incredible Wolverines whose Michigan experiences were made possible by philanthropic support. Get to know two outstanding students and an inspiring new alumna of a future who are already making an impact on their campuses, in their communities, and across the Midwest.

**STAV NACHUM**, a recent graduate of the Stephen M. Ross School of Business who is now working her dream job as a consultant in Chicago

**NOWSHIN LASKAR**, a senior at UM-Dearborn serving her local community through education and mentorship

**ROSS MICHAELS**, a second-year medical student, triathlete, and first-time father

FROM PASSION TO PROFESSION

Stav Nachum

Recent graduate Stav Nachum (BBA ’19) will never forget the moment she learned she was accepted to the University of Michigan.

It was the beginning of winter break, and Stav was checking into a hotel with her family when she received a flurry of text messages from friends. U-M had notified accepted applicants.

“I was on a flight and didn’t have internet access, so I had no idea the decisions had gone out,” Stav recalls. “As my parents were checking in to our hotel, I found out I was accepted, and I immediately told them the good news. Michigan was my dream school.”

Stav’s journey to Michigan began in Israel. Born in Tel Aviv, she arrived in the U.S. with her family when she was eight months old. By high school, Stav had become interested in everything from political science and international governments to technology and business.

Her budding passion for business piqued her interest in U-M’s world-class Stephen M. Ross School of Business, but with the top-ranked University of Virginia right around the corner from her hometown, choosing a school came down to a financial decision.

Stav’s exceptional academic performance in high school earned her multiple awards and scholarships, including the Robert and Janet Neary Scholarship. The Nearys’ scholarship offers need-based support for out-of-state students in the Ross School and the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

“Knowing I wouldn’t have debt after graduation was an incredible feeling to have,” Stav says. “It made it easier to choose a school that suited my cultural and academic interests.”

Support from Robert (BBA ’55) and Janet (AB ’54) Neary enabled Stav to immerse herself in all U-M had to offer, providing her with a truly transformational college experience. Stav was widely involved on campus, whether she was conducting research on cybercrime at the Institute for Social Research or helping lead the TAMID Group, a student-run organization that consults with international startup companies.

“Having a scholarship allowed me to choose Michigan without the worry of having to spend hours every day working to support my tuition,” Stav says. “Instead, I was able to participate in a wide range of activities outside of the classroom that gave me a more holistic education.”

Before her senior year at U-M Stav interned at home and abroad, from the U.S. House of Representatives to a high-tech startup in Tel Aviv. As an emerging leader for student organizations like the Michigan Business Women, she used experiences such as these to mentor younger students in the group.

The opportunity to explore diverse interests eventually led Stav to her current career—a field she admits she didn’t know existed before coming to U-M.

“I landed my dream job at a top consulting firm that I enjoy every day, and I know it couldn’t have been achievable if I didn’t have the opportunity to go to Michigan and pursue different interests,” Stav says.

Now based in Chicago as a business analyst for McKinsey & Company, a management consulting firm, Stav helps companies improve strategy and business operations, evaluate customer experiences, and more.

“It’s easy to get excited about my work,” Stav says. “I often work long hours, but, to me, the work is so fascinating, and I truly feel I’m creating impact, learning, and evolving every day.”

In the future, she hopes to pay forward the generous support that led her to early-career success.

“Eventually I would love to give scholarships to others because of how dramatically they changed my life.”
“I feel it’s important for children to be able to see themselves in the people they look up to.”

University of Michigan-Dearborn senior Nowshin Laskar grew up enjoying school, but rarely had teachers and mentors to whom she could easily relate. As an elementary education and mathematics major, Nowshin is inspired to change that for future generations of students.

“Nowshin says: “It’s something I want to bring to my community, since it’s not something I grew up with. I see the students that struggle and I want to help them have a better future.”

At UM-Dearborn, Nowshin became highly involved in organizations across campus, pairing her passion for teaching math with her love of serving children in her community. Through the university’s Office of Metropolitan Impact, she tutored students in math at Detroit’s Osborn High School, serving as a role model to students who, like her, grew up in disadvantaged environments.

