

NEUMANN UNIVERSITY

WINTER 2025
Vol. 53, No. 1



NEUMANN *Voices*



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MARCH 22 • Brendan P. Kelly Celebration

APRIL 4 & 5 • Neumann Inspires Film Festival

- **APRIL 4** – *World premier of the documentary about the 170-year history and rich legacy of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia*

APRIL 5 • The 18th Philadelphia General Hospital (PGH) Lecture Series in collaboration with the J. Mark and Ann Claffey Baiada Professorship in Nursing & Home Health Care

APRIL 13 • Cultural Arts Forum High Tea

MAY 18 • Graduation

MAY 19 • Neumann Golf Outing



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A magazine for
NEUMANN UNIVERSITY
alumni, family and friends

WINTER 2025 Vol. 53, No. 1

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Emma
Schneider '25
sharing a
Mission Moment
with Neumann
donors.



*Emma Schneider '25,
Senior Nursing Honors student*

“ While my courses were difficult, I have always felt supported by my professors. A benefit of a close-knit university is that the professors can truly know you and your goals. Whether that was directing me to resources, breaking down content, or just lending an ear when they could tell I needed it. ”

Emma is a student athlete advisory committee member, the field hockey team captain, a Presidential Ambassador and a Neumann Navigator.





FROM THE PRESIDENT

Friends,

Storytelling is a powerful means of communication. As mythology expert Joseph Campbell once wrote, "People forget facts, but they remember stories."

Neumann University marks its 60th anniversary this year and, as part of the celebration, we are inviting alumni to share their memorable Neumann stories. The tales can be recollections of an inspiring professor, a career-defining internship, a campus ministry retreat, or a special season with a sports team. They can be memories of meeting a spouse or forging a lifelong friendship.

The cover story in this edition of *Accent* magazine explains how to participate in our collection of stories, which will be published digitally and in print in October of this year. The article even shares abbreviated versions of early submissions from those who, like many of you, proudly call Neumann their alma mater.

In keeping with the storytelling theme, this issue also focuses on the behind-the-scenes experiences of the championship men's soccer team and the entrepreneurial tale of Aaron Krause, the CEO of Scrub Daddy, who delivered the annual Abessinio Lecture, endowed by Rocco '79 and Mary Abessinio.

Of course, all of these narratives add to the threads that continue to be woven into the complex and evolving tapestry that is Neumann University. That tapestry tells the story of transformational Franciscan education and unwavering commitment to our core values: Reverence, Integrity, Service, Excellence, and Stewardship.

As always, we eagerly embrace this mission, based upon the belief that knowledge is a gift to be shared in the service of others, and anticipate the stories that future generations of alumni will tell.

Dr. Chris Everett Domes
President

“
People
forget facts,
but they
remember
stories.
”

Voices

NEUMANN



Men's Soccer: The Stories Behind the Title



Dominic Petruzzelli

The men's soccer team won its second consecutive Atlantic East Conference championship in the fall of 2024. After finishing the regular season with a record of 8-6-4 (5-1 in conference) and the #2 seed in the conference tournament, they earned a return trip to the NAAs by defeating Immaculata, 1-0, in the semifinals and Marymount, 3-1, in the title match.

Back-to-back championships, of course, are clear indications of excellent athletic talent and coaching. But what are the other ingredients of a dominant squad? What creates the chemistry and brotherhood that winning teams always develop?

Dominic Petruzzelli, a junior who transferred to Neumann when Cabrini University closed, points to a night of reflection that was organized by Sr. Marguerite O'Beirne and Sr. Linda DeCero. "We had been going through a rough patch," he recalls, "and we needed to get our footing before conference play started."

The Sisters arranged dinner for the team and worked with Petruzzelli and teammate Vince Landis to formulate questions and prompts to help the team get to know each other more deeply. On the night of the reflection, the Sisters dropped by to wish the team luck and then departed.

"We thought they were going to be in the room with us," says Petruzzelli, "and they just left."

The strategy worked. "That night was the turning point of our season," Petruzzelli admits. "There were chills, tears, and laughter. We played FDU that week, had a top-tier performance, and won in the 88th minute. Everything aligned. We had five transfers from Cabrini and seven freshmen, and that night of reflection helped us get closer."

For Carter Gorczyca, a freshman from South Carolina, the realization that he had found a home at Neumann was more unsettling than sharing stories during an evening of reflection.

The 2024 Atlantic East champions



“ We’re here to play soccer, but at the end of the day, we’re here for each other. ”



Landon Moroney

“I had a pretty severe concussion during a Saturday practice,” he remembers. “I was transferred to the hospital but off the field I got a ton of support from all my teammates. They prayed for me and guys came to the hospital to check on me. That made me feel like I was truly supposed to be here, that I had built such a great family here.”

