

BEACON

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BC's future

Family First

Guiding BC Athletics
with purpose

Scholarly Surge

A bold pledge sparks
historic growth

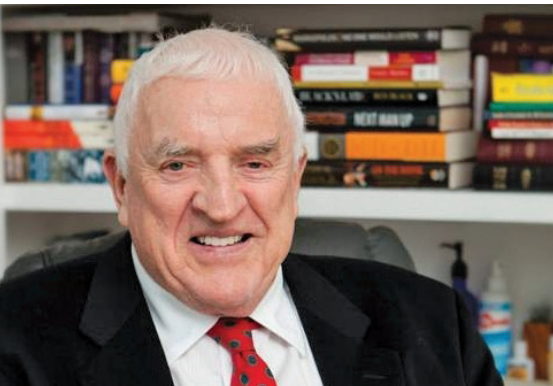
“The line between the past and the present is indistinct ...



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BEACON, published by the Office of University Advancement at Boston College, celebrates the significant advances made possible by generous and forward-thinking philanthropic investments in the University as well as the beneficiaries of that support.

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SOARING HIGHER

The Campaign for Boston College

A Grateful Eagle

BY JOHN F. FISH, P'13, '18, '23



I came to Boston College in 2006 not as a student, but as an adopted Eagle. What I didn't expect then was that my BC experience would be just as transformative.

That's how it seems to work at the Heights. You think you're just passing through ... and then something takes hold.

Over time, as chair of the Boston College Board of Trustees, a BC parent, and a campaign co-chair, I found myself reflecting on Boston College's incredible journey—from its humble beginnings serving Boston's Irish Catholic immigrant community, to becoming one of the most sought-after and respected universities in the world. That transformation didn't happen accidentally. It was built by leaders with courage, faculty committed to excellence, and generations of students and alumni who were shaped by Jesuit values and who carried those values into the world as part of their daily lives.

A BC education is not just an academic model. It is a model for how to live. Once you witness that higher ideal in action, it reshapes how you see everything. It moves you beyond asking "Can we?" to "Should we?" In a world that celebrates capability above almost everything else, that second question is the harder and the far more important one. It is the question that separates ambition from purpose.

For me, the Jesuit values became a lifelong pursuit, a beacon that gave me direction to becoming the kind of leader and the kind of human being I wanted to be.

I began my relationship with Boston College as an outsider. I conclude my second term as chair of the trustees as a grateful Eagle. A proud Eagle. A lifelong Eagle.

BC didn't give me a degree. It gave me something harder to earn: a conscience, a compass, and a community. And these, in the end, are the greatest gifts.

John F. Fish recently completed his second and final term as chair of the Boston College Board of Trustees. He also serves as co-chair of *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College* and chairman and CEO of Suffolk. John and his wife, Cyndy, have three daughters, Christina, JD'13; Jennifer, MBA'18; and Caroline, MS'23.



[1] The Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program Class of 2026 in the Silver Corridor at the Waldorf Astoria New York during the 36th annual Wall Street Business Leadership Council Tribute Dinner on April 23, 2026.

[2] Tribute Dinner guests reconnect in the legendary Grand Ballroom at the Waldorf Astoria.

[3] University Trustee Sandra and Paul Edgerley, P'23, (second and third from left) with members of their family and William V. Campbell Director of Athletics Blake James (far right) on the newly dedicated Edgerley Family Court at the Silvio O. Conte Forum on February 14, 2026.

[4] (Left to right) Trustee Beth Vanderslice '86, P'30; Ronald Logue '67, MBA'74; featured speaker Misty Copeland; Robert L. and Judith T. Winston Provost and Dean of Faculties David Quigley; and Trustee Pat Bonan '79 at the dedication for the newly renamed Kathleen McGillicuddy CWBC Colloquium on April 9, 2026.

\$2.24 billion raised toward \$3 billion goal

On January 31, 2026, *Soaring Higher* surpassed \$2 billion raised, making it the most successful campaign in Boston College history! For a more detailed look at the campaign, visit campaign.bc.edu/impact.

*Raised as of
July 1, 2026:*

Financial Aid
\$614 million

Academics
\$773 million

Student Life
\$756 million

GOAL: \$1.1 billion

\$1.15 billion

\$750 million

RECENT NOTABLE GIFTS

Tanji '86 and Robert '88 Marshall Family Scholarship

Longtime Boston College volunteers **Tanji Reed Marshall '86 and Regent Robert Marshall '88, P'17**, established an undergraduate scholarship in appreciation for their own formative education and that of their daughter, Aerin '17, who flourished at BC and has now committed her life to serving others.

Faculty Futures Fund

Established in 2024 by a gift from **Hon. Miriam Mattinen Shearing, JD'64**, and bolstered in 2026 by a second commitment, the Faculty Futures Fund provides annual current-use support for faculty of Boston College Law School who are conducting research and pedagogical projects that advance social justice, equality, the support of marginalized groups, and democratic access in the political system.

Matt and Rebecca Carroll Family Quarterbacks Coach

Boston College football received a commitment from **Regents Rebecca '95 and Matthew Carroll '95, P'25**, to endow the quarterbacks coach position. This gift, which follows the Carroll family's recent endowment of a football student-athlete scholarship and first-generation student scholarship, was the first coaching position to receive funding from the \$50 million Athletics Challenge Match (see page 13).

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TA: Trustee Associate
R: Regent
A: BC Alumni Association Board Member



Striking the Match

The bold idea that sparked a surge of faculty support at BC

BY DIANA GRIFFITH AND ERIC BUSHNELL, MA'22

In 2021, Boston College announced a historic Faculty Challenge Match, fueled by a \$50 million pledge from an alum and his spouse who chose to remain anonymous. Their goal was clear: close the gap between BC—then home to about 100 endowed faculty positions—and peer institutions that boasted as many as 300 or more.

Five years later, their vision has been substantially realized. The initial pledge has catalyzed more than \$100 million in new gifts and led to the naming of over 65 professorships, fellowships, and other academic funds—the most significant expansion of faculty support in Boston College history.

“We’ve always been proud of BC, but over the last 20 to 30 years, we’ve seen it grow from a great school to a truly outstanding research university,” the alum said. “This gift was our way of not only giving back to the school that means so much to us, but also to make sure future University leaders have the resources to remain academically competitive.”

“We have been delighted by the response from other alumni and families, not only their financial contributions, but the sense of momentum and excitement it has generated,” the donors said after hearing the final tallies. Longtime

benefactors, they said this latest gift was motivated by their faith in BC’s leaders, particularly the outgoing University President William P. Leahy, S.J., and David Quigley, the Robert L. and Judith T. Winston Provost and Dean of Faculties.

Endowed positions are a necessary tool to attract and retain faculty across the full span of the academic life cycle, says Billy Soo, vice provost for faculties and professor in the Carroll School of Management, who oversees the recruitment, hiring, and management of more than 930 faculty members across BC’s nine schools and colleges. “I was ecstatic when I heard about the gift because I knew it would have a multiplier effect on donors and on our ability to attract even more superstar faculty. The more endowed positions you have, the more flexibility you have to entice someone to come to—or stay at—your campus,” Soo says.

Through the Challenge Match, select endowed gifts \$500,000 and above qualified for a two-to-one match; for example, a \$2 million gift could receive an additional \$1 million, reaching the minimum required to endow a professorship. This structure expanded each gift’s impact and, in some cases, helped donors reach new philanthropic milestones.



The Match in Motion

Inspired by the match and the 2023 launch of *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College*, the BC community embraced the chance to make a lasting difference at the Heights. Their impact reached every level of the University, from postdoctoral fellowships to deanships and other senior-level administrative posts, including the chair of the engineering department, directors of the Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society and the Prison Education Program, and the provost and dean of faculties.

The number of endowed professorships also expanded significantly, including commitments for four University professorships. These are the highest distinctions available for faculty who have invested years, often decades, into research, teaching, and service. “Many of our senior faculty want to be seen. They’re going the extra mile—helping students, producing research, mentoring colleagues, sacrificing their free time,” says Soo. Endowed professorships are also crucial in recruiting established faculty from other institutions, he adds: “When you offer a senior scholar an endowed chair along with flexible research funds, it becomes a powerful incentive to consider moving to Boston College.”

