

BEACON

ALL FOR ONE



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BEACON is a publication exploring the significant advances made possible at Boston College through the generous and forward-thinking philanthropic investments of both individuals and organizations. Their partnership has helped to bring about remarkable progress in the University's academic and societal mission. We are grateful.

BEACON

WINTER 2023/2024 - ISSUE 10
THE CAMPAIGN ISSUE

beacon.bc.edu

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR
UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT
Andrew K. Davidson

EDITORIAL

Jill Caseria, P'26
Kevin Coyne
Dan D'Onofrio
Zoë Gadegbeku
Diana Griffith
Stella Rinaldi

PRODUCTION AND DESIGN

Sheila Frazier
Bob Monahan
Christian Montenegro
Emily Parent
Jacqueline Tynes

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jon Burke
Christopher Churchill
Caitlin Cunningham
Scott Eisen
Gretchen Ertl
Justin Knight
Michael Manning
Danny Mortimer
Ryan Piemonte

CONTRIBUTIONS

Doug Carter
Nick Darling
Scott Hultman
Bianca Whitworth Luzon
Helena Shaw
Casey Sullivan '24
Megan Tiede '02
Sam Wallace

Please send correspondence to
scott.hultman@bc.edu

 Boston College Alumni

 @bcalumni

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Hello!

This fall, we celebrated a momentous occasion as we marked the launch of *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College* just before Family Weekend. The campaign opening celebration at Bapst Library paid homage to the history of philanthropy at Boston College with a glance toward the University's limitless future, which will be inspired by the visionary benefactors who carry on a 160-year tradition of support for the University.

This tenth issue of *Beacon* offers a deeper exploration of who and what animates *Soaring Higher*. On pages 14 and 15, we look back at those benefactors and campaigns that have come before this one. You will learn more about the three pillars upon which *Soaring Higher* stands: financial aid (p. 8), academics (p. 16), and student life (p. 24). You will also hear from the BC champions at the helm of this effort, including our campaign co-chair couples, Cyndy and John F. Fish; Brigid Doherty '96 and Rene Jones '86, P'25; Patti and Jonathan A. Kraft, P'24; Kim Gassett-Schiller and Philip Schiller '82; and Marianne D. Short NC'73, JD'76, and Raymond Skowyra Jr., P'05 (p. 2).

It's clear these Eagles have a deep affection for Boston College, and I am thrilled they are sharing their enthusiasm and motivations for leading this effort within the pages of our magazine.

Soaring Higher offers us an opportunity to reflect on our priorities as an institution and to make advancements that will strengthen the University for generations to come. I am confident that, with the support of committed friends like you, Boston College can realize its ambitious vision for the campaign.

Finally, I am grateful to you and the entire BC community for your warm welcome to the Heights. Since starting my role last March, I have been inspired by so many remarkable individuals—students, faculty, staff, alums, parents, and friends—who contribute to the University's success. Thank you for everything you do to make Boston College such a special place.

Sincerely,



Andrew K. Davidson
Senior Vice President
for University Advancement

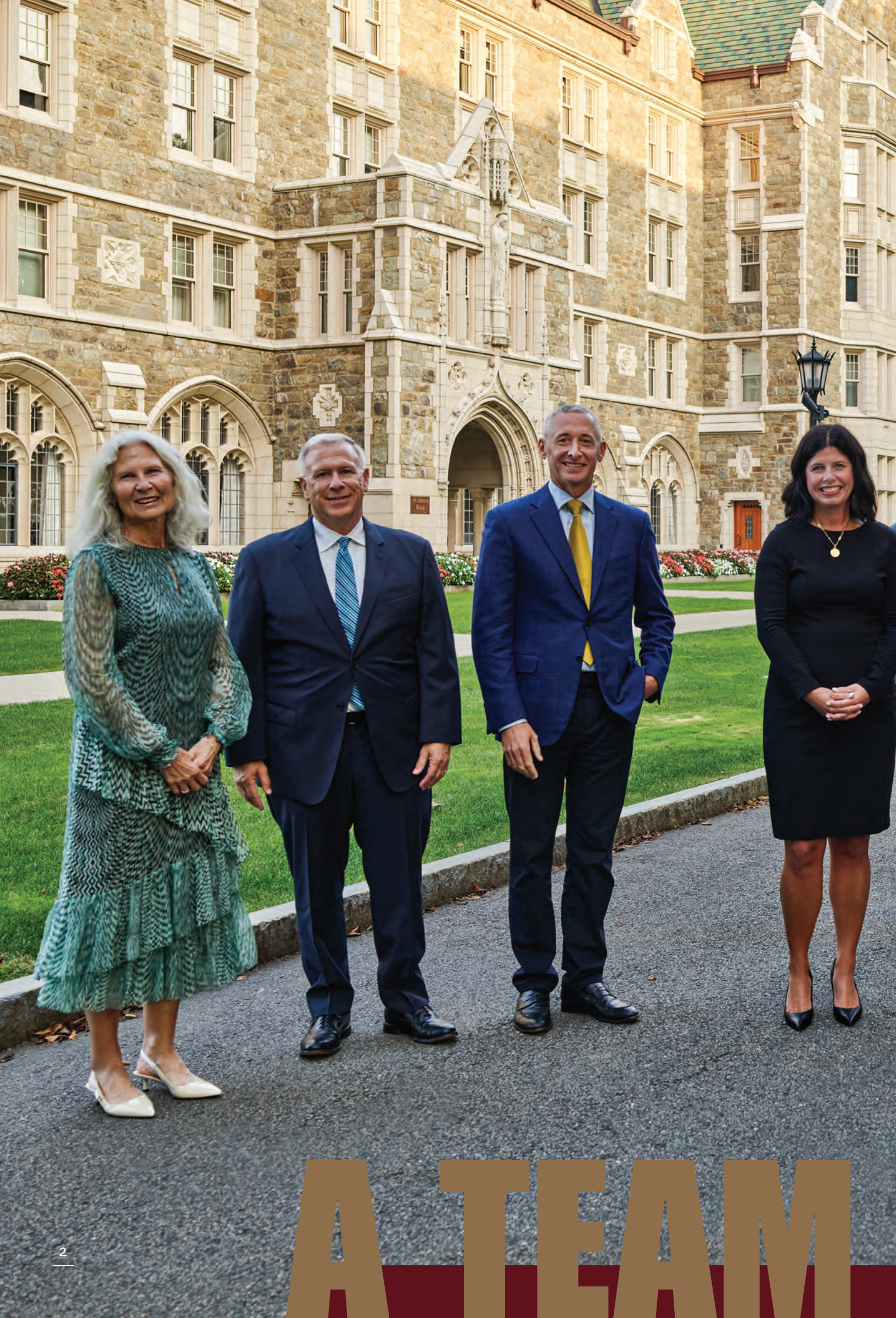


SOARING HIGHER, TOGETHER



SOARING
HIGHER

The Campaign for
Boston College



A TEAM



Launched in September 2023, *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College* will raise \$3 billion, enhancing the University's commitment to scholarships and financial aid, academics, and student life. Meet the tireless co-chairs leading alumni, parents, and friends into the largest fundraising campaign in BC's history.

EFFORT

By Jill Caseria



During Phil Schiller's high school years, his parents presented him with an opportunity—he could attend the college of his choice, but with one condition: he had to pay for it on his own. Taking inspiration from his older sister, he opted to be a commuter student at Boston College. BC lessened his financial burden with a scholarship, and Schiller also received a student loan. His summer job earnings bridged the remaining gap. “With those three sources combined, I managed to cover my tuition of \$7,500,” Schiller explains. “It wasn’t easy, but back then I could manage to do it on my own. That’s simply not possible now.”

