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COVER IMAGE Composite of photographs by Alexander Grey and Umanoide on Unsplash.

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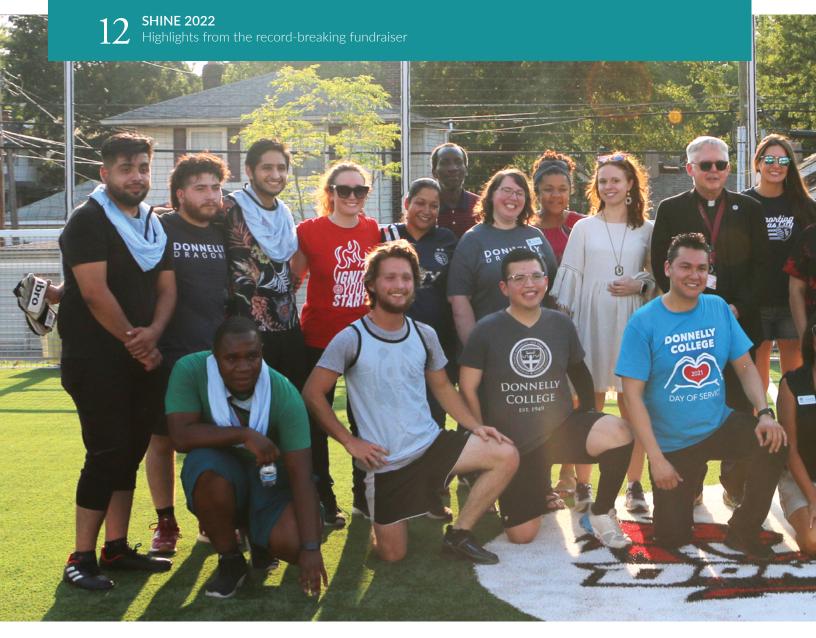
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DONNELLY FAMILY 22 Updates from our community





LEFT President Monsignor Stuart Swetland guards the goal during Donnelly's first annual back-to-school soccer tournament.

BELOW Donnelly students and staff pose together at the conclusion of the event co-hosted by Sporting Kansas City.



Building Community Around the World

onnelly sophomore Sayra Salais had never left the country or even traveled by plane before she traveled to Cuba with Donnelly's Study Abroad Club this summer. She was nervous about leaving the country, but eager to embrace "a once-in-alifetime opportunity."

Although Salais could have been deterred when she learned she would be the only Donnelly student on the trip, the opportunity to travel with seven students from the University of Kansas cemented her decision to participate.

"I felt like I could represent Donnelly as a student and what we [at Donnelly College] value on our campus. I was glad to do it," Salais said.

Salais was able to earn the first stamp on her passport thanks to the efforts of Dr. Paula Console-Soican, assistant professor of English at Donnelly and faculty advisor to Donnelly's Study Abroad Club. Dr. Console-Şoican has partnered with KU for several years on a Costa Rica study abroad program, but the trip to Cuba was a first for both institutions. This spring, two Donnelly students also traveled to Portugal through a separate program.

Throughout the Costa Rica visit, Dr. Console-Soican encouraged students to build community by meeting with indigenous people, hearing their stories and witnessing the challenges they have overcome. The Cuba program focused on immersing students in Cuban culture: viewing films by Cuban directors, attending plays, listening to live music and visiting historical sites.

Dr. Console-Şoican enjoys traveling with her students because "they reveal who they really are" and have a new sense of self when they land back in the United States.

"Through travel experiences, our students get opportunities to learn beyond what we offer here [on campus]. Our students need to experience the world," she said.