For junior faculty, the needs are different but no less important. Early-career scholars rely on research funding to collect data, hire assistants, and pursue projects not yet ready for external grants. Through the Challenge Match, donors helped establish 22

“The impact of the Challenge Match gift will last for generations. When faculty choose to come here or remain here, they shape their students, and those students go on to flourish and influence others.”

—Billy Soo

faculty fellowships, nine dean’s faculty fellowships, and five provost’s faculty fellowships—a dramatic infusion that gives rising scholars the freedom to take intellectual risks and build strong foundations for long-term success.

Beyond professorships and fellowships, donors also funded specialized positions to meet school-specific needs. At the Lynch School of Education and Human Development, two endowed visiting professorships will bring accomplished scholars with fresh perspectives to campus. In the Connell School of Nursing, a new endowed professor of the practice will honor the essential teaching and mentoring role of non-tenure faculty by bringing real-world clinical experience directly to students. And in the School of Social Work, an endowed postdoctoral fellowship fund will attract rising scholars and support research on urgent social matters.

“One of the most impressive aspects of this match is how widely it reached,” says Soo. “It shows how a single person’s generosity can have such a wide magnitude of effect on the University.”

Many donors found the Challenge Match helped them support BC in ways that made a difference for them as well as the University. For some, this

meant establishing their first endowed faculty position; for others, it meant adding to an existing fund to increase their impact. In one case, three couples came together to establish a faculty fellowship in honor of their extended family’s many connections to BC.

“The impact of the Challenge Match gift will last for generations,” says Soo, noting that every new endowed position contributes to the transformative student experience for which BC is known. “When faculty choose to come here or remain here, they shape their students, and those students go on to flourish and influence others.”

A Late Start

It is the cumulative, generational impact of endowed positions that makes additional investments so important, particularly given the head start enjoyed by many of the schools Boston College competes with. “We were certainly very late to the game,” notes Soo. Harvard established its first endowed chair in 1721, most major universities followed by the early 20th century, and Notre Dame and Georgetown had endowed positions by the late 1960s. Boston College, on the other hand, announced its first endowed positions in 1976, with the Gasson and Sweeney Chairs.

In the nearly five decades that followed, the BC community steadily built a roster of about 100 endowed positions—support that Soo says played a direct role in the University’s dramatic rise in the rankings of America’s best universities. The Faculty Challenge Match accelerated that progress in extraordinary ways, boosting BC’s number of endowed positions by more than 60 percent in only five years.

While the gains are historic, Soo emphasizes that the work is far from finished. “This is extraordinary progress, but we can’t stop here,” he says. “If we want to remain competitive, we need to keep building. Endowed positions are what allow a university to grow for generations.”

See more about the Challenge Match’s cross-campus impact on the following pages.

The Catalysts
Inspiring innovations across boundaries

Boston College’s academic leaders quickly recognized that the Faculty Challenge Match was an opportunity to capitalize on one of the University’s core strengths: its integration of the liberal arts and formative education into all academic programs. With a new crop of faculty endowments, BC is advancing this mission, building innovative curricula that transcend traditional academic disciplines and touch all corners of campus.

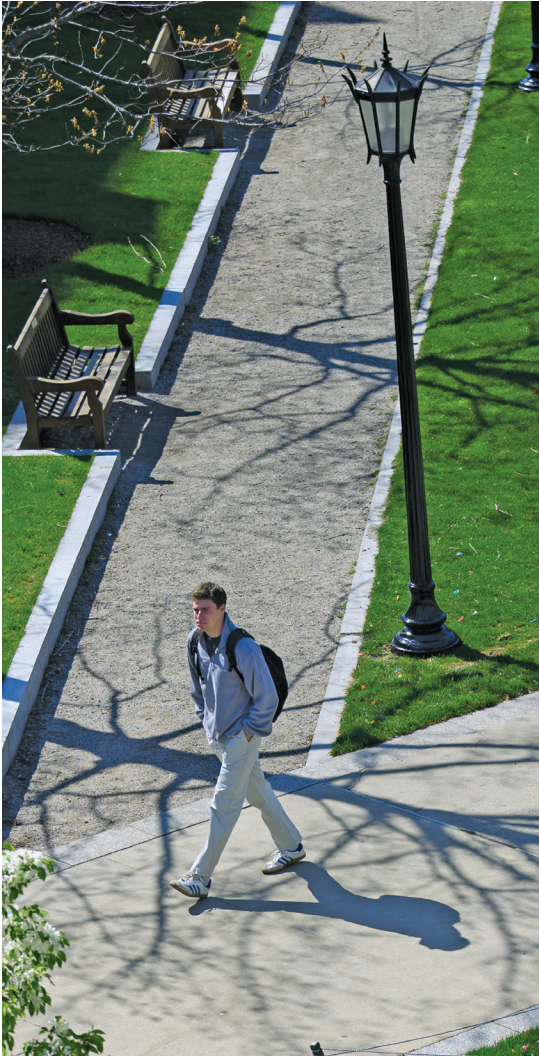
In recent years, the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences and the Carroll School of Management have forged an especially close partnership—what Andy Boynton ’78, P’13, John and Linda Powers Family Dean of the Carroll School, calls “a multidisciplinary bridge.” He and Morrissey College Dean Greg Kalscheur, S.J., MDiv’01, encourage their students to take courses in each other’s schools, and today, roughly half of all Carroll School students graduate with an additional major or minor in the Morrissey College, and one-third of Morrissey

College students have declared a minor at the Carroll School.

Despite this close integration, no endowments existed to promote the bonds between the Morrissey College and the Carroll School—until the arrival of the Challenge Match. Since 2024, donors have used the match to establish two endowments that support curricular development between the schools as well as one University professorship whose recipient will integrate the humanities, management, and sciences in their teaching and research. With these gifts, the growing connections between the University’s two largest schools are now bolstered by dedicated, perpetual funding.

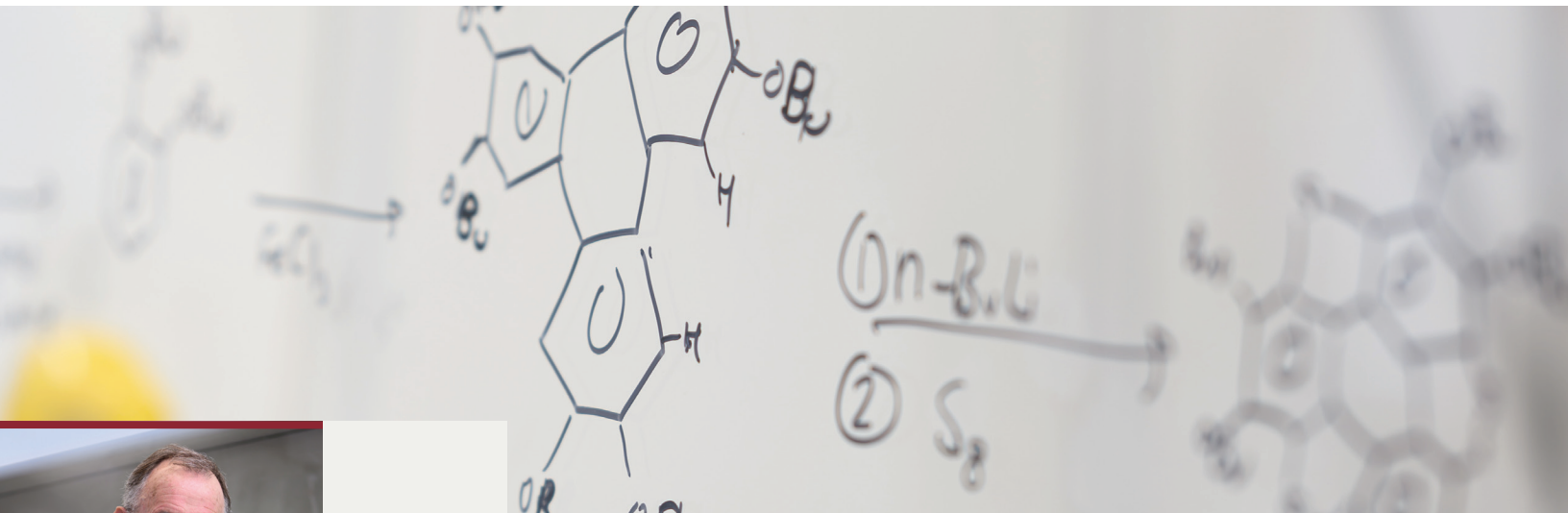
But the impact of the Challenge Match extends further, benefitting all of the Heights. At the core of Boston College’s Jesuit, Catholic mission is formative education. Integrating intellectual, social, ethical, and spiritual dimensions, formative education “pursues the full human flourishing of all of our students,” says Provost Quigley. In 2022, through the Challenge Match, a donor family established an

endowed fund to support the Office of the Provost’s formative education initiatives. The gift was followed by two subsequent endowed funds, both established in 2024 through the Challenge Match, to support faculty projects and academic initiatives at the provost’s discretion.