Sophomore Landon Moroney agrees that Gorczyca’s injury was a turning point for the team.

“Everybody went to the hospital to check on him. He was only there for a couple of hours,” says Moroney, “but that really brought us together and we found our stride. It made us realize that we’re here to play soccer, but at the end of the day, we’re here for each other.”

All three players have experiences that are seared into their memories, images that they are certain will stay with them for decades.

Moroney recalls winning both titles, of course. But he also vividly remembers traveling to NCAA tournament games, staying in a hotel with the team, and just being around his teammates for a couple days. “We stayed in the same hallway, and everybody’s door was open the entire time.”

For Petruzzelli, the unforgettable moment occurred at this year’s trophy presentation after the team had clinched the Atlantic East crown.

“Coach [Erik] Temple decided to let the five Cabrini guys accept the trophy and that was just a class act. We had accepted the second-place trophy a year earlier on Neumann’s field.”

Gorczyca’s unshakable memory is about a devastating loss at home to Marymount.

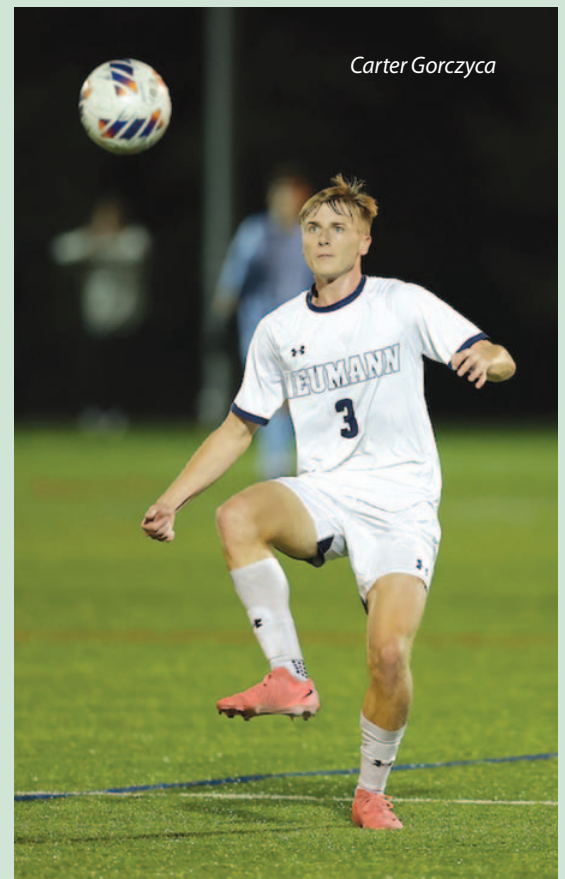
“We had a huge build-up to that game. A ton of students came out to support us, and we had a blow-up tunnel that we ran through with smoke and music. To lose that game and have Marymount run over to our student section, gesturing, made me determined to work harder.”

Payback for Marymount, of course, came in the title match.

Petruzzelli, Gorczyca and Moroney all picture themselves maintaining close friendships with teammates long after they graduate.

“They’ll be at my wedding, honestly,” chuckles Petruzzelli, smiling at the prospect. “In my grade, there are 12 of us. We just had a Friendsgiving celebration at my off-campus house. Eleven months

ago [at Cabrini], I would never have pictured this. We’re going to have it next year and the year after that until we have our weddings and have kids. Then we’ll come back to tailgate at Neumann.”



Carter Gorczyca

Launching a Neurodiversity Study With a Sensory-Regulation Tool

Imagine having access to a tool that can reduce anxiety and stress in less than 10 minutes.

That's the promise of a Cubbie, an immersive sensory regulation booth that can help individuals "get back to center through music, video, and lighting," as explained by Dr. Jenelle Abnett, Neumann's expert in autism and neurodiversity.

And Neumann has the first Cubbie in America.

It was installed in mid-November on the ground floor of Bachmann, directly across from the computer lab. At first glance, it looks like an oversized phone booth, but the interior is a high-tech mixture of a digital screen, audio feed, and comfortable seating to provide a sensory regulation experience.

According to Abnett, Cubbie was designed with autistic and neurodivergent people in mind, but anyone can benefit from it when feeling stressed, anxious, or even down and sluggish.

Dr. Tiffeny Atkins, a Neumann faculty member specializing in pediatrics and human development, explains that "The Cubbie experience can support student well-being by helping them manage the common pressures of college life, such as academics, athletics, performances, and social interactions."

