

TRANSFORMATIONS



CHECOTA CHANGES LIVES

A year after launch, scholarship sends nearly 200 graduates into the workforce

TRUEMAN MCGEE'S RECIPE
FOR SUCCESS IS MATC

ALUMNI CHEFS SURVIVE
AND THRIVE AFTER COVID

MATC BASKETBALL BASKS
IN NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

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Dr. Vicki J. Martin is the 10th president of MATC.

She has served in higher education for four decades, at MATC for more than three decades and has led the college since 2014. In 2015, Dr. Martin launched the MATC Promise, a public-private partnership that provides free tuition for eligible new high school graduates, and in 2018, she announced the MATC Promise for Adults, which provides free tuition for eligible students to finish their degree. Dr. Martin has attracted growing private-sector and foundation support to the MATC Foundation, serves as vice chair of the Higher Education Regional Alliance, is the chairperson of the Bradley Tech High School Commission and is a founding leader of the M³ (pronounced M-cubed) initiative, which brings together MATC, Milwaukee Public Schools and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to transform the future of Milwaukee through education. Leading the college with a focus on success for all students, Dr. Martin has guided MATC's implementation of the nationally recognized Guided Pathways framework and participation in the nation's first regional launch of the Moon Shot for Equity, which is aimed at eliminating higher education equity gaps by 2030.



MISSION Education that transforms lives, industry and community

VISION The best choice in education, where everyone can succeed

VALUES Empowerment, Inclusion, Innovation, Integrity, Respect

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Founded in 1979 as the college's philanthropic partner, the MATC Foundation works together with civic leaders, employers, community members and alumni to promote economic opportunity for MATC students, their families and our entire region by offering large-scale, career-focused scholarships and other vital student financial support programs, such as assistance with books and supplies and quick-turnaround emergency grants.

Our mission is to support student success and enhance learning by engaging those who are passionate about the college and the community it benefits.

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Students descend the grand staircase in the S Building at the Downtown Milwaukee Campus.

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MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
TRANSFORMATIONS MAGAZINE, FALL 2023

Letter From the President

AFTER JUST ONE YEAR, the Milwaukee Area Technical College's first-ever full-ride scholarship, the Ellen and Joe Checota MATC Scholarship Program, continues to deliver impressive results. Between Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, nearly 400 students earned the scholarship and more than 150 already graduated. Those graduates include Samantha Albert and Nathan Berrios, whose inspiring stories you'll find on page 10. Still more Checota students are set to graduate in December.

As we celebrate the success of Samantha, Nathan and so many other alumni in this edition of Transformations, I encourage you to explore the breadth and depth of the college's offerings to prepare students and the region for success. We are growing the diverse talent pipeline by expanding our electrical power distribution program from the Mequon Campus to a second location in the heart of Milwaukee (page 33).

Our Culinary Arts graduates, from renowned chef Paul Bartolotta to rising star (and faculty member) Jason Alston, are at the forefront of how the region has adapted to a massive shift in the hospitality industry. Starting on page 26, read their compelling stories of survival during the COVID-19 pandemic.

And an MATC education proved pivotal and life-changing for William A. Campbell, a graduate who had once been declared a "menace to society" and rose to earn bachelor's and master's degrees, ultimately becoming a U.S. foreign service officer. William was once detailed to the White House and today works as an economic officer in the U.S. Embassy in Kenya (page 14).



Dr. Vicki J. Martin

MATC prepares quality graduates for these fields and so many more that our community needs. We build the diverse, skilled workforce our region needs to grow and be competitive. We do this all thanks in part to your ongoing partnership and support. For that, I continue to be grateful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki J. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vicki J. Martin, Ph.D.
MATC President

Highlights 2023

Two Practical Nursing Students Graduate From High School and MATC at the Same Time

CHIANN WALKER AND FAYTH BUCHANAN COOPER earned 25 college credits and received a technical diploma in Practical Nursing from MATC before graduating from high school.

Buchanan Cooper and Walker participated in M³ (pronounced M-cubed) College Connections, an innovative dual-enrollment program that is a part of the broader M³ initiative of MATC, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Eligible students complete high school while earning college credits at no expense to the student. The program helps students save money and prepares them for college-level work.

In the fall, the women will pursue bachelor's degrees in nursing. Walker will attend Marquette University while Buchanan Cooper will head to Alcorn State University in Mississippi.



Nearly 100 members of the class of 2023 participated in the program. With the average cost of a college credit at \$300, the students saved more than \$500,000 in tuition, according to MPS Superintendent Keith Posley.

MATC Instructors Named Best of the Year

CHERYL MIRANDA, an instructor in the Baking and Pastry Arts program for nearly 40 years, was named Instructor of the Year by the Wisconsin Baking Association for her artistic designs and for sharing her cake decorating passion with students.



CELINA ECHEVESTE-DUKET was named 2022 Hispanic Woman of the Year by United Migrant Opportunity Services. Echeveste-Duket teaches between five and seven classes each year, carefully guiding and molding the childhood educators and care providers of tomorrow.



Longtime Juneteenth Champion Visited MATC

OPAL LEE, often called the grandmother of the Juneteenth federal holiday established in 2021, visited MATC on February 24.

Lee, 96, spoke to a group of students from Milwaukee Public Schools' Golda Meir and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. schools at the Downtown Milwaukee Campus' Create Gallery, where the college hosted the exhibit "Magical Black Tears Experience."

The June 19 holiday commemorates the day when the last enslaved Black Americans learned they were free, following the Emancipation Proclamation two years earlier in 1863.

Lee campaigned tirelessly to make Juneteenth into a national holiday. She was at the White House on June 17, 2021, when President Joe Biden enacted the holiday.

Highlights 2023

New Executive Leaders at MATC

MATC welcomed three new executive leaders this past year:



Executive Vice President, Student Success

With a focus on helping students transform their lives, Philip King, Ed.D., assumed the role of executive vice president of student success on July 17. Reporting directly to MATC President Dr. Vicki J. Martin, Dr. King oversees the

vice presidents for the Enter, Stay and Learn pillars, and the executive directors of the regional campuses.

Dr. King came to MATC from Shoreline Community College, a 9,000-student institution in Washington state. He served as vice president for student learning, equity and success, and was responsible for all instructional units, instructional support, international education, institutional effectiveness, student services and workforce education. He also served as acting president in 2021.



General Counsel

Attorney Sherry Terrell-Webb, J.D., took on oversight of all legal matters of the district as MATC's new general counsel on June 5. Terrell-Webb serves as legal counsel for administrative activities; manages and oversees the work of outside legal counsel; serves as legal liaison to

the district board; drafts legal documents, board resolutions, policies, procedures and forms; and initiates risk prevention programs. In addition, she oversees risk, compliance and the Office of Public Health. In prior positions, Terrell-Webb served as general counsel for the Madison Metropolitan School District and corporate legal counsel for LindenGrove Inc., a large local nursing home.



Vice President and General Manager, Milwaukee PBS

Debbie Hamlett became vice president and general manager of Milwaukee PBS on June 12. Hamlett, who previously served as executive director and general manager at WCMU Public Media in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, will work with

a staff of 60 employees to bring national and local programs to its viewers throughout southeastern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. She will plan and develop the station's goals and objectives, and implement short-term and long-range strategic planning to meet the needs of the Milwaukee broadcast market.

MATC Pops Up in the Community



SINCE DECEMBER 2022, the Student Recruitment team has held six Pop Up events, including two bilingual sessions on the south side of Milwaukee. The team's goal is to meet the community where they live, spread the word about scholarships and connect with potential students.

"People appreciate us coming to them," said Courtney Kelly, special projects coordinator with MATC's recruitment team.

MATC students, athletes and scholarship recipients have attended the Pop Ups and shared their experiences. Other events have focused on single programs such as the Electrical Power Distribution program coming to the Metcalfe Park neighborhood. City officials, MATC District Board members and state representatives have also joined the Pop Ups and shared their experiences with their constituents.



Proud to Serve: Women Veterans Share Their Military Experiences

TO HELP CELEBRATE national Women's History Month in March, MATC recognized the service and contributions of women veterans by holding a panel discussion on March 16, and by sponsoring a traveling exhibit from the War Memorial Center at the college's Downtown Milwaukee Campus.

The exhibit, "I Am Not Invisible," highlighted local women who are either veterans or currently serving in the military. Large pull-up banners displayed photos of 31 women veterans along with descriptions of their military service. Every branch of the armed forces was represented in the exhibit, as was every service era from World War II through the present, said Sean Clark, education program director at the War Memorial Center.

In 2000, women made up 4% of all veterans in the United States. Today they make up 10%. By 2040, they will make up nearly 20% of all veterans, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered: High School Seniors Celebrate Committing to MATC

THE COLLEGE GAVE about 100 future students and their parents the star treatment during the inaugural Senior Signing Day on April 20. Students signed letters of intent to attend MATC while enjoying music from HYFIN Radio DJ A-Biz and hearing from representatives from all seven of the college's Pathways.

The Milwaukee Hittaz Drum Corp. started off the event, thundering into MATC's Cooley Auditorium and pounding out several songs. Greg Ware, aka Sir G, the college's manager of quality improvement projects and planning, emceed the event.

"All of you have chosen to go to college and that's the best decision you'll ever make," Dr. Vicki J. Martin, MATC president, told the students. "We know you have many choices, but we think you made the right decision coming here."



After signing their letters on the auditorium stage, the students feasted on cake, snapped selfies and received Stormers swag. "We wanted to make this a fun activity that relieves the stress they have been under throughout the decision-making process," said Marwill Santiago, MATC's director of student recruitment. "We hope it inspires younger kids who will witness the occasion to set high expectations for their own futures."

New Members Join the District Board

The MATC District Board Appointment Committee has appointed three individuals to the district board.



WALEED NAJEEB is the medical director at Medpoint Family Care Center located in the city of Glendale. A graduate of Damascus University School of Medicine, Dr. Najeeb has more than 30 years of experience as a physician in Wisconsin.



GALE PENCE is the CEO and founder of Global Precision Industries Inc. He is an MATC alum and lifelong Milwaukee area resident. Pence founded Global Precision Industries in 2003 and has extensive manufacturing management and business development experience.



TINA OWEN-MOORE is superintendent of the School District of Cudahy. She established and led The Alliance School of Milwaukee, the first school in the nation started with a mission to address bullying. On the board, she will represent district school superintendents.



College Hosts Unique, Interactive Museum Exhibit for Children to Explore Causes and Possible Solutions to Racism

POWERFULLY DEMONSTRATING its commitment to help advance diversity, equity and inclusion, MATC hosted "Magical Black Tears Experience," an interactive exhibition pilot that teaches children ages 4-12 how direct action can create a more just and fair society for Black people.

Inspired by Decoteau J. Irby's book "Magical Black Tears: A Protest Story," the free exhibit was on display in MATC's Create Gallery in February.

Jacqueline Robinson, Ph.D., faculty and instructional chair of the college's social sciences department, curated the exhibition.

