Dear Friend:

Each year while drafting this message, I review the progress UAlbany has made at every level during the previous 12 months, and I am astonished. In looking back at 2017-18, I’m pleased to note that that trend continues – and I want to thank you for having played a significant role in furthering the University’s student, faculty, academic, and research initiatives.

During the year ended June 30, 2018, UAlbany’s donors again demonstrated their loyalty and generosity:

• Foundation funding totaling $6.5 million in student, campus, and faculty support included scholarships, awards, prizes, grants, and honoraria.
• Donors contributed $4.3 million to The UAlbany Fund.
• Gifts at the 1844 Society level grew by 23 percent, while the number of donors at that leadership level increased by 11 percent.
• The Division of University Advancement’s major-gifts team secured 70 gifts of at least $25,000 – more than ever before in one year.
• The Heritage Circle Society, which recognizes alumni, faculty and friends who have made philanthropic commitments to the University’s future, added 23 donors who committed more than $5.3 million in new planned gifts.
• Overall, the division raised more than $15.4 million in gifts, pledges and planned gifts.

And as we prepared for the public launch of This Is Our Time: The Campaign for UAlbany in October 2018, there was more good news:

• Campaign gifts of at least $1 million totaled 16 – more than doubling the number of gifts at this level in all of the University’s 174-year history!
• The addition of 32 new endowments through the campaign priorities brought UAlbany’s total number of endowments to more than 560.
• With more than $98 million raised toward This Is Our Time’s $150-million goal by June 30, the campaign had already reached 65 percent of its goal four months before its official kickoff date.

Throughout this report, you’ll find additional information about 2017-18 fundraising, events, and Foundation activity. In particular, I ask that you devote some time to reading about the students who are completing their degrees – and planning their futures – with your help. By supporting them, and the many others they represent, in their endeavors, you are not only furthering their personal and professional aims; you are encouraging them to consider giving back to the University one day.

Again, I thank you for joining me this past year in helping the University at Albany to attain unprecedented success. And I invite you to work with me again in 2018-19 to ensure that our efforts achieve similar results.

Happy holidays!

Sincerely,

George R. Hearst III
President
The University at Albany Foundation
The University at Albany Foundation, the University's philanthropic entity, advances the institution by planning and executing fundraising, asset management, and stewardship activities. In accordance with its bylaws, the Foundation board met October 21, 2017, and March 8 and June 14, 2018. Throughout the year, committees of the board met, then filed individual reports for review and action, as necessary, by the full board.
Throughout the 2017-18 academic year, numerous University events were strategically planned and executed to recognize, cultivate, and celebrate our various constituencies, including donors, foundations, corporations, alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents, community and business leaders, elected officials, the media, and friends. Those events included:
JULY AND AUGUST 2017

Parent Orientation Receptions

In conjunction with parent orientation dates throughout the summer, eight receptions were held at Tom & Mary Casey Stadium, giving parents of new students a chance to meet members of the UAlbany staff.

AUGUST 10, 2017

SUNY Annual Fund and Donor Relations Discussion

UAlbany hosted development professionals from fellow SUNY schools to discuss trends, best practices and innovative ideas for advancement.

AUGUST 25, 2017

Opening Convocation

Incoming freshmen and transfers, and their families, were invited to UAlbany’s fourth annual Opening Convocation ceremony, which formally kicked off their academic journey at UAlbany. The event concluded with an all-class picture on Bob Ford Field inside Casey Stadium and a family picnic on the academic podium.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

Massry Lecture

Students and local business leaders welcomed Hany Farid ’92 to campus for the third annual Massry Lecture. Farid, who received his master's from UAlbany, is considered by many to be “the father of digital forensics.” He spoke about his work reining in online abuses.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

Katharine Briar-Lawson Lecture

The inaugural lecture was held in the Performing Arts Center's Recital Hall, where a full house heard from Carol Wilson Spigner, former associate commissioner of the Children's Bureau. Her talk was titled "Vulnerable Families and Social Justice: The Professional Challenge."