“I was mentoring them and giving them an idea of what a college student could look like, as well as a picture of what college life could be like,” Nowshin says.

These critical educational experiences at Osborn changed her perspective on teaching. For many students at Osborn, growing up in poverty affected their ability to maximize their potential in the classroom.

“There are so many different things people are going through,” Nowshin says. “When I work in different schools, I keep that in mind. Kids might be angry or restless because there’s no food in their house, and keeping those things in mind when I’m working with children is important.”

Her desire to work with students and give back to the community extends into other programs, like Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates, the Student Michigan Education Association, the Muslim Student Association, and Talent Gateway.

In 2018, Nowshin was named a UM-Dearborn Difference Maker—students who are at the forefront of their fields. Generous donors—also difference makers—enabled Nowshin to attend UM-Dearborn and have a significant impact on campus.

“I don’t have to worry about taking out loans and having to stress over how to pay my tuition without finding a job,” Nowshin says. “I can focus on my career goals, which helps tremendously.”

Nowshin’s strong academic performance in high school earned her the Opportunity Scholarship, a merit-based scholarship automatically awarded to students within certain geographic districts who are admitted to UM-Dearborn.

Nowshin is also a recipient of the Belinda J. Wilson Endowed Incentive Scholarship, which provides need-based support for students from Detroit who are leaders in their community. In her mentoring, Nowshin exhibits the kind of leadership qualities she hopes to pass on to her mentees.

“If I didn’t get scholarships, I never thought I could pay for college,” Nowshin says. “I chose UM-Dearborn because of the scholarships that were offered to me. Coming from a low-income family, I would not have been able to afford it. I’m so grateful for this opportunity.”

In the future, Nowshin hopes to pay forward the support she received by serving students in her own community. “My biggest dream is to teach in Hamtramck,” she says. “I really love this place and the people; it’s something that’s really special to me.”

Donors’ generosity has inspired Nowshin to some day provide scholarship support to other students like her.

“It’s really important because there are so many kids that work really hard to have the same opportunities as others, but money gets in the way,” Nowshin says. “It’s great to know people are there to help us.”

Photography by Scott C. Soderberg
Ross Michaels had a big year in 2018. He moved to Ann Arbor, started medical school at the University of Michigan, completed an Ironman Triathlon, and became a dad for the first time.

“It wasn’t an easy first year,” Ross says. “But we didn’t sign up for easy when we decided to go to medical school.”

For Ross, life has always been somewhat of a balancing act. As an undergraduate at Michigan Technological University, he studied biomedical engineering, ran track, remained active at church, volunteered for service trips, and more.

Ross married his childhood sweetheart, Kaitlyn, during their senior year at Michigan Tech. Both worked as volunteer emergency medical technicians. As newlyweds with plans to start a family, they knew Ross attending medical school would mean a major commitment of time and money, and that finding support—financial and otherwise—would be crucial to their success.

For many students, receiving financial aid is a deciding factor when choosing a school, especially when carrying prior educational debt. That was the case for Ross, who planned to join the Army to pay for medical school. It wasn’t ideal, but it was better than acquiring more debt.

Then a phone call came.

“I was signed up for officer training when I got a message from the assistant dean for admissions at the Medical School, saying, ‘Ross I’d like to offer you a scholarship to Michigan if you defer for a year,’” Ross says.

Ross, a native of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, received the Northern Michigan Endowed Scholarship at the U-M Medical School, providing him with a fully funded two-year scholarship. That financial assistance, courtesy of Curtis Cummins (BS ’89, MD ’95), allowed the Michaels family to continue pursuing their passion for public service.

“Being married with a kid, it was hard looking at this big burden of debt,” Ross says. “We felt an overwhelming sense of freedom when I was offered the scholarship because it allows us to use our skills in whatever way we see fit and go wherever God’s calling us to practice. This is something you can’t really put a value on for us.”