MATC, which last year unveiled a five-year diversity, equity and inclusion plan to improve and enhance the college community, is the ideal place to host this exhibition pilot, "because of our stated values and our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Hosting this work demonstrates that commitment," Dr. Robinson said.

MATC FOUNDATION IMPACT

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A Year of Changing Lives

Since August 2022, the Ellen and Joe Checota MATC Scholarship Program has helped students and inspired the community to invest in a shared future

Samantha Albert hasn't had an easy ride. She has run into roadblocks, taken detours, screeched to sudden stops. But she didn't quit.

Her father instilled in her a love of cars and all things automotive, but he struggled with addiction and died of a drug overdose when she was a teenager. A year after she graduated from Greenfield High School, she got pregnant and had a son with special needs.

"I stopped my life and had to go in a different direction," she said. "Once my son got older, I decided that it was my turn to go to school."

In August 2022, Albert enrolled in MATC's Automotive Maintenance Technician program and graduated in May 2023 with help from the college's quality instructors, encouraging advisors and a full ride from the Ellen and Joe Checota MATC Scholarship Program.

"Because of the Checota, I had my child care paid for, which allowed me to stay later for classes, to study and to complete my classwork," Albert said. "I am so, so grateful for that."

Launched in August 2022, the scholarship program has wasted no time in transforming lives. Driven by the vision of Ellen and Joe Checota to accelerate entry into the workforce, the scholarship covers the cost of tuition, books, equipment, child care, transportation and food so students pursuing short-term technical diplomas and certificates can earn credentials faster (in up to 18 months).



Ellen & Joe Checota Scholarship Program
A full-ride scholarship to quickly earn a technical diploma or certificate

Samantha Albert is one of 372 students who have received assistance from the Checota MATC Scholarship Program.

In less than a year, 372 students (about 85% identifying as people of color) received the scholarship and 191 graduated in the 2022-23 school year. Recipients are entering fields that are in desperate need of skilled workers, such as nursing, automotive, carpentry, electricity and more.

TRIPLE YOUR DONOR INVESTMENT



\$6.02M

Amount secured toward the program's \$7.5 million goal thanks to generous gifts from the public and Ellen and Joe Checota's \$2-to-\$1 match

[MATC.EDU/DONATE](https://matc.edu/donate)

414-297-7687 | give@matc.edu

Shortly after enrolling at MATC, Albert was diagnosed with lupus, a disease that attacks the immune system and painfully inflames the skin, joints, heart, lung, kidneys, blood cells and brain.

But Albert wasn't about to let that stop her.

She attended classes at MATC's Oak Creek Campus every weekday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. She also worked part time at a local Target store and was raising her son.

Albert learned about the Checota MATC Scholarship Program after she started classes. Now that she has her



Ellen and Joe Checota

Automotive Maintenance Technician technical diploma, she plans to further her training.

“I’m trying to get a background in everything automotive so I can decide what I really want to do with it,” she said. “Being in the maintenance technician classes has made me want to work in automotive even more.”

Albert also has shared her story of perseverance with local high school students trying to figure out what to do with their lives and with community members trying to get back on track.

“Growing up, so many people told me that college was just a no. My family didn’t have the resources,” she said. “I didn’t know there was so much help available to attend college, but there is. There’s a lot of help, and a lot of help that is free. The people here want to help you succeed.”

Another scholarship recipient whose life was changed by the Checota scholarship is Nathan Berrios, a Milwaukee native

who wants to install, repair and maintain all-important overhead power and utility wires and cables.

“The job certainly isn’t for everyone. But I think for me it will be a very fulfilling field,” said Berrios, who graduated from Milwaukee Public Schools’ Riverside University High School. “You can make really good money and learn a lot. My plan is to get hired on as soon as possible and start a really long career.”

Berrios completed MATC’s Electrical Power Distribution program and, thanks to the Checota MATC Scholarship Program, will start his career with zero college debt.

“It was just phenomenal that I didn’t have to pay for almost anything,” Berrios said. “I didn’t have to break my back working extra shifts at work to pay for school.”

Berrios’ scholarship became critical after his car was stolen last year. He had enough money in his savings account

to buy another car, but not if he had to pay tuition.

“I probably would not have been in school without the scholarship,” he said. “It really helped.”

Inspired philanthropy

The Checotas’ gift not only changed the lives of students like Albert and Berrios, but also inspired the community to give and invest in the next generation of workers.

As of June, more than 250 individuals, foundations and corporations have donated \$2.02 million and the Checotas have contributed \$4 million (the couple gives \$1 million for each \$500,000 raised). The first matching gift of \$500,000 came from attorneys Julianna Ebert and Frank Daily, and Bader Philanthropies gave \$400,000, which is the second-largest matching gift.

Additionally, the Zilber Family Foundation contributed \$200,000, the Ralph Evinrude foundation donated \$120,000 and an anonymous donor gifted \$100,000. Molson Coors gave \$100,000 through its Project Justice initiative. Another \$480,000 in donations is needed to reach the program’s full matching potential of \$7.5 million.

“We want students to know that if you make the effort, we will continue to support you,” Joe Checota said at the time of the scholarship’s launch. “We’re trying to change lives one life at a time in Milwaukee.” ■



372
SCHOLARSHIPS
AWARDED



191
CHECOTA GRADS
IN YEAR ONE



\$6.02M
TOTAL RAISED
FROM 250+ PEOPLE

For more information about the Ellen and Joe Checota MATC Scholarship Program or to donate through the MATC Foundation, visit matc.com/donate.

SPOTLIGHT: MORE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

A Promise Kept

In 2016, the MATC Promise became the first scholarship of its kind in Wisconsin to give free tuition to students coming directly from high school to MATC. Two years later, the college expanded the program to include adults who had started college, but hadn't yet earned a diploma or degree.

Since 2016, MATC has awarded more than \$3 million in Promise scholarships and served more than 3,000 students.



GRADUATES

Total
667

High School
310

Adult
357



DIVERSITY

in most recent cohorts

High School
88% students of color

Adult
78% students of color



RETENTION

students who stay after each semester

High School
82% overall since inception

Adult
77% since inception

College Overall
60% for part-time students

Advancing Healthier Wisconsin as an MATC Research Partner

The aim of Advancing Healthier Wisconsin (AHW) is to make Wisconsin the healthiest state in the nation.

AHW is Wisconsin's largest health improvement philanthropy and invests more than \$17 million annually for biomedical research, community health initiatives and the health workforce needed in the state, said Christina Ellis, program director for the AHW Endowment.

MATC Foundation received an 18-month, \$200,000 community partnership grant from the AHW Endowment to create the structure for the new \$6 million Froedtert Memorial Hospital Scholarship Fund. The fund was created to provide scholarships for underprivileged and deserving students over the next 20 years. Ultimately, the scholarship program aims to expedite the process to enter the healthcare workforce.

"There isn't a job in healthcare where people aren't needed," said Jesse Ehrenfeld, M.D., senior associate dean and director of the AHW Endowment. "We can't do it alone. We need partners to help us provide the trained people we need right now."





Building a Better World

Globe-trotting alum William A. Campbell credits MATC with putting him on the path to success

William A. Campbell returned to MATC in August for a visit.

At 15, William A. Campbell was decreed a menace to society.

Campbell skipped classes for weeks at a time and got expelled from three high schools. He punched a girl after she slapped him. He beat up a classmate for lunch money. He was charged with burglary and armed robbery and at one point faced 60 years in prison.

“In my darkest hours, my father told me I had a chance to move forward, but I had to do it,” Campbell said. “And the next chance you get to do that might be your last chance.”

With support from his parents, stints in several youth detention programs and guidance from caring instructors, Campbell earned a high school diploma. He secured a job developing websites and enrolled at MATC in 2003.

At the college, he transformed himself into a disciplined student, a vocal leader, the confident face of campus success, and, perhaps most important to Campbell himself, a responsible man.

His accomplishments at MATC became the foundation for two more college degrees and a career as an international diplomat. In April 2023, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) honored Campbell with a national outstanding alumni award, given annually since 1982 to a handful of graduates of the nation’s 1,167 community colleges.

Campbell received the award at the AACC annual conference in Denver. MATC President Dr. Vicki J. Martin was at the ceremony to see Campbell accept the honor.

“This award recognizes William’s determination to overcome challenges, his desire to improve his life and his drive to embrace education,” Dr. Martin wrote in a congratulatory letter to Campbell. “The MATC family celebrates the quality student he was; the outstanding professional and loving husband and father he is; and the compassionate community leader and inspirational role model he has become. Your story truly shows that by providing high-quality academics, ample resources and thoughtful support, MATC transforms lives.”

A rough start

Campbell recalled that his collegiate transformation didn’t start particularly well.

“I struggled that first semester, but MATC and its instructors instilled in me a discipline and a focus educationally and socially that I never really had,” he said. “MATC was a challenging, demanding institution.”

Milton Dockery, Campbell’s instructor for Contemporary Civil Rights at MATC, booted Campbell out of his class that first semester because of chronic tardiness. But Campbell returned the next semester.

“I could tell by how he looked at me when I told him he was out that he would be back. He had a thirst for knowledge,” Dockery recalled. “His writing skills were strong, his research skills excellent and he had a wonderful ability to form an argument.

He was exceptional and his success is no surprise to me. You could see it coming.”

Campbell served as president of the Black Student Union, worked in local elections and became the face of MATC in an advertising campaign.

“The theme of the ads was ‘Start Here, Go Anywhere,’” he said. “MATC showed me there was so much more out there. I was peering out of the window at the world and that vision drove me to see the rest of it.”

Campbell also played baseball for the Stormers, and a trip

down south with the team showed him more of the world. In Nashville, Campbell saw a vibrant Black community. He saw Fisk University, an historically Black college whose faculty had included W.E.B. Du Bois, social critic and co-founder of the NAACP, and Booker T. Washington, an educator and reformer.

Campbell earned an associate degree in liberal arts from MATC and transferred to Fisk. “Fisk was a demanding institution as well, but MATC had prepared me well,” he said.

At Fisk he earned a joint bachelor’s degree in history and business administration and management.

As graduation from Fisk neared, he was asked by the university’s president at the time, former U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Hazel O’Leary, to apply to the Thomas Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program. The program paid for a two-year master’s degree program in exchange for a commitment to work for five years in the foreign service.

After completing a master’s degree in international relations from Marquette University, Campbell joined the U.S. Department of State’s foreign service. He was detailed to the White House during President Barack Obama’s second term,



“I see being a role model as my real responsibility. It’s imperative that I pay forward what has been poured into me at MATC ... If I didn’t do that, I would be letting the universe down.”

WILLIAM A. CAMPBELL, U.S. foreign service

“I struggled that first semester, but MATC and its instructors instilled in me a discipline and a focus educationally and socially that I never really had.”