OCTOBER 6, 2017

Fenimore Financial Forum

UAlbany partnered with Fenimore Asset Management to host this inaugural event in the Massry Center for Business. Guests received insights into investing and the key characteristics of successful businesses during a lively Q&A session featuring Fenimore’s Investment Research Team and UAlbany's Dr. David Smith.

OCTOBER 10, 2017

President’s Welcome Event

George Hearst welcomed Capital Region supporters to the Fort Orange Club for a private reception introducing UAlbany President Havidán Rodríguez to the University’s most loyal supporters.

OCTOBER 20 AND 21, 2017

Homecoming Weekend

Special events integrated into the larger Homecoming Weekend included an inaugural Heritage Circle Society Luncheon; the President’s Breakfast; an 1844 Society Tent at the Great Dane Pre-Game; and the University at Albany Speaker Series, which featured Academy Award-winning actress Octavia Spencer.

OCTOBER 16, 2017

Stuyvesant Plaza, Inc., Scoreboard Unveiling

A new video scoreboard, made possible by a $1 million donation from Ed Swyer and Stuyvesant Plaza, Inc., was unveiled at SEFCU Arena before dozens of fans and fellow UAlbany supporters. The scoreboard has been a game changer for athletic and University events held in that venue.
OCTOBER 26, 2017
38th Annual Citizen Laureate Awards Dinner
George Hearst and event co-chairs James Barba and Mark Sullivan welcomed guests to the SEFCU Arena for The Foundation’s premier black-tie dinner, which honored Academic Laureate Andrew J. Matonak and Community Laureates Jerry Jennings ’76 and Rev. Kenneth Doyle.

FEBRUARY 8, 2018
Faculty/Staff Donor Appreciation Breakfast
Some of our proudest and most passionate UAlbany Fund donors – faculty and staff – were recognized for their support at a breakfast hosted by President Havidán Rodríguez in the Great Hall of the Campus Center.

MARCH 8, 2018
Celebration of Scholarships
In connection with the University at Albany Foundation board meeting, donors attended a dinner where they met the students who had received scholarships they support. The event, held in University Hall, enabled benefactors to witness firsthand the immediate and personal impacts of their gifts.

MAY 18-20, 2018
Commencement Weekend
Our graduates were honored at several events, including a doctoral hooding ceremony, a master’s/graduate-certificate ceremony, undergraduate recognition ceremonies, the University-wide outdoor ceremony, and the Torch Reception. Speakers at the outdoor ceremony included Dan Hart ’83, president and CEO of Virgin Orbit, and graduating student Madeeha B. Khan.

NOVEMBER 1, 2017
Bunshaft Lecture
The sixth annual lecture featured Wendi Heinzelman, professor and dean of the Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the University of Rochester. Heinzelman spoke about “inspiring the next generation of leaders to make the world ever better.”

DECEMBER 5, 2017
President’s Business Leaders Breakfast
Capital Region business and community members joined UAlbany President and featured speaker Havidán Rodríguez in University Hall’s atrium for a breakfast sponsored by the University and partner Fenimore Asset Management.

JUNE 14, 2018
UAF Board Meeting and Alumni Reception at the Hearst Tower
Following The University at Albany Foundation board meeting, alumni gathered at the famous Hearst Tower in New York to network, and to hear from George R. Hearst III, president of the board, and University President Havidán Rodríguez.