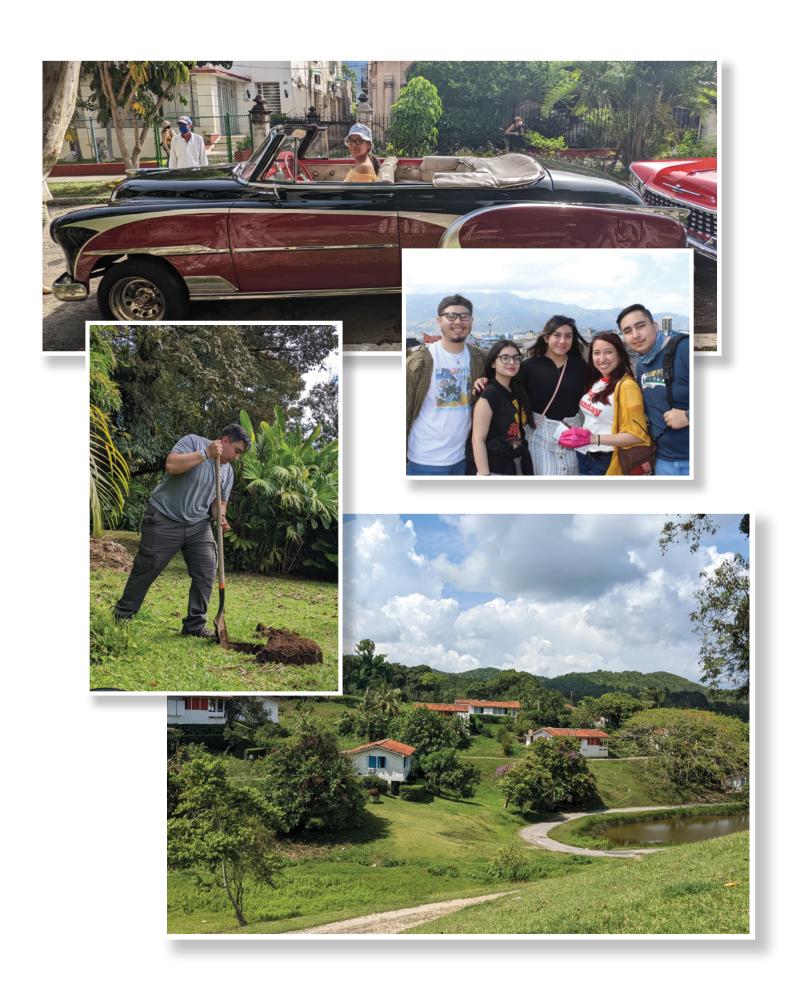
Perhaps one of the most unique travel abroad experiences occurred this past summer. Donnelly student Aline Mukobwa traveled to Rwanda to take part in a pilgrimage to Kibeho, a Marian apparition site, and visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial. Mukobwa accompanied Immaculée Ilibagiza, author of a memoir about surviving the Rwandan genocide that was Donnelly's Common Read text during the 2021-2022 academic year. When Ilibagiza visited campus to talk about her book, she invited any Donnelly student to attend the yearly pilgrimage to Rwanda. Mukobwa jumped at the opportunity and raved about the lasting impact and unique experiences she encountered.

For students who prefer to stay closer to home, Donnelly also offers domestic travel options through the Travel Club sponsored by Director of Humanities Gretchen Moffet. In recent years, the Travel Club has gone to Memphis to tour the National Civil Rights Museum and Underground Railroad sites. The club has also traveled to the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis and the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* courthouse. Educational activities and service-learning are woven

"Within the U.S., we work with an organization called Saint Christopher Journeys, which organizes travel through a Catholic lens," said Moffet. "It's not just sightseeing. It gives students an understanding of the world around them. There's just something about getting out and experiencing things that you can't replicate in the classroom."

The Study Abroad Club has another trip to Costa Rica planned for early next year and the Travel Club will be visiting Chicago. For current students who might be hesitant to travel, Salais shared a piece of advice: "Be open-minded and be open to new adventures. Learn about people's stories," she said.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Donnelly student Sayra Salais tours Havana, Cuba. Students pose for a picture in San José, Costa Rica. From left: Hugo Juarez Avalos, Alexis Mendoza, Janibel Alvarenga, Denise Diaz-Gonzales, Marco Delgado. Donnelly student Marco Delgado plants a coffee tree in Costa Rica. Students visited Las Terrazas, a pioneering ecovillage located in Cuba.