Today, the Class of 1982 grad now finds himself in a very different role—one that will help increase scholarships and financial aid for students while supporting BC’s upward trajectory. He and his wife, Kim Gassett-Schiller, are among five couples steering *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College*. Together, they are at the forefront of the effort to drive the BC community to invest in students and the University’s future.

Previous page: Working together, these five BC couples play a pivotal role in *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College*. As campaign co-chairs, they lead the effort to build resources, gain support, and achieve the University’s ambitious goals. Pictured (L–R) are Kim Gassett-Schiller and University Trustee Philip Schiller ’82; University Trustee René Jones ’86 and Regent Brigid Doherty ’96, P’25; Jonathan A. Kraft and University Trustee Patti Kraft, P’24; University Trustee John F. Fish and Cyndy Fish; and Raymond Skowrya Jr. and University Trustee Marianne D. Short NC’73, JD’76, P’05.

Beacon spoke with the campaign co-chairs to learn more about this unprecedented endeavor.

How has your relationship with Boston College evolved over the years? How did your philanthropy to BC come to play a role in your life?

John Fish: Since 2006, I’ve poured my heart and soul into Boston College, demonstrating my commitment to Eagles and my belief in the future of this institution. My introduction to BC was nothing short of an epiphany. It changed my life, my marriage, and how I raised my children. My involvement with BC

brought back into view the things that are really important in life—first and foremost, being men and women for others. I am humbled and truly honored to be a part of the University and serve as the first non-alum chair of the Board of Trustees.

Cyndy Fish: Over the past 10 years, each of our three daughters earned graduate degrees from Boston College. It’s been wonderful to experience the University through their eyes and perspectives, as well.

Patti Kraft: We’ve been on an accelerated track in terms of our involvement with BC. What has resonated with us is the fact that the mission is so front and center in every aspect of the University. It’s something that we encountered very early on and very genuinely. It has influenced my involvement in everything here these past few years.

Brigid Doherty: Experiencing Boston College as a parent provided a new appreciation of how special the University truly is. Sharing in the campus experience is so much fun. It’s an opportunity like no other.

Jonathan Kraft: I grew up less than a mile from Boston College and drove by it every day on my way to school. Over the years, I saw the physical evolution of campus—the organic growth that was taking place. When our children were young, we started bringing them to BC football games. After all this time watching the University grow from afar, it’s a privilege to be on the inside.





Kim Gassett-Schiller: Our first philanthropic commitment to BC was to support the hockey team. But when we discovered the numerous opportunities that aligned with our interests, our connection with BC grew. Over the years, our philanthropy has expanded to support students, faculty, and staff. Our son is currently a graduate student at BC, studying physics. His connection to the University is so deep that he chose to have his wedding reception at BC's Connors Center in Dover. Today I'm at a point where sometimes I feel like I am an Eagle!

What excites you about serving as a co-chair for *Soaring Higher*?

PK: We were deeply honored to have been asked to be chairs. Honestly, we were a bit hesitant at first to accept such

a role as non-alums. Our experience as parents was what tied us to the school and, as a board member, I had insight into BC and the deep commitment to the University. Boston College has already had so much impact in the world, by virtue of its Jesuit mission. It is wonderful to be a part of BC and to support it in any way we can.

JK: We're excited to tell BC's story and explain how further investment in the institution by those who care about it can make it an even more impactful place, both for the greater Boston community and the world at large.

KGS: I am honored to be part of a team that's doing important work for the University. I'm always impressed with the students we meet; it's amazing to talk to them about the work they're doing and to hear how passionate they are about what they're learning at BC. They can't wait to get into the real world and make an impact. This campaign will open new doors for students and support new opportunities for faculty.

Marianne Short: I have been associated with Boston College for over 50 years—from my undergraduate days at Newton College through my Law School days, and I've served on the Board of Trustees since the mid-1980s. My husband, Ray, and I are proud of Boston College's accomplishments to date, and we are excited for its future.

Phil Schiller: The longer I'm involved with BC, the more impressed I become with the value of this education and the more I want to help others have this experience too. That's why I wanted to be a part of this campaign. And that's why I hope to further advance BC and create more opportunities for more students.

What are BC's strengths, challenges, and opportunities in the years ahead?

PS: The liberal arts education that I received at BC gave me the confidence that I could learn anything, which has helped me throughout my life. BC prepared me to be flexible, adaptable, and do well in anything that I was excited about.

JK: As a parent, it's been wonderful to see our son experience BC in terms of academics, formation, and athletics. We also love hearing our son talk about Ignatian values of doing good and inspiring others to do good in the world as men and women for others. There's a similar Jewish principle called *tikkun olam*—work to heal the world. It is the most important thing a person of the Jewish faith can do every day for humanity.

BD: Boston College's differences are its strengths. Its history and commitment to the Jesuit mission, its support for an incredible faculty, and the commitment to meeting 100 percent of all financial aid need are some of the many reasons BC stands apart.

René Jones: Boston College's success as an educational institution is incredible. But the University's purpose is greater—focusing on the formation of individuals who make an impact on their communities and the world. It's essential that we continue to provide BC with the resources to deliver on this purpose now and into the future.

How important is it for the BC community to participate in this campaign?

MS: Father Leahy has set an exciting tone for this campaign—one that inspires us to get going. But for this effort to be successful, we need everybody to participate. This is really a team effort across the BC community of alumni, parents, and friends.

PS: This campaign is about two things. One, it's about resources for

DRIVING THE BC COMMUNITY TO INVEST IN STUDENTS AND THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE

facilities, programs, students, faculty, and scholarships. Two, it's about strengthening the BC community. If we can increase the number of people who are engaged and active with the University, BC will benefit beyond the funds raised.

RJ: Right, Phil. As co-chairs, our role is to access the diverse communities that exist within and around Boston College. Our diverse perspectives and backgrounds are powerful assets. We can all contribute to widening BC's outreach in our own way. The more the merrier, right?

Reconnecting with BC has made a meaningful difference for me. For a long time, my impression of the University was based on my experience as a student. So much has changed since then. BC's mission and purpose has



endured, but the University has evolved to meet the current needs of students and the community. I think alums who have not engaged with BC in a long time would benefit from reengaging to witness the University's lasting impact.

BD: I agree. This campaign provides an opportunity for people to reconnect with the BC community and give back. *Soaring Higher* is an opportunity for us to recognize our blessings and share them with other people—both now and in the future. It's a really wonderful thing.

AN UNPRECEDENTED ENDEAVOR—THE LARGEST FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN IN BC'S HISTORY

Why is now the right time to launch this campaign?

PS: There are so many great things going on at Boston College. The campaign provides an opportunity to talk about those things and engage a broader audience with the University. There's never been a better time to discuss the achievements of each department and showcase the work the students are doing. BC is different today than it was five or 10 years ago, even more than most people realize.

JF: I believe in my heart that we're at an inflection point at Boston College. Yet the stronger we become, the more competitive a field we'll be in—for students, faculty, staff, and resources.

One big lesson we've learned over the past few years is that it's important for people to show up as their authentic selves, without seeking permission, and be cared for. Within the board, we talk about how important formation is and how important the principle of Eagles for others is in this ever-changing world we live in. What other institution in the country today is espousing those values and those virtues? This is why this campaign is so important. Boston College has the special sauce that this world is looking for. We have the environment that people want to be in and where people can thrive no matter who they are. ■



On September 28, 2023, University President William P. Leahy, S.J., and campaign co-chairs welcomed distinguished guests to the official launch of *Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College*. The festive celebration opened with a reception in Bapst Library, honoring the transformative, foundational moments that have shaped the Heights, followed by dinner and an inspirational program under a tent on Bapst Lawn.