“At BC, we don’t let disciplinary boundaries get in the way of what creates a formative experience for our students. By bringing together great faculty across schools, we’re shaping an innovative curriculum that integrates the humanities, management, and sciences.”

—Andy Boynton (right) reflecting on his academic partnership with Fr. Kalscheur (left)



“When I heard about the Challenge Match, my reaction was: hallelujah. What a way to raise the bar for the entire University.”

—Thomas Chiles

The Scientists
Empowering breakthroughs in STEM discovery

While the Faculty Challenge Match inspired gifts across schools and disciplines, it was first focused primarily on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) faculty in hopes of more quickly closing the gap in these crucial—and resource-intensive—fields.

By 2026, 12 endowed faculty positions were created in STEM fields—an unprecedented investment that reinforced BC’s standing as a top research university. For DeLuca Professor Thomas Chiles, Vice Provost for Research and Academic Planning, the impact was immediate.

“I don’t think you can overstate the importance of endowed professorships and fellowships,” Chiles says. “We educate the next generation of scientists and scholars. If we want them to be leaders who have an impact in the world, we have to expose them to the highest caliber faculty—and endowed professorships bring those faculty to BC.”

The Challenge Match arrived at a pivotal moment: BC had recently achieved R1 status, elevating its national profile and intensifying competition for top scientists.

Three of the first endowed funds were designated for the newly launched human-centered engineering department, providing a foundation for recruiting exceptional faculty and signaling BC’s long-term commitment to the distinctive program grounded in ethics and the common good. “Having those three positions endowed signaled that engineering was a very important endeavor,” says Chiles. “It allowed us to recruit high-caliber faculty we might not otherwise have been competitive for.”

Beyond engineering, the new endowed funds are strengthening STEM departments at a time when federal funding is tightening. They provide significant investments in equipment, data, lab space, and personnel. “A lot of the ideas that drive research come from our undergrads, our grad students, our postdocs, and our colleagues,” says Chiles. “To explore those ideas, you need resources, facilities, and time. Endowed support gives faculty the flexibility to move ideas forward, generate data, publish, and be competitive for grants.”

Strengthening the sciences speaks directly to BC’s mission, says Chiles. It ensures that students learn from leading scholars, participate in cutting-edge research, and are prepared to confront the complex problems facing society, people, and the planet.



The Lawyers
A show of support for legal leaders

When Odette Lienau arrived at Boston College Law School in 2023 as the inaugural Marianne D. Short, Esq., Dean, she found a faculty at a turning point. Beloved senior scholars were retiring, rising stars were being recruited by peer institutions, and new voices were gaining prominence.

It was a moment of profound renewal, and she knew that expanding endowed faculty support—BC Law had only seven named titles at the time—would be essential. That number has now more than doubled to a record 18 endowed faculty positions, thanks to the *Soaring Higher* campaign and Faculty Challenge Match.

“As soon as I heard about the Challenge Match, I knew it was going to be a game changer,” says Lienau. The match energized donors who had long admired BC Law’s faculty but assumed an endowed gift was out of reach. The faculty responded with equal enthusiasm, expressing “surprise at the scale of the match and real appreciation that some of it would be allocated to the Law School.” Of the donors behind the initiative, the dean praises their “generosity and interdisciplinarity of vision—thinking about the University as a whole and about faculty as bridge builders across disciplines.”

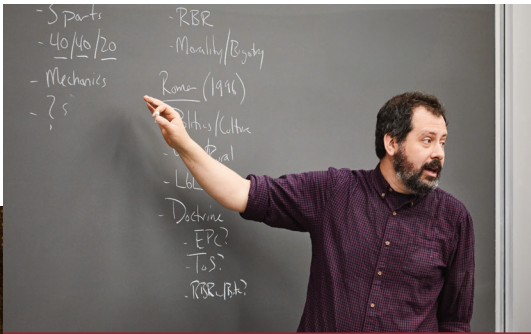
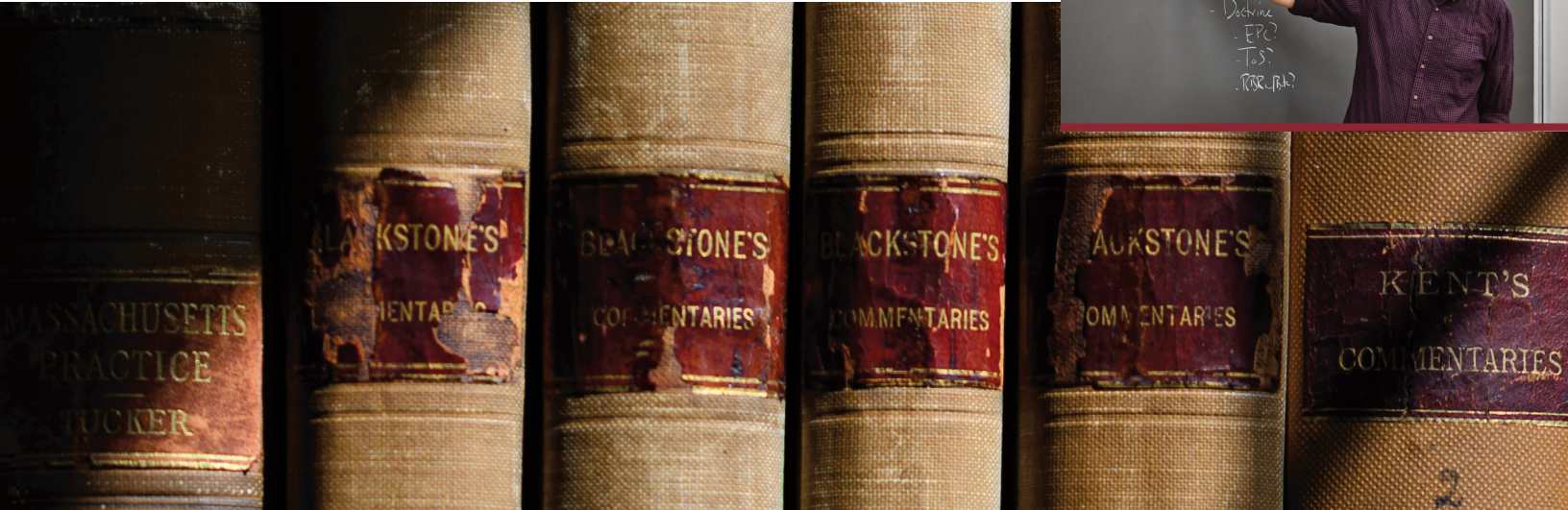
Endowed titles are especially important at the nation’s top law schools. They provide faculty with resources for ambitious, public-facing scholarship—funding for major projects, costly datasets, scholarly engagement, and research assistants—and they carry significant weight beyond campus. “An endowed professorship is a signifier of our confidence in a scholar’s expertise,” Lienau says, “and it’s externally recognized as well.” In a field where invitations to expert panels, symposia, and policy discussions can hinge on such markers, endowed titles give BC Law faculty both the support and the standing to shape national conversations.

Among the 11 new positions are four professorships, three dean’s faculty fellowships, three faculty fellowships, and the deanship. Already, they have strengthened the school’s academic reputation and given Lienau essential tools to compete for top talent. “BC Law, like so many law schools, is in a moment of faculty renewal,” says Lienau. “Being able to share that they will have a guaranteed source of support has been very important—whether we’re retaining key faculty as other schools show interest, or drawing top talent from across the country.” ■



“The growth in endowed positions has been an important marker of our progress as a law school—of our commitment to research and teaching at the highest levels.”

—Odette Lienau



Family First, BC Always

By embracing its values, Blake James is helping BC find new ways to win.