MAY 3, 2018
UASBIG’s 10th Anniversary Celebration
The University at Albany School of Business Investment Group observed its 10th anniversary in New York City. A student-managed investment fund, UASBIG was established in 2008 with a $50,000 commitment from The Foundation, which committed an additional $50,000 later that year. The portfolio’s value exceeded $150,000 for the first time in 2013 and $200,000 in 2017. UASBIG’s primary purpose is to educate students in equity investment analysis while they seek to outperform the S&P 1500 benchmark index. An advisory board consisting of alumni and faculty evaluates student-analysts’ valuation models and weekly stock pitches; an associate advisory board of dedicated young alumni provides insight to the young analysts.
FUNDRAISING

Highlights of the progress made by the Division of University Advancement in 2017-18 include the following:

- With more than $98 million raised, *This Is Our Time: The Campaign for the University at Albany*, surpassed 65 percent of our $150-million goal four months prior to the campaign’s public launch.
- The Advancement Division raised $15.4 million in gifts, pledges and planned gifts.
- Campaign gifts exceeding $1 million now total 16, more than doubling the number of gifts at this level that UAlbany has received in its entire history.
- The major gifts team secured 70 gifts of $25,000+, an all-time high for UAlbany and a 40-percent increase from 2016-17.
- Gifts to the campaign included 32 new endowments supporting scholarships, student success initiatives, faculty research, and other priorities. The total number of endowments now exceeds 560.
- Foundation funding totaling $6.5 million in student, campus, and faculty support included scholarships, awards, prizes, grants, and honoraria.
- The Alumni Association expanded engagement efforts, growing its Admissions Ambassadors program by 207 percent; increasing the number of donations from 30 to over 300 through coordinated donor-participation efforts with the UAlbany Fund; and increasing the alumni-to-student Career Advisory Network by 31 percent.
- The UAlbany Fund had a highly successful year, attracting $4.3 million in operating support. A 3-percent increase in dollars and a 1-percent increase in donors over the prior year bucked a national trend of declining alumni participation. Nearly all University at Albany fund revenue streams posted healthy increases: Most notably, leadership-level 1844 Society gifts increased by 23 percent in dollars, while the number of donors increased by 11 percent.

We are deeply grateful to all of the individuals, corporations, and foundations who generously enabled us to advance University at Albany initiatives during the past 12 months.
Military veterans have dedicated their lives to aiding and protecting others. With a gift from a nonprofit established by alumnus Lucas K. Detor, a UAlbany scholarship program is assisting veterans.

Detor founded ReserveAid in 2006 “to honor and help the heroes who have served our country.” In a September 2017 ceremony at the University’s Veterans’ Wall of Honor, veteran and ReserveAid Executive Director Polly Weidenkopf presented a $500,000 check to President Havidán Rodríguez to support the scholarship, which has been named in her honor.

Rodríguez, a U.S. Air Force veteran, noted: “I am delighted and grateful that ReserveAid has chosen to endow this scholarship at UAlbany. I am particularly proud that our student body currently includes more than 200 veterans of military service. The Polly Weidenkopf ReserveAid Scholarship will provide critical financial assistance to veterans to pursue their education at UAlbany after serving their country.”

“I am so pleased we can extend our reach to the education of military veterans at UAlbany through The Polly Weidenkopf ReserveAid Scholarship,” said Detor. “Because of Master Gunnery Sergeant Weidenkopf’s leadership and commitment, we are able to fund this endowment, which will help many veterans earn the world-class education they deserve.”

Military veterans, Reservists and/or Guardsman from all branches of the armed forces are eligible for The Polly Weidenkopf ReserveAid Scholarship. Recipients must pursue an undergraduate or graduate degree at UAlbany.

As a sophomore studying accounting at UAlbany’s School of Business, Detor joined the U.S. Army Reserves and later, the New York National Guard. Now part of the executive team at CarVal Investors, he previously held positions with Pricewaterhouse, the United States Secret Service, and Morgan Stanley.
Adell Y. Smith | “Dreaming Bigger”

Adell Y. Smith wants to encourage African-American graduate students at UAlbany’s School of Public Health to “dream bigger.” To help them to do so – and to promote diversity within the healthcare community – she’s established an endowment that carries both her name and that of her longtime employer, the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS).

After graduating from high school, Smith attended secretarial school in Albany and later served as an executive secretary for such well-known Capital Region entities as Conrail and NYSUT. (She also worked for a year at the University at Albany’s College of Arts and Sciences, where she was an assistant to then-dean O. William Perlmutter.) Since 1988, she has been with HANYS, where she is now an executive assistant.