“I’m
investing
in you.”



Having supported the scholarships of nearly 40 Eagles over the years, Sue Martinelli Shea insists there are few gifts greater than a BC education.

BY DIANA GRIFFITH

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF FINANCIAL AID IN EAGLES' LIVES

For over 150 years, Boston College has stood as a symbol of transformation—personal, spiritual, and professional—offering a path to a better future for students from all walks of life. From the Irish immigrants who first sent their sons to BC to the servicemen who came to the Heights on the GI Bill and the growing numbers of low-income and first-generation students now at the Heights, a BC education has been instrumental in helping young people realize the American dream.

Giancarlo Monzon '19 is one such Eagle. A talented student from a low-income family in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, Monzon's dream of attending BC's Carroll School of Management became reality thanks to the generous financial aid package he received. Once at the Heights he excelled in his classes, studied abroad in Italy and South Africa, led BC's Latin dance team, and interned at Accenture where he secured a job upon graduation.

"Without financial aid, none of my experiences would have been possible, and I don't know if I would be on the same route that I am today," says Monzon, who now lives in New York City and has risen through the ranks to become a management consultant at his firm.

Monzon's financial aid package included a mix of federal aid, work-study, student loans, and a substantial University grant made possible, in part, by an endowed scholarship fund established by BC Trustee Susan "Sue" Martinelli Shea '76, P'04. He is one of many students who have received a Shea



Giancarlo Monzon '19

- Concentrated in finance and managing for social impact at the Carroll School of Management, now working as a management consultant at Accenture in New York City
- From Puerto Rico, studied abroad in both South Africa and Italy while at BC
- Was president of Fuego del Corazon, BC's Latin dance team

“It’s a gift for me, it’s just a gift. I love looking at somebody in the face and saying: ‘I believe in you.’”

—SUE MARTINELLI SHEA

Family Pops Scholarship, Shea Martinelli Endowed Scholarship, or Shea Family Flynn Fund Scholarship as part of their Boston College financial aid package. All told, Sue's contributions have helped 38 students pursue their education at BC—a number poised to grow in the years to come.

The average BC undergrad need-based grant is **\$56,000**. Depending on demonstrated need, that package can be considerably more.

“Some people invest in stocks or buildings or companies, but I tell my students, ‘I’m investing in you,’” says Sue. “And the return on my investment is phenomenal; I win every time.”

Making it Happen

Sue was raised with a belief that education, hard work, and service to others were central to achieving the American dream. Her mother was a butcher’s daughter who earned both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in teaching. Her father served in the Army before he returned to college and, after briefly considering joining the Jesuits, went on to become a highly successful businessman and philanthropist.

It was a guidance counselor’s offhand suggestion that led Sue to first consider BC, which impressed her with its strong Jesuit foundation and respected education program. From her first days on campus, she knew she’d made the right choice.

“I had four glorious, unforgettable years at Boston College,” says Sue. “This is where I found my calling as a teacher, where I met roommates who became like sisters to me, and where I learned how to incorporate reflection into every aspect of my life.”

After graduation, Sue spent 15 years teaching in schools around the country—often severely underfunded—with a focus on students with learning differences. “I always knew I wanted to work with the children who fell through the cracks.”



Sophia Rodriguez '23

- Majored in environmental justice and policy and environmental studies, with a minor in management and leadership
- Now a program support intern at the International WELL Building Institute in New York City
- Was co-president of BC Real Food and event coordinator for the Colombian Organization of Boston College



Vidisha Pandey '23

- Nursing major, recently began working as a registered nurse at Boston Medical Center
- Was a member of Seacole Scholars, a program to support diversity in nursing, held an undergraduate research fellowship, and served on a nursing health service trip to Belize
- Sang in the University Chorale and mentored a young girl through BC Bigs

She credits her time at BC for giving her both the skills and the confidence to take on even the most demanding situations, vividly recalling the day a professor told her class that, as Boston College graduates, they would never say “I can’t do it.”

“I was 18 when I heard that and it still stays with me,” Sue says with a note of wonder. “So, in every classroom I taught in, I had a banner that read ‘Never Say I Can’t Do It,’ and the kids lived by it just like me.”

In 2003, she left teaching to take a leadership role—first as a volunteer, then as trustee and committee chair—at a Jesuit-influenced elementary school that serves mostly low-income students in North Philadelphia. It was around the same time that Sue began to take a more active role as a BC alumna, participating in her local alumni chapter, attending events on campus, and making gifts to support the BC mission.

Personal Connections

Sue has made several gifts to BC, from endowing the deanship for the Lynch School of Education and Human Development to providing operating support for Mission and Ministry. Throughout, Sue found her highest priority was supporting financial aid.

“I want other students to have those ‘aha’ moments when they hear things that make a difference,” explains Sue. “I want Boston College to touch their lives the way it touched me. That’s why I give.”

67% of BC undergrads receive some form of financial aid, including need-based grants provided by the University.

Sue relishes the opportunity to form connections with her scholars and to encourage them at Pops on the Heights and similar events.



Sue began by funding Pops scholarships (which provide current-use support for one year), but she initially passed on the chance to meet the recipients at the Pops on the Heights gala. “Then one year Fr. Jack Butler said to me: ‘You need to go; you need to be there.’ So I went, and I saw the power of getting to know these wonderful students, of seeing the difference we, collectively, could make.”

Since then, Sue has tried to meet with every student who receives a Shea Scholarship, many of whom have responded in kind, going out of their way to meet with her while on campus and to share updates on their families and careers after graduation. “One time, Vidisha [Pandey ’23] and I walked around [the Chestnut Hill] Reservoir and talked about what she was thinking for the future, what part of nursing she would go into,” Sue recalls. “That was the best time ever, just getting to know her.”

“Some people invest in stocks or buildings or companies, but I tell my students, ‘I’m investing in you.’ And the return on my investment is phenomenal; I win every time.”

—SUE MARTINELLI SHEA

Sophia Rodriguez ’23 sent her a book with photos she’d taken during a semester abroad with a note that said, “I had this opportunity because of you”—and later asked Sue to be her confirmation sponsor. Ben Posorske ’20, an aspiring doctor who remains in touch with Sue, describes her role—as both donor and friend—as a blessing.

“Meeting Sue and getting to know her over my four years at BC made a real impact on me,” says Posorske. “I hope to be at least half as generous as her one day, and I will always appreciate the difference she made in my life.”

A Catalyst for Change

The students who have received Sue’s support represent a broad range of BC majors, backgrounds, and career interests, from film studies to finance, nursing to neuroscience. All were eligible



for need-based financial aid, and more than half identified as Black, Hispanic, or Asian American/Pacific Islander.

Increasing diversity and supporting historically underrepresented students are a high priority for Sue, who has seen firsthand in her classrooms how inequality can limit opportunity for even the most talented young people.

“Everybody should have the opportunity to have the best education possible,” she says. “And if I can help them do that, that’s perfect.”

Sue commends BC’s recent initiatives aimed at broadening diversity, especially its partnership with QuestBridge, a national nonprofit that matches highly qualified, low-income students with elite colleges, and Messina College, BC’s two-year residential school designed to meet the needs of first-generation and other underrepresented students that launches in summer 2024.

As a result of these and other efforts, the University welcomed its most accomplished and racially diverse undergraduate class this year, with a record 39 percent identifying as AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American) and 11 percent as the first in their family to attend college. This increase in diversity epitomizes the very best of BC’s Jesuit, Catholic identity and educational mission.