Dr. Cummins’ support has not only enabled Ross to chase his dream career, it’s also allowed the Michaels to continue volunteering, all while providing enough security for Kaitlyn to take care of their 6-month-old daughter, Eden.

Growing up in an intimate rural community, the Michaels discovered their love for service volunteering through their church. By high school, Ross was pondering whether to become a pastor or a doctor, until a trip to Haiti changed his perspective. Ross met a doctor who runs a clinic in Haiti and began helping him care for patients, solidifying his love for medicine.

“Being able to offer the gift of medicine really resonated with me, so I chose medical school.”

His choice to come to Michigan was inspired by the heroic team of doctors and nurses at Michigan Medicine.

“We would often pick up the U-M Survival Flight team from the airport and transport them to the hospital in the U.P. to pick up sick children,” Ross says. “When the U-M physicians and nurses showed up, the panicked staff at our little local hospital was so relaxed just because the experts were there. It gave me the impression that people really knew what they were doing at Michigan.”

Now in his second year of medical school, the balancing act continues. So how does Ross do it all? With a little perspective and a lot of support, he says.

“Being able to go home and pick up Eden—who could care less about anything—it just brings me back to the bigger picture of what’s important.”
“David Hermelin was a charming, funny, high-energy human being, and those traits made him the quintessential fundraiser.” U-M Associate Vice President for Development Todd Baily has nothing but warm memories of the late David B. Hermelin (BBA ’58, HLLD ’00). According to Baily, Hermelin was a prolific fundraiser, an outstanding mentor, and a one-of-a-kind friend.

Since 2004, the University of Michigan has awarded the David B. Hermelin Award for Fundraising Volunteer Leadership in the late philanthropist’s memory. The award is the university’s highest honor for volunteers, recognizing those who exemplify Hermelin’s love for the university and his tireless pursuit to preserve it.

Hermelin was a dedicated alumnus, a Detroit-area entrepreneur, and a passionate philanthropist for causes both charitable and political. President Bill Clinton chose him as U.S. ambassador to Norway in 1997. At U-M, he served on numerous committees and fundraising campaigns throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

His life was cut painfully short in 2000, just two years after being diagnosed with an aggressive glioblastoma. He was 63 years old. But he left an indelible mark on everyone he met, and those who knew him best can still vividly recall his presence nearly two decades later.

“He told the best jokes,” Baily recalls. “He used to say, ‘That guy has the deepest pockets of anybody I ever met—and the shortest arms.’ He was historical, and a performer. He was always comfortable on stage in front of an audience.”

“David always wrote songs for everybody and he did everything in costume; it was always costume,” Hermelin’s wife, Doreen, told The Jewish News. Alongside her husband, Doreen turned their Ringham Farms home into a fundraising focal point for innumerable platforms and charitable causes—from the Jewish community and U.S. politicians to the city of Detroit and, of course, David’s alma mater. “I used to tell him, ‘OK, I’ll do as many events as you want. You do the speaking and I’ll do the cooking,’” she recalled.

“I never kept a statistic, but I believe an event happened every single week of the year at the Hermelin house,” says Hermelin Award winner Joel Tauber (BBA ’56, MBA ’59, JD ’63). Tauber grew up alongside Hermelin in Detroit, where the two quickly became lifelong friends.

“I’ve been around the world, and around successful people and around leaders my entire life. And there is no one that compares to David Hermelin,” Tauber says. “He was unique because he had a love for people that I’ve never seen among anyone else in all my time.”

Friends recall that Hermelin never stopped moving, brokering deals, or connecting with the causes he cared about most. In an era when cell phones came in bags, he carried two. He would often use them at the same time. One in each hand. Sometimes while driving.

The headline of his obituary in The New York Times described him as a “Diplomat Who Artfully Used the Hot Dog,” referencing when he gathered President Clinton, former Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel, and former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat around a table to eat kosher hot dogs.