WILLIAM A. CAMPBELL

Inspired by the MATC ad campaign, William A. Campbell started his journey at MATC and truly went anywhere. His diplomatic career has taken him to Africa, Asia and the White House.

spent seven years in China as an economic officer, and currently works at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, as one of only 19 regional economic officers posted around the globe.

“It’s a privilege and an honor to be in the position to represent the people of the United States,” Campbell said. “It also at times has been extremely challenging when our nation is divided on so many issues. The work of building a more perfect union is never finished, and I would like to think that I have helped do that.”

Being a role model

In February 2022, Campbell was welcomed back to MATC via Zoom for an alumni spotlight session. Nearly 50 faculty, staff and students joined the call and heard Campbell talk about his time at the college.

“At MATC, I learned the lesson of self-advocacy. If you don’t go to bat for yourself, you won’t get to where you want to be or where you need to be,” he said during the session. “Sometimes you need to seek out help and resources. There are people and resources at MATC who want you to succeed.

“Not every door will be open to all people, but there will be doors,” he added. “You need to

step to the door and then learn how to unlock that door to get where you want to go, and you never have to do that alone.”

Married and a father to three children, Campbell helps others succeed by being an active, engaged role model to young Black men and women. For almost 20 years, Campbell has worked with Rescue, Release and Restore Inc., a Chicago-based camping experience that helps Black youth realize their full potential.

The group’s programs foster positive self-images through mentoring, conflict resolution, and academic and cultural enrichment. Campbell participates in the group’s annual summer camp.

“I see being a role model as my real responsibility,” Campbell said. “It’s imperative that I pay forward what has been poured into me at MATC, at Fisk, in the city of Milwaukee. If I didn’t do that, I would be letting the universe down.” ■

Watch William A. Campbell receive the 2023 National Outstanding Alumni award from the AACC.



MATC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Life of Diplomacy

When Luis Arreaga was born in Guatemala City in 1952, his country seethed with social unrest, economic turmoil and political violence.

“As a kid, you’re not always aware of what was happening,” Arreaga said. “Everyone had a relative or knew someone close who had been a victim of violence.”

Arreaga found respite playing in the small yard of his family’s modest home. One day during his frolics, a Pan Am jetliner took off from the nearby airport and screeched across the sky. While looking up at the jet, Arreaga wondered if he would ever be on an airplane.

Since that day, he’s been on more airplanes than he can count. Arreaga has lived all over the world, worked in cosmopolitan cities, served as the American ambassador to Iceland and Guatemala, and retired in November 2020 from the foreign service after a sterling career spanning three decades.

But back in August 1971, before leading the exciting, international life of a diplomat, Arreaga was a college student at MATC.



“It (MATC) was a place that embraced ethnicities from different parts of the world. I felt I could bring my own cultural roots. I felt like I was accepted.”

LUIS ARREAGA, retired U.S. ambassador

“Tuition was about \$300 a semester, they offered a marketing degree and we knew a family who lived in Milwaukee where I could stay,” said Arreaga, who paged through piles of thick college directories to find MATC in the days before the internet or cell phones.

He lived in a small house near 27th Street and Highland Avenue and rode the bus to the Downtown Milwaukee Campus. To Arreaga, MATC was a collegiate United Nations: students of many races studying subjects from electricity to hairdressing to mortuary science.

“It (MATC) was a place that embraced ethnicities from different parts of the world,” he said. “I felt I could bring my own cultural roots. I felt like I was accepted.”



Luis Arreaga (left) served as the U.S. ambassador to Guatemala.

MATC staff members made sure Arreaga took the right courses and knew where the classrooms were. “They were very engaged, and I am forever grateful for that,” he said. “It’s amazing what a difference it makes when someone takes an active interest in seeing you succeed.”

After earning his associate degree in marketing, Arreaga married Mary Kelsey in 1973 and became a U.S. citizen in 1975.

“I had idolized the United States since I was a kid,” Arreaga said. “Becoming a citizen was a no-brainer. I wanted to be part of this country. I wanted to be associated with the values of this nation.”

He attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration in 1976, a master’s degree in management and a doctorate in economics in 1981.

In college, Arreaga discovered a passion for public service. He entered the foreign service and served all over the world for the next three decades.

The pinnacle of his career came when he served as the U.S. ambassador to Iceland from 2010 to 2013 and to Guatemala, the land of his birth, from 2017 to 2020.

Arreaga retired from the foreign service in November 2020. He and his wife now live in Arlington, Virginia. They enjoy traveling and have returned to Milwaukee numerous times to visit old friends and the city that helped shape their lives.

“I could have never imagined that my life would turn out like this,” Arreaga said. “Being an ambassador is the honor of a lifetime. I have no regrets. I have been lucky to have the life I have been given.” ■



Shelton Williams-Dryden drives for the basket in a game against the Bryant & Stratton College Bobcats.

Blood, Sweat and Happy Tears

In March, the men's basketball team brought home the college's first national championship. Here's the story behind that historic victory.

Running what seemed to be his millionth sprint on the burning sands of Milwaukee's Bradford Beach under the broiling August sun, MATC student Mason Johnson wondered if it was all worth it.

Johnson was starting his third and final season on the MATC men's basketball team, and the late summer preseason practices were taking their toll: His feet hurt, his legs were tired, his back ached.

For Johnson and the rest of the Stormers players, the 2022-23 season might have started in agony, but it ended in the ecstasy, elation and excitement about the college's first national championship in basketball.

"It all comes back to the hard work at the beginning of the season," said Johnson, who grew up in Milwaukee and graduated from Milwaukee Public Schools' Golda Meir School. "The training at the beach, where we ran up hills, ran up and down stairs, did sprints on the sand: In the end, it all paid off."

The payoff came in Danville, Illinois, on Saturday, March 25, when MATC beat Macomb Community College 86-65 to win the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division II national championship. The Stormers won the most games in MATC history (32) and won the title as an underdog No. 7 seed — the highest seed to win the tournament.

"From the first day of conditioning and practice, we knew we had talent," said Travis Mrozek, MATC's assistant athletic director and associate men's basketball coach. "The question always was will the talent we knew we had play together and be special like we knew they could."

Storming out of the gate

In October 2022, the Stormers were ranked No. 5 in the NJCAA Division II preseason poll. The team played in a preseason tournament against Des Moines Area Community College, a perennially powerful team and a favorite to win the national championship.

"We stayed close with them for three quarters of the game," Johnson said. "It was our very first game playing together, but we held it together. That's when I knew we could win a championship."

The Stormers went 9-1 in their first 10 games, scoring more than 97 points in six of those contests. After a one-point loss to John Wood University, the team rattled off another 11 straight wins, topping 100 points five times.

But a February 2 road trip to North Central Community College Conference (N4C) rival South Suburban College near Chicago ended in a humbling, 102-68 loss. It also became a crucial moment in the season. "We had to decide who we were," Mrozek said.

Johnson covered his face with his hands when he remembered that game. "Not good," he said. "We knew we couldn't go into another game without knowing our opponent. We also knew we couldn't overreact to one game. We knew we could recover."

MATC regrouped and clinched its third straight N4C championship on February 20 by defeating Madison College, 87-68.

In the regular season finale on February 23, Johnson scored four points in the last 38 seconds to help the Stormers beat the Bryant & Stratton College Bobcats, 67-62, in the Bloechl Center at Mount Mary University, in front of a national audience who livestreamed the game on ESPN+.

"That was something special for the players," Mrozek said. "We knew whatever happened in the rest of the season that they would have a special memory from MATC."

Set for the second season

With the regular season completed, the Stormers headed to the NJCAA Region 4 playoffs at Rockford, Illinois. They beat Rock Valley College, avenging a regular season loss, to win the regional title and earn a spot in the national tournament.

“The Rock Valley game was key. I think that’s when we clicked and began to really play together,” Mrozek said.

At the national tournament, the Stormers won four games in five days: They beat No. 9 seeded Mott 83-68, upset No. 2 Niagara County 79-65 in the quarterfinals and defeated No. 6 Orange County 79-76 in the semifinals to reach the title game.

“All along the way, we told the players they were writing their own story,” Mrozek said. “And all along the way we asked them how did they want the story to end.”

In the title game against Macomb, Johnson scored 14 points and grabbed seven rebounds. Ke’ Varius Taylor scored 20 points, while Mikale Stevenson added 17 points.

In MATC’s four wins, Johnson made 71% of his shots, averaged 20.3 points and 8.3 rebounds, and was named the tournament’s Most Valuable Player.



“All along the way, we told the players they were writing their own story. And all along the way we asked them how did they want the story to end.”

TRAVIS MROZEK, MATC’s assistant athletic director and associate men’s basketball coach

“I was at the tournament the year before and had a pretty bad experience,” Johnson said. “Everything is different down there. The vibe is different, the floor is different, the rims are hard. Being there once before made a huge difference. I was so much more prepared.”

Victory laps

At first, the Stormers weren’t ready for the rush of emotion that came with hoisting the national championship trophy.

“It’s like climbing Mount Everest,” Mrozek recalled. “You do so much planning and so much preparing that when you get to the top, you just exhale in relief.”

Joy came soon enough. Players sang and cheered in the Danville locker room. Head coach Randy Casey danced. Back in Milwaukee, the college celebrated its champions on April 5 with a loud pep rally in the Student Center cafeteria.

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley read a proclamation honoring the team, while Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson and U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore extended congratulations via video. The team was honored by the Milwaukee Bucks at their April 5 game against the Chicago Bulls at Fiserv Forum.

“Just looking at that trophy over and over, and I still can’t believe that it actually happened,” said Casey at the college rally. “It shows what can happen when you put in the hard work no matter where you’re at, no matter what circumstance might be in your way. It’s all about what hard work can achieve.” ■

Support MATC Athletics! See a full game schedule at matcstormers.com.

MATC’s men’s basketball team came together this season to clinch the national title. Playing in a game at Mount Mary University that was livestreamed to a national audience on ESPN+ was a season highlight.



Stormers spirit captured the college after the men's basketball team returned from Danville. The team was celebrated April 5 at a pep rally attended by students, faculty, staff, family members and local leaders.



The True Way

After a few detours, Milwaukee chef and Funky Fresh Spring Rolls founder TrueMan McGee heads for the national spotlight

Thanks to MATC, TrueMan McGee shouldn't have any trouble solving this knotty multiplication problem:

Take a business creating unique, gourmet spring rolls that began in his parents' kitchen and grow it exponentially into a national brand available at thousands of stores from California to New York.

For the answer, McGee, who founded Funky Fresh Spring Rolls in 2013, is using skills he learned in MATC's Sheet Metal apprenticeship program from 2005 until 2010.

"The things I learned at MATC I still use to this day: project management, troubleshooting, math," said McGee, a lifelong Milwaukee resident. "At MATC, I learned that math isn't just paper on a test. I learned that I had to apply math at my job. If I wasn't good at math, I wouldn't have a job.

"I also learned that if there is a will, there is a way," McGee added. "You need to have the will to do it. You can't wish it to happen. You have to have the will to make it happen."