The University’s commitment to financial aid serves as a cornerstone for this diversity. Already, close to 70 percent of undergraduates receive some form of financial aid, a figure poised to grow



Carol Adu-Gyamfi '20

- English major, now teaching 6th grade English Language Arts at Lion Charter School in the Bronx, New York
- Was a student mentor in BC’s Montserrat Coalition Dinner Club
- Selected as a Teach Plus 2021–2022 Massachusetts Policy Fellow



Ben R. Posorske '20

- Biology major, now a clinical research coordinator in the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology department at Phoenix Children’s Hospital
- Published two papers in scientific journals while still a student at BC
- Received BC’s Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam Scholar award in 2016

with the influx of students coming from QuestBridge—each of whom receive full-tuition scholarships—and through Messina College—who are expected to require significant financial aid. This reality underscores the necessity of increased scholarship support from BC alumni, parents, and friends.

One reason Sue continues to invest in scholarship support is the ripple effect it can have on students—particularly those with limited means—as well as their families, communities, and the nation as a whole. For Carol Adu-Gyamfi '20, a Bronx native and first-generation college student, BC’s financial aid enabled her to attend Boston College and, after graduation, return to her hometown as a middle-school English teacher.

“The Shea Family Pops Scholarship gave my family hope that I could provide a better future for myself,” says Adu-Gyamfi. “Having her support was very important, and it was touching to know that someone was interested in my success.”

Stories like these are what has made scholarship support so meaningful for Sue—and countless others—who have established endowed and current-use scholarships.

“You just need one person to believe in you,” says Sue. “If you can be that one person who believes in that student, then you’ve made a difference already. We’re giving them the chance to have the same great experiences we had, and that’s worth everything.” ■

BC's 2023–2024 budget for financial aid is **\$166 million.**



Soaring Higher: For Every Eagle

For students like Giancarlo Monzon '19, the pursuit of a college education—with all the advantages and experiences that entails—is increasingly slipping out of reach. In the U.S., a significant portion of children are growing up in poverty and, in many states, more than half of K-12 students belong to families earning less than \$40,000 per year. This dire reality extends to higher education, where these students often struggle to afford tuition, textbooks, housing, and essential expenses. Many middle-income families struggle as well, earning too much to qualify for federal aid but too little to cover the full cost of attending an elite school such as Boston College.

Financial aid emerges as a pivotal tool to counteract escalating disparities in higher education. It enables students to afford tuition, materials, and living expenses, ensuring that talent, not economic background, determines their educational trajectory.

As one of the key pillars of *Soaring Higher*, Boston College has set a goal of raising \$1.1 billion for financial aid.

At BC, there are two main ways to support student access:

Endowed scholarships provide student support in perpetuity; examples include named scholarships, financial aid funds, and endowed student-athlete scholarships.

Current-use scholarships provide immediate student support for one year; examples include BC Fund Scholarships, Pops Scholarships, and Flynn Fund Scholarships (for student-athletes).

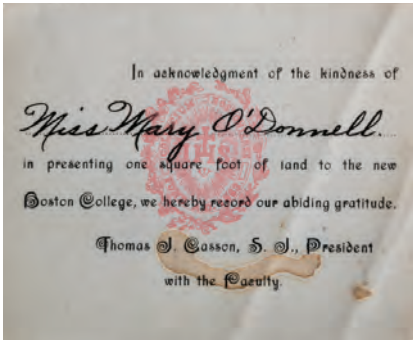
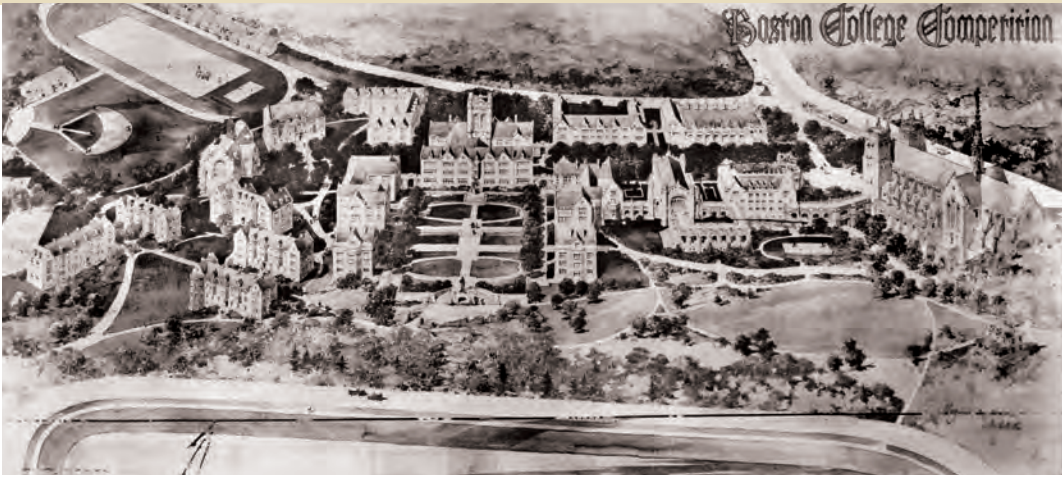
Raising the Heights



Today’s Boston College would be unrecognizable to the first students who enrolled in 1864—so much has happened since then. BC has evolved from a small, all-male commuter school located on two blocks near downtown Boston to a complex, coeducational, global university with more than 400 acres of property and enrolling approximately 15,000 students.

Every step of BC’s transformation has been made possible by the visionaries and benefactors who saw the promise of where we stand now. Boston College is a better place because of the energy, creativity, perseverance, and generosity of all Eagles through the years.

Soaring Higher will write the next chapter in BC’s history, but realizing the campaign’s full potential first requires a better understanding of the people and moments that made it all possible.



For many, Boston College is synonymous with Chestnut Hill, but it wasn’t until 1907—nearly 45 years after its founding—that BC would find its permanent home. President Thomas Gasson, S.J., purchased 36 acres of land overlooking two reservoirs, dubbed it “University Heights,” and vowed to erect “the greatest Catholic college in America.”

An architectural competition was announced to design the new campus, with the winning design pictured above. In response to an appeal from Fr. Gasson, alumni pledged thousands to a “land fund,” with Gasson reporting that Mrs. Mary Dryer, a widow, had made the first gift—of \$1 (left).

With great fanfare, BC launched a 10-day campaign in May 1921 to help kickstart the building of a new science building, library, chapel, and gymnasium under the slogan “Boston College will be big enough if your heart is.” Ultimately, it raised \$1.1 million for the Heights.

The Philomatheia Club, a group of local Catholic women, was the college’s de facto fundraising office beginning in 1915. The club was inventive in linking philanthropy with a lively social calendar and became the first port of call for BC presidents looking to fund scholarships and many other priorities.

In the late 1940s, BC purchased the 37.5-acre Lawrence Basin below the main campus, making possible both the development of intercollegiate athletics and the evolution of BC into a residential institution. Short-duration gift drives urged supporters to “buy a brick for Boston College,” fueling campus expansion and postwar enrollment growth.



Key victories for Boston College teams have long inspired philanthropic support. Following a thrilling October 1920 football victory over Yale, Daniel J. Coakley handed over a \$1,000 check for the Athletic Association while he was traveling with the team on the train home from New Haven.

Fundraising throughout Boston College’s first century often relied primarily on small donations from large numbers of people. That changed with the launch of the *New Heights Advancement Campaign* in 1976, which raised more than \$25 million over five years. The six-year-long *Ever to Excel* campaign concluded in 2003, racing past its \$400 million goal. The University’s most impactful campaign to date was *Light the World*, which garnered \$1.6 billion from 2008 through 2016.