"Yes, it works for those with autism, attention-deficit disorder, depression and anxiety disorders, but it's much broader," says Abnett. "If a student is preparing for a high-stakes exam and taking tests causes distress, they can center themselves in the Cubbie before the exam."

The Cubbie will be open to students, faculty and staff during the spring semester. Neumann is producing a video tutorial to explain how to use it effectively.

The long-term goal, however, is much more ambitious.

Abnett, assistant professor of special education, and Atkins, professor of physical therapy, are launching an independent research project on the effectiveness of a multi-sensory regulation space. They will be the principal investigators in a yearlong study.

The pair are collaborating with David and Jon McIntyre, Irish brothers who designed and launched Cubbie, to use the booth as the intervention tool for the research. For the McIntyres, both of whom have neurodiverse children, the project is more than just a business enterprise.

Neumann hopes to partner with 8-10 local school districts to install Cubbies during the 2025-26 academic year and collect data on students' perceptions of their emotional well-being and educators' reports on student focus and classroom disruptions.

Several schools without Cubbies would also participate in the study, acting as a control group.

For the schools, the benefits are clear. Sensory breaks are key in the routine of neurodivergent students, allowing them to regulate and



Jon McIntyre, Jenelle Abnett, and Tiffeny Atkins in the Cubbie.

return to their lessons with full concentration. Cubbie helps complete this process quickly and with little classroom disruption. In a study conducted in Ireland, Cubbie showed a 60% reduction in disruptions and a 90% increase in participation.

"The study hopes to show similar results for students here in America as it does in Ireland," says Abnett. "If it does, schools could have a tool that would support inclusive education, increase students' time on task, and decrease disruptive behaviors."

Abnett notes that the Cubbie program can be personalized. "The company has a group of occupational therapists who are available to customize the experience for individual needs," she explains. "The speed and tone of the music and video will be set to regulate each individual user."

University Advancement is working to raise funds to support all aspects of the study: Cubbie costs, shipping and installation, and research expenditures.

For McIntyre, whose son is on the autism spectrum, the study and references from school personnel would help introduce Cubbie to the American market.

Cubbies are currently used at almost 300 sites in Ireland and the UK. "Children's hospitals use them the most because of the innate high stress situations in those settings," says McIntyre. "There are endless applications, but we decided to start here with education."

He chose Neumann as Cubbie's American partner because of the university's close relationship with the CHOP Center for Autism Research and the Eagles Autism Foundation as well as the curricular focus on education, healthcare, criminal justice, and sport management.

"It just felt absolutely right," he says.

In Europe, the company has worked with Trinity College in Dublin, Queens College in Belfast, and King's College in London.

Schools interested in exploring participation in the study should contact Dr. Jenelle Abnett at abnettj@neumann.edu.

Neumann Makes Tuition Promise To Eligible Pennsylvania Families

Neumann University has launched the Neumann Tuition Promise to make higher education more affordable for eligible Pennsylvania families.

The Tuition Promise guarantees that domestic first-year undergraduate students who reside in Pennsylvania and who are eligible for Federal Pell Grants and Pennsylvania State Grants can attend Neumann University tuition-free if they meet certain criteria.

Pell Grants are awarded to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA is also used to assess eligibility for state grants.

Other criteria include a high school GPA of at least 3.5 and a commitment to live on campus at Neumann during fall and spring semesters. Room and board costs are not covered by the Tuition Promise.

Students can receive this tuition benefit for up to eight semesters as long as they are enrolled at Neumann full-time. Summer terms are not included.

“With the Neumann Tuition Promise, eligible Pennsylvania families can access a quality education without the burden of rising costs,” says Francesca Reed, vice president for enrollment management and marketing. “This free college tuition program ensures that talented students from across the state can achieve their academic and career goals with fewer financial barriers.”

To qualify for the Neumann Tuition Promise for the fall of 2025, students must apply for admission to Neumann and list the university on the FAFSA by April 1, 2025.

According to President Chris Domes, “Neumann University is dedicated to making higher education accessible

and affordable, reflecting our Catholic Franciscan tradition that knowledge is a gift to be shared in the service of others. We believe in supporting every student’s potential, empowering them to make a meaningful impact on the world.”

To learn more about the Neumann Tuition Promise, visit www.neumann.edu/tuition-promise.

“
Eligible Pennsylvania families can access a quality education without the burden of rising costs.

”



NEUMANN *Voices*

**TELL
YOUR
STORY**



NEUMANN UNIVERSITY will mark its 60th anniversary in 2025, and what better way to celebrate than by sharing alumni stories.