Today, McGee is trying to make something big happen. Ten years after selling his first spring rolls, McGee is partnering with Milwaukee-based pizza company Palermo Villa to transform Funky Fresh into a national food brand. So far, Funky Fresh rolls are available in nearly 200 grocery stores in Wisconsin and Illinois.

"The plan is to create a thriving national business and make Funky Fresh a household name," McGee said.

McGee opened his first retail store in downtown Milwaukee's Shops of Grand Avenue mall in 2018 and then moved to

the Sherman Phoenix Marketplace in the Sherman Park neighborhood later that year.

The store soon had an avid, hungry following, offering non-traditional gourmet spring rolls handcrafted with fresh and local ingredients and baked in oil instead of deep-fried. The shop also became a community meeting place and training ground for young Black workers thinking about their future.

"Back then I did and I still do talk up MATC," McGee said.

"MATC has some of the best programs to start or further your career. I tell people they don't need a bigger school or a place where they might incur a lot of debt. I tried to be a role model, especially to young Black men. I hoped to show them that with energy and effort, anything is possible."

McGee was born in Milwaukee and grew up at 26th and Burleigh streets. He had nine brothers and sisters and was the youngest of seven boys.

"You learn to find your own way," he

said. "When you're not the strongest, not the smartest and not the fastest, you watch and learn the lessons of others."

Growing up, he wanted to be a movie director or a chef. "My mom stayed at home and cooked huge dinners for the family. In the summer, she catered," he said. "Food sets the tone. Food connects us. It's always there. We meet for lunch, we meet for dinner. Many times, the better the food, the better the event."

McGee graduated from what was then called Milwaukee Technical High School, now Milwaukee Public Schools' Bradley Technology and Trade High School or simply "Bradley Tech." The school pushed the trades as the best way to a career, so McGee took sheet metal classes.



"MATC has some of the best programs to start or further your career."

TRUEMAN MCGEE, founder,
Funky Fresh Spring Rolls

TrueMan McGee can't contain his enthusiasm for Funky Fresh Spring Rolls.

In 2005, he enrolled in MATC's Sheet Metal apprenticeship program. He took courses at the Oak Creek Campus, learning to fabricate, assemble, install and repair sheet metal products and equipment, such as ducts, control boxes, drainpipes and furnace casings.

"MATC felt like my high school. It was laid out the same way, but I knew I was learning for real," McGee said. "If I didn't learn it, I might not get a job."

McGee finished his classes in 2010. He was working toward becoming a journeyman sheet metal worker when he got laid off in 2012. At the time, all he knew was the trade, but his old desire to be a chef resurfaced.

He started Funky Fresh and coached high school wrestling until the food business caught on. In 2022, the Milwaukee Business Journal honored him as a 40 Under 40 recipient. In 2023, he connected with Palermo and closed the Sherman Phoenix store.

These days, McGee travels the country drumming up business for his brand, serving up samples in supermarkets and making short videos. He wants to see Funky Fresh products in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, where his parents now live. He'd love to someday have a Funky Fresh manufacturing plant that employs hundreds of people in the city of Milwaukee.

"I knew that this transition would change my life, I just didn't know how much," McGee said. "Everything takes longer than it used to. I'm working more on the computer, making connections and networking. This is a journey, but I believe I have the skills to get it done." ■

Keep up with the latest news from TrueMan McGee at funkyfreshspringrolls.com.

MATC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

The Magic of Alumni Connections

To bring his Funky Fresh Spring Rolls onto the national stage, TrueMan McGee partnered with Palermo Villa. The Milwaukee-based company is led by quite a few MATC alumni, including President Angelo Fallucca and Chief Creative Officer Laurie Fallucca.



"We all share the same entrepreneurial spirit," said Angelo, an MATC Business and Accounting graduate. "That's what drew us to TrueMan and his business."

And they share the experience of studying at MATC. All three credit the college with teaching them skills they've applied in their business and community initiatives.

"MATC has had a major, positive impact on my professional life," said Laurie, who earned a degree in fashion. "How I approach each day with a positive 'can-do' attitude came from my wonderful instructors at MATC."

What advice do these executives have for entrepreneurs like McGee?

"The key is to find what your natural gifts and passions are and then go after them with gusto," Laurie said.

TrueMan McGee (center) with Palermo Villa President Angelo Fallucca and Chief Creative Officer Laurie Fallucca



Cain Mendoza shares his story to help Latino youth.

Heart of a Lion

A series of setbacks inspired Cain Mendoza to return to MATC where the former class clown learned to be a leader

Yesterday's Cain Mendoza would hardly recognize today's Cain Mendoza.

Back in the day, Mendoza was a slacker, more concerned about cracking jokes than cracking open books. He didn't care about taking care of himself and drifted through Milwaukee Public Schools' Alexander Hamilton High School before graduating in 2011.

"I was the class clown," Mendoza recalled. "I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do with my life."

Today, the 30-year-old Mendoza is an MATC graduate, a successful businessman, a community leader and a devoted father. This transformation came through hard work, discipline and a fierce drive to not just survive, but thrive.

"I'm hardheaded and have an unwavering will," said Mendoza, who was named president of the Latino Entrepreneurial Network (LEN) of Southeastern Wisconsin. "I was going to get the skills I needed to stand on my own. ... It was about going out there and doing it."

Real-life education

Mendoza was born in Fresno, California. He moved to Milwaukee when he was 7 years old and grew up on the city's south

side. He enrolled at MATC right after high school, first to study nursing, then medical interpreting. But without any clear career plan, he dropped out.



"Let's empower ourselves to become the change we want to see."

CAIN MENDOZA, president of LEN of Southeastern Wisconsin

He took a job in sales that tapped a vein of entrepreneurialism he had inside him. He also discovered that simply thinking you can do something didn't equate to success.

"I certainly got a real-life education," he said. "Rejection became a friend. I learned to fail fast and fail forward. It was like stepping into the ring with a boxer. You can have the heart of a lion, but he knows things you don't. At some point you have to learn what he knows."

Mendoza began to reshape and refocus his mind, body and spirit. He joined a gym, lost weight and competed in bodybuilding. In 2019, he returned to MATC. Even

though he was working full time and raising a son as a single father, going to school was just the challenge he needed to move forward.

"I live for stepping out of my comfort zone," Mendoza said. "I got around people who were goal-oriented. I have become a lifelong student because I know that knowledge is power."

While completing his associate degree in Business Management at MATC, he took a job as business development manager at Creative Marketing Resources (now CMRignite), a full-service strategic communications agency. He finds new business opportunities for companies by cold calling, connecting, networking and partnering. "I'm a hunter," he said with a smile. "And I love this kind of work."

Rising community leader

Among the connections Mendoza made was Nelson Soler, who founded LEN. Soler reached out to Mendoza about working with the network, which provides services and educational programs to individuals, entrepreneurs and business owners in Milwaukee's Latino community.

"He saw something in me," Mendoza said. "It was really the first time someone recognized me as a leader. I ignored any fears I had and said yes."

Mendoza was sworn in as president of the board in January and will serve one year. He aims to help the organization expand its bilingual entrepreneurial training centers and hopes to find forums to share his story with the city's Latino youth.

"The type of influence you have is based on the example you set," Mendoza said. "We want them to listen to us. Well, we need to listen to them as well. Telling them the truth and being super authentic is what they want to hear."

"We need to teach resilience, fortitude, and that it's okay to fail, we have all been there," Mendoza said. "Let's empower ourselves to become the change we want to see." ■



Jason Alston serves up savory specialties at Heaven's Table BBQ.



Food for Thought

The COVID-19 pandemic threw the hospitality industry into chaos. MATC alumni recount how they adapted to survive or made the difficult decision to walk away.

Restaurants can stomach practically anything.

For thousands of years, the hospitality industry has withstood and survived depressions, famines, wars, revolutions, all sorts of natural disasters, even plagues.

“Restaurants have been around for centuries and have endured all sorts of hardships, but people always return because our industry is constantly evolving and growing and welcoming of people,” said Paul Bartolotta, an MATC graduate, two-time James Beard award winner and one of the country’s Superstar Chefs, according to Food & Wine magazine. “We make people feel welcome, and there will always be a need for that.”

In 2020, a modern plague descended on the world. The COVID-19 pandemic shuttered restaurants and eateries or months, limited customer capacity and popularized delivery and carryout. It altered the way the industry works forever, according to MATC alumni working in the business.

We asked three graduates of MATC’s respected Culinary Arts program to look back at how they managed their operations during the pandemic and to share the lessons they learned as they navigated the new normal.



Paul Bartolotta

*The Bartolotta Restaurants,
bartolottas.com*

Training for years in Europe, winning two national James Beard awards, and opening and operating 17 dining destinations wasn't enough to prepare chef Paul Bartolotta for the pandemic.

Closing the doors of so many restaurants was one of the worst days in his long career, Bartolotta said. But going through the experience gave him a renewed sense of appreciation for his workers, his guests and his craft.

"As a business owner, taking care of the people that work for you and your community is always your top priority, but the pandemic really brought that to the forefront. Without our hardworking team members, we don't have a business. They are the beating heart of our company and the face of our hospitality," Bartolotta said.

"The pandemic also showed us the power of our communities and how people supported the restaurant industry throughout Milwaukee and the rest of the world," he added. "As we reopened and had to adjust our business models, we were fortunate to have loyal, patient guests who understood our struggles, and they were happy to support our industry. I can't thank our local community enough for standing by us during that difficult time."

When the restaurants closed, Bartolotta set up a dry goods pantry for his employees to access food and supplies, and he kept a core leadership team employed full time through the

closures. He also used the quarantine to reevaluate business practices and structures.

"It was a time of great reset for our company and one that I believe made us stronger in the long run," he said. "The wonderful thing about the hospitality industry is that people will always want to go out to eat and try new foods and gather with friends and family."

Bartolotta has visited MATC numerous times to talk with students, and he often reminds them to have a realistic view of the industry they want to make their career.

"Hospitality is so much more than a service industry. We are in the people business first and foremost. It teaches camaraderie, teamwork, personal responsibility, how to take care of other people," he said. "The training and education that I received at MATC helped prepare me, and all of the students who enroll there, to navigate real-world scenarios by providing an incredible foundational education that leaves students feeling confident as they embark on their professional careers."

AJ Dixon

Lazy Susan, closed April 2023

AJ Dixon is a professional chef and will always love cooking.

But during the pandemic, she learned to dislike the grueling pace of the restaurant business.

Dixon, a 2002 MATC Culinary Arts graduate, owned and operated Bay View's popular Lazy Susan from 2014 until April 2023. The stress of running her own business, not having any partners, cooking almost all the food and never seeing her family were already taking a toll.

The pandemic pushed her over the edge.

"If I had to do it all over again, I would have cut my losses, shut my doors and never looked back when COVID hit," Dixon said.