Named buildings, schools, centers, chairs, and other endowments dot the Heights thanks to major gifts from generous benefactors and other extraordinary contributions. However, that was not always the case. In 1952, Jesuit leaders of BC reversed a policy to never honor one Jesuit over any other through building namings. With the unanimous vote, Bapst, Fulton, Gasson, and Lyons became the official monikers of some of the Heights’s most hallowed halls.

BC students have tremendous integrity,” says Avneet Hira, assistant professor of engineering and Sabet Dean’s Faculty Fellow. “They push and challenge me, which I appreciate.”



“...that’s what a BC education is all about.”

INVESTING IN
FACULTY AND
ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS
CREATES
A RICHER
STUDENT
EXPERIENCE
AND A MORE
ACADEMICALLY
COMPETITIVE
INSTITUTION.

BY JILL CASERIA



Joy Cho '25 and King David Buckle '26 share a light moment while brainstorming ideas for their group project.

It's a sunny Tuesday morning, three weeks into the fall semester. Assistant Professor of Engineering and Sabet Family Dean's Faculty Fellow Avneet Hira opens this twice-weekly Innovation Through Design Thinking class—a course that is cross-listed in studio arts and engineering—with a declaration that commands attention.

“Some of you might love today’s class, and some of you might hate it,” Hira announces to the more than 30 students sitting in project teams of four, her voice filling the room through a wireless mic clipped to her gray blazer. “We’re going to do a few brainstorming and improv exercises,” she continues, smiling like she’s got a plan up her sleeve. “So please stand if you are able,” Hira invites, raising her arms above her shoulders. The students exchange looks of apprehension as they unenthusiastically get up from their seats.



Working in groups, students exchange ideas to solve problems.

“It’s simple. When I say ‘walk,’ walk, and when I say ‘stop,’ stop walking. Ready?” Hira asks. “Walk!” Students begrudgingly shuffle their feet, looking at one another. “Come on, it’s not weird,” she says, while weaving through the rows of whiteboard surfaced tables in the recently renovated Active Learning Classroom. “I’m walking, too!” Her students pick up their pace. “Now stop!” she commands. Students freeze.

Over the next minute or two, Hira gradually builds upon the commands, adding complexity to this variation of Simon Says. Soon, students are walking, clapping, dancing—and smiling. Then Hira introduces a twist.

“Now, ‘walk’ means ‘stop’ and ‘stop’ means ‘walk,’ and ‘jump’ means ‘dance’

and ‘dance’ means ‘jump,’” she says. “You need to listen carefully. Walk!” Students laugh as some struggle to not move their feet. With each successive call, they respond to the various directives, determined to succeed.

After a few minutes, Hira gets her class back in their seats. They look to her to hear what’s next.

“A big part of brainstorming within your groups is about being in the moment,” Hira explains. “It takes listening skills and presence and clear communication. You all did a spectacularly good job! Now let’s apply these skills to your projects.”

With their energy levels high, the students are ready to tackle the task at hand: designing ways to improve

“
She helps
connect the field
of engineering to
what it means in
the world.”

—CLAIRE MIKULSKI '26

various aspects of customer service for a fictional dentist’s office. Each group tackles a practical, real-world challenge, ranging from scheduling appointments and reducing wait times to decreasing anxiety levels, retaining patients, and beyond. They dive right in, discussing and innovating creative solutions to complex issues with each other—and with their professor.

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

In an industry that hovers around 16 percent women, Hira is a role model for her students. Her track record includes positions in some of the nation’s top engineering departments and impressive grants and funding from various sources. In 2023, Hira was awarded a five-year, \$596,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER grant—a first for BC’s new human-centered engineering department. It’s NSF’s most prestigious honor in support of a junior faculty member who exemplifies the role of teacher-scholar through research and education. The grant supports Hira’s work promoting fluency in engineering and technology among youth in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

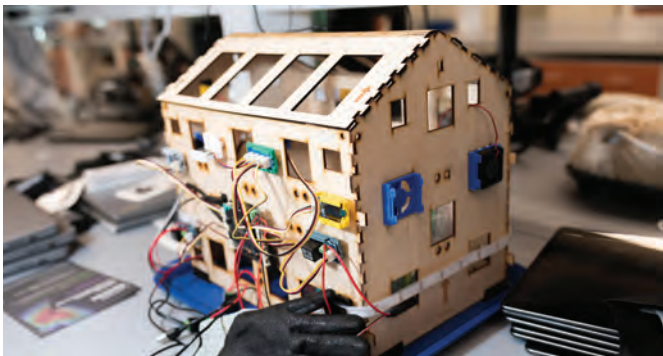
For Hira, it’s a familiar story. Early influences in her own life shaped her path toward who and where she is today.

Hira was only a tween when aerospace engineer Kalpana Chawla, the first Indian-born woman to soar into space, boarded the Space Shuttle Columbia. Chawla quickly became a national



Hira uses a variety of media, games, and activities to engage students in the classroom material.

hero in India. From the moment Hira learned about Chawla, she was transfixed—and determined to follow in Chawla’s celestial footsteps. To get there, Hira read everything she could put her hands on about Chawla’s life and achievements. She tailored her education to align with the same career aspirations. She also loved building remote-control airplanes. In high school, many of her peers were also pursuing engineering, so Hira tried to take a different path, deviating from her original plan. She served as president of the school debate club and entered a law program after graduation. But law wasn’t her true calling, and she knew it immediately. After two weeks, Hira enrolled in Punjab Engineering College. Today, with degrees in aeronautical engineering, aerospace engineering, and engineering education, Hira is thrilled to be part of BC’s human-centered engineering program. “I was attracted to BC for many reasons. Most of all, I really liked the idea of building the program from the ground up,” she says. “My experience was with big engineering schools. BC would provide me with the



This house in the lab is part of a collaborative project Hira is conducting with Lynch School of Education and Human Development Senior Research Associate Helen Zhang and Professor G. Michael Barnett around using physical computing, plant science, and engineering to grow plants in tabletop greenhouses.

opportunity to be one of the program’s founding members, to figure out how engineering should be human-centered, and how we should care about the environment—while at the same time teaching traditional and technical knowledge. We would be providing what is needed for the next generation of engineers.” Hira was also excited about the prospect of starting her own research group, developing new collaborations, and encouraging students toward careers

in STEM. One of those students is Eunice Kang ’24, who works in Hira’s lab. “I am inspired at how she views engineering as a way to create spaces for underserved and underrepresented students in engineering, as well as how she connects social justice and technology,” says Kang, who is majoring in international studies and computer science. “She also gives me the space to think about what a project means to me—and asks me for my thoughts on the work.”



Throughout the day, Hira moves from her office to her classroom to her lab to meetings, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to Eagles, the University, and her research. Above, Hira checks in with PhD student Maria Moreno Vera during afternoon office hours.

Engineering major Claire Mikulski '26 counts Hira among her favorite BC professors. “She’s like a therapist in the way that she doesn’t simply tell you the answer to a question,” Mikulski says. “She guides you to discover the answer on your own. Most importantly, she helps connect the field of engineering to what it means in the world.”

“BC students have tremendous integrity. In class, in the lab, and one-on-one, they ask really hard questions and they work diligently to develop the skills they need to solve complex problems. They consistently push and challenge me, which I appreciate,” says Hira. “It’s truly a joy to be on campus every day.”

Hira’s commitment to BC was underscored in October when Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences Dean Gregory Kalscheur, S.J., announced that Hira—and Engineering Professor Siddhantan Govindasamy—were both named the inaugural Sabet Family Dean’s Faculty Fellows. The appointments are for five years and are accompanied by \$20,000 per year in discretionary funding to support research.