A Tale of Two Brothers: Simon and Julian Scholl

or brothers Simon and Julian Scholl, Donnelly is more than just a college. It represents a community that has provided them both with unique opportunities and lasting connections.

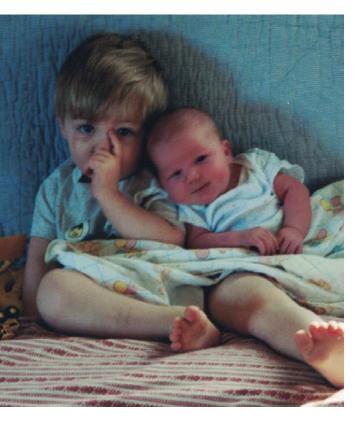
Simon, the oldest of the two, graduated from Donnelly in 2021 with a bachelor's degree in business leadership and joined Donnelly's full-time staff as assistant registrar in 2022. Julian is a sophomore earning an associate of arts degree. The brothers come to campus daily with different goals, but have stayed connected to Donnelly for similar reasons.

Coming from a Catholic, homeschooled family, Simon and Julian wanted their higher education experience to reflect their Catholic upbringing as well as smaller class sizes to create an easier transition from homeschooled high schoolers to college students. Simon started out attending a local community college, but found it difficult to make connections.

"I did well [at the community college], but I never really connected to much of that school," said Simon. "It was just sort of like, 'This is the place I go to take classes.' I chose Donnelly for its accessibility and Catholic identity. I liked the smaller classes and how everyone was able to get to know each other a lot better."

After graduating from Donnelly, Simon started working at a corporate job, but felt something was missing. After finding a job opening for Donnelly staff, Simon jumped at the opportunity to work at his alma mater.

"I benefitted from the community aspect of Donnelly as a student and that's part of why I came back to work here too," he said. "Many staff come back to work at Donnelly after being a student. There is a reason for that."





FROM LEFT Simon and Julian Scholl

After hearing of Simon's positive student experience, younger brother Julian also enrolled at Donnelly.

"Since I was homeschooled for most of my education, I wanted to go to a smaller college because it seemed less jarring," said Julian. "I found that I could actually excel here. I feel that Donnelly has opened a lot of opportunities for me."

Julian is the president of Donnelly's Salsa-Dancing Club and Soccer Club. He has participated in a study abroad program and also tries to attend as many student events as possible. Throughout his time as a student, Julian found a passion for helping others, specifically as a peer tutor. He plans to start a career in teaching. He sees participating in campus activities as a way to give back to Donnelly.

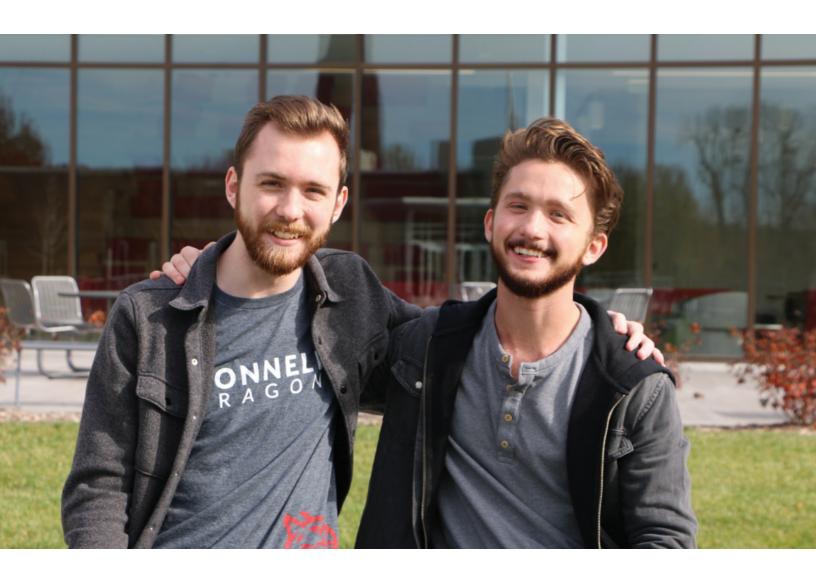
"I'm always trying to motivate those around me to get involved, even students I don't know," he said.