The office-suite belonging to the William V. Campbell Director of Athletics is perched above Alumni Stadium section B, stretching from about the five-yard line to the 20. Its lengthy bank of picture windows offers a panoramic vista of the entire playing field, giving it one of the best views on campus.

On top of the view, the suite's size—more than 600 square feet—and L-shaped configuration are ideal for game-day hosting. That's why BC legends like Zay Flowers, Doug Flutie, Alison Crowther, Jerry York, Tom Coughlin, Jack Bicknell, and others have spent time there on at least one fall Saturday. Since 2022, their official host has been Blake James, who came to the Heights after eight years as athletic director at the University of Miami.

Like many kids from Minnesota, James grew up with dreams of playing in the NHL. Eventually he realized that wasn't going to happen, but he still wanted to work in sports. So he started his athletics administration career in ticket sales at Miami.

"I had two sets of yellow pages, two sets of white pages, and a phone—my task was to call people and sell them tickets," he recalls. "To do that job you have to have persistence, you have to be driven, and you have to be competitive. I think everything I learned through that experience has helped me get to where I am today."

Today, James is a respected leader in college athletics, having served in major NCAA governance roles—including chairing the Division I Council, the body responsible for day-to-day oversight of all Division I athletics. He has also held leadership positions within the ACC and was selected as one of four national recipients of the Under Armour Athletic Director of the Year award in 2016.

Game days in the AD's suite are a family affair—some say James's wife, Kelly, is the real host—and their children, Haley and Ryan, are regular visitors.

No matter who is on the guest list, the Jameses take great pride in providing a welcoming atmosphere, fully leaning into the idea of "Once an Eagle, always an Eagle." Yet the BC family doesn't just come together once a week on Saturday, and their love for BC rises above all else. "This is such an incredible community that places an emphasis on competing for championships while never straying from our core mission of graduating our students and providing them with an incredible experience during their time in Chestnut Hill," James says. "I believe that makes us unique and I am honored to play a small role in our campus life."

Family is the lens through which James sees his entire job, and he treats student-athletes like he would his own kids. When speaking about

them, he beams with pride at their accomplishments, and one of the first things you see when you walk into his office is a giant collage of photos featuring Eagles from every BC sport. It's a tangible way of expressing that each athlete deserves a meaningful BC experience.

Embracing the Mission

James believes BC's greatest advantage is the kind of student-athlete it attracts, and ideal Eagles "check a lot of boxes." They are bright, embrace the Jesuit educational tradition, seek growth, and are up for a challenge. "Whether you put them in a classroom or on a court, they're going to strive to be the best," James says. They also understand the long-term value of choosing BC. "The young people that we're bringing here really are looking at the total experience ... the value of a BC degree is going to open more doors than just being a BC athlete."

The results speak for themselves. BC student-athletes perform among the nation's best academically. In fall 2025, Eagles had a collective GPA over 3.2 and 74 percent made the ACC honor roll. The program's 2025 graduation success rate of 97 tied for second in the ACC across all sports and was third among all Football Bowl Subdivision schools.

James has embraced the BC mission since arriving at the Heights, taking part in formation opportunities like the Ignatian Colleagues Program

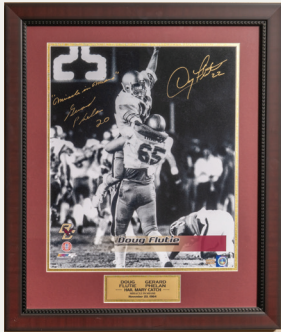
A man with short grey hair and a friendly smile stands in a large stadium box office. He is wearing a maroon Boston College zip-up jacket over a striped collared shirt and khaki pants. The jacket has "BOSTON COLLEGE" printed in white on the left chest. Behind him, a large window looks out onto a football field with white yard lines and a green field. The stadium seating is visible in the background, mostly empty. Several banners hang from the stands, including one for the "NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP" and others with numbers like "8" and "14".

“We’re going to compete at the highest level, and we’re going to do it in a way that reflects the values of Boston College.”

—Blake James

Five Interesting Things in Blake's Office

► ROOM WITH A VIEW
The best game James has watched through his office window was the September 2024 Red Bandanna game against Michigan State. Trailing late, BC scored a 42-yard touchdown that sealed an emotional victory.



▲ HEROICS AND HEARTBREAK
There aren't too many people who have seen both sides of the "Miracle in Miami," but James is one of them: He was AD at the University of Miami for eight years before coming to BC in 2022.

and seeing up close how deeply that ethos shapes life on campus. He notes that "there's so much more to the experience here, not only for our students, but also for us as employees," and that BC's investment in forming men and women for others influences "everything that we do here." That commitment is unmistakable in the community: Last year, 99 percent of student-athletes engaged in service, contributing 25,000 hours and earning national recognition through the NCAA Community Engagement Impact Award and the Fiesta Bowl Community Service Award from James's peers in the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA).

Solidifying the Future

Attracting the right student-athletes to BC starts with access, and scholarships have a significant impact. Last year, BC awarded scholarships to 350 student-athletes, totaling more than \$30 million, a number that will continue to climb with changes to roster limits and the rising cost of education. The endowment only covers about one-third of the total scholarship investment and the remainder comes from the University's operating budget. Additional donor support is essential. "The more endowment we create, the more opportunity it gives

the institution to fund areas that we need to continue to grow and improve," James says, adding that tools and resources that enhance student-athlete performance as well as maintenance and improvements to facilities are among the biggest areas of need.

Endowment support is one of the department's top fundraising priorities. "I have joked many times publicly that I'm the largest parent on this campus—my tuition bill is over \$30 million," James says. "Support of endowment—whether that be coaching, scholarship, or operational endowment—solidifies the future of our program and helps us achieve at a much greater level." Strengthening the Flynn Fund is another major priority. Unlike endowment support, Flynn Fund gifts are unrestricted and can be put to use immediately, offering James the flexibility to support the areas of greatest or urgent need across the department.

Even with enhanced philanthropic support, BC is operating in a rapidly changing environment. Under the 2025 *House v. NCAA* settlement, institutions may now directly compensate student-athletes through revenues generated from media rights, ticket sales, and sponsorships. BC has

committed to participating at the maximum permitted level, aligning with peers across the Power Four conferences. Student-athletes are also permitted to profit from the use of their name, image, and likeness (NIL) and to transfer more freely between universities. These recent changes are reshaping how student-athletes make enrollment decisions, which can dramatically impact roster continuity and team success. BC must keep pace to remain competitive not only on the court, field, or ice but also on the recruiting trail and in the transfer portal.

Within that reality, James says frankly that BC teams need to win more. He also recognizes that while new opportunities exist for student-athletes, the vast majority come to BC because of scholarships and the ability to receive a transformative education. It's another reason why philanthropic support is so important. "A better endowed athletics program will allow us to more nimbly respond to the changing landscape of college athletics, including our ability to participate in revenue sharing and provide additional scholarships to compete with ACC peers," James says, adding: "Money



▲ HIS “OTHER” KIDS

Spanning the side wall is a collage of action shots featuring athletes from all of BC’s varsity sports.



◀ SELTZER CENTRAL

James is thirsty for more victories out of the Boston College teams, so he keeps his mini fridge stocked with seltzers—he estimates he drinks six to eight per day.



◀ DESK-SIDE DEVOTION

Nestled in the framed BC Athletics logo above James’s computer monitor are a pair of subtle Catholic artifacts: a palm frond from Palm Sunday Mass at St. Mary’s Chapel and a small copy of Psalm 23: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”

doesn’t guarantee winning, but the more investment we make, the greater probability that we win.”

Staying True to Our Values

“When our programs succeed, it elevates the entire institution,” James adds. Long referred to as BC’s “front porch,” athletics is one of the most visible gateways to the University, a point of entry for people who may not otherwise engage with the Heights but feel a connection through its teams. BC is the only Power Four institution in New England, so it occupies a unique place in the region’s sports landscape. “We have an incredible opportunity to shine a national spotlight on Boston College,” James says.

One measuring stick for the department’s success is the NACDA’s Learfield Director’s Cup rankings, which recognize institutions that maintain broad-based athletics programs for achieving success in both men’s and women’s sports. Since James arrived, BC’s Director’s Cup ranking has risen from #109 to #66. In the next five years, he would like to match the University’s *U.S. News & World Report* ranking, which currently sits at #36. How could that benefit BC? “Everyone loves a winner,” James says. “And the more we win, the more

people we bring, the more excitement it creates, the more opportunities it has to positively impact the entire campus community.”