Dixon grew up on Milwaukee's south side. Her late mother, Susan, loved food and loved to cook. AJ grew up in the kitchen watching and eating everything her mother created. She earned her degree at MATC, then cooked at various restaurants in Milwaukee.

In 2014, she opened Lazy Susan to rave reviews and a solid customer base. "I'm very proud of what I did," she said. "I had a really great restaurant that routinely was in the Top 30." The Top 30 is an annual list of the area's best restaurants published by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's dining critic.

In early 2020, she foresaw the havoc COVID could wreak and emailed her insurance company about possible problems. "I was sad, scared and concerned all the time," Dixon said. "When we opened the doors again for indoor dining, it should have been easier, but it just kept getting harder."

Dixon was mentally fatigued and physically exhausted. “My hands hurt every day. I was tired every day. Some days I sat in my office and cried. I was going down a deep, dark path and I needed to make some changes to pull myself out of it.”

After talking to her staff members, Dixon decided to close in April. “Closing was the hardest decision I had to make, but the best one I ever had made for myself. I loved my restaurant, the staff, the friends I made along the way and more. Lazy Susan was more than just a restaurant, it was a big family.”

Dixon now works as a corporate chef, a Monday-to-Friday gig with benefits and a retirement plan. She would like to teach cooking someday.

Although Dixon loved having a restaurant, the business can be brutal, she acknowledged. “Restaurants and restaurant workers need better support and better compensation,” she said. “Burnout is real. And in the end, it took me a long time to realize that I wasn’t a failure.”

Opening and operating a restaurant was one chapter of her life, she said. “Now, I’m on to other chapters.”



Jason Alston

Heaven’s Table BBQ
heavenstablebbqmke.com

Plain and simple, Jason Alston didn’t know what to do when COVID hit.

“There was no plan,” said Alston, shaking his head. “Suddenly you had to find a way to provide for your customers, your employees and your family.”

In 2018, Alston opened Heaven’s Table BBQ inside the Crossroads Collective food hall on Milwaukee’s east side. By the spring of 2020, business was cooking. “We were hot, and we were climbing the charts,” he said. “We had great momentum.”

Then COVID came and the restaurant shut down. Fortunately, Alston had recently purchased a cargo van, so he delivered food whenever and wherever he could. He dropped off dinners all over the city to make sure his employees got paid.

And he appeared on Quarantine Kitchen, a Facebook Live cooking show featuring tips and recipes to make at home using basic ingredients and pantry staples. In the episode, Alston showed viewers tips and tricks to make a smoked brisket Philly cheese steak.

He did almost anything he could think of to keep busy.

“I grew up in a single-parent home, and many times I had to just figure something out myself. I couldn’t sit around and mope,” Alston said. “But I have always had a lot of drive in me, good or bad, and I just stayed focused and prayed a lot. I tried not to worry about restaurants closing down around me.”

In the fall of 2020, he was renovating a new carryout space a few miles west of the Collective on West North Avenue, located next to a residential neighborhood and near a few other restaurants.

As COVID precautions and regulations were eliminated, Alston discovered his customers preferred delivery and takeout. Getting them to come and sit down took more effort than simply opening the door.

“Our lives are moving faster all the time, so people are learning to take their food and go,” he said. “Plus, people want a story attached to their food to make it special. We need to make the experience fun and creative for them.”

Alston, who also serves as an instructor at MATC’s Culinary Arts program, tells students to be prepared. “I ask them about their visions and about their dreams, but I tell them to create a plan now to develop their brand,” he said. “Know the limitations you have, adjust and prepare for reality.”

Alston plans to open a second location in the future and has developed a nonprofit organization called Chosen Generation. He visits schools and correctional facilities to tell his personal story — a journey that includes family troubles, school expulsions, arrests and prison time.

“I want to help others avoid the mistakes I made,” Alston said. “There’s nothing more influential than talking to somebody that’s been in your shoes. I try to help others to think about the consequences before they engage.” ■

Learn more about the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management programs at matc.edu.



Nicole Acosta photographs a subject for the Hoops Project.



Through Her Own Lens

Photographer Nicole Acosta's Hoops Project inspires women to tell their stories

Sitting at a laminated table of a small McDonald's restaurant in a dusty Texas town, a young Nicole Acosta couldn't keep her eyes off of the picture hanging on the wall.

"I was maybe 7 or 8 years old, and we were on a family trip," Acosta remembered. "There was a portrait of Frida Kahlo.

"I was so drawn to the image, so infatuated with it. I found out all about her. In high school, I was one of the only Mexican students in my class, and I learned all about her all over again. That's when I knew I was going to be an artist."

In the past three decades since her fateful encounter with Kahlo's portrait, the Milwaukee native has become so much more than that.

Acosta harnessed her creativity and trained her eye at Milwaukee Public Schools' Milwaukee High School for the Arts (MHSA), studied at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design (MIAD) and participated in MATC's respected Photography program.

Today, she's an acclaimed Milwaukee-based photographer, painter, storyteller, dancer, marketing expert and community activist.

"Nicole is a self-described unicorn: an amazing professional artist who is an accomplished arts professional. She's a mixture of talents, a great cocktail of a person," said Rew Gordon, executive director of Mitchell Street Arts (MiSA), which hired Acosta as creative director this past summer. "We chose her from a slew of amazing candidates, and she has been stellar at what she has been working on. We are so happy she is on the team."

Discovering her creative brain

At one point, Acosta's immigrant parents weren't so thrilled about her artistic bent. Born and raised on Milwaukee's south side, Acosta was expected to become a nurse, a doctor or a lawyer. Instead, she loved to dance and took ballet lessons. She played the viola. She saw life through a different lens.

"From an early age I was different," Acosta said. "I was a creative kid. I liked to daydream. My head was in the clouds."



Photos from Nicole Acosta's Hoops Project

Her parents agreed to let her attend MHSA if she studied visual arts and not dance. It was at the high school that she fell in love with photography.

“For a while you couldn’t keep me out of the darkroom. I would skip classes to keep working on things. It became quite an obsession with me,” she admitted. “My parents bought me my first 35 mm camera at 7 Mile Fair. They might not have understood what I wanted to do, but they supported me.”

She also had supportive instructors who encouraged her and nurtured her nascent talent. “I had an eye for it,” she said. “Having the eye means you know that decisive moment — that exact right time to take the shot. No matter what kind of equipment you use, your eye will shine through. You can’t really teach it. It’s innate.”

But after graduating she discovered she couldn’t get rich as an artist while being the mother to a baby boy. She decided to go to nursing school. “Bad decision,” she said flatly. “Inside, I knew I had to be an artist.”

Training her critical eye

She took photography courses at MIAD, Wisconsin’s only private, four-year college of visual art and design. She fell in love with the portrait work of photographers Richard Avedon and Helmut Newton.

She enrolled in MATC’s Photography program to learn the technical side of the art form and hone her skills. She said she endured pointed, at times stinging, critiques of her work, but she learned.

“At MATC I got to explore my place in the world,” she said. “I was pushing the envelope at times.”

Still, her dreams of becoming a self-sustaining artist were tempered with the

reality of paying bills and raising her children. She dropped out of MATC and earned a degree in marketing at Alverno College in 2016.

After sending out hundreds of résumés and sitting in a dozen fruitless interviews, Acosta landed a job as the marketing manager for Ex Fabula, a community group that hosts public storytelling events and collaborates with businesses and nonprofits. She flourished there and, three years later, took a marketing job at the Milwaukee Chamber Theater.

In 2019, she started her HOOPS project, taking photo portraits of Black, Brown, Indigenous and Asian women wearing hoop earrings and collecting their personal stories. The project received national recognition, became a play performed at the Milwaukee Chamber Theater and is the subject of a soon-to-be-published coffee-table book.

She took photos of women from all kinds of places and professions, including teachers, artists, doulas, creators, healers, healthcare workers, musicians, poets, advocates, mothers, DJs, hair stylists and dancers.

“When I began the HOOPS Project, it had no name and had no actual goal, except to share personal stories and to document what hoop earrings mean to so many,” Acosta said. “I realized that adorning oneself with hoop earrings is something deeply personal, ritualistic and revolutionary.”

“Many, many people have told me how emotional and impactful HOOPS has been for them. When I hear that, I get re-inspired,” Acosta added. “I never, ever thought my art would resonate so much with people.”

It resonated so much that in February

2023, Acosta was named the 14th Artist in Residence at The Pfister Hotel in downtown Milwaukee. She set up a studio off the lobby, taking photos, painting pictures and gathering stories from guests and community members.

“We were excited to welcome Nicole to The Pfister and looked forward to seeing her tell our guests’ stories through her photography,” said Brandon Drusch, the hotel’s managing director.

Acosta completed her six-month artistic residency in September. She now is devoting all her time to Mitchell Street Arts collective (MiSA). MiSA has stages for performing arts such as theater, spoken word poetry and open mic nights, along with studio and gallery spaces for woodcarving, ceramics, photography and painting.

Acosta is also active in Latinas Unidas en las Artes (LUNA), an organization dedicated to empowering the city’s Hispanic/Latino/a artists. Young girls of color routinely reach out to her to ask advice about life and art, she said, and she unflinchingly shares her story.

“I’ve overcome a lot of challenges and a lot of barriers. There are things I never thought I would talk about but have become more open about. I’m thrilled if my story helps them,” Acosta said. “People of color, especially women of color, have felt silenced for a long time. They have been overlooked, underpaid, not taken seriously. At some point I decided I didn’t need to wait for permission from anyone. I decided I was going to create what I wanted.” ■

Learn more about Nicole Acosta’s work at atsocanicole.com.



A Powerful Partnership

**MATC, We Energies and the City of Milwaukee
join forces to expand the Electrical Power
Distribution program**

MATC has supercharged its Electrical Power Distribution (EPD) technical diploma program, thanks to a surge of support from We Energies and the City of Milwaukee.

In April, MATC unveiled a partnership with the utility company and the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM) to add an EPD training facility in Milwaukee's Metcalfe Park neighborhood.

The 30-credit program covers the basics on electrical power distribution, rescue and safety, and general workplace communication. Students are prepared for entry-level electrical line worker positions, and graduates can use the training as a step toward apprenticeship.

"These are the people that when your lights go out, they go out to repair them," said Alderman Russell W. Stamper II, who represents Milwaukee's District 15, where the program expansion is unfolding.

The college's current EPD program accommodates only one section at the Mequon Campus, thus limiting enrollment. A second training facility

at the revitalized site in the Metcalfe Park neighborhood will provide students greater access to classes and training, and attract a more diverse student population in Milwaukee.

The Metcalfe Park location combines land owned by We Energies and RACM. We Energies is dedicating a portion of its Metro North facility located at approximately North 31st and 32nd streets and West North Avenue. The company also is donating yard space and a trailer for classroom instruction and a small pole yard for field instruction.

RACM will commit vacant land located around North 30th Street from West Meinecke Avenue to West North Avenue. This area will be used for field instruction, allowing students to practice training where greater distance between poles is needed.