Not only have the two brothers been involved in the Donnelly community, but their entire family has additional Catholic ties to the College. Their family parish, Our Lady and Saint Rose Church, is where Donnelly President Monsignor Stuart Swetland is the pastor and their father is a permanent deacon.

"It's cool to see Monsignor at school and church. It makes me feel even more connected to Donnelly," said Simon.

Altogether, there are seven Scholl siblings. Simon and Julian hope their younger siblings decide to attend Donnelly in the future. While Julian plans to graduate in the spring of 2023, he hopes to stay connected as an alumnus, just like his older brother.

"I have a lot of great memories at Donnelly. The community is why I enjoy it the most," said Julian.





DONNELLY'S COLLEGE IN PRISON PROGRAM

n early August, after being buzzed through four security checkpoints, several members of Donnelly's staff made their way into the community room of the Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF) maximum security prison. Once inside, chairs were placed in neat rows and tables were set at the front of what would soon become a graduation ceremony space like no other. As instructors, administrators and wardens entered the LCF community room, the hum of conversations filled the air as they awaited the three prison residents that would soon emerge in their caps and gowns.

Monsignor Stuart Swetland, president of Donnelly College, made his way to the front of the room to begin in prayer and welcome.

"This space has become sacred as we celebrate the fact that in any gathering of human community where two or three are present, God is among them," he said.

As the students shared their stories and the deputy warden challenged them to "never stop growing and learning," the three graduates officially became Donnelly alumni, all earning their associate of science in business degrees.

Donnelly's College in Prison Program launched in 2001 after former president Dr. Ken Gibson advocated for serving residents in the minimum and maximum security prisons. According to the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) website, LCF is the largest and oldest correctional facility for adult males in the state of Kansas.

Maintaining support and resources for Donnelly's College in Prison Program has been no easy task. Yet, despite both fiscal and operational challenges, what started as a dream to expand the College's mission beyond the reaches of Donnelly's Kansas City, KS campus, has endured for 21 years and counting.

In the 1990s, the U.S. government disallowed the use of Pell grant funds for prisoners, which in turn forced many higher education institutions to shut down their college in prison programs. Despite the lack of monetary support, Donnelly's "doors" stayed open to serve a massively underrepresented population in higher education.

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education lifted the ban on Pell grants for incarcerated students when it established the Second Chance Pell Experiment. The Experiment's purpose continues to be "to help incarcerated individuals resume educational journeys and reduce recidivism," according to a 2022 DOE article. Donnelly's application to participate in the Experiment was approved in 2020. In April 2022, the DOE announced the expansion of the Second Chance Pell Experiment to include 200 total schools.

LEFT President Monsignor Swetland (far left) poses with the three Lansing graduates alongside John Hewitt, director of the Lansing program (far right). Photo credit: Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC)

Donnelly's Director of the Lansing Correctional Program John Hewitt has witnessed just how impactful this program has been for the prison residents.

"This program is bringing hope to guys who are finding themselves in seemingly hopeless situations," he said. "They're going through deep personal change. Once they're enrolled, they discover that they like going to school, then realize they want to do more in life."

Since the program was established in 2001, Donnelly has served 371 total prison residents with 30 earning a degree. There are currently 29 Lansing residents enrolled in Donnelly classes with an additional 20 more projected to start in the spring.

According to Hewitt, enrollment numbers are largely dependent on word-of-mouth advertising from current and former students.

"I've noticed there's more interest in Donnelly's program and who we are, especially with the recent graduation," he said. "The gentlemen have heard about our instructors' professionalism and how the course content can prepare them for life outside of prison."

In his graduation ceremony speech, one of the August graduates reflected on growing up with a mother who was a doctor and three siblings who attended Ivy League schools. A string of poor life choices led to him being incarcerated at the Lansing maximum security facility.

"Life doesn't stop because I made a mistake... Prison was a wakeup call. I told myself I'd continue my education and I'm so grateful for this opportunity," he said.

Hewitt hopes to continue providing support and additional learning opportunities for the residents. He has noticed that providing an atmosphere of support over judgment has been transformational for the students in the minimum and maximum security Lansing facilities.