The college sports landscape is becoming more complex. Expectations, as well as the cost of doing business, continue to rise. The margin for error grows ever smaller. Through it all, BC remains consistent; James is adamant that the University won’t chase trends that don’t fit its mission. He says

that BC must be “smart, not reactive,” especially in an environment where rules shift quickly and the pressure to keep up can push institutions into decisions that don’t align with who they are. “We’re going to compete at the highest level,” he says, “and we’re going to do it in a way that reflects the values of Boston College.”

That’s a future the entire BC family can be proud of. ■

Game. Set. Match.

In December 2025, Blake James announced that an anonymous donor had pledged \$50 million to create a challenge match to inspire support for BC Athletics from alumni, parents, and friends.

For endowed gifts of athletics scholarships or named coaching positions \$250,000 and above, the Athletics Challenge Match will enhance these commitments dollar-for-dollar, doubling their impact. As of June 2026, the match has helped generate 14 new endowed scholarships and name two coaching positions at BC.

The goals of the match are to allow BC to compete with peer institutions that already have deep endowment strength and to build the financial base that will sustain BC Athletics for decades.

The match is a key component of *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College*, which has a \$750 million goal for student life initiatives, including \$400 million for BC Athletics.



Steady as a Beacon

Thirty years of moments, milestones, and momentum that have shaped today's Boston College.

For part of the afternoons of October 17 and 18, 1996, classes at Boston College were canceled. It wasn't simply a kind gesture from the administration or a nod to the brilliant autumn sunshine and unseasonably warm temperatures that would make any prospective Eagle fall in love with the Heights, but rather because a once-in-a-generation event was about to take place.

The inauguration of William P. Leahy, S.J., as Boston College's 25th president was a two-day campus affair, replete with a Mass of the Holy Spirit, an academic symposium, a student musical spectacular, and, of course, a grand installation ceremony. The festivities formally commenced what would become the longest tenure of any president in University history.

Flanked by some 500 robed BC faculty, deans, vice presidents, trustees, and representatives of universities from around the world, Fr. Leahy urged the Conte Forum audience to remember BC's values and rededicate to its mission, saying, "I and so many others are certainly committed to ensuring that Boston College be the strongest university it can be, and also remain faithful to its religious and educational heritage."

Over the past three decades, BC community members have heeded this call. Through capital campaigns and philanthropic contributions, they have enabled BC to grow in ways that directly shape lives: opening doors for students through financial aid, strengthening academic excellence and faculty innovation, and supporting the programs and people who embody the University's mission. In turn, the quality of BC's student body, its community impact, its research prowess, and its physical footprint have expanded.

As Boston College continues to evolve—while remaining grounded in its Jesuit, Catholic foundations—the true impact of philanthropy lives in thousands of individual stories that exceed the limitations of this magazine. In these pages, *Beacon* highlights some moments and milestones of the last 30 years that have led to where BC stands today.

"We must, in the best Christian sense, be a light, a beacon that helps our own and the world's communities to distinguish good from ill, love from hate, truth from falsehood."

—University President William P. Leahy, S.J., October 18, 1996

1996

Where We Came From

Since BC's founding in 1863, philanthropy has always played a pivotal role in its growth. A real turning point was the *New Heights Advancement Campaign* from 1976 to 1981, which focused on construction, endowment, renovation, and modernization. Ultimately the campaign exceeded its goal, raising more than \$24 million.

"That was the first serious, sustained campaign," says James M. O'Toole '72, PhD'87, Clough Millennium Chair in History emeritus and University historian. "Prior to that, any kind of fundraising work was building-specific. *New Heights* really changed that, and the successive campaigns, including the present one, are its descendants."

At the conclusion of *New Heights*, the Boston College endowment stood at \$7 million, and then-Vice President of University Relations James P. McIntyre '57, MEd'61, DEd'67, H'11, saw limitless potential for future development, saying, "I can't imagine a time when [the University's] needs will be met."

Where We Were

In early 1994, J. Donald Monan, S.J., announced his decision to step down from his role as president, telling *The Heights*, "I believe this is, for the University, the proper time to effect a transition. Boston College is in sound condition academically and fiscally. We have ambitious but reasonable plans in place. I would like to assure that the transition take place in a manner where there is no slowing down of momentum or of activity."

BC did indeed have momentum. By the summer of 1996, the University was receiving approximately \$31 million in gifts annually and the endowment had grown to nearly \$600 million.

Where We Were Going

When he left the presidency, Fr. Monan expressed confidence in BC's ability to realize the high expectations it had set for itself, recognizing that the University was in a wonderful position to succeed under its new leadership and with the supporting hands of many. "These past 24 years have taught me, if teaching was ever needed, that ambitions for an institution as complex as a modern university do not depend on its president," he said. "The talent, dedication, goodwill, and generosity of literally thousands of people will play their part in shaping its future."



1996

William P. Leahy, S.J., is inaugurated as the 25th president of Boston College. [1]

1997

The Boston College Tribute Dinner, sponsored by the Wall Street Business Leadership Council, surpasses \$1 million raised for the first time in its nine-year history.

1999

The Carolyn A. and Peter S. Lynch School of Education is named thanks to a gift from the couple, pictured here with Dean Mary Brabeck (left). [2]

The Boston College endowment surpasses \$1 billion. [3]

The Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life is established with an endowment from Rene '69 and Geoffrey Boisi '69, P'11.

With a gala event held in Gargan Hall at Bapst Library, BC launches the \$400 million *Ever to Excel* campaign. [4]

2000

Gifts exceeding \$5 million from John M. Corcoran '48 create the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College. [5]

2001

The William F. Connell School of Nursing is named for the late University trustee who made a \$10 million gift to the school. [6]



3

University Sets New Milestones

Endowment topped \$1 billion in 1999	Applications for 2004 eclipse 20,000
--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------



5

“BC’s Jesuit ideal of inclusion rather than exclusion means that the University accepts the challenge that the search for truth and understanding is not hindered, but rather is enhanced by diverse perspectives, especially when based on a profound respect for the individual.”

—John Corcoran



2002

The Woods College of Advancing Studies is named after longtime dean James A. Woods, S.J., thanks to a gift from Katharine and Robert M. Devlin, P'88, '90. [7]

The Council for Women of Boston College launches as a way to heighten alumnae involvement with the University. Pictured speaking with Fr. Leahy are founding co-chairs Cynthia Egan '78, P'20, and Kathleen McGillicuddy NC'71. [8]

2003

The *Ever to Excel* campaign ends after generating \$441 million for Boston College, including more than \$80 million to endow faculty positions and \$71 million for scholarships and financial aid. Alumni contributed \$259 million to the campaign and 85 percent of gifts were of \$1,000 or less. [9]

2004

The Lower Campus dining hall and plaza are rededicated as the John M. Corcoran Commons thanks to a generous gift from Helen and Leo Corcoran, P'76, '79, '81, '82, to honor Leo's brother, a devoted Eagle.

2005

The Connors Family Retreat and Conference Center in Dover, Massachusetts, is established following the University's acquisition of the property and a gift from Eileen '66, MSW'95, and John M. "Jack" Connors '63, H'07, P'93, '94. [10]

Dual gifts benefit the Carroll School of Management: Judith T. and Robert L. Winston '60 endow the Winston Center for Leadership and Ethics and Gloria, MDiv'90, MS'97, and Charles "Chuck" Clough '64, P'87, '93, '98, establish the Clough Colloquium within the Winston

Center. Pictured are Chuck Clough (center) and Robert Winston (right) with John and Linda Powers Family Dean Andy Boynton '78, P'13 (left). [11]

2008

Following a new 10-year strategic plan in 2007, BC launches the \$1.5 billion *Light the World* campaign. "Throughout its history, Boston College has always set high standards and has never steered away from challenges," said Fr. Leahy.

7

"It is individuals like Fr. Woods who make our world a better place."

—Robert Devlin



10



11

9

'Ever to Excel' Passes the Test

Campaign success bolsters academics, student life, research

\$441 million



8

2006

\$76.6 million CASH

\$70.6 million COMMITMENTS

The McGillicuddy-Logue Center for Undergraduate Global Studies is named thanks to a \$10 million commitment from Kathleen McGillicuddy and Ronald Logue '67, MBA'74.

The Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy is established thanks to a gift from Gloria and Chuck Clough.

2010

The Barbara and Patrick Roche Center for Catholic Education is named thanks to a \$20 million gift from the longtime benefactors.

The Lynch Leadership Academy—the first in the nation to jointly train and support Catholic, public, and charter school principals—is established thanks to a gift from Carolyn and Peter Lynch.

2011

The Charles F. Donovan, S.J., Deanship of the Lynch School of Education is named thanks to a gift from the Shea Family Foundation.

[12]

Maloney Hall, seen as a bridge connecting Middle and Lower Campuses, is named following a commitment from Nancy and T.J. Maloney '75, P'09, '16. [13]

2012

The Cadigan Alumni Center, a new Brighton Campus facility housing the University's fundraising, alumni relations, and parent relations offices, is named for Patrick F. "Pat" Cadigan '57, P'91, after his \$15 million commitment.

2013

Stokes Hall, the 183,000-square-foot humanities building, opens on Middle Campus. The facility is named for Patrick T. Stokes '64, H'22, P'91, '94, '97, thanks to a \$22 million gift. [14]

The Director of Athletics position is named for William V. Campbell,

H'12, a former football assistant coach and longtime BC Athletics benefactor.

2014

The Vice President for Mission and Ministry position is named thanks to a gift from BC parents Liliane and Christian Haub, P'13, '14, '17.

The Boston College endowment surpasses \$2 billion.

The Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program is named following a major gift from the Gabelli Family Foundation and years of support from Mario Gabelli, P'90, '94, '95, '00, '11. Pictured are the scholars from the Class of 2014. [15]

13

“We, in our own way, ‘bridge’ students into the contemporary world. We have been a bridge for generations of students coming to Boston College to be connected to the wider society.”

—Fr. Leahy



2015
The Edmund H. Shea Jr. Center for Entrepreneurship is formally dedicated. The center was made possible through a generous gift from Mary S. Shea and her six children. Pictured is Phil Schiller '82, P'24, then–senior vice president of worldwide marketing for Apple Inc., who gave a keynote address at the dedication. [16]

The Rappaport Center for Law and Public Policy relocates to Boston College Law School as a result of a gift from the Phyllis & Jerome Lyle Rappaport Foundation. [17]

The Robert J. Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences is named for the 1960 alumnus and former trustee.

The John and Linda Powers Family Dean in the Carroll School of Management is named thanks to a gift from the couple.

2016
The *Light the World* campaign ends with a record total of \$1.605 billion raised, more than \$100 million over its goal. Gifts came from 140,000 donors, establishing 380 financial aid funds and more than 1,000 current-use scholarships. Thirty-one full and assistant endowed professorships, two endowed deanships, and 10 major research

centers were also created. Pictured are members of the University Chorale of Boston College, who performed at the closing gala. [18]

Funded in part by a gift to Boston College from the McMullen Family Foundation, the new McMullen Museum of Art opens in the former residence of Boston's Cardinal Archbishop on the Brighton Campus. [19]

2017
The Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society is established thanks to a gift from Kim Gassett-Schiller and Phil Schiller. [20]

2018
BC Athletics launches the \$150 million *Greater Heights* campaign as part of a new strategic plan.

Fish Field House, a new 115,700-square-foot athletic space, opens adjacent to Alumni Stadium. Funded by more than 200 individual donor families, the facility is named for leading benefactor John F. Fish, P'13, '18, '23. [21]

Harrington Athletics Village on the Brighton Campus, home to BC baseball and softball, is named for John L. Harrington '57, MBA'66, H'10, P'82, '89, '94.

17

“The move to Boston College gives the center a real opportunity to build on the foundation’s successes while partnering with one of the nation’s leading schools of law. We are very excited about this new beginning.”

—Jerry Rappaport



22



16 20



19



21



18

2016

\$128.4 million CASH

\$197.1 million COMMITMENTS

2019

The Margot Connell Recreation Center is named for six-time BC parent and one of the University’s most generous benefactors thanks to a \$50 million leadership gift. [22]

2020

BC launches the \$250 million *Be a Beacon* campaign for financial aid with the purpose of bolstering the University’s commitment to need-blind admission for undergraduate students.

2021

The estate of Joyce L. and E. Paul Robsham, MEd’83, makes a \$75 million gift to BC for a range of University priorities, including scholarships, academic programming, facilities, and operation of the Robsham Theater Arts Center. [23]

The Boston College endowment surpasses \$3 billion.

A gift of 27 paintings and three drawings worth more than \$20 million is made to the McMullen Museum of Art from the private collection of Peter Lynch and his late wife, Carolyn. An additional \$5 million gift supports the ongoing curation of the Carolyn A. and Peter S. Lynch Collection.

2022

The Mary E. Walsh Center for Thriving Children at the Lynch School of Education and Human Development is named thanks to a \$10 million gift from an anonymous donor. [24]

2023

The Hoag Basketball Pavilion opens thanks to a \$15 million gift from Michaela “Mikey” ’86 and Jay Hoag, P’14. [25]

BC launches *Soaring Higher*, the most ambitious capital campaign in University history, with a goal of raising \$3 billion for financial aid, academics, and student life. [26]

The 31st annual Pops on the Heights: the Barbara and Jim Cleary Scholarship Gala set a new record for fundraising, generating \$15 million. [27]



2024

The Gloria L. and Charles I. Clough School of Theology and Ministry is named in honor of two of the University's most loyal and generous benefactors, thanks in part to their \$25 million gift. [28]

The Seidner Department of Finance becomes the first named academic department at BC thanks to a gift from Trustee Marc Seidner '88, P'24. [29]

2025

David Quigley is named the Robert L. and Judith T. Winston Provost and Dean of Faculties thanks to a major gift from the longtime BC benefactors.

The Murray Center for Student Wellness is established thanks to a gift from Tami Murray '83, P'09, '15, '19, in honor of her late husband, Stephen P. Murray '84.

The Boston College endowment surpasses \$4 billion.

2026

BC receives a \$125 million commitment, the largest in University history, from the Patrick F. Cadigan Family Foundation. The gift will help support the renovation of Carney Hall. (see page 24)

The Krantz Institute for Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Humanity is launched thanks to a gift from Keely '95 and Trustee Jason Krantz '95, P'23. [30]

The Boston College endowment surpasses \$5 billion.



29

“Excellence is a constant, continual, and regenerative pursuit. I hope the gift will help BC to continue to live up to its motto.”

—Marc Seidner



2026

Where We Came From

Since 1996, Boston College has undertaken a number of successful capital campaigns, including *Ever to Excel*, which surpassed its original goal by 10 percent; *Light the World*, the first BC campaign to generate more than \$1 billion in support; and, currently, *Soaring Higher*, with its ambitious \$3 billion goal and focus on three priorities: financial aid, academics, and student life.

Where We Are

In February 2026, BC announced that *Soaring Higher* had surpassed the \$2 billion mark, making it the most successful campaign in University history. Gift commitments now readily exceed \$300 million per year, and the endowment has surpassed \$5 billion.

Philanthropy has shaped and strengthened BC's mission as a Jesuit, Catholic university over the last three decades. "It has provided fuel for our initiatives," says Fr. Leahy. "Without philanthropy, we would not have had the financial resources to invest in programs, in faculty, and in financial aid. I think of it as rocket fuel. It allows us to think big and act according to our mission."

Where We Are Going

When it was announced that Jack Butler, S.J., would become BC's 26th president in 2026, Board of Trustees Chair John Fish said that Fr. Butler possessed the vision, leadership, and relational skills needed to help the University maintain the institutional stability, continuity, and momentum it has experienced in recent times.

"I promise to devote myself to continuing BC's upward trajectory and making this great university an even stronger beacon of light and hope for the world," Fr. Butler said. "Boston College is a university blessed with wonderful opportunities to become stronger, better, and more distinctive. I believe our future is full of promise because what we offer—an education with a heart, soul, and imagination—is essential for the world today and in the decades to come." ■



Use your smartphone camera to scan this code and see content about the last 30 years as featured in *Boston College Magazine*.



A Final Act of Gratitude

Patrick F. Cadigan made a lasting impression on the Heights during his lifetime. A record-breaking posthumous gift from his family foundation to the University will impact Eagles for generations to come.