Metcalfe Community Bridges Inc., a nonprofit organization that supports neighborhood investment and revitalization, is joining the partnership and will work with RACM on the project's second phase to create a community gathering area at the southern end of the property.

"This is collaboration at its best," said Laura Bray, MATC's vice president of college advancement and external communications and executive director of the MATC Foundation. "Partners came together to expand training opportunities tied directly to high-demand, high-paying jobs. This will bring a new asset to the great Metcalfe Park neighborhood."

The expansion is being funded by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's Fresh Coast Protection Partnership, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, We Energies and MP Systems.

A first-year apprentice line worker can make \$65,000 or more, said Matthew Reindl, an electrical power distribution instructor at MATC. An experienced line worker who travels to sites affected by natural disasters can make nearly a quarter of a million dollars a year, he said.

"We're starving for line workers right now," Reindl said. "There's more demand on our power grid, which means more repairs are needed. There's no shortage of work." ■

WAGE



\$44.74

Mean hourly wage of line mechanics in Wisconsin

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



A cruise ship enters Milwaukee's busy port.

Holding Down the Port

Jackie Q. Carter is the first woman and the first person of color to oversee busy Port Milwaukee

Jackie Q. Carter grew up in a hustling, bustling household. She lived in Milwaukee's Washington Park neighborhood and was raised by her maternal grandmother, a benevolent presence who oversaw a constant flow of relatives, neighbors and friends through the house and kept it all from descending into disorder.

A quiet child, Carter watched her grandmother, studied her and learned from her.

"She had raised eight children herself, and she was a true matriarch," Carter recalled.

"There was always family around, and she took care of every one of them. She showed me what it was like to be responsible for people."

Decades later, thanks to her grandmother's example and an education that started at MATC, Carter is

responsible for the operation that safely moves millions of tons of cargo and thousands of passengers through Port Milwaukee.

Carter, who earned an associate degree in Accounting from MATC in 2008, was named port director in early 2023. She is the first woman and first person of color to hold the position.

"My goal is to lay the foundation to make sure that I'm not the last one," she said.

'Simply the best choice'

Carter began working at the port in 2017 as finance and administration officer, directing all business, financial, human resources and administrative operations. In October 2022, she was named acting port director after former director Adam Tindall-Schlicht left to become administrator of the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation.

Tindall-Schlicht routinely praised Carter's work to the Harbor Commission, which oversees port operations, and to Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson.

"After listening to applicants with expertise from around the world, Jackie is simply the best choice to carry out the port's mission of promoting commerce and supporting the local economy," Johnson said when appointing Carter in January 2023.

The port's two-story, beige stone administration building on Lincoln Memorial Drive sits a few hundred feet away from the

Jackie Q. Carter honed her organizational skills at MATC.



Ship: Photo Courtesy of Port Milwaukee; Portrait: Kalida N. Williams

lapping waters of Lake Michigan. From her second-floor office window, Carter can survey much of the port's 467 acres, and watch the bustling ship, ferry and cruise liner traffic, rail transports, and storage operations.

In 2022, more than 13,000 recreational cruise ship passengers passed through the port, along with nearly 2.3 million tons of cargo that included curved steel plates, brewery tanks, superyacht pieces and limestone blocks.

"Port Milwaukee has a rich history, and I want to help build on our momentum," Carter said. "We want to connect with more customers and make sure they know that we specialize in moving cargo, and that includes people in cruise ships."

Her path to the port

Carter hardly ever thought about ships while growing up. She graduated from Milwaukee Public Schools' John Marshall High School in 1995. She tried a four-year college briefly, but she found the large school hard to navigate and dropped out. She worked at several non-profit organizations, including Rosalie Manor Inc. and Our Next Generation.

In 2007, she took a job in the City of Milwaukee Treasurer's office and worked in various roles. As her responsibilities grew, she reconsidered college. This time she chose MATC.

"I saw MATC as a safe space," Carter said. "It's easy to get lost at a big school. You need to learn how to navigate."

"My classes at MATC gave me a broader understanding of the world. The college and my instructors exposed me to different perspectives and how people see things."

Her accounting instructor, Natasha Librizzi, had a professional confidence and personal assurance that Carter

admired. "Those were things I didn't have and that I wanted," she said.

"Jackie was a very hardworking and determined student," said Librizzi, who still teaches accounting and business at MATC. "She was very organized. She was very engaged in her classes,

she truly cared and was a fast learner. I am so thrilled with her accomplishments and very proud that she is in the community helping our city."

After earning her MATC degree, Carter attained a bachelor's degree in business and management and professional

communication from Alverno College, and a master's degree in public administration from Concordia University Wisconsin.

Carter said she uses the lessons she learned at MATC every day: the importance of internal controls, how to improve processes, how to share information and how to stay organized.

"When I became port director, I had to broaden my perspective from just a financial one to everything. I had to learn a lot and meet lots of people. I interacted more with our customers, our business owners and our community partners," she said. "There's a bigger picture. What I was taught at MATC helped me immensely with that."

The next generation of Carter's family is following her lead and studying at MATC. One of Carter's daughters took several courses at MATC online during the COVID-19 pandemic, and her son is planning to attend classes at the college as well.

"I would absolutely recommend MATC," she said. "It provides a safe space, a solid education, an affordable alternative to a four-year college. If you're in the trades, you can find a job pretty quick, so there's an immediate payoff. It has served me very well." ■

“Port Milwaukee has a rich history, and I want to help build on our momentum.”

JACKIE Q. CARTER,
director Port Milwaukee

Port Milwaukee by the Numbers

Jackie Q. Carter oversees a bustling port that made a post-pandemic comeback in 2022



13,611

Cruise Passengers
(the highest number in the port's history)



16,000

Items of Luggage Handled



2.3

Million Tons of Cargo



\$4.25 Billion

Total Value
of Shipments

Source: Port Milwaukee's
2022 Annual Report



Nurse Katie Jackson makes nursing scrubs fashionable.

Designing Woman

Nursing graduate Katie Jackson helps fellow nurses dress for success

Katie Jackson believes you can look good while making people feel good.

As a registered nurse working in the 21st century, Jackson doesn't wear the archaic starched white dress and cap uniform. Instead, she dons comfortable, practical scrubs and Crocs for her shifts.

And now Jackson, a 2021 Registered Nursing graduate, is bringing fashion to those functional garments. The Milwaukee native has started her own line of nursing wear and accessories called NurseBae LLC. Through nursebaeshop.com, Jackson sells scrub sets, outerwear, jackets and accessories that help nurses look and feel their best while healing, teaching, comforting, nurturing and saving lives.

"When I was a nursing student, scrubs just weren't that cute," Jackson said. "They're scratchy. They're boxy. The pants don't fit right. I always say if you look good, you're going to feel good. I wanted to come to work in cute scrubs that made me feel great and ready to conquer the day."

She launched her line in October 2022. "The first day I sold four things," she recalled. "I was kind of sad that it wasn't more but really excited that it was working."

Thanks to a vigorous professional and personal social media presence, Jackson has sold items from her line to all kinds of medical professionals in more than a dozen states and the Virgin Islands.

In 2023, Jackson plans to offer a casual line of crew necks and T-shirts, along with more accessories like Croc pins and stethoscope cases.

Her website and social media posts usually feature nurses of color wearing her products. "I'm always trying to connect with minority communities and highlight those people in healthcare," said Jackson. "I wanted my scrub line to highlight the African American women working hard in the healthcare field, despite all of the adversity we may encounter."



"I wanted to come to work in cute scrubs that made me feel great and ready to conquer the day."

KATIE JACKSON, owner of NurseBae LLC

Jackson has always had a flair for fashion. At Milwaukee Public Schools' Rufus King International High School, she styled hair and applied makeup to fellow students for special



19.4%

number of nurses who are women of color

Source: American Association of Colleges of Nursing, April 2023

events like prom and homecoming dances. That gig morphed into a YouTube channel and a blog, where Jackson to this day makes entries discussing her life and career.

“I just go with the flow,” she said. “I talk about all kinds of subjects. It’s a way to talk about my scrubs, my life, my nursing career.”

Growing up, Jackson didn’t have any particular role models who influenced her in becoming a nurse. She said her mother considered going into medicine at one time, so there were several medical books at home that sparked her interest.

After high school, Jackson considered attending a historically Black college or university (HBCU) in the South, but then

she was accepted into MATC’s Promise for New High School Graduates program, which provides free tuition for eligible high school students. In partnership with generous contributors, the MATC Foundation, the college’s philanthropic partner, provides scholarships for students where there is a gap between the cost of tuition and financial aid grants.

“You can’t beat free school,” Jackson said.

She completed her prerequisite classes, then received an associate degree in Registered Nursing in 2021. She finished her MATC education without borrowing any money.

“The first two years are pretty much the same no matter where you go, so you might as well do it for cheaper,” she said. “I didn’t have a huge amount of money saved up for college. My father told me I would regret not taking two years of college for free, and he was right.”

After graduation, she worked at Froedtert Hospital for several months, then signed with an agency to be a traveling nurse. She has worked at various medical locations in the region.

“MATC really prepared me for what I am doing in the working world,” Jackson said. “MATC is a fantastic place to start your career.” ■

See Katie Jackson’s designs at nursebaeshop.com.

MATC ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Guardian Angel

Another MATC alum has put her designing skills to use helping the public. Kim Coleman, a retired MATC Public Safety officer and Commercial Art program graduate, created a backpack that makes children walking to and from school visible to drivers.

The idea came to Coleman when she was driving with her daughter Dionna Hayden. She saw a boy wearing a backpack with a skateboard sticking out of it. For the briefest of seconds, Coleman swore the boy had wings like an angel.

Coleman decided she had received a message: Design what she calls her Angel on My Shoulder Backpack.

“I couldn’t get the image out of my mind,” Coleman recalled. “I felt it was ordained for me to do these bags. I went home and started sketching.”

She completed a design of brightly colored backpacks that have removable light-up wings and reflectors, making wearers more visible to drivers. Coleman went to Armen Hadjinian, longtime lead faculty of MATC’s

Entrepreneurship program, to get help constructing, marketing and selling her product.

“She built a prototype out of cloth, then paid to have it done in vinyl to make it as close to the finished product as possible,” Hadjinian said.

“I’ve never done anything like this before, so I am learning as I go,” said Coleman, who patented her design. “There have been some bumps along the way, but I never once said that I would quit.”

Her dream now is to make her backpacks available in stores. “Everyone who has got one has loved it,” she said. “I’m learning to be patient and trying not to be anxious. I know I was born for a purpose. I will keep holding on to my dreams and passions.”

See Kim Coleman’s backpacks on her Facebook page, facebook.com/zoelifeangels.



ALUMNI NEWS

If you wish to share an MATC Alumni News update or start a scholarship in honor of an MATC alum, email Donor Relations Coordinator Bob Holland at hollanrj@matc.edu

BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT

Amber Campbell, Accounting, was named controller of CornerStone One, a Brookfield-based commercial contractor. Her appointment was noted in The Daily Reporter, a construction news source in Wisconsin.