"The gentlemen are serious about what they're doing. They've organized their own study groups. The facilities have created quiet study areas for the students to work. They even read Donnelly's Common Read book. The Lansing instructors talk a lot with the residents about what it means to be a college student. They set the same expectations in the prison as they do on campus," he said.

Long-term, Hewitt hopes to expand the College in Prison Program while ensuring its sustainability. With the Second Chance Pell Experiment, he predicts there will be more competition with other colleges to enroll the residents. However, Hewitt is confident that what sets Donnelly apart – commitment to supporting students, quality instructors, real-world preparation and dedication to the College's mission – will stand strong.

Against all odds, Donnelly students at LCF are finding hope and experiencing transformation.

"This experience with Donnelly has been life changing," said another Lansing graduate speaker. "Our lives are just beginning. It's up to us to take advantage of our new life here and be the best we can be. Glory be to God."





LEFT Three Lansing residents earned their associate of science degrees in August 2022. Photo credit: KDOC

ABOVE The Lansing Correctional Facility is the largest and oldest correctional facility for adult males in Kansas. Photo credit: KDOC



2022 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME)TCEE

Dr. Bill Nicely '85



After earning his associate degree from Donnelly in 1985, Bill earned a Bachelor of Science in education from Pittsburg State University and a master's in education policy and leadership from the University of Kansas. He then earned his doctorate in education through Nova Southeastern University. Bill worked as an educator

for over three decades, starting his career as a high school science teacher before becoming a high school principal and ultimately a superintendent. Since retiring in 2020, Bill continues to influence the lives of children through his work with the Kauffman Real World Learning initiative, the Education Governance and Leadership Association and his consulting firm.

Bill has the distinction of being the first Legacy Alumni Hall of Fame member. His father, Steve Nicely, was inducted in 2014.

"When I was a young man... I was lost. It was Donnelly College that put the pair of glasses on so I could see...how to be a good human being and how to live by faith."



To watch the Alumni Hall of Fame video features from SHINE 2022, please visit youtube.com/donnellyedu

Dhuha Shareef '09



Before coming to the United States in 2008, Dhuha taught high school math for 18 years in Iraq. When her family fled Iraq, they chose to settle in Kansas City, close to extended family. In fall 2009, Dhuha completed Donnelly's English as a Second

Language program, while also volunteering as a math tutor. After she completed the ESL program, Dhuha began teaching at Donnelly as an adjunct math instructor. She earned her Master of Science in mathematics from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2014, and was then promoted to Assistant Professor at Donnelly. In 2021, she was promoted to Associate Professor and recognized as faculty member of the year.

Dhuha is currently working on an interdisciplinary doctorate in mathematics and physics at UMKC.

"I am most grateful for the 13 years I have had at Donnelly. I want to thank its community for supporting me and my family. With the aid of this institution, I have been able to make progress and put down roots in unfamiliar soil."



ABOVE Perla attends class at Donnelly. (Accounting is her current favorite.) **LEFT** Perla celebrates Christmas with her family.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! My name is Perla Grijalva, and I am a student at Donnelly College. I am honored to share my story with you.

As a young adult, I was focusing on raising my three beautiful children with my husband in Kansas City, Kansas. In 2017, our nine-year-old daughter, Evelyn, was diagnosed with brain cancer. Our family spent several months at the hospital while Evelyn underwent intensive treatment. During this time our goal was to keep a smile on her face, and nothing helped more than playing with toys.

After Evelyn passed away, our family held a toy drive at our church in honor of her birthday. We were overwhelmed by the support we received, and the toy drive soon became an annual event. To help more families, we started a nonprofit organization called Team Evelyn Making Smiles Project. In addition to collecting toys for children with cancer, our organization raises funds to cover expenses that their families could not afford.

After running our nonprofit for four years, I knew I needed to increase my skills if I wanted to continue growing our impact. I had always dreamed of going to college, but I did not believe it was possible as a 39-year-old mother. All that changed when I met a Donnelly admissions counselor while helping my oldest daughter explore college options. The counselor told me about Donnelly's Business Leadership program, and I knew immediately that it was the right fit.