Hermelin never stopped connecting with others or championing the causes closest to his heart. His seemingly limitless energy sprung from the joy he took in just being alive. Clinton contributed these words to his memorial: “David loved life. And he made sure that everyone around him shared that love.” He wrote, “He left the world a better place than he found it. And no one could ask for a finer legacy.”

“The key to it all was not the awards that were won or the congratulations,” Tauber recalls of his late friend. “He made a difference. He changed lives. What a fantastic legacy and that is consistent among all of the Hermelin recipients.”

The staff of Leaders & Best are proud to celebrate the life and legacy of David Hermelin in featuring this year’s recipients of the David B. Hermelin Award for Fundraising Volunteer Leadership. From all of us here at L&L, thank you for all you do—and congratulations on taking home the Hermelin.
Tammi Carr

As a lifetime Wolverine, U-M alumna Tammi Carr (AB ’97) has served as a devoted fundraiser, donor, and ambassador for her university. Carr once served as a major gift officer for C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital and Von Voigtlander Women’s Hospital, creating signature events and building lasting relationships with Michigan Medicine donors. The connections she made there would prove valuable after the Carrs’ 4-year old son, Chad, was diagnosed with diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG) in 2014. Even in the face of terrible tragedy, Tammi and her family ignited an international movement to find a cure.

Carr founded the ChadTough Foundation in 2015 with her family and husband, Jason (AB ’95). Together, the family seeks to support and inspire the critical pediatric brain tumor research that can lead to better treatments and cures. Their efforts have significantly increased the amount of funds, projects, and resources dedicated to DIPG research at the university. Carr was also heavily involved in the $30 million campaign to establish the U-M Chad Carr Pediatric Brain Tumor Center in 2018, which has since dramatically expanded hope for children like Chad. Thousands of U-M donors came together to offer their generous support to the center in Chad’s memory.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

My favorite Michigan memory is hearing the announcement that the brain tumor center at Michigan had been approved by the Regents as the Chad Carr Pediatric Brain Tumor Center in honor of our sweet little boy.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

My inspiration for getting involved at Michigan at the level I have over the past few years is our son Chad. His fight against brain cancer made me realize the need for a greater focus on pediatric brain tumor research. Pediatric brain tumors are the leading cause of cancer death in children, and who better to lead the fight against this cancer than the brilliant minds at Michigan?

What do you find most rewarding about being a donor and fundraising volunteer at U-M?

Being able to support the pediatric researchers at Michigan who focus on brain tumors through my personal volunteerism and through the ChadTough Foundation has been a huge blessing after losing my son Chad. Being able to work in partnership with researchers at Michigan has given me a purpose and has made me believe that our son’s life is making real impact.

Bruce & Jackie Cook

Bruce (BBA ’80, MBA ’81) and Jackie (BS ’82) Cook love getting people excited about the University of Michigan. The couple has supported U-M for nearly five decades, giving to more than 22 areas around campus. The Cooks’ highest priority: student support. The couple has established numerous scholarships, including the Michigan Alumni Scholarship, offering one-time scholarship offers to high school students from 23 outstate counties in central and northern Michigan. In each of the last five years, over 100 students have received some form of support from the Cook family.

From their many volunteer roles at U-M, the Cooks’ greatest impact may be the way they open the university’s doors for high schoolers throughout the state of Michigan. Knowing that visiting campus in person is a critical step, Bruce brings groups of ninth-graders from Shiawassee County to visit the Ann Arbor campus every spring. He also arranges trips for interested upperclassmen and scholarship nominees to see and experience Ann Arbor firsthand.

Beyond their generous gifts, the Cooks have served as exemplary ambassadors for their university. Together, they’ve made the distant dream of attending Michigan a concrete reality for thousands of students.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

The dedication of the Huetwell Visitors Center, a badly needed facility that we played a part in getting built. It was a beautiful Friday afternoon before a home football game and I [Bruce] was asked to speak. Looking out at the crowd, I was shocked to see head football coach Lloyd Carr seated in the front row.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

There was no single person but a small group of alumni and Michigan personnel who set an example by their dedication and commitment to our great university.