“BC is so fortunate to have Avneet,” says Professor Glenn R. Gaudette, the John W. Kozarich ’71 Chair of the Department of Engineering. “A brilliant researcher

IF AN OFFICE REFLECTS one’s state of mind, then Hira stands out as one of the most fascinating people on BC’s campus. Her shelves, desktops, and walls showcase an array of eclectic media, instruments, and artwork—nearly all constructed by her own hands. Pieces such as a LEGO® typewriter, a map made on a 3D printer, and a metal tree of life crafted with her mother are eye-catching focal points. These—and more—often become conversation starters with the many students Hira meets with throughout the week during office hours.



Although it looks real, no typist can practice “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog” on this typewriter—Hira built it entirely of LEGO® bricks.



Hira purchased this vibraslap—a percussion instrument—several years back, inspired by the band Cake.



Toys, photos, and other things that make Hira—and her students—smile.

and founding faculty member of our program, she has made significant contributions to ensure that our students have the technical knowledge needed in engineering, combined with a mindset focused on making the world a

better place for all. That’s how she—and so many of BC’s outstanding faculty—operate every day, and that’s what a BC education is all about. That’s our mission.” ■

Soaring Higher: For Excellence

Boston College deans and faculty are committed to leadership in formative education—and excellence—among the nation's great universities. Through the campaign, BC seeks to raise \$1.15 billion for academics, including \$100 million for Boston College Law School.

Retaining, Rewarding, and Attracting Exceptional Faculty

Endowed professorships, fellowships, and faculty research funds help attract and keep outstanding faculty at the Heights. Recent hires from Cornell, Harvard, Princeton, and New York University include Nobel laureate Paul Romer, who joined BC's faculty this year as the inaugural Seidner University Professor in the Carroll School of Management. Others include:

- Thomas W. Mitchell, the Robert F. Drinan, S.J., Chair and director of the Initiative on Land and Housing Rights Property at BC Law School
- Guy Beiner, the Craig and Maureen Sullivan Millennium Chair in Irish Studies and director of the University's Center for Irish Programs
- George Mohler, the Daniel J. Fitzgerald Professor, and the University's first faculty member specifically focused in data science

"The competition for high-caliber faculty is fierce right now," says Katherine Gregory, dean of the William F. Connell School of Nursing at Boston College. "Having opportunities like endowed chairs and professorships make it possible for us to recruit and, more importantly, retain top-tier faculty, who then influence the education, the academic programs, and the student experience."

Teachers, Mentors, and Role Models

As drivers of formative education within a Jesuit, Catholic framework, BC's faculty not only shape students' academic experiences, but also their values, aspirations, and career choices.

BC Law alumna Emily Jordan, JD'22, is grateful for the guidance she received from Associate Professor Natalya



Shnitser, a recipient of the Patricia and John McHale Fund for Faculty Research and Scholarship at Boston College Law School. "It was through our conversations during office hours that I ended up practicing employee benefits law," Jordan says. "Professor Shnitser shared stories from her experience in this practice area and answered all of my questions, which helped me find my path. She played an integral role in my BC Law experience, and her passion and commitment to the field continue to inspire me."

Sydney Cheney, MS'22, DNP'24, a former Beth Verre Martignetti '76 Fellow, appreciates the support she's received from her co-directors in the Family Nurse Practitioner specialty. "They are fantastic mentors and have made an impact on my education and time at BC," she says. "These skilled practitioners have a wealth of clinical knowledge, and they are adept educators who ensure that the course material is understood by all. Most importantly, they are compassionate and care for their students. I believe that I will be a better NP because of them."

Affecting Real Change in the World

The Boston College Core Curriculum allows students to explore new ways

of knowing and being, helping them discern who they want to be, how they want to live—and why. Additionally, some of the University's greatest impact derives from academic institutes, programs, and centers. These initiatives reflect the University's commitment to understanding the world and providing the open-ended intellectual freedom to innovate solutions to its problems.

- **The Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society**, housed in 245 Beacon Street—a science facility in the heart of campus—focuses on energy, health, and the environment through the lens of designing solutions that benefit everyone. Its impact is magnified by programs like human-centered engineering and Global Public Health and the Common Good.
- **The Mary E. Walsh Center for Thriving Children** uses research and data to help scale the chance for all students to develop, learn, and thrive, transforming schools and communities into systems of opportunity.
- **The Catholic Religious Archives** allow students and scholars access to the contributions of religious communities of men and women to the Catholic Church, Catholic life, and wider culture.



Hello, my name is:

Ben Anderson came to Boston College in 2012 and has worn many hats in University Advancement, including major giving roles on both coasts, director of parent development, and executive director of capital giving. For the past three years, he has been associate vice president for principal giving, and last year he added a new title: campaign director. In this role, Ben is leading the strategy for *Soaring Higher* through collaborations across campus and the BC community.

How did you get into development?

BA: A few of my college friends worked at an LED lighting company, so I went to work in sales. I really enjoyed the relationship building side of it, but at the end of the day, I didn't feel good about the work that I did; I needed more fulfillment. Both my parents started their careers as teachers, so I went to teach at a boarding school in Rhode Island. But teaching was not for me. I explored what I liked about the jobs I had: relationship building, connecting people with an organization, making a difference in people's lives. So it became either admissions or fundraising, and I was fortunate to get a job at Skidmore College in fundraising.

All these years later, how do you do your job effectively?

BA: It's really about getting to know people and learning what they care about. Hopefully those things align with BC's priorities and areas of need. If there is a connection, we do our best to make a compelling case for them to make an impact at BC in a significant way.

Do BC's donors fit that profile?

BA: We're fortunate to have a lot of donors who ask first about the University's needs and priorities, and those tend to be the people who are giving more out of loyalty and gratitude for what BC has done for them.

Why should donors support *Soaring Higher*?

BA: As a mission-driven institution, BC plays an important role in shaping future generations of leaders who will have the courage to take on the world's issues and bring us to a better place. This takes investments across the spectrum—aid to make a BC education attainable, investment in academics to ensure these students are challenged, and facilities and resources that allow them to reach their fullest potential. ■

Ben Anderson

For years, Ben has played matchmaker between BC and its benefactors. Now he takes on a new challenge leading strategy for *Soaring Higher*.

HOMETOWN

Rutland, Vermont

FAVORITE BC TRADITION

the Orientation tradition of presenting three questions for students to consider while they are at the Heights: *What brings me joy? What am I good at? Who does the world need me to be?*

HOBBIES

skiing; biking (road, mountain, gravel); spending time with family and his springer spaniel, Hattie (right)

ALMA MATER

Bates College

17 years in advancement



"I came out better on the other side."

The experiences of three Eagles illustrate the ways student formation—the kind that equips students not just with useful knowledge, but also a profound understanding of how to live—extends beyond the classroom, beyond campus, to every facet of life at the University.

BY KEVIN COYNE

Tuesday mornings, Delaney Coyne '23 wakes in the marrow of the night and gathers herself for another day with the unhoused guests of St. Francis House. Quiet footfalls her only company across an empty Lower Campus, she hunches through the stubborn cold to greet the Green Line's first train from Boston College. Eventually—after a predictably unpredictable MBTA delay—the train screeches to life and carries her to Park Street as the sun creeps over Commonwealth Avenue.

In her final semester at BC, Delaney relishes this time each week. As difficult as it is to wake up on time, it's a deeply centering ritual. Some days find her in the kitchen cleaning dishes or rolling



yarn into balls so guests can knit themselves gloves or a hat. Other times, she just sits and talks with the guests of St. Francis House, listening to their stories and lending a sympathetic ear to people who are frequently regarded as little more than an obstacle on the sidewalk. "Society often sees the poor as just their material needs, rather than full people. They're reduced to a list of things that need to be done for them, instead of people who deserve to express themselves, live in community, and lead full lives," she says.