The university has partnered with Publishing Concepts, Inc. (PCI) to launch the Neumann Voices project, a collection of stories and memories that bring the Neumann University experience to life. There is no cost to share your story, and all alumni are invited to participate. Everyone will have an opportunity to purchase a keepsake publication as a hardbound book or digital collection in the fall.

If you have not already responded to an email, phone call or postcard from PCI, you can participate by calling the dedicated Neumann University update line at 800-347-7562.

■ Attending Neumann University was one of the best decisions I ever made. I immediately felt at home and knew this was the right place for me. Initially, I was undecided on a major, but I ultimately landed on business administration, as I wanted to learn how to properly run my art business. Everything I learned about business, from contracts to marketing, I owe to that school. Now, I'm doing projects for major companies like Netflix, Maker's Mark, and Paramount. Neumann University gave me the solid foundation I needed to achieve this level of success.

Alloyius McIlwaine '04

Stories that have been submitted so far range from 1967 to 2023. They include memories of student life, inspirational faculty members, teammates, career connections, and lifelong friendships.

Here are some abbreviated samples to get your creative juices flowing. Visit www.neumann.edu/neumannvoices for more information.

Movie and TV Connections

■ It was as if I was meant to end up here, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, finding my heart's desire in my own familiar surroundings.

Sandra Huddle '17

■ The campus itself had a sense of holiness and faith that was palpable. When we were snowed in, the few remaining nuns took care of us, making hot chocolate and letting us stay at the off-campus convent. It was like a scene out of *The Sound of Music*.

Christina Kapusta '81

■ The best memories, though, come from the bus rides to away games. My coach had never seen *Mean Girls* before, and his priceless reaction to that movie will always make me laugh. Those team bonding moments are truly what I cherish most from my Neumann experience.

Amanda Houck '10

■ I also adored Sister Felicia and her secretary, Sister Eileen Walsh. They were like the Lucy and Ethel of Neumann — a hilarious duo who kept me constantly entertained. Sister Felicia was my advisor for most of my time there, while Sister Eileen liked to playfully 'harass' me.

Maura Torelli '86

Student Life

■ As a young novice, I was present at the groundbreaking for what would become Neumann University, then known as Our Lady of Angels. It was an exciting time as I played a role in transferring the library from the motherhouse to the college. I vividly remember the 'Long Line of Sisters' passing books hand-to-hand between the buildings.

Sr. Rose Dvorak, OSF '72

■ One experience stands out the most — the alternative spring break trip to New Mexico during my junior year. I had the opportunity to take a Native American studies course, and we embarked on a week-long service-learning adventure. We immersed ourselves in the life of the reservation, working at the school in the poorest diocese in the country. The true impact of that trip has stayed with me to this day . . . It has shaped my perspective and continues to inspire me, even years later.

Rebecca Nicoletti '09

■ In fact, the group of five friends I met at Neumann have remained close to this day. We even pulled a memorable prank, taking an 'Annie doll' from the nursing department and placing it in the basketball stands, dressed in Neumann sweatpants and a jacket. While the faculty knew it was us, we never got in any real trouble.

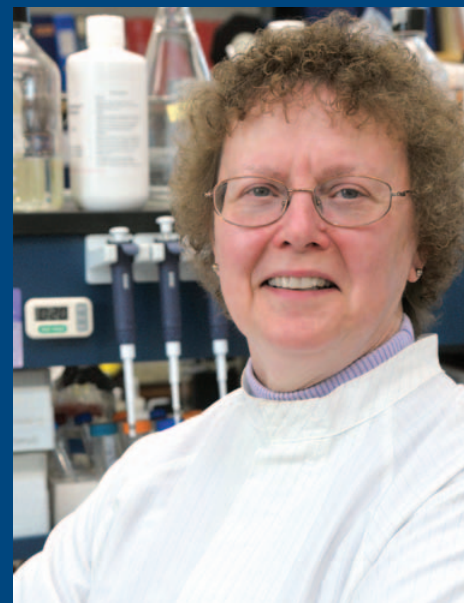
Elizabeth Sushereba '88

■ Neumann has truly become my home, a sanctuary where I find the greatest peace. The Franciscan values instilled here have shaped me in profound ways, guiding me through the stresses of my daily life . . . Neumann University is not just a place of education; it is a community, a family. Neumann will forever hold a special place in my heart, a sanctuary where I've found my calling and embraced the love of God.

Kimberly LaCoste '91 '12

■ I distinctly remember the first-year retreat with campus ministry as a pivotal moment. As a Delaware native, my mom had encouraged me to go somewhere further away for college, but that retreat made Neumann feel like my new home. The welcoming community and supportive mentors created an environment where I truly felt safe and comfortable.