What do you find most rewarding about being a donor and fundraising volunteer at U-M?

Two things. First, the opportunity to change the lives of the students that we recruit to Michigan. Second, the wonderful people that we have come to know along the way.
Carol Ann & Jim Fausone

The Fausones epitomize the highest levels of multi-unit commitment by alumni. By supporting a quality learning environment and scholarships, Carol Ann (BSN ’75) and Jim (BSE, BS ’76) have advanced the interests, training, and skills of aspiring nursing professionals and engineers. For both the School of Nursing and the College of Engineering, the Fausones have served as committed, passionate volunteers for decades.

The couple demonstrate their engagement through philanthropy, volunteerism, and good counsel. Carol Ann, a retired brigadier general in the Air National Guard, served as chair of the School of Nursing’s highly successful Victors for Michigan Champions for All campaign committee. She volunteers for university veterans’ events, offering a valuable perspective on university initiatives on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Jim helped drive giving to the Michigan Engineering alumni giving strategy. Both lend their voices at alumni events, as hosts and speakers, and on committees.

The Fausones have served the university with enthusiasm and grace, whether actively leading volunteer committees, recruiting or soliciting support, or offering sage advice. They are unwavering in their enthusiasm for U-M and models of service for the public good.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

What do you find most rewarding about being a donor and fundraising volunteer at U-M?

Carol Ann: Education changes the trajectory of a person and the entire family. To be able to help young men and women achieve their dreams is very rewarding.

Jim: I like to say the world needs more nurses and engineers. … We should all support, to the degree we can, those students and research endeavors. There really is a Michigan difference.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

What do you find most rewarding about being a donor and fundraising volunteer at U-M?

Carol Ann: Education changes the trajectory of a person and the entire family. To be able to help young men and women achieve their dreams is very rewarding.

Jim: I like to say the world needs more nurses and engineers. … We should all support, to the degree we can, those students and research endeavors. There really is a Michigan difference.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

What do you find most rewarding about being a donor and fundraising volunteer at U-M?

Carol Ann: Education changes the trajectory of a person and the entire family. To be able to help young men and women achieve their dreams is very rewarding.

Jim: I like to say the world needs more nurses and engineers. … We should all support, to the degree we can, those students and research endeavors. There really is a Michigan difference.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

Who inspired you to get involved at U-M?

Carol Ann: My inspiration has been my dad. He played football at the University of Michigan, #39. He graduated in 1949.

Jim: Education has always been mission critical to the family. Mom and Dad were college graduates. My brothers and sister all have graduate degrees. … The inspiration to give back at U-M stems from that foundation.

What do you find most rewarding about being a donor and fundraising volunteer at U-M?

Carol Ann: Education changes the trajectory of a person and the entire family. To be able to help young men and women achieve their dreams is very rewarding.

Jim: I like to say the world needs more nurses and engineers. … We should all support, to the degree we can, those students and research endeavors. There really is a Michigan difference.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.

What’s your favorite Michigan memory?

Carol Ann: I will never forget when my mom and dad delivered the news I was going to the University of Michigan School of Nursing. And being selected as a resident advisor in Courzens Hall for my junior year really shaped my life. I learned leadership and I met my buddy, best friend Jim Fausone. We celebrated 40 years of marriage this year.

Jim: It is probably bombing my first chemistry test as an engineering freshman. I was ready to call it quits. My dad drove me in at midnight, midweek to talk to me. He told me he would drive me home right then if I wanted to quit, but that quitting now would change my life. Staying at U-M and graduating did change my life.
THE NATION COMES TO MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor will welcome a war of words next fall, as U-M prepares to host a U.S. presidential debate on Oct. 15. The debate will take place at Crisler Center.