Often, her role as a team leader calls her to mentor students volunteering at St. Francis House for the first time. It can be jarring for otherwise sheltered students to see the realities of poverty and homelessness laid so bare.





“

[Serving with 4Boston has] been a great way of reminding me why I’m getting my education and whom it should ultimately serve.”

—DELANEY COYNE '23



Delaney meets them in that discomfort, encouraging them to confront it. “These issues shouldn’t make you comfortable,” she says.

SOME 1,300 MILES away from Chestnut Hill, Taji Johnson '24 tightens his shoes in preparation for a long day of walking. One lace after the other, the wide receiver threads his sneakers as snug as he would his football cleats before a game at Alumni Stadium.

It is July 2022 in Selma, Alabama, the humidity heavy in the air as a dirge. Flanked by a delegation of Eagles and student-athletes from other Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) schools, Taji is here representing Boston College for the league’s social justice platform, ACC Unite. A Meier Scholar, Schoen Memorial Scholar, and New Balance BC Student-Athlete, Taji is a tireless advocate for social justice at the Heights and beyond, and this is only the beginning of his journey.

One foot after the other, he steps across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, following the path marched by his heroes nearly 60

years ago. Much has changed since that fateful “Bloody Sunday” in 1965. There’s much work left; you’ll find Taji in the thick of it.

WHEN THE LEAVES turn in Central Massachusetts, they change like a performer switching outfits before an encore—a flurry of wind, a swell of color. A river runs through the retreat grounds where Chloe Chaple '25 and 150 other BC women in the Ascend program meet to decompress and escape the anxieties of college life.

Her first year at the Heights was a grueling one, marked with isolation and loss. Already prone to a measure of social anxiety as well as mental illness when the weather turns, she suffered a concussion and a prolonged bout with COVID-19 in her first winter away from her home in Westport, Connecticut. A loss in her family compounded her suffering, and Chloe knew she needed help in the form of community.

Here in Charlton, she’ll walk with mentors along leaf-laden trails, laugh with first-year women she might

EAGLE INFLUENCERS



Along with her research under Professor Kristin Heyer on just immigration policy, Delaney credits her service with 4Boston as the formative experience of her time at Boston College, shaping her positions on important issues and what it means to be successful.

“I found all the time that my classes in theology and international studies were speaking to each other and informing my service work. That interdisciplinary approach, along with the belief in caring for the whole person, really ensures you leave BC the best person you can be.”

Taji cites Michael Davidson, S.J., in addition to his coaches and teammates, as the person at BC who’s had the strongest influence on him. “His Courage to Know course wasn’t just about the work—but rather building trust and relationships. He’s been such a mentor for me, paving the way for how I think and approach the world.”

For Chloe, the relationships she built with mentors like communications Professor Celeste Wells and Assistant Director of the Center for Student Formation Grace Roberts, have proved indispensable, helping her find herself and lean into her passions.

“I’m just so much less afraid to be myself—to be weird, honestly,” she says. “When I got here, I wanted to be skinny and liked. Now all I want to do is watch *Survivor* (her senior thesis is a kind of a sociological study of the show), rant about it to Grace and my roommates, and laugh with my friends.”



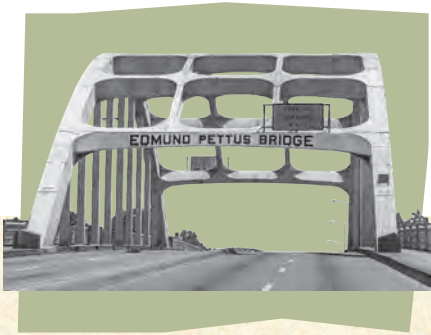
Nick Thomas '25, Alex Broome '25, and Taji Johnson '24 at the ACC's Unity Tour in Washington, D.C. in July 2023

(photo courtesy of Taji Johnson)

not have otherwise met, and hear upperclasswomen who used to intimidate her share stories about their own struggles. An hour's drive from the Heights, this is the place she'll find a home at BC.

BACK IN BOSTON, Delaney's served for four years with 4Boston, BC's largest weekly service organization, wherein students volunteer with community partners for several hours a week in the areas of social service, healthcare, or education. Run by Campus Ministry, 4Boston's pillars of community, spirituality, and social justice align well with her dual majors in theology and international studies.

"It's been a great way of reminding me why I'm getting my education and whom it should ultimately serve," Delaney adds. It's easy to hear the influence of one of Delaney's favorite writers, the late BC



“It’s always been bigger than myself.”

—TAJI JOHNSON '24

theologian, Reverend Michael Himes, in her reflections. Fr. Himes's famous three questions—*What am I good at? What brings me joy? Who does the world need me to be?*—permeate every corner of campus, compelling Eagles to consider their identity, desires, and the meaning of success in a different way than the world typically does.

What makes the BC experience unique is how core elements of campus life—academics, service, Campus Ministry, Athletics, and extracurriculars, etc.—intertwine, like a braid of hair, instructing each other and strengthening the overall experience for Eagles.

“SELMA CHANGED ME,” Taji says. “It was such an immersive experience, being in that space with people who were actually there.” The second youngest of five siblings, he’s always had

an acute sense of the ways in which you depend on those who've gone before you, and the importance of helping those who follow after you. "It's always been bigger than myself."

The founding president of the Black Male Initiative (BMI), a student-athletel- led group committed to empowering students of color and being a voice for the unheard on campus and beyond, Taji personifies what it means to be more than an athlete at the Heights. You can find him organizing panels or speakers for BMI events, getting involved in the wider Boston community, or volunteering at Campus School and other on-campus initiatives.

An applied psychology major, Taji is passionate about sports psychology and promoting mental health for athletes. He's recently passed the BMI leadership baton on to BC football teammates Nick Thomas '25 (a Hovsepien Family Scholar) and Alex Broome '25 (an O'Donnell Family Scholar and New Balance BC Student-Athlete), who have hit the ground running in their new positions. Over the summer of 2023, they joined Taji and fellow members of the BC Athletics community on the latest ACC Unity Tour, visiting the nation's capital for the 60th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington. From there, Thomas and six teammates hosted a Pop Warner program for 150 children in Roxbury, Massachusetts, connecting with the community beyond Chestnut Hill. Despite the considerable academic and athletic demands on their day-to-day schedules, Eagles like Taji, Nick, and Alex demonstrate the myriad ways athletics integrates into the wider life and mission of the University.

ASK FIRST-YEAR WOMEN at BC the biggest challenge they face and you'll get a range of different responses. For Chloe, the answer is easy: uncertainty. "You're so full of self-doubt," she says, "and that fear ends up infiltrating every part of your life."

"It just felt like I was taking hit after hit," Chloe says. "Outwardly, I seemed like a perfectly happy, put-together person. I was getting good grades. But I wasn't feeling confident in my place here, and I wasn't finding ways to engage in campus life or enjoy my studies."



“**[Ascend] helped me realize no one has everything figured out and sent me on a track of really investing in myself and my mental health.**”

—CHLOE CHAPLE '25



Grappling with depression, grief, and loneliness, she could have turned inward and further isolated. Instead, Chloe applied to Ascend, a Center for Student Formation (CSF) program for first-year women to participate in weekly small-group meetings with peers, talk through their experience at BC, and connect with junior and senior women mentors (AKA “leads”). The retreats, held twice a year, are as restorative as they are empowering, providing a forum for students to be vulnerable with one another, build organic relationships, and share their struggles with junior and senior mentors.