Rayanna Williams '18



■ I was part of the first graduating class of the medical technology program . . . After graduating, I went on to conduct NIH-funded melanoma research and teach at numerous universities. I also traveled extensively, both nationally and internationally, to present my research . . . This program at Neumann University molded me into the confident, accomplished professional I became.

Mary Ann McLane '76, PhD

■ The greatest moment of my time at Neumann was winning the NCAA National Championship with the ice hockey team my freshman year. It was an incredible experience to be part of such a dedicated, successful group and to learn from their leadership.

Jeremy Gates '12

■ Although I didn't live on campus since I lived nearby, I was still able to get involved and make a difference. I volunteered frequently for Habitat for Humanity and the Sandwiches for Survival program, which had a meaningful impact on my life. Even after graduating, I continued to support the homeless on my own.

Saliyah Smith '17

Continues on page 10

Career Success

■ As a member of the Sisters of Mercy, I was drawn to the faith-based program of study at Neumann University, which was founded and sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis. I admired the holistic approach and the reputation of the two professors running the program, Dr. Joanne Conn and Dr. Eileen Flanagan. The education I received at Neumann University has been an incomparable gift, one that I have been able to share and apply in my professional and personal life, as well as in my spiritual journey.

Sr. Mary Flannery, RSM '94

■ Neumann's communications program allowed me to take classes in a variety of areas, from photography and advertising to videography and theater. This flexibility to explore my interests was exactly what I was looking for. Some of my fondest memories include performing in the theater productions and directing a student variety show. These hands-on experiences outside the classroom were incredibly rewarding and helped me grow. I wouldn't trade my time at Neumann for anything.

Angela Smedley '90

■ I was determined to attend Neumann University ever since I discovered its strong emphasis on the spiritual aspect of psychotherapy ... Now, as a licensed psychotherapist, I feel a deep sense of fulfillment in being able to apply the knowledge and skills I gained at Neumann ... The autonomy and expertise I developed through the program have been invaluable in my private practice, where I truly feel I am living out my calling to help others heal.

Linda DiMatteo '06 '20, PhD



■ **Completing the Public Safety Administration degree from Neumann University was a pivotal step in my career. It led to a promotion and allowed me to help grow and renew a fire department, before being selected as the fire chief for a neighboring community. This degree has been instrumental in my advancement and success in the public safety vocation that has been a part of my family for generations.**

Daniel Kerr '20

■ One of the highlights was working on a senior project around racial justice in the NFL. Through that, I was able to connect with NFL players and commentators, which led to an incredible internship opportunity ... That internship paved the way for my current role at a global healthcare company, where I've been promoted to a program supervisor position ... Neumann set me up for success, and I'm forever grateful for my experience there.

Joshua Mobley '21

■ Neumann provided me with a platform to explore my passions and expand my horizons ... After graduating, I hit the ground running, starting my own PR firm. This venture allowed me to work with prominent figures like Meek Mill, Lil' Kim, and Whoopi Goldberg. I've also been involved in major events and productions, such as J. Cole's Dreamville Fest, the A3C festival in Atlanta, and the BET and NAACP Image Awards.

Chante Hall '16

Academic Impact

■ As the first man to attend Neumann University (formerly Our Lady of Angels College), I look back on my time there with a deep sense of gratitude and fondness. Coming from a military background as a medic in Vietnam, I had decided to pursue nursing. Despite being the only male student for the first few years, the sisters and faculty made me feel incredibly welcome ... The lessons I learned and the unwavering support I received from the sisters and faculty have shaped my life in countless positive ways.

Lloyd Behmke III '82

■ Juggling a full-time job and classes was certainly difficult and challenging, but it ended up being one of the best things I ever did. Earning that degree opened my eyes to so many new possibilities. I no longer saw the world as black and white — it was full of gray areas that I had never considered before.

Helen Smith '13

■ The education at Neumann was incredibly challenging, but the support from the instructors was unparalleled. Sister Bernadette in particular worked tirelessly with me, helping me overcome my struggles with math. She taught me the old-fashioned methods that clicked better than the 'new math' I had been taught.

Laurie Mills '84

■ I graduated from Neumann back in 1985, and the experience left a lasting impact on me ... The close-knit community and the involvement of the Franciscan sisters in the daily activities of the student body made it feel more like a family than a typical university. Neumann University, to me, represents a nurturing educational environment, where students are recognized as individuals and supported by the Franciscan community. It's a place that fosters personal growth and a strong sense of purpose.

Sr. Patricia Millen, OSF '85



■ The mentorship of Neumann alumni like Stacy Milliken was invaluable. She, along with professors like Dr. Marisa Rauscher and Anne-Marie O'Malley, instilled in me the importance of patient, reflective, and student-centered teaching. Their guidance has remained with me throughout my career, as I strive to truly understand and connect with each of my students.