Still, Smith, who’d grown up on a Hudson Valley dairy farm, always wondered where life would have taken her had she “dreamed bigger” in her youth. That thought, and her interactions with hospital nursing staff who tell her their career advancement and academic aspirations take a backseat to child care and other financial obligations, inspired her to set up the Adell Y. Smith HANYS Healthcare Leadership Scholarship endowment.

Another inspiration was the appointment of M. Beatrice Grause, R.N., J.D., as the first female HANYS president in the association’s 90-year history. When Smith asked aloud, “What if there was an African-American version of Bea?” the idea “took on a life I never expected.” Her colleagues enthusiastically supported her notion of starting a scholarship endowment to support African-American graduate students seeking to prepare for careers as leaders in healthcare policy, management, and administration. When Grause herself exclaimed, “I want in!” and HANYS made a matching donation, the endowment became a reality.

The scholarship fund presents a great opportunity to impact the community positively, observes Smith. “I really feel blessed. I think God had a plan for me. It all fell into place.”


When Henry and Patricia Binzer wanted to do something exciting and innovative with their money, they decided to help the University at Albany School of Social Welfare – and impact the social-work field for generations to come.

Through The University at Albany Foundation, the couple has made an estate commitment of $1 million to establish The Binzer Family Doctoral Fellowship. Distributions will provide support for one or more Ph.D. students enrolled in the School of Social Welfare, with academic merit and excellence the primary criteria for selection.

“Pat and I don’t have a big family to leave things to,” explained Henry, known as Hank. “We wanted to make an impact with all that we have acquired throughout our lives. We wanted to make a difference in the world, and saw the future of that in educating our young doctoral students to go out in the world.”

School of Social Welfare Dean Lynn Warner said: “We are excited about this generous commitment from the Binzers. It will help secure the long-term future of our highly respected doctoral program.”

The Binzers also support The Henry and Patricia Binzer Internships in Aging Scholarship, established in 2016.

Pat will never forget the compassion SSW interns participating in the Internships in Aging Program demonstrated toward her brother a few years ago while he was living at a local nursing home. “I got to see firsthand the benefits of these internships.” The students’ “attention and respect for his dignity made such a difference in his day-to-day life,” recalled Pat, whose mother was a social worker.

The Binzers’ new commitment will help the school attract and retain the most promising Ph.D. students. The doctoral fellowship’s broad scope will encompass the areas of aging; children and families; diversity and minority health disparities; and addictions and/or mental health.
A history-making season for men’s lacrosse ended with the team’s dramatic run to the Final Four of the NCAA Tournament. Now, the University at Albany has received two generous gifts to support the continued success of Great Dane lacrosse student-athletes.

Ronald Frasch, B.S.’70, has provided $50,000 to fund the Frasch Family Lacrosse Scholarship. Frasch, operating partner at the Newton, Mass.-based private-equity firm Castanea Partners, previously served as president and chief merchandising officer at Saks Fifth Avenue. He was also CEO and president at Bergdorf Goodman, and has held executive positions with GFT USA, Escada USA, and Neiman Marcus.

“Georgie and I have become big lacrosse fans, thanks to our son Christian’s engagement and love of this sport,” said Frasch. “We are extremely proud of the successful program that Coach [Scott] Marr has developed and the quality of the young men he has attracted to men’s lacrosse at my alma mater. We are thrilled to help the program achieve continued success.”

William Drewry, founding partner at Pursuit Advisory LP, is providing $50,000 to create the Jack Drewry Endowed Scholarship, named for his son Jack, who attended UAlbany’s Lacrosse Camp in 2017. An alum of Old Dominion University, Drewry is a founding partner at Pursuit Advisory LP, which provides strategic guidance for innovative media and technology companies. He also serves as the chief financial officer of Modern Media Acquisition Corp. and as its principal financial and accounting officer. Previously, Drewry was the managing director of RBC Capital Markets LLC.