Thaime Nanez, Marketing Management B2B, was honored as one of BizTimes magazine's 2023 Women of Influence. Nanez and her husband, Jesus, own Chucho's Red Tacos and the Farmhouse Paint Bar & Hall in Milwaukee. Nanez, who is a bilingual business coach at BizStarts, also runs two popular festivals — Frida Fest and Fiesta Selena.



COMMUNITY & HUMAN SERVICES

Julie Laurence Brown, Aesthetics, was the Outstanding Technical Diploma graduate at the college's Spring 2023 Commencement. In August, she was featured in Milwaukee Magazine's 2023 Faces of Milwaukee.



Julie Brown

Bria Burris, Human Service, was profiled in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel in July. The article recounted her journey from foster kid, teen mom and homeless college student to her appointment to the MATC District Board in 2022.



Gerald "Gerry" Kudek, Fire Science, retired as fire chief of the West Bend Fire Department after 38 years serving the city. Fellow firefighters honored his service, including Allenton Fire Chief John Breuer who was quoted as saying, "Chief Kudek has been a staple of support and leadership throughout his years as West Bend's fire chief."

CREATIVE ARTS, DESIGN & MEDIA

Najma Abdi, Web and Digital Media Design, received MATC's President Award at the Spring 2023 Commencement. The award honors



her academic achievement, contributions to the college and community involvement. "I was shocked and honored to win," said Abdi, who was born in Minneapolis after her parents fled war-torn Somalia. "As a first-generation student here, I feel very proud."

Paul Bartolotta, Culinary Arts, was named chef de cuisine for the 24th annual Naples Winter Wine Festival, to be held January 26-28, 2024, at The Ritz-Carlton Naples, Tiburón, in Naples, Florida.

Sarinlada Panyasopa, Pastry and Baking Arts, opened a new restaurant called Mom's Kitchen in Pewaukee. The menu features classic Thai dishes inspired by the cooking of Panyasopa's mother, Wanee Panyasopa.

Josh Rank, Music, debuted his novel "The Present Is Past" in July. Set in Appleton, Wisconsin, the novel tells the story of a family faced with Alzheimer's disease.



John Suess, Commercial Art, was the featured artist at the North Shore Public Library in Glendale in March. After retiring from the Milwaukee Public Library, Suess focused some of his free time on painting. Learn about his upcoming shows at johnsuessfineart.com.



GENERAL EDUCATION

Mason Johnson, Associate of Arts, graduated in Spring 2023 and transferred to Southern Utah University. Johnson, a forward on the MATC men's basketball team that won the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division II championship in March, surpassed the 1,000-point career mark and was named the tournament's most valuable player.

Mikale Stevenson, Associate of Arts, graduated in Spring 2023 and transferred to Grambling State University in Louisiana. Stevenson was a point guard on the championship MATC men's basketball team and was named to the NJCAA Third Team and to the All-Tournament team.



STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS)

Michael Emem, Architectural Technology, was featured as a Class of 2023 Notable Alumni in BizTimes magazine. Emem is the president and CEO of Emem Group LLC, which has managed over \$100 million in residential and commercial development projects in the Milwaukee region.



Dave Megna, Electrical Technology, was featured as a Class of 2023 Notable Alumni in BizTimes magazine. As vice president of Wisconsin field operations for Milwaukee-based WEC Energy Group, Megna is responsible for the delivery of electricity and natural gas to customers in Wisconsin and upper Michigan. Since 2021, he has served as a director on the MATC Foundation Board, the college's philanthropic partner in supporting student success.

Erica Pergande, Environmental Conservation and Pollution Control, joined raSmith, a civil and structural engineering and surveying firm, as a senior wetland ecologist/project manager.



Dorothy York, Computer Operations, was featured in The Milwaukee Business Journal for her work with Acts Housing to help families become homeowners. As vice president of real estate, York oversees the purchase, restoration and sale of 100 homes annually through the Homeowner Acquisition Fund Program.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Jessica Currie, Adult High School, continues her work as executive director of Missionary Currie for Women and Children. She helps mothers experiencing homelessness find emergency shelter, clothing, food and support services. City of Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson honored Currie's work when he proclaimed November 21, 2023, as Missionary Currie for Women and Children Day. Learn more about her organization at missionarycurrieinc.org.



Richard Diaz, Adult High School, was awarded the 2022 Environmental Hero Award from the Sierra Club for his work to raise awareness about lead poisoning in Milwaukee, to increase voter registration and to advocate for environmental causes. The community advocate is a co-founder of the Coalition On Lead Emergency, or COLE. He was profiled in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel in January.



Welcome, all new alumni from the class of 2023!

Join the MATC Alumni Network. It's free!

- Special alumni-only discounts
- Unlimited access to MATC's CareerHub to post your job opportunities and to find interns
- Unlimited job-seeking services – résumé review, interview tips and more
- Social and invitation-only alumni opportunities
- Monthly MATC alumni newsletter emailed to you

Update Your Contact Information or Sign Up Today!

EMAIL
MATCalumni@matc.edu
VISIT
matc.edu/alumni

In Memoriam

We honor and celebrate the lives of the following alumni who passed away in the last year, as reported in obituaries in local newspapers.

If you'd like make a donation in memory of an MATC alum or honor an alum in the In Memoriam section, please contact Bob Holland at hollanrj@matc.edu.

A

Randolph Scott Allen, 61,
February 28, 2023, Kenosha, Wis.

Pattie Jo Anderson, 80,
November 7, 2022,
Menomonee Falls, Wis.

**Mathilda "Matty" Andrzejewski
(née Ciepluch)**, 98,
April 13, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Lois M. Austin, 79,
December 26, 2022, Mequon, Wis.

Milwaukee and MATC Loses a Culinary Pioneer

Knut F. Apitz, 84, passed away August 26, 2023. A renowned chef who delighted Milwaukee diners for more than 20 years as the executive chef at Grenadier's Restaurant, Apitz generously shared his knowledge and love of cooking with the MATC community. He served as a longtime member of the Culinary Arts and Hospitality programs' advisory committee, helped establish the Culinary apprenticeship program and was on the MATC Foundation Board of Directors and Finance Committee for 25 years.

B

Rose Marie Bach, 91,
April 11, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Charles Borromeo Beaulieu III, 85,
May 11, 2023, Newberry, Mich.

Marilyn Emily Bender, 87,
November 6, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Isadore Bilbrew Jr., 69,
December 11, 2022, Clarksville, Tenn.

Anne Margret Bliske, 59,
March 30, 2023, Muskego, Wis.

Larry M. Boeselager, 67,
April 23, 2023, Sturtevant, Wis.

Ricky Darnell Bond, 42,
July 27, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

James Alfred "Jim" Braun, 80,
January 6, 2023, Green Lake, Wis.

Samuel Eric Brock, 72,
December 21, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

LaFrance Brookens, 74,
August 4, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Suzanne M. "Sue" Bruner, 85,
November 18, 2022,
Port Washington, Wis.

Jose "Pepin" Lazu Burgos Sr., 76,
July 26, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

James Carl "Jim" Burr III, 66,
August 5, 2022,
White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.

Claude Butler Jr., 61,
September 23, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

C

Charles P. Cain, 54,
February 7, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Thomas Lewis Caldwell, 46,
December 17, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Angela Calvert, 76, January 22, 2023,
Lac du Flambeau, Wis.

Deborah A. Carter, 70,
June 16, 2023, Elkhart Lake, Wis.

David E. Cash, 86,
October 7, 2022, Stevens Point, Wis.

Jordan D. Chadwick, 64,
August 13, 2022, Pewaukee, Wis.

Michael Joseph Chiappa, 29,
December 16, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Annie Jewel Clark-Nunely, 77,
December 5, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Kathleen Marie Conti, 60,
July 2, 2022, Waukesha, Wis.

**Lynette Lea "Lynie" Cornelius
(Wilcox)**, 55, December 5, 2022,
Milwaukee, Wis.

Kathleen Antoinette Crape, 63,
March 13, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Gordon Kevin Crisp, 66,
November 20, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Aric Jermaine "OX" Cunningham,
50, April 26, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Gregory J. Czech, 61,
August 7, 2022, Pulaski, Wis.

D

Ruby Dancil, 79,
February 23, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Allen H. Davis, 76,
March 8, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Xaiver Casanova Davis, 23,
August 28, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Bernadette Dawsey (Jones), 71,
November 28, 2022, Lake Charles, La.

Leonard C. “Lenny/Len” Donohoe, 65, August 19, 2022, Wauwatosa, Wis.

Diane Elizabeth Dorow, 57, December 22, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Kurt Morgan Dovenbarger, 57, October 10, 2022, Marshfield, Wis.

E

Suzanne Eileen Ennis, 59, Oct. 3, 2022, Dodgeville, Wis.

Yakov Epshteyn, 48, April 15, 2023, Cedarburg, Wis.

F

Draylen Fair, 26, December 28, 2022, Rockford, Ill.

Lawrence P. “Larry” Falk, 66, December 19, 2022, Plymouth, Wis.

Mary Ann Fisher (Newman), 74, October 1, 2022, Bay View, Wis.

Linda Grace Fletcher (Schmoller), 75, April 9, 2023, Waukesha, Wis.

SanDee Jean Francis (Sprotte), 66, April 29, 2023, Oak Creek, Wis.

Erik Arnold “Arnie” Froode, 97, April 13, 2023, Caledonia, Wis.

Steven Richard Furlong, 57, December 14, 2022, West Allis, Wis.

G

John Joseph Galiano, 71, January 10, 2023, Carthage, Texas.

Michael W. Gall, 71, May 5, 2023, Neenah, Wis.

Jeffrey J. “Jeff” Galligan, 56, May 8, 2023, Kenosha, Wis.

Ann L. Perry Games, 84, April 5, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

James B. Gantner, 72, May 21, 2023, Grafton, Wis.

Oscar P. Garcia, 91, August 28, 2022, Hales Corners, Wis.

Colleen M. Gavigan, 59, September 24, 2022, Kewaskum, Wis.

Elizabeth J. Go (Langeberg), 86, May 2, 2023, Brookfield, Wis.

Michelle Marie Goebel (Bee), 69, April 4, 2023, Viroqua, Wis.

Gary Lee Goedde, 74, August 17, 2022, Silver Spring Lake, Wis.

Craig James Golbach, 56, December 4, 2022, Phoenix, Ariz.

Daniel Leo Goschey, 70, October 2, 2022, Port Washington, Wis.

Walter A. “Walt” Gossfeld, 85, January 15, 2023, Hartford, Wis.

Carlton Julian “Cal” Granus, 80, November 26, 2022, Green Bay, Wis.

Dorothy Mae Gray, 91, April 10, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Martha Nell Greene, 90, December 18, 2022, Searcy, Ark.