Sub Turri, 1957



“My education taught me the importance of hard work and instilled in me values and discipline that stayed with me. The foundation I received from the Jesuits left an indelible impression on me and prepared me for success in business and in life.”

—Patrick F. Cadigan



At the dedication of the Cadigan Alumni Center in 2012, Pat Cadigan (left) shares a laugh with longtime friend and classmate John Harrington and University President William P. Leahy, S.J.

BY JILL CASERIA, P'26, '28

On a warm summer afternoon at the end of June in 2012, BC alumnus and longtime University patron Patrick F. “Pat” Cadigan ’57, P’91, made his way to the front of the newly renovated 2121 Commonwealth Avenue on the Brighton Campus. In a moment, Pat and his family would celebrate the building’s official dedication. The Cadigan Alumni Center, as it would be known, was named in Pat’s honor, thanks to his extraordinary gift to the *Light the World* campaign.

Designed as a gathering space for Boston College alumni, Pat was proud that the building would house the BC Alumni Association, among the offices of University Advancement. It represented his enduring ties to his alma mater and classmates, as well as his extraordinary journey to self-made real estate businessman in the competitive California Gold Coast.

Wearing a blue tie that matched his Irish eyes, he paused at the entrance to gaze at his surname emblazoned across the façade of the building—a tribute to a lifetime of hard work and gratitude for his Jesuit education during his formative years. This refurbished “home” would not only

“Pat never forgot his roots. He was a great among the greatest and a great friend.”

—John Harrington



Celebratory banners and BC community members filled the three-level atrium of the Cadigan Alumni Center at its dedication event in 2012.

mark his legacy, but also demonstrate what one can achieve with grit, drive, and a BC degree.

As the doors opened, the tough businessman set his game face. Yet upon entering the sun-filled three-story atrium, he was caught off guard with a surprise: A crowd of 150, including University Advancement staff, friends

from the Class of 1957, and University administrators, fanned across every level, delivering a well-deserved, heartfelt standing ovation. Speechless and overwhelmed by the outpouring of kindness and support, Pat’s expression softened, revealing unexpected tears in his eyes—a side to the man few in the room had ever seen.

The Cadigans enjoying a day at the beach. Back (left to right): Mary, Kevin, and Denis. Front (left to right): Pat and Angela.



The Cadigan siblings. Standing (left to right): Patrick, Kevin, and Angela. Sitting (left to right): Mary, Denis, and Eileen.



Through the years, Pat was always more than a name etched in the University's history; he was a pillar of the Boston College community whose influence on BC would extend far beyond his lifetime. Almost a decade and a half after that sunny day in June, a gift of \$125 million from the Patrick F. Cadigan Family Foundation—the largest ever to BC—has been given to the University as a testament to his enduring love for the institution that played such a pivotal role in his life.

Pat's story began in Belmont, just a few miles from campus. As one of six children of Irish immigrants and the first in his family to attend college, his parents understood the transformative power of education. They put in great effort to provide so their children could attend the best schools possible and taught each one the rewards that can come from a strong work ethic.

Growing up, Pat worked, both in and outside the classroom. He occasionally put hours in at his grandparents' restaurant, the Celtic Café, in Inman Square, and attended Boston College High School, where classes were rigorous. From there, he secured a place at Boston College. Once enrolled, he immersed himself into his studies and quickly formed lasting friendships with those who shared a similar Irish background.

"The foundation I received from the Jesuits left an indelible impression on me and prepared me for success in business and in life," Pat reflected in 2012.

"Dad felt a strong personal responsibility to give back to the schools that shaped him and contributed to his success."

—Maria Cadigan



Pat Cadigan shares a handshake with University Chancellor J. Donald Monan, S.J.

Upon graduating from BC in 1957, Pat was commissioned as a second lieutenant through the University's Army ROTC program, going on to serve as a platoon leader at Fort Benning, Georgia, and Fort Devens, Massachusetts, before earning an honorable discharge in 1966 as a captain in the US Army Infantry Reserve.

After his military service, Pat joined Sylvania Electronic Systems in Waltham before moving to the West Coast to

work with the Electronic Engineering Company of California. There, he rose through the ranks to become president and CEO, leading the company for nearly two decades. His success was marked by numerous achievements, including holding leadership positions on the boards of more than a dozen high-tech and electronics firms and building a substantial real estate portfolio in Orange County.

Along the way, Pat never forgot the role BC played in his journey. His generosity to the University during his lifetime included gifts to the Boston College Annual Fund and building renovations, most notably demonstrated with a \$15 million gift to establish the Cadigan Alumni Center.

Personally and professionally, Pat possessed remarkable strength—and he was loyal to those important to him. "He was always one of the greats among the greatest. He was a 'man's man'—strong and of solid character. His handshake was his word," recalls John Harrington '57, MBA'66, H'10, P'82, '89, a longtime friend and classmate. Behind his formidable exterior, however, lay a generous spirit and a deep-seated affection for Boston College. "Pat never forgot his roots," Harrington reflects. "He was a great friend. I miss him a whole lot."

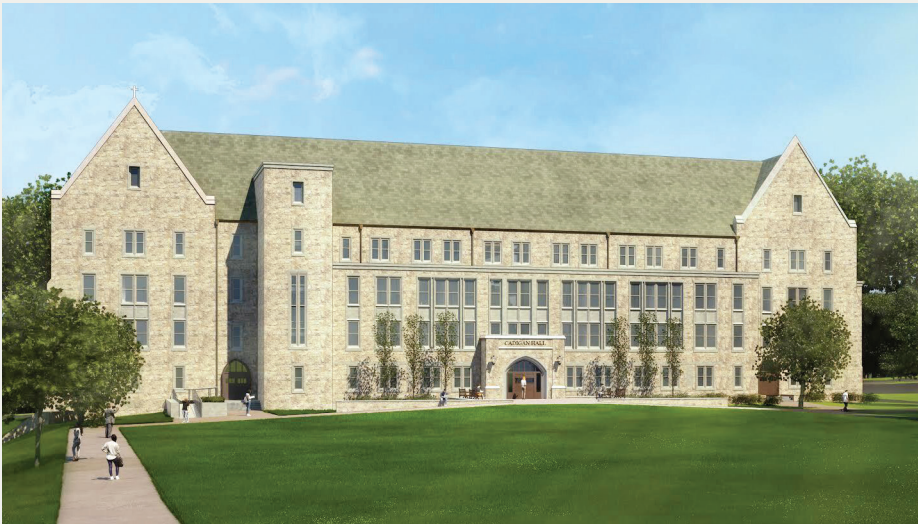
That loyal spirit continues in this latest record-breaking gift, his final act of gratitude. The unprecedented amount, earmarked in the foundation bylaws for capital improvements and buildings at schools and universities Pat attended,

EXPANDING THE CADIGAN LEGACY AT BOSTON COLLEGE

Cadigan Hall will be one of BC’s largest investments in the liberal arts on campus.

Thanks to the partnership of the Patrick F. Cadigan Family Foundation, Carney Hall will be transformed into a state-of-the-art facility—aptly renamed Cadigan Hall.

Postrenovation, Cadigan Hall will serve as a hub for the social sciences, including the departments of psychology and neuroscience, sociology, political science, and economics, and the Office of Campus Ministry. As such, it will embody the University’s commitment to the liberal arts tradition—enabling faculty to lead their fields in inquiry and research and preparing students for lives of integrity, leadership, and service. With the social sciences and Campus Ministry under the same roof, Cadigan Hall will emerge as a center for student and faculty engagement at the intersections of faith and scholarship.



“This project will encompass all that my father intended with this impactful gift,” says Maria Cadigan.

Upon completion, Cadigan Hall will be one of BC’s largest investments in the liberal arts on campus. Its prominent

location will help to fulfill BC’s strategic vision of revitalizing Middle Campus, playing a vital role in the academic experience—the cornerstone of Jesuit, Catholic education.

ensures that future generations of Eagles will benefit from the same transformative educational experience that he cherished. Through this designation “to improve a prominent building on campus” (see “Expanding the Cadigan Legacy at Boston College,” above), as well as his family surname on a second building at the Heights, Pat leaves an enduring legacy at the University—a reminder of the profound impact one can have on an entire community.