In expressing gratitude to Frasch and Drewry for their generous commitments to the lacrosse program, UAlbany Athletic Director Mark Benson observed: “These gifts will help make it possible for future Great Danes to achieve the same level of success, both on and off the field, that the program enjoyed during this remarkable run to the Final Four. We truly appreciate their investments in our student-athletes.”

The gifts come at a transformative time for both the men’s lacrosse team and the University. The 2018 season saw a string of firsts for UAlbany, which became the first State University of New York school to achieve a No.-1 ranking in Division I athletics in any sport and earned the program’s first Final Four appearance.

In addition, several players were honored for academic success. They included Josh Egan, who received the NCAA’s Elite 90 award during championship weekend, and Kyle McClancy, who was honored with a Scholar-Athlete award by SUNY Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson. The accolades have continued for McClancy, who recently became the first University at Albany student to earn America East Man of the Year honors, a recognition of his on-field heroics, his classroom success, and his commitment to serving others.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

TOTAL ASSETS

Private Support by Purpose
- 51% Student Financial Aid
- 16% Unrestricted
- 23% Academics
- 6% Athletics
- 1.3% Student Experience
- 2.7% Community Engagement

Private Support by Source
- 64.5% Alumni
- 11.8% Faculty/Staff
- 5.8% Friends
- 13.7% Corporations
- 3.7% Foundations
## BALANCE SHEET

**As of June 30, 2018**

### ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$2,369,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental receivable</td>
<td>118,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledges receivable</td>
<td>16,149,592</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other receivables and prepaid expenses</td>
<td>993,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>92,826,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation</td>
<td>44,858,407</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artwork and literary collections</td>
<td>2,209,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$159,525,982</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable &amp; accrued expenses</td>
<td>$1,215,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities associated with investments</td>
<td>5,987,002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annuity and life income obligations</td>
<td>1,747,261</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asset retirement obligation</td>
<td>1,075,107</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term debt</td>
<td>1,776,089</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets, unrestricted, designated</td>
<td>2,626,186</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets, unrestricted, undesignated</td>
<td>62,819,735</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets, temporarily restricted</td>
<td>20,229,577</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net assets, permanently restricted</td>
<td>62,049,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$159,525,982</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

**For the year ended June 30, 2018**

### SUPPORT AND REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions, gifts and grants</td>
<td>$3,854,284</td>
<td>$1,900,423</td>
<td>$4,140,883</td>
<td>$9,895,590</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental income</td>
<td>7,788,292</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,788,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program activities and other revenue</td>
<td>766,981</td>
<td>13,382</td>
<td></td>
<td>780,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative fee income</td>
<td>67,471</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>67,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net investment income</td>
<td>1,580,750</td>
<td>3,200,439</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,781,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other changes in restrictions</td>
<td>(168,361)</td>
<td>(133,078)</td>
<td>301,439</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>2,649,192</td>
<td>(2,649,192)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total support and revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,538,609</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,331,974</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,442,322</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,312,905</strong></td>
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</table>

### EXPENSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program services</td>
<td>5,600,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate</td>
<td>8,543,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund raising activities</td>
<td>724,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and administrative</td>
<td>973,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets contributed to the University at Albany</td>
<td>936,019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,777,318</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>(238,709)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets, beginning of year</td>
<td>65,684,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets, end of year</strong></td>
<td><strong>$65,445,921</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANDREW HUR
For Andrew Hur, a sophomore studying public policy at Rockefeller College of Policy & Public Affairs, enrolling at the University at Albany was a logical choice. “The school's location in the state capital of New York” was attractive, the Queens, N.Y., native notes. So was the opportunity to fulfill his academic requirements while taking classes not directly related to his major, such as Introduction to Digital Forensics, his favorite course so far. In addition, Hur has already completed two internships: one with Change Food, an organization that seeks, according to its website, “to provide healthy, safe, delicious, fair food for all,” and the other with the NYPD. The internships, combined with his classroom studies, will prepare Hur well for his chosen career in public service. After graduation, the ROTC program participant notes, “I want to serve my country first, then probably go into the state Legislature” – not as an elected official but “to help people make laws.” Hur appreciates the Louis S. Weiner Scholarship he has received: “I'm from a low-income household, and it helps a lot.”