I love what I am learning and all the support I receive from the faculty and staff. Because I had to stop working full-time when I enrolled, I am especially thankful for the two scholarships that are covering the bulk of my tuition and fees.

My family was so grateful for the financial and spiritual support we received during Evelyn's illness, and now I am equally grateful for the many donors that support Donnelly's mission. Whether you are a new or longtime supporter of Donnelly, please consider making a gift to help other Donnelly students realize their dreams. Your generosity will pay dividends in more ways than you can imagine!

Sincerely, Perla Grijalva '26 To help students like Perla realize their dreams,



use the return envelope found in this issue of the Digest or visit **donnelly.edu/give**.

SHINE FOR DONNELLY COLLEGE

\$855,000 RAISED FOR STUDENTS AND MISSION

On October 6, nearly 400 Donnelly supporters and donors gathered for the first in-person SHINE fundraiser and gala since 2019. Guests arrived at The Abbott event space for a social hour, one-hour program and after-party that included a surprise flash mob by staff and students.

As Donnelly's biggest fundraiser of the year, SHINE aims to share how the mission of the College is exemplified through the students, staff, alumni and supporters, all while emphasizing the financial needs of the College's operations and affordability model. Notable highlights from this year included the induction of Dr. Bill Nicely '85 and Dhuha Shareef '09 into the Alumni Hall of Fame and student spotlight speeches from current student Eny Mejia '23 and alumnus Carlos Walker '01. Both spotlight speakers shared how being Donnelly scholarship recipients has shaped their lives and given them hope for the future.

Donors and sponsors exceeded this year's fundraising goal by over \$100,000, raising a total of \$855,000 for student scholarships and the mission.

Most Rev. Joseph F. Naumann, D.D., Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas and Donnelly board member, closed the evening in prayer, asking God, "To continue to bless this college and make it fruitful so more of our young adults can achieve their dreams."

For the SHINE 2022 sponsor list and to watch the live program, visit

DONNELLY.EDU/SHINE



ABOVE Alumnus Carlos Walker '01 gives a moving testimony about his life experiences and time at Donnelly. AT RIGHT, FROM TOP Donnelly student volunteers pose for a photo during the event's social hour. Donnelly supporters join in the celebration on the dance floor. Event Chairs Herb and Lisa Sizemore celebrate with Monsignor Swetland after learning the fundraising goal was met. Student Sonia Rivas participates in the surprise flash mob.



"I had a great experience at SHINE because being a student volunteer forced me to do something outside my comfort zone."

-Ezequiel Hernandez-Cruz

"I enjoyed hearing the stories of former students who attended Donnelly and excelled in their professions. I also really loved dancing." -Sonia Rivas







PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2021-2022 Academic Year



Monsignor Stuart Swetland

love coffee. One could say
I am addicted to coffee.
Currently, my favorite coffee
mug is from the National
Shrine of Blessed Francis
Xavier Seelos and includes his
quotation: "Every day holds a
possibility of a miracle."

Blessed Seelos is correct. Miracles happen ALL THE TIME. For example, every sacrament is a miracle of grace.

Some miracles get special attention, like those associated with the canonization of a saint or those that help define an era or an institution.

Archbishop Naumann called our recently completed new building and master plan "The Miracle on 18th Street." I do not know if it was in fact a miracle, but who am I to argue with the Archbishop?

But even miracles need our cooperation; after all, grace builds on nature. Donnelly's miracle was made possible by the skill and expertise of the contractors, architects and artisans who built our campus, as well as the tremendous generosity and support of our wonderful alumni and benefactors, the hard work of our faculty and staff and the enthusiastic support of the wider community.

The transformation of our external campus is an outward sign of the transformational education and formation that occurs inside our beautiful buildings.