Jamie Willis '13, EdD

■ There is a particular course that truly challenged me in ways I did not expect and that made a lasting mark on my life. The professor of the course, Dr. Etsuko Hoshino-Browne, was known to be difficult. The format of the course was primarily student-led ... This meant I could not simply coast through the class, and I had to be an active, engaged participant. I left the course a better student. Looking back, I'm grateful ... I developed skills that proved invaluable as I went on to law school.

Garrett Treer '15

■ Dr. Nadine McHenry was a pivotal figure in my development as a future educator. She challenged me to step out of my comfort zone and engage with the broader education community, guiding me as I found my path ... But perhaps the greatest gift was the opportunity to learn from an exceptional mentor and coach, Len Schuler. The lessons I learned from him continue to shape my approach to coaching and leading others.

Eric Rosen '02

■ It was in the 'communications building' that I found immense joy, pouring my creativity into a range of projects – from documentaries and short films to even a radio drama. The resources available to us were truly remarkable. We had access to top-notch film equipment, audio gear, and cutting-edge editing software. It was an environment where any thought, idea, or story could come to life. I thrived in this unlimited space.

Kristina Tannen '22

■ The growth and evolution of Neumann, from its humble beginnings in mobile buildings to the diverse, contemporary institution it is today, has been nothing short of astonishing. The university's unwavering commitment to serving students who may have faced challenges or marginalization is a testament to its founding principles. It is this focus on providing opportunities to all that I find most fulfilling in my ongoing involvement with Neumann University.

Sr. Marguerite O'Beirne, OSF '70



■ I'll never forget the day I walked into Sister Marguerite's office. As a recent refugee new to this country, I found myself in a tight spot, struggling to afford basic necessities like textbooks and meals. Sitting in her chair, I let it all out – the tears, the worries, the uncertainty of my situation. And when I finally finished unloading, Sister Marguerite looked at me and said the most reassuring words: 'You're going to be okay.' From that moment on, she went above and beyond to support me. Her compassion and unwavering belief in me made all the difference.

Yana Tamba '04

Scrub Daddy CEO Shares Gems of Wisdom

Hundreds of students filled the Meagher Theatre to overflowing in mid-November to hear Aaron Krause, CEO of Scrub Daddy, tell his success story. Some sat in the aisles during the 70-minute presentation.

And Krause did not disappoint.

Mixing old photos, video clips from home-shopping network QVC, and segments from his winning appearance on the hit TV show *Shark Tank* in 2012, Krause mesmerized the audience from start to finish, tracing his 35-year career from running a high school car washing business to being CEO of a company with \$400 million in sales last year.

Along the way, he sprinkled gems of wisdom to inspire budding entrepreneurs in the crowd.



Aaron Krause,
CEO of Scrub Daddy



Krause and Rocco Abessinio '79,
who endowed the annual lecture
series on entrepreneurship.

Match grit with talent

"Are you born an inventor and entrepreneur or is that something that can be taught?" Krause asked. He credits his father with instilling the entrepreneurial spirit in him long ago. In high school, Krause constantly bugged his father to buy him Atari, an early video game. "Buy it yourself," his dad eventually told him, providing a list of chores for which Krause could earn money.

The car washing enterprise that Krause launched then revealed his willingness to work hard and charted the course for a lucrative career in cleaning products.

"The invention part, I was born with," he admits. "I was always seeing problems in my environment, that this or that could be better." His natural inclination was to create ways to solve those problems: how to turn off the lights from his bed, how to install cup holders in cars.

He didn't invent the Clapper or cup holder, but he did learn that mixing entrepreneurial grit with natural talent was a winning combination.

Gotta be in it to win it

He told an old joke with a timeless lesson. "If I don't win the lottery, I'll lose my house," a man prays to God. He doesn't win. He prays again: "If I don't win the lottery, I'll lose my car." Again, he fails to win the jackpot. Finally, he begs "If I don't win, I'll lose my life." The skies then open and God says, "You gotta buy a ticket."

Krause distilled the moral succinctly. "If you aren't in the game, how can you win?"

He referenced Steve Jobs, one of his heroes, in his encouragement to students. "You've got to act and not be afraid to fail. Believe in yourself and act on it."

Persistence and resilience

Krause graduated from Syracuse University in 1992 with a degree in psychology and pursued a career in the auto detailing industry. He developed and patented a double-sided buffing pad and other car detailing products over the next 15 years.

During this time, he worked with a German company to develop a yellow scrubbing foam, which he thought would be a perfect hand-washing tool for mechanics. He got a patent on it, but it didn't sell.