“Pat was absolutely bigger than life. He had such a presence,” says Dennis R. Delahanty, chief executive officer of the Patrick F. Cadigan Family Foundation and Pat’s friend for more than 30 years. “He was a good man, an honest man, and a very strong Catholic. He believed in God and the utmost integrity.” Most of all, he adds, Pat was “proud to be a Double Eagle. Boston College was very dear to him.”

In addition to his education at Boston College, Pat earned an MBA from Boston University, a degree from Harvard University’s advanced

management program, and master’s and doctoral degrees from Claremont Graduate University in California, where he studied under Peter Drucker, the “inventor of modern management.” For Pat, these degrees were not simply credentials; they represented “the opportunities this country had given him, opportunities he felt blessed to have and was determined to honor,” reflects his daughter Maria Cadigan ’91. “He treasured every educational experience and felt each institution had given him something he carried with him for the rest of his life.” Before his passing, Pat identified those he wanted to support through the foundation. Boston College received the largest gift.

“Dad felt a strong personal responsibility to give back to the schools that shaped him during his formative years and contributed to his success,” Maria continues. Her father also wove many aspects of Ignatian spirituality into his everyday life and lived the Jesuit commitment to giving back to support education.

For example, she adds, her father often spoke of finding God in all things and included the Jesuit motto, *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam* (AMDG), which translates to “For the greater glory of God,” in his email signature. This gift, she says, is a nod to his longtime relationship with Fr. Leahy. “Dad always said that a true education teaches you how to think, not what to think, and he never took for granted that this country made that possible. His parents gave everything to build a life here, and he carried that gratitude with him always. He truly believed America was unique in the opportunities it offered, and education was the greatest of them,” says Maria. “This gift symbolizes the high regard that he and his parents held for education and faith, and it will create spaces for great minds to come together for generations. It is exactly what my father would want.” ■



“Back to BC Football”

General Manager Kenyatta Watson is laying the groundwork for players’ success—on the field and in life.

BY ERIC BUSHNELL, MA’22

His enthusiasm is contagious; his love for Boston College is palpable. After thirty years away, BC football alumnus Kenyatta Watson ’96 has returned to the Heights as the team’s first general manager.

He brings a wealth of experience from his time recruiting top players to Auburn, Georgia Tech, and Florida State—and an unshakable belief that he is the right man, at the right time, to

help Gregory P. Barber ’69 and Family Head Coach Bill O’Brien lead the BC football team to greatness.

What does a general manager do in today’s world of college athletics, and why is it an important role for Boston College?

Basically, a general manager handles the roster, making sure that we improve it and fix any player issues so we can win games. In the world of

college football nowadays, things are trending toward a model that’s like the NFL. Coaches need to focus on coaching, and the staff need to focus on personnel: finding recruits, building relationships, and handling the revenue share.

What drew you back to the Heights?

First of all, I just love BC, one thousand percent. I loved playing here, and I met some of my best friends here—guys



“The guys that come here get to play college football, but they also get a world-class degree in an unbelievable city.”

—Kenyatta Watson

I still talk to today. Last year, some former BC players reached out to me and they said, “We need talent ... and you’re the guy [who can help us].”

I’ve got a lot of experience recruiting and building relationships with players in the Southeast, especially. Back when I was on the BC football team, we had lots of really good players from there, and I knew that I could definitely bring that back. So I got in touch with Coach O’Brien.

What distinguishes BC student-athletes from those at other schools?

To play here, you’ve got to be a really good “BC guy”—one who’s willing to go to class and who understands the importance of school. It’s not easy, and it’s not for everyone.

We have in-person classes here, which is so dope to me. It’s a different vibe; it’s a different environment. I was talking to the parents of some recruits, and I said, “Do you understand the advantage of actually going to class? There’s a professor there, you’re

meeting people, you’re building your network instead of doing everything online.” The guys that come here get to play college football, but they also get a world-class degree in an unbelievable city—one of the best cities in the world.

Last season was a challenging one for BC football. How are you moving forward?

I always tell people, you gotta have players. [In 2007 and 2008], we had back-to-back ACC championship game appearances. That’s because we had Matt Ryan [’07] as quarterback; he took the program to a different level. We’ve been working to bring in some playmakers again. I think we’ve done really well bringing in the right guys with the transfer portal.

We’ve also had some coaching changes, and Coach O’Brien knows exactly what he wants to get accomplished. So we’ve got the right players and the right coaches—it’s going to be an exciting season. We’re going to get back to BC football: being physical, running the ball, knocking the [expletive] out of you.

How can the BC alumni and donor communities support BC football?

Get behind us. Support us financially. Show up—showing up is more important than anything. Some BC guys who’ve played in the NFL just came back and talked with the team—Mathias Kiwanuka [’05, H’26], and Jeremy Trueblood [’05]—and that was so impactful. And there are former players who are now high-level coaches, like Brian Flores [’03, MS’04] and Ryan Poles [’07], who I talk with all the time. Having that type of guy come back for practice and seeing them on the sideline for games is huge.

But beyond the football ladder, we need guys in business to come back and build relationships with the team. Hire our guys! Keep the BC pipeline going. Everybody has dreams of going to the NFL, but only one percent get that opportunity. So how else can we help these young men be successful in life? That’s the most important thing. ■

This interview has been edited and condensed.

Moved by Compassion

BY ERIC BUSHNELL, MA'22

In this edition of Beacon Book Club, Meghan Sweeney, professor of the practice in the theology department and former Cooney Family Director of the PULSE Program for Service Learning, shares *Jesus Before Christianity* by Albert Nolan.

As a teenager, Sweeney understood that the city she lived in was hurting. It was New York in the 1970s and '80s: a city beset by economic inequality, racial tensions, and the AIDS epidemic. Then a high school student at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Sweeney sometimes wondered how Christianity could solve the challenges she saw all around her. That was until her teacher Ann Smith, R.S.C.J., assigned her Nolan's portrait of the man at the heart of Christian faith.

Albert Nolan, O.P., (1934–2022) was a South African Dominican priest who criticized faith-based justifications for apartheid and other forms of oppression. In *Jesus Before Christianity*, first published in 1976, Nolan undermines such arguments

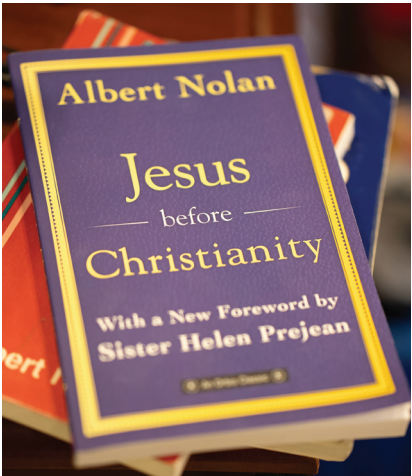


by focusing on the simple facts of Jesus's life and ministry in first-century Palestine. In doing so, Sweeney says, he reveals Jesus to be “a person moved by radical compassion across boundaries of difference to feed people, heal people, include people, challenge people, and love people.”

Sweeney has assigned *Jesus Before Christianity* to her students since she began teaching in the PULSE Program for Service Learning in 2006. “Students take PULSE because they perceive injustice and suffering, and they want to make a difference in the world. Through his portrait of Jesus, Nolan shows students they can,” she reflects.

PULSE educates students about social injustice by connecting them with marginalized populations and social change organizations and by encouraging discussion on works of philosophy and theology. Since its founding in 1970, 20,000 PULSE students have collectively completed four million hours of community service at roughly 400 partner agencies across Greater Boston. ■

Meghan T. Sweeney, PhD, served as Cooney Family Director of the PULSE Program for Service Learning from 2014 through May 2026. In addition to her ongoing work at the Boston College theology department, Sweeney is active in parish ministry as an Episcopal priest.



The legacy of William B. Neenan, S.J., at Boston College is beyond measure. For nearly 35 years, he personally curated the “Dean’s List” and shared it with the BC community. We honor and continue that treasured tradition through Beacon Book Club.



Scores of alumni returned to the Heights for their Boston College Reunion, held May 30–June 1, 2026.



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... Looking backward, we can never clearly mark the point
at which ‘now’ turns into ‘then.’”

from *Ever to Excel: A History of Boston College* by James M. O’Toole ’72, PhD’87,
Clough Millennium Chair in History Emeritus, University Historian