Some recent highlights:

- Last year we graduated 100 students, including three graduates from our associate degree program at Lansing Correctional Facility.
- Nearly three-quarters of these graduates (71%) were first-generation college students.
- Fall enrollment grew for the third year in a row and our retention rates continue to improve.
- Our nursing program was again recognized for exceeding the national average for licensure pass rates and we have been granted permission by the Kansas State Board of Nursing to expand our program capacity.
- Four of our students were received into full communion with the Catholic Church last Easter.
- Our SHINE events continue to highlight the success of our students and alumni. Our 2022 event raised \$855,000 to support scholarships.

Donnelly also continues to climb in the *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges rankings:

- As of fall 2022, Donnelly was recognized as the most diverse college in the Midwest for the sixth straight year.
- For the first time, Donnelly was ranked in the top thirty among Midwest regional colleges, finishing 28th overall and third among the 12 Kansas colleges in our division.
- Donnelly ranked in the top twenty for least debt at graduation (7th), economic diversity (12th) and social mobility of our graduates (18th).

Donnelly continues to receive other recognitions and awards:

- Our new campus was awarded two architectural awards: an Association of Builders and Contractors Heart of America Excellence in Construction Award and a Kansas City Business Journal Capstone Award.
- Donnelly was honored as the 2021 Distinguished Catholic Organization at the Deo Gratias awards by the Catholic Foundation of Northeast Kansas.
- Donnelly was recognized as a "plank owner" for our support of the USS Kansas City and its crew.

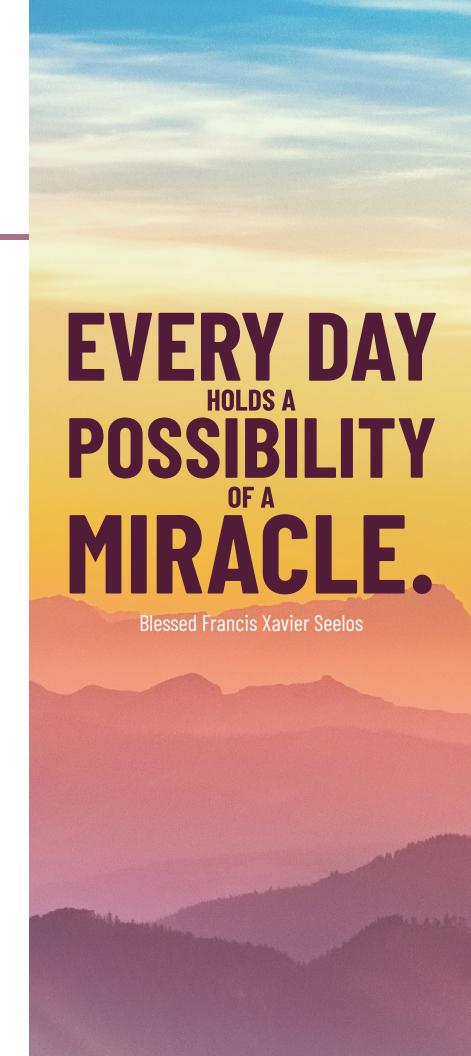
God has been so good to us! We know that "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (Psalm 127:1).

Every day, we pray at Mass in gratitude for our students, faculty, staff, alumni, Board and benefactors. You have blessed us with your prayers, sacrifices and generous gifts. We could not serve those who might not otherwise be served if it were not for you. Every day, we attempt to live our values: to seek truth, build community and pursue excellence.

Thank you for your ongoing support. May God "who has begun a good work in you...continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6).