In September 2008, global conglomerate 3M acquired Krause's buffing pad business; however, material deemed superfluous was carved out of the contract and notably included the Scrub Daddy foam. It sat in a box labeled "scrap" from 2008 to 2011.

Washing dishes with the foam one day, Krause discovered that it became soft in warm water, hard in cold.

"The heavens opened up, and I heard the angels sing," he recalls. Scrub Daddy was resurrected and would soon be beatified on national television.

In 2014, The Original Scrub Daddy was named the most successful product in *Shark Tank* history, a title which it held for ten years. Since initially airing on the show, more than 250 million units of Scrub Daddy products have been sold.



Krause took time to chat with students after his presentation.

The Abessinio lecture series

Rocco Abessinio and his wife Mary established The Rocco and Mary Abessinio School of Business Chair in Management and Entrepreneurship Endowed Fund in 2015. It is the center of entrepreneurship education, activities, and programming for the School of Business and across campus. The annual lecture series is one of the outcomes from this endowed fund. Neumann's inaugural Abessinio Lecture was delivered by Rocco Abessinio himself on October 4, 2016.

Mr. Abessinio, an alumnus and longtime friend of Neumann, is chief executive officer of Roch Capital, Inc., a privately owned capital management firm, headquartered in Glen Mills, PA, and focused on making investments in quality assets that will be held for the long term. He is also the founder of Applied Bank and Applied Card System, which grew to be the 10th largest issuer of Visa and MasterCard credit cards in the country.

A longtime Philadelphia Flyers fan, Krause visited IceWorks to skate with the men's and women's teams.



ALUMNI IMPACT: Stories of Commitment

Amanda DeCarolis '21

HR Generalist at Bloom Energy

Since graduating, Amanda DeCarolis has been a loyal supporter of Neumann University, dedicating her time to molding the next generation of Knights. She has returned to campus multiple times to visit professors, attend events, and volunteer in various capacities.

Among her contributions, she has served as a guest speaker in Dr. Robert Till's Human Resource Management class, performed with the Jazz Band at concerts and homecoming events, and participated in the Knight 2 Knight networking events.

Amanda's motivation to give back is rooted in her desire to assist fellow Knights as they embark on their career journeys. "Neumann feels like a big family," she reflects, "and Knights are always there for one another."

This familial bond inspired her to build rapport with current students, just as alumni had done for her. During her time at Neumann, guest speakers played a pivotal role in her education, providing valuable insights and networking opportunities. Amanda understands how impactful those connections can be and is eager to pay it forward.

Shaping Her Career and Growth

Amanda entered college with a clear vision of becoming an HR professional, driven by a passion for helping others develop. Her time at Neumann equipped her with essential knowledge, while professors offered invaluable support and resources.

Participation in work-study positions and campus clubs helped her cultivate transferable skills that have been crucial in her career. She acknowledges, "I never expected to achieve all that I did during my time at Neumann. I couldn't have done it without every person I met along the way."

Lewis Johnson MS, NCC, CTP, CET II '12, '22

Owner/Trauma Therapist at The Lotus Center for Wellness and Healing

Meet Lewis Johnson, a dedicated member of the Neumann University community, whose journey from student to alumnus is a testament to the profound impact Neumann has had on his life. From his first visit to campus in 2009 to his active involvement as an alumnus, Lewis embodies the spirit of giving back, reflecting on his experiences, and making the connections that shaped his path.

For Lewis, Neumann felt like home from the moment he stepped onto campus. This sense of belonging only deepened during his time as an undergraduate, where he was involved in campus ministry and founded the Ally program for LGBTQ+ students. This initiative, now thriving twelve years later, stands as a testament to his commitment to inclusivity and support for others. "My time at Neumann was just one of the most special experiences in my life," Lewis explains.

Neumann also encouraged her to step outside her comfort zone. Involvement with the Neumann Update (a student-run news show) helped her enhance her public speaking, writing, and storytelling skills. Being part of the Honors Program further strengthened her academic abilities, leading her to write some of the best papers that she presented at honors conferences.

During her last three semesters, Amanda worked with one of her favorite professors, Dr. Ardeshir Shahmaei, as a supplemental instructor for Business Statistics. She expresses pride in helping students overcome their fears of numbers, emphasizing that "Numbers tell us stories. Being able to help them unravel those stories was very rewarding."

Words of Wisdom

Amanda has valuable advice for current students: "Neumann University is a special place. Cherish every moment. Once a Knight, always a Knight." She encourages students to take advantage of the opportunities to learn from the faculty and to connect with alumni, reminding them that "you never know when that one conversation might shape your career."