IVAN DAQUIAL
Nineteen-year-old Ivan Daquial now aspires to a career in public service, but he once had quite a different vocation in mind: Before moving to the U.S., he spent three years in a minor seminary in his native Philippines, preparing to become a Catholic priest. The freshman, who now calls Queens, N.Y., home, plans to major in political science and philosophy, minor in Spanish, and attend law school. “I'm really interested in criminal law or in immigration law,” says Daquial, who enjoys public speaking. “I also would like to run for elected office statewide or nationally, and write laws that affect people positively.” For inspiration, he looks to the late Miriam Santiago, a three-time candidate for the presidency of the Philippines. He also cites former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden as a role model; “he's really experienced in what he does.” A recipient of the Suydam Family Scholarship, Daquial says the award “means a lot,” because initially, his parents feared that he could not afford to attend UAlbany. “I committed to Hunter College,” he recalls, “then got the call that the University would be offering more scholarships, and that made the whole situation better for me.” Daquial is eager to make the most of his UAlbany experience: “I wanted to do an internship for a state senator, probably, but right now I have a lot on my plate. I was just elected to the Student Association, and I’m on the debate team. I had interests in five clubs but narrowed [the list] to two.” In addition to devoting time to those extracurricular activities, Daquial plans to do research with Rockefeller College. Since arriving at UAlbany, he acknowledges, “I've grown up a lot.” He adds: “I'm enjoying the University. There's always something to do. It's fun for me; I enjoy it.”

CRYSTAL WILSON
Crystal Wilson, 34, has spent nearly half her life in the U.S. Army: She joined at 18 and currently holds the rank of E-6. Her experience in military intelligence is opening doors for her; Wilson, who studies digital forensics, is interning with General Electric and planning for her “second career” when she graduates from UAlbany in Spring 2019. The Polly Weidenkopf ReserveAid Scholarship has also been a great help. “It's wonderful,” notes the South Carolina native, who served in Iraq for a year and in Afghanistan for two. “Every semester, I have a balance. The rest of my tuition is covered; it's perfect.” Asked if she has a favorite professor, Wilson responds: “I don’t know if I can pick a favorite. I always have very dynamic relationships with my professors; I can speak with them on a peer-to-peer level, since I’m older than most of the other students.” Wilson resides in Albany.
JAZMINE FRANCIS

With a year and a half to go before graduation, Alumni School Spirit Award recipient Jazmine Francis is excited about the future. The Bronx, N.Y., native, who majors in human biology and minors in Spanish, will study medicine – “That’s the plan!” she exclaims – to prepare for a career as a pediatrician. “Throughout my life, I’ve always loved kids,” Francis explains, noting that she’s a youth leader at her church, El Remaneate in Washington Heights. “I want to help young people academically and socially, and make sure they’re healthy all around.” Francis, 20, recalls her own pediatricians fondly: “They were always involved in my life, and each of them had an influence on me.” The Alumni School Spirit Award “means a great deal to me, especially coming from a low-income background.” Francis, whose favorite class is chemistry lab because she enjoys its “hands-on” and “trial-and-error” aspects, has “been in love with the University since high school.” As one of just 70 in her graduating class, she was looking for a college that would offer her “a plethora of options – the opportunity to explore many majors and minors – as well as diversity and cultural awareness.” UAlbany has done just that, says Francis, who works in the University’s Department of Residential Life. “I feel that the University really cares about the well-being of its students.” Francis cites Ekow King, Amberly Carter, and Michelle Mora among the UAlbany staff who have “helped me grow into a well-rounded person. They’ve helped me learn more about myself.”