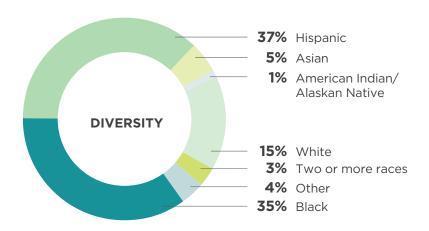
Msgr. Stuart W. Swetland

Msp. Stuart W. Swettand President



2021-2022 ACADEMIC

OUR STUDENTS

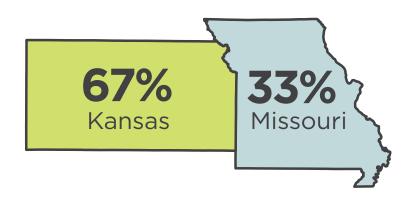






Almost twice as high as other four-year institutions nationally

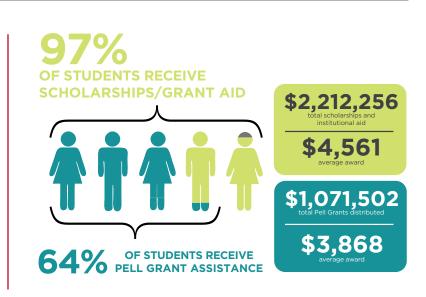
WHERE OUR STUDENTS ARE FROM



AFFORDABILITY

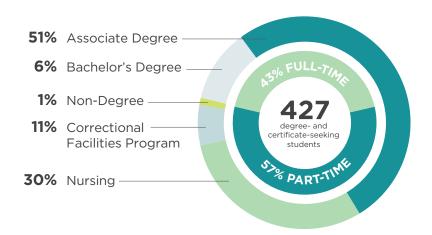


Sources: National Center for Education Statistics & Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities



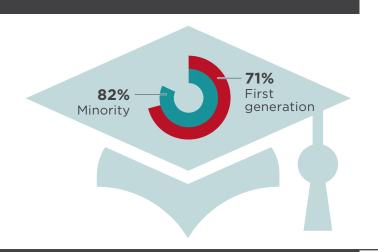
YEAR: BY THE NUMBERS

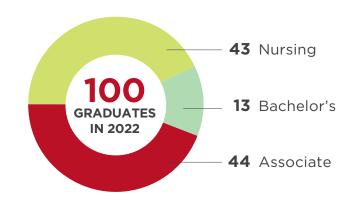
PROGRAM ENROLLMENT





OUR GRADUATES

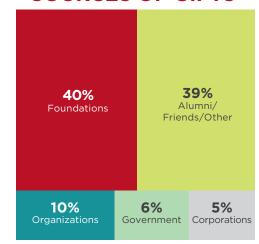




DONOR IMPACT



SOURCES OF GIFTS





\$250,000+

Anonymous (2)
Archdiocese of Kansas City
in Kansas
Marion and Henry Bloch
Family Foundation
The Dehaemers Family
Charitable Trust

\$100.000+

Thomas R. Bettencourt Living Trust

\$50,000+

H&R Block Foundation
Barbara and David
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\$250+

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DeAnn Trowbridge Bartkoski '69

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Remembering those who have recently passed away:

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Suzanne Lenahan '62 Rose Clifford '56 Curtis McClain '07

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STAFF NOTES

2021-2022 Staff Awards:

- Dhuha Shareef Faculty Member of the Year
- Laura McKnight Staff Member of the Year
- Rafah Albayaty
 Adjunct Instructor of the Year
- Nursing
 Department of the Year
- Joe Multhauf
 Catholic Social Justice Award

Stephani Berry, Director of Financial Aid, attended the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators annual conference in Austin, TX this summer.

Breonna Dunigans, Marketing and Digital Media Coordinator, attended the Kansas Independent College Association's (KICA) annual Advancement, Alumni and Marketing conference this summer.

Patrick Owens, Assistant Professor of English, delivered a lecture at Colgate University in New York titled "Romantic Zombies: The Afterlife of Dead Languages."

Dr. Mary Pflanz, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, completed a year-long program with the KICA Aspiring Campus Leadership Academy.

Lisa Stoothoff, Chief Operating Officer and Dean of the College, presented "Healing Through Restorative Justice: Mission Possible" at the Association of Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities' annual conference this summer.

Aaron Williams, Campus Minister, published a review of Dr. Keith Lemna's "The Apocalypse of Wisdom" in the theological journal *Nova et Vetera* this fall.

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Students Amina Abdi and Cecilia Lozano Parra participate in Donnelly's 2022 Day of Service.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

#1Day4Donnelly Giving Event Wednesday, March 1

Guest Speaker Zena Hitz Author of Lost in Thought, Donnelly's 2022–23 Common Read selection Thursday, March 9

Commencement 2023 Saturday, May 13

SHINE 2023 Thursday, October 5