John R. Greenwood, 77, December 30, 2022, Cedar Grove, Wis.

Daisy Louise Grimes, 86, July 16, 2022, Land O’ Lakes, Wis.

H

John E. “Jack” Hahn Jr., 71, February 15, 2023, Johnson Creek, Wis.

Sherrilyn Hannon, 65, May 12, 2023, West Allis, Wis.

William James “Will” Harmann Jr., 57, February 4, 2023, Union Grove, Wis.

Venard Harrell, 70, September 24, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

William Earl Haygood Jr., 56, January 7, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

William A. Heck, 75, March 26, 2023, Waterford, Wis.

Richard Craig “Rick” Heine, 73, January 30, 2023, Delavan, Wis.

Judith Ellen Hirt (Tullberg), 82, January 17, 2023, Cudahy, Wis.

Thomas L. Hoffman, 68, January 20, 2023, Whitewater, Wis.

William H. Huebner, 86, October 7, 2022, Cedarburg, Wis.

J

Roberta R. Jarnig, 72, March 8, 2023, Okauchee, Wis.

Paul W. Jasen, 90, March 25, 2023, Stevens Point, Wis.

John “Johnny” Jaworski, 58, August 4, 2022, Greenfield, Wis.

Alonzo Johnson, 62, November 10, 2022, Brookfield, Wis.

Irene Ford Jones, 74, August 29, 2022, Marksville, La.

Kenneth K. Jones, 60, August 13, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

K

Ralph E. Kaye Jr., 73, November 4, 2022, Fountain Hills, Ariz.

John Edward Kehler, 61, November 23, 2022, Oak Creek, Wis.

Dawn Lynn Kingan (Nickels), 64, June 4, 2023, Franklin, Wis.

John Henry Kjentvet, 66, March 15, 2023, Madison, Wis.

Darlene Rose Klingman (Farvour), 76, March 2, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Rebecca L. “Becki” Knapp, 46, October 20, 2022, Waterford, Wis.

Raymond Anthony “Tony” Konkol III, 56, February 24, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Anthony M. “Tony” Kosinski Sr., 86, April 19, 2023, Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Mark G. “K9AQC” Krause, 80, April 3, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Thomas William Kugler, 76, August 17, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Jeffrey Richard Kuhn, 74, January 3, 2023, Oconomowoc, Wis.

Phillip Bernard Kullmann, 79, May 8, 2023, Waunakee, Wis.

L

Barbara Ann Lee, 86, November 5, 2022, Madison, Wis.

Matthew D. LeFever, 41, March 25, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Stephan C. Leiterman, 77, October 10, 2022, Mosinee, Wis.

Donald M. Lemley, 69, May 17, 2023, Vicksburg, Mich.

In Memoriam

Continued

Paul Arnold Lindemann, 83,
April 5, 2023, Muskego, Wis.

John “Cuppy/Capitan” Llanas Jr.,
66, May 5, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Diane Lovett, 71,
September 28, 2022, Butler, Wis.

Kimberly E. Lukes, 36,
January 2, 2023, Plymouth, Wis.

Robert D. Lukowski, 43,
March 31, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Terry R. Lundsten, 85,
May 29, 2023, Watertown, Wis.

Beverly J. Lynch, 85,
February 25, 2023, Hales Corners, Wis.

M

Maureen “Tweetie” MacGillis, 70,
March 12, 2023, Marinette, Wis.

Wayne A. Madro, 66,
May 27, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Richard K. “Sarge” Maher, 75,
October 22, 2022, Grafton, Wis.

John Paul Malewicki, 75,
February 19, 2023, Chesterfield, Mo.

Timothy Leonard Markowski, 72,
August 4, 2022, South Milwaukee, Wis.

Rita Rae Joan Marsh, 76,
April 17, 2023, West Bend, Wis.

Betty Ann Marshall (Paquin), 77,
January 1, 2023, Grafton, Wis.

Harriet Margaret Martin (Knoeck),
82, November 14, 2022,
West Bend, Wis.

Ronald James “Ron” Martis, 78,
January 24, 2023,
Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Gerald J. “Jerry” Mauer, 72,
December 17, 2022, Two Rivers, Wis.

Kevin John McCarthy, 58,
August 2, 2022, Lake in the Hills, Ill.

Mary Ann Wade Meeks, 70,
July 2, 2022, El Dorado, Ark.

Frederic L. “Fred” Meyer, 80,
June 12, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Roger Charles Middleton, 80,
January 28, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

N

Richard Lee “Rick” Nash, 70,
April 3, 2023, Ladysmith, Wis.

Walter E. Neulreich, 105,
January 3, 2023, Howards Grove, Wis.

O

Richard Oertel, 85,
April 3, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

John O’Meara, 58,
August 7, 2022, Little Chute, Wis.

Lilli Lennea Osberg (Johnson), 93,
January 16, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

P

Michael Arthur “Mike” Paegelow, 77,
January 18, 2023, Fort Myers, Fla.

**Elizabeth Francis “Liz” Perrone
(Peterson)**, 69, September 6, 2022,
Lac du Flambeau, Wis.

Rafe Perry Jr., 62,
September 16, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Vida H. Peters, 94,
May 29, 2023, Tomah, Wis.

Kim N. Petersen, 60,
January 7, 2023, Racine, Wis.

Maria Pilugin (Maximenko), 100,
January 23, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Ronald Guy Porto, 71, August 27,
2022, Neenah, Wis.

R

Jack Radke, 87,
March 26, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Doris Maxine Renfro, 89,
March 9, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Paulette L. Richards, 71,
December 18, 2022, Janesville, Wis.

Ronnie Dee Robbins, 69,
October 30, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

John D. “Slugger,” Robertson Jr., 58,
March 12, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Thomas Edwin Rodaks, 69,
January 7, 2023, Berlin, Wis.

Fredie Carl Rogers, 66,
July 30, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Doreen Mary Rouse (Corbine), 69,
March 30, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Edmund L. Rozite, 25,
September 18, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

S

Joan Marie Schatzman, 87,
May 17, 2023, Grafton, Wis.

Kathleen Rose Schiefelbein, 79,
January 4, 2023, Chicago, Ill.

Daniel “Dan” Schreier, 83,
August 26, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

LaVerne H. Schulz, 76,
December 3, 2022, Columbus, Wis.

Lillie Pearl Scott, 93,
May 12, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Dallas “Sam” Seboe, 75,
November 7, 2022, Horicon, Wis.

Theresa “Terry” Seegers, 88,
October 5, 2022, Cudahy, Wis.

George Ernest Selburg Jr., 61,
April 10, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

LaVonne C. Shawley, 81,
February 27, 2023, Sparta, Wis.

Susan M. Simon, 61,
February 17, 2023, Madison, Wis.

Glenn D. Skenadore, 72,
December 4, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Patrick L. "Pat" Smalley, 75,
February 26, 2023, Union Grove, Wis.

Richard R. "Dick" Smigelski, 81,
September 9, 2022, Greenfield, Wis.

Caleb Alvin "Kay" Smith, 22,
May 4, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

James "Jim" M. Smith, 76,
April 4, 2023, Somers, Wis.

Ronald J. Smith, 61,
March 28, 2023, Grafton, Wis.

Patricia Ann Clayton Lewis Stafford,
69, July 9, 2022, Carthage, Miss.

William R. Stark, 90,
October 28, 2022, Glendale, Wis.

Claudette Yvonne Ballinger St. Clair,
87, March 31, 2023, Brown Deer, Wis.

John Steffen, 74,
May 29, 2023, Grafton, Wis.

Edward J. Strzelczyk, 63,
January 12, 2023, Greenbush, Wis.

Daniel Raymond Szurgot, 90,
June 2, 2023, Allouez, Wis.

T

Elizabeth Juanita Tanner-Gray, 62,
March 13, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Dwight Tatum, 69,
March 22, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Robert L. Taylor, 84,
Sept. 25, 2022, Cottage Grove, Wis.

Habtemariam Negassi Tesfamichael,
64, January 14, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

John "Ian" Elnathan Terry, 67,
July 14, 2022, Trimountain, Mich.

Sally Tracy-Smith, 72,
October 13, 2022, Marietta, Ga.

Nichole Lynelle "Nikki" Trotman, 51,
April 13, 2023, Dover, Del.

Gerald E. "Jerry" Turk, 70,
April 9, 2023, Saukville, Wis.

V

Donald Ray Vachon, 85,
November 6, 2022, Mukwonago, Wis.

**Margaret "Marge" Sattler
Van Beckum**, 91,
November 10, 2022, Rubicon, Wis.

David J. Vander Grinten, 82,
October 12, 2022, Town of Erin, Wis.

Peter R. Vanderhoof, 71,
January 5, 2023, Port Washington, Wis.

Jennifer Susan Vanek, 40,
December 12, 2022, West Allis, Wis.

Judith (Christiansen) Vavra, 81,
July 16, 2022, West Bend, Wis.

**Ruth D. Verville (nee Romero,
formerly Ziller)**, 89,
November 16, 2022, Greenfield, Wis.

Michael Villarreal, 44,
January 23, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

W

Catherine May Ward (Wesolowski),
94, May 18, 2023, West Allis, Wis.

Lee E. Weitz, 74,
March 31, 2023, Crivitz, Wis.

Donald Alan Wescher, 82,
September 8, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Sandra Jo Westbrook (Wright), 78,
November 14, 2022, Scottsdale, Ariz.

H. Patricia "Pat" Westphal, 81,
February 7, 2023, Grafton, Wis.

George W. Wickboldt, 77,
July 2, 2022, Oshkosh, Wis.

Jackie Fae Wilder, 69,
December 1, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Cheryl Rose Wilke, 72,
November 26, 2022,
Lac du Flambeau, Wis.

Kristin Sue Williams, 52,
February 4, 2023, McFarland, Wis.

Loren Michael Willis II, 28,
March 8, 2023, Hartland, Wis.

Marilyn Lovell Wilson-Smith, 69,
September 7, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Randall Scott "Randy" Wolfgram, 59,
November 7, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Sandra M. Wright, 79,
October 3, 2022, Sheboygan, Wis.

Dr. Elizabeth F. "Liz" Wywialowski,
79, January 2, 2023, Oregon, Wis.

Y

Jaelen Miguel Yracheta, 18,
December 29, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.

Z

Victoria T. Zetting, 87,
October 14, 2022, West Allis, Wis.

Ronald B. Ziegelbauer, 71,
May 17, 2023, Saukville, Wis.

**Clinton Peter "Buzzy"
Zimmerman Jr.**, 74,
June 24, 2023, Juneau, Wis.

Mark Stephen Ziperski, 68,
January 5, 2023, Hayward, Wis.

Scott G. Zirbes, 72,
November 6, 2022,
Port Washington, Wis.

Kenny La Mont Zollicoffer Sr., 54,
April 22, 2023, Milwaukee, Wis.

Gary A. Zudonyi, 73,
December 28, 2022, Milwaukee, Wis.



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