NICHOLAS CARRARA

Nicholas Carrara, B.S.’15, worked for the New York State Department of Labor while earning an undergraduate degree at UAlbany and “almost got a bachelor’s in biochemistry.” But when he realized that physics “appealed to me more,” the Schenectady resident recalls, “everything changed.” After completing his undergraduate studies, Carrara, 34, decided to remain at UAlbany to conduct research in probability theory. The Virginia and Lori DeSorbo Scholarship he’s received is furthering his educational and career aims. “I’m very grateful that there are people willing to support students. I don’t know them; they’ve never met me. They must think that it’s worth it to support me because I’ll use the scholarship to advance something, to do some good with it. I like that. I would like to do the same for someone else someday.” After earning his doctorate, “I’ll try to obtain a post-doc position,” says Carrara, who describes his adviser, Ariel Caticha, as “one of the most inspirational people I’ve ever met.” The DeSorbo Scholarship, established by Lou DeSorbo, B.S.’78, M.S.’80, and named in honor of his grandmother and wife, respectively, supports master’s or Ph.D. level students pursuing a degree through the Department of Physics.

MERISSA MARThAGE

When considering which college to attend, Merissa Marthage didn’t have to do much research about UAlbany. The Whitesboro, N.Y., native learned about the University from her brother, Sam, who enrolled a few years before she did and graduated summa cum laude last May with a B.S. in physics and mathematics. “I wasn’t really sure where I wanted to go,” remembers Merissa, 20, a junior history major “interested in the library-science graduate school here.” Her “ultimate” career goal is “to become director of a library or a library system.” Meantime, the Honors College student is enjoying her experience at UAlbany. Merissa, a religious-studies minor, says her favorite class, to date, is “a Zen Buddhism course I took with Professor [Aaron] Proffitt last semester. He had great stories to tell because he lived in Japan. It was a challenging course but a fun one.” For Merissa, receiving the Elena Rodrigues Anderson ’82 Scholarship was “an honor;” it also alleviated her concerns about finances and allowed her to pursue such opportunities as internships with the USS Slater in downtown Albany and at the New York State Talking Book and Braille Library. A member of a Phi Alpha Theta committee planning an upstate conference for the honor society, Merissa enjoys spending time on campus at Indian Pond. “It’s nice to get away from the concrete!” she says.
KAMAI LEE

Eighteen-year-old Kamaii Lee, who lives in the Houston area, “always knew” she wanted to attend college out of state so she could “be on my own.” The opportunity arose when Lee – attracted by UAlbany’s criminal-justice program – applied to the University. She worried about finances; “my family is not wealthy, and out-of-state tuition costs more,” she says. However, the Mark Hunt Scholarship alleviated her concerns. The award, made “after I had been accepted,” means “a lot” to the freshman psychology major, who’s still thinking about a minor. Eventually, “I may go into education, or maybe therapy or social work,” Lee muses; “those are my main interests right now. I also have an interest in criminology, but I’m not sure whether I’ll stick with that or not. Whatever job I choose, I want to help people.” Lee finds the University Library a nice place to study, though, she admits, “I still kind of get lost there sometimes.” One of her favorite courses so far is Issues in Diversity. “It offers a different perspective and shows how people express themselves growing up in different cultures.”

JOHN MULLER

As a damage controlman in the U.S. Coast Guard for five years, John Muller trained in “everything from firefighting to chemical and biological warfare” to protect lives. Since 2016, the Earlton, N.Y., native, who joined the military at 19, has been transitioning toward a new career objective: actuary. Muller, 26, majors in actuarial science and economics at UAlbany, which, he notes, is “one of the few universities to offer an actuarial degree and ranks in the top 10 in the U.S. for that field.” The Polly Weidenkopf ReserveAid Scholarship he received has helped further his studies while bringing his professional goal within reach. “When I was in the military, we saved as much money as we could, but it didn’t go a long way,” notes Muller, who holds two part-time jobs. He and Nadia, his wife of seven years, are raising 3-year-old daughter Anya and awaiting the birth of their second child. The family resides in Kiskatom, N.Y.
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