In light of the opportunity, the university will provide various avenues to engage with the electoral process through curricular and co-curricular experiences, as well as various public events. Participants can anticipate topics related to democracy, the election, and the debate. Planned topics include cybersecurity, voting rights, and the meaning of truth.

Visit debate2020.umich.edu to learn more. Join the debate conversation on Twitter and Instagram at @Debate2020UMich.

THE GIFT OF HEALTH

For decades, U-M teams have tackled some of the world’s toughest health challenges. Now thanks to a new $10 million gift from Takatada Yamada (1973’69H ’15) and Leslie D. Yamada, those teams will have new resources to think even bigger, work more closely with global partners, and do more for people with the greatest healthcare needs worldwide. The Yamada gift will fuel the new U-M Center for Global Health Equity.

“The University of Michigan’s public mission and excellence across many academic disciplines make us uniquely suited to address health inequities around the world,” says U-M President Mark Schlissel. “I applied the Yamadas’ generosity in supporting the work of our faculty, students, and staff who will create long-term, global benefits through this new center.”

Learn more about the Yamadas’ gift at myumi.ch/lbYamada.

TRUE-BLUE GENIUS

U-M remains home to the leaders, hosts, and brights. U-M philosophy professor Elizabeth Anderson was one of 26 recipients selected for a 2019 MacArthur Fellowship—also known as the “genius grant.” The MacArthur Fellowship is one of the most prestigious accolades in American letters, celebrating the accomplishments of extraordinarily inventive and talented individuals. The fellowship awards $625,000 prizes to help recipients explore the boundaries of their creativity.

Anderson is an Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, John Rawls Collegiate Professor, and John Dewey Egalitarianism Chair in Political Philosophy. She has been on the faculty at the University of Michigan since 1980. Anderson is currently working on a history of epistemology, with the goal of demonstrating how collective advancement in normative beliefs can promote positive change and even a transformative moral consciousness.

“I am honored and energized by this amazing award,” Anderson said. “I consider myself extremely fortunate to have pursued my career at the University of Michigan, the leading university for interdisciplinary scholarship in the world.”

Learn more about U-M’s resident genius and her life’s work at myumi.ch/lbAnderson.

ART AFICIONADO, MR. ROBOTO

In 2020, a trip to the museum might include info. brochures, audio tours, and docents—but probably no robotic guides. However, thanks to a new research project at U-M, robotic technology could reimagine guest experience at the University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA), not-so-distant future.

While still in the early stages of the design, the collaborative UMMA and U-M’s Robotics Institute could change the museum experience for guests. The museum project aims to create a robot that can engage with UMMA guests and provide tours of the museum, further enriching visitors’ appreciation of art.

“You won’t see robots wandering the Apei in the near future, but in the meantime, the project is providing muse. with new ways to consider how they interact and with guests,” said a project collaborator. “This project gives us a view into machines can interact with people, it also helps us reflect on how we as humans are approaching people as we see.”

Big House of Healing

Michigan Medicine is investing in a new adult hospital that will transform inpatient and surgical care on the Ann Arbor medical campus. The new 12-story hospital will house 264 private rooms, a state-of-the-art neuro- and neurological surgery center, high-level specialty care services for cardiovascular and thoracic patients, and advanced imaging.

The new hospital will also include family spaces throughout and space for loved ones to visit in each patient area to enhance continuity of care. Patient rooms will allow for the addition of family spaces for up to 10 family members, and will include spaces for advanced imaging. Each patient room, as well as centralized collaboration spaces in each patient area, will also include spaces for patients and family members to receive care in the future.

Project managers and clinical leaders will help recipients explore the boundaries of their creativity. The hospital will also include family spaces throughout and space for loved ones to visit in each patient area to enhance continuity of care. Patient rooms will allow for the addition of family spaces for up to 10 family members, and will include spaces for advanced imaging. Each patient room, as well as centralized collaboration spaces in each patient area, will also include spaces for patients and family members to receive care in the future.

For assistance on giving to Michigan, contact: leadersandbest.umich.edu.