To her fellow alumni, she adds, "Never forget that your Neumann family is here to support you, celebrate your achievements, and assist the next generation of Knights just as you were helped."

Amanda is grateful to the faculty and staff for their pivotal role in her journey. "Thank you for helping me get to where I am today," she says. "Your impact on so many NeuKnights is profound."

She encourages alumni, donors, and the broader community to recognize the significance of their contributions. "Every gift you give — whether time, talent, or treasure — creates a bigger impact than you realize."

Paying It Forward

After graduating in December 2012, Lewis found ways to give back that aligned with his passions. In the spring of 2014, he directed his second show at Neumann, drawing on his experiences in the theater program. "It was my way of offering a different perspective to current students," he reflects. This experience not only allowed him to share his talents but also helped nurture the next generation of performers.

As he continued his journey, Lewis returned to Neumann as a graduate student and staff member in Academic Support. His commitment extended beyond his role; Lewis was eager to share his experiences with students and began speaking to preclinical students in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling graduate program and engaging with classes like Neumann's multicultural course, led by Amanda Breen, associate professor of psychology. "As a clinician of color, I felt it was important to share my journey and experiences," Lewis explains.

and Connection



Memorable Mission Moment

During Lewis's time at Neumann, he found a supportive community in several key departments: the Counseling Center's Wellness Educators, the Theater, and Mission & Ministry. These groups not only helped him to stay grounded, but also significantly influenced his journey to becoming a therapist.

One of his most cherished memories involves participating in a SEARCH retreat with graduating students. "I remember the excitement and anxiety they felt as they approached graduation," he recalls. During this time, he provided a reassuring perspective and emphasized that it's okay not to have everything figured out.

Today, he sees his work as a culmination of these experiences, blending therapeutic techniques with the arts and spiritual integration. Lewis continues to encourage current students, and fellow alumni alike, to embrace intentional pauses in their busy lives. "Take those moments to reflect," he advises, reminding others that life becomes much more manageable when we take time to breathe.

Words of Wisdom

To his Neumann family, Lewis offers this heartfelt message: "Don't forget to pay it forward. Sharing your gifts with others is what keeps the world going." He believes that love is the foundation of meaningful connections, and by sharing our unique stories, we can support one another on our journeys.

Through his ongoing contributions, Lewis exemplifies the power of community and the lasting impact of Neumann University. His story is a reminder that the bonds formed here extend far beyond graduation, creating a legacy of support, love, and a commitment to helping others thrive.

Class Notes are now online!

WHERE
are you
and
WHAT
are you
doing?

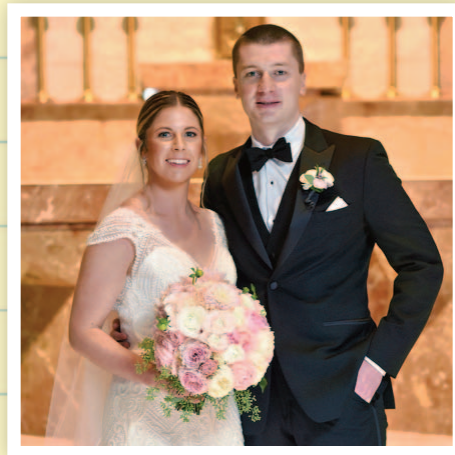
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Jo'Nelle (Grant) Clarke '21 married **Khalil-Lee Clarke '20** in April 2024.



Chrissy Donohue '21 and **John Beck '19** met during their time at Neumann and started dating in February of 2019. They just got married on September 28, 2024!



Rachel (Smith) Asplint '20 welcomed a baby girl, Anastasia Renee, into the world on July 23, 2024.



Peg DeGrassa '98, Senior Editor, Delco News Network was named 2024 ATHENA Leadership Award Recipient. The ATHENA Leadership Award is presented to a woman — or man — for professional excellence, community service and for actively assisting women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills. A committee of community business leaders chose DeGrassa based on her high level of professional excellence and her eagerness to improve the quality of life for others in the community. She has always been willing to actively assist others, particularly women, in realizing their full leadership potential.



Alloyus McIlwaine '04 recently finished a mural for "To The Polls 2024." Drawing inspiration from the struggles for voting rights, from the Women's Suffrage and Civil Rights Movements to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, he wanted to create an image that used one of America's most recognizable symbols to encourage people in Philadelphia to use the right that people fought for.



Lilly Blevin '14 '17 made the difficult decision to leave her teaching position and travel the world! She had the opportunity to explore and backpack in seven different countries and visited over 20 states!

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Questions? Contact Fran Walmsley '05 '08 at 215-713-4171 or walmslef@neumann.edu.