As is typical at BC, people made all the difference. The relationships Chloe formed in Ascend built her back up and equipped her to enjoy a fulfilling, complete BC experience. “To hear these older girls who looked like they had their lives all together share these really vulnerable stories of anxiety, or relationship issues—my heart just opened up,” she says. “It helped me realize no one has everything figured out and sent me on a track of really investing in myself and my mental health.”

Nearly two years, three Ascend retreats, and countless coffee dates after that cruel semester, Chloe's found her place at the Heights. She's adopted reflective habits in the form of the daily examen, a practice of Ignatian spirituality; developed close relationships with faculty and mentors; and interned for Ascend in her sophomore year before applying to be a lead in her junior year. Her experiences have helped her come to know and care for herself on a deeper level.

“As difficult as that time was,” she says, “I came out better on the other side.”

IN THE WORDS of Fr. Himes, “Education is the process through which we become more fully human and also more like God.” This is what formative education looks like at Boston College. Not only does it teach students to ask questions, engage with new ideas and perspectives, and respond to their calling in the world, it also imparts the necessity of community and asking for help.

The experiences of Delaney, Taji, and Chloe illustrate the ways in which formative education—the kind that equips students not just with useful knowledge, but a profound understanding of how to live—extends beyond the classroom, beyond campus, to every facet of BC student life.

Every student brings their own baggage and needs to Boston College. Every student finds him or herself—their passions and quirks and communities—in different ways at the Heights. The common denominator is a university that truly cares for their whole person, making a home for each and every Eagle where they can find themselves, over and again. ■



Soaring Higher: For the Heights

Boston College and its culture profoundly affect both the students who are drawn to the University and also the lives they lead after they graduate. The University dedicates significant resources to fostering rigorous intellectual development as well as religious, ethical, and personal experiences—also known as student formation. BC's reputation as a leader in this area is one of its greatest distinctions, and philanthropic support through *Soaring Higher* is critical to continuing its success. In particular, the campaign seeks to raise \$750 million for student life, including \$400 million alone for BC Athletics.

Athletics are at the heart of the Boston College experience for many and are a crucial part of the University's identity. Student-athletes demonstrate intensive self-discipline, motivation, and heart, excelling not only as competitors but also as advanced and committed scholars. Their BC experience is buttressed by scholarships, enhancements to facilities, support for the whole student-athlete, and so much more.

"A thriving BC student-athlete is well-balanced," says Michael Harris, director of student-athlete academic services

and designee of diversity and inclusion efforts for BC Athletics. "Ultimately, we want to see our student-athletes maximize what they do on the field and in the classroom, integrating into the larger BC community, and taking advantage of all the opportunities BC has to offer," says Harris.

Thanks in part to the efforts of Harris and colleague Kenny Francis, assistant athletics director for student-athlete formation and success, Athletics has built an environment that BC student-athletes of color especially are proud to call home. In fact, in the past five years, retention rates of Black student-athletes have risen considerably, even as transfer restrictions have eased. Additionally, the University's Athlete Ally Index Score has increased from 66 to 95 (out of 100).

Forward-looking support for athletics facilities will help recruit the top student-athletes to BC, while investments in residence halls and gathering spaces will promote community, enhancing the overall well-being of our student body.

"Students don't live in siloes," says Colleen Dallavalle, the assistant vice president for student engagement and

formation. "The ways in which they're engaged and formed are constantly in conversation and influencing each other." Dallavalle and her team in Student Affairs take a holistic approach to their work, collaborating with the Division of Mission and Ministry to develop material for retreats and amplify formative programs across campus.

Mission and Ministry's Montserrat Office ensures any and all students who wish to participate in such opportunities are able, whether or not they can afford to pay for a service trip, retreat, or on-campus experience. Offerings like 48Hours (for first-year students), Halftime (for sophomores to seniors) as well as Pause and Pray, Kairos, and silent retreats aim to develop contemplative habits among students and strengthen the social fabric of campus.

"Success is not mutually exclusive—it's holistic," says Francis. "Part of why I love BC is that you're not putting athletics in one basket over here, academics in another, maybe sprinkling in some spirituality on the side. No, it's all integrated; it all contributes to their self-realization."

SUPER FAN

REQUIRED READING

Did you know that when Father Thomas Gasson purchased the land that would become Boston College's Chestnut Hill Campus, it was adjacent to not one but two reservoirs? You've probably heard of the Chestnut Hill Reservoir but the smaller one, Lawrence Basin, was filled in after World War II in order to build Lower Campus, including the spot that is now Alumni Stadium (read more on p. 15).

That moment in BC's history marks the transition from "college" to "university" as argued by the authors of the two books featured in this edition of Beacon Book Club: *The Heights: An Illustrated History of Boston College, 1863–2013* by Ben Birnbaum and Seth Meehan, MA'09, PhD'14, and *Ever to Excel: A History of Boston College* by James M. O'Toole '72, PhD'87.

In fact, BC's distinct eras frame these two important reflections on its first century and a half. The School was the vision of its founding fathers. The College coincided with the move to

Chestnut Hill. And the University, BC's current form, involved a transformed campus that made BC a residential institution, a shift toward coeducation, and an expanded and reimagined curriculum.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then *The Heights* is priceless. Originally published for the University's sesquicentennial anniversary in 2013, its 225 pages depict Boston College's origins, evolution, and maturity.

"Institutions produce two kinds of illustrated histories. One is the family album. The other kind makes it case as history, with illustrations. This book is of that kind. Though hundreds of images—many in print for the first time—appear on its pages, it is foremost about what Boston College did over the days of 150 years and how those days and years, in turn, shaped Boston College, as best we can know these things," Birnbaum wrote in the book's introduction.



O'Toole, the university historian and Clough Millennium History Professor Emeritus, wrote *Ever to Excel*, published in 2022, as a "social history" of BC. In other words, it focuses on the stories of hundreds of thousands of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and benefactors who have shaped the University.

"Over the course of my career, I've come to think history is valuable precisely because it connects to the stories of real human beings," O'Toole said. "What are the actual people doing, not just in the president's office, but on the ground?" ■

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.

An eagle's-eye view of the Heights on April 20, 1938, Easter Sunday. Lawrence Basin, which was later drained and filled in to create Lower Campus, is pictured in the center of the image.



Campaign Volunteer Leadership

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Susan Martinelli Shea '76, P'04



SOARING HIGHER

The Campaign for
Boston College

GOAL: \$3 billion

Raised as of November 16, 2023:

FINANCIAL AID: \$425 million

ACADEMICS: \$411 million

STUDENT LIFE: \$321 million

GIFTS UNDER \$1 MILLION: 230,117

RECENT NOTABLE GIFTS:

Jane B. Rattigan Head Women's Ice Hockey Coach Fund

Established in 2020 by Thomas J. Rattigan '60 in honor of his wife, Jane B. Rattigan, this gift will support expenses associated with the Boston College women's ice hockey head coach position.

Jennifer Levy Healy '93 BC Fund Scholarship

Cara and Patrick Puzzuoli established this fund in memory of Jennifer Healy '93. It will provide annual current-use support for undergraduate financial aid with a preference for a student studying in the Connell School of Nursing.

Dowden Family BC Law Financial Aid Fund

Income from this endowed fund, established in 2023 through a gift from Sarah and James P. Dowden '97, JD'00, will support need-based financial aid for qualified BC Law students.

Planned Gifts—They Count!

An update to BC's estate commitment policy means every gift counts toward BC's future.

Now when you include a gift to Boston College in your will or trust, BC will recognize the full amount of your gift at the time you make the estate commitment. That means your gift will be counted in ***Soaring Higher: the Campaign for Boston College***—and you will be helping BC provide an unmatched formative experience for all students. For more information, please visit bc.edu/giftplanning or call 877-304-SHAW.



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