



KEAN UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION

# The Future Begins Now

e N E W S L E T T E R / S U M M E R / 2 0 2 0

## Greetings from the Kean University Foundation!

*We are excited to share with you the Summer 2020 Edition of our e-Newsletter, which we are calling The Future Begins Now. In keeping with previous publications, this e-newsletter is sent out quarterly to friends and members of the Kean Community, alike, including content related to the many ways we can all support Kean University, as well as options available for making a gift to the Foundation. We look forward to keeping you updated on the Foundation's activities, as well as the tremendous impact from its valued supporters!*

## Donor Spotlight: *Patricia Graleski*

*“I wanted to give back to someone who did something good for me.”*

These are the words of Patricia Graleski – a New Jersey native and the newest member of the Kean University Foundation's Medallion Society. Born in Jersey City, Patricia is the oldest child of two deaf parents, neither of whom graduated high school and spent their adult lives as unskilled laborers. These circumstances created some of her earliest memories, with her acting as translator for both parents while accompanying them on frequent trips to the unemployment office. Given their background, Patricia's parents often found themselves out of work during periods of economic downturns throughout the 1950's.

Such experiences instilled in Patricia a great desire to obtain a college degree. She knew her parents would be unable to support her goal financially, but saw the value in pursuing higher education and set her sights on achieving academic excellence in an effort to earn a scholarship. “From second grade on,” said Patricia, “I promised myself I would be going to college.”

Patricia's family eventually moved to the suburban town of Morganville, where she attended Freehold High School and was classmate to a little-known (at the time!) guitarist by the name of Bruce Springsteen. There, she maintained her studies and remained focused on the promise she had made to herself many years earlier. Patricia completed SAT testing, as well as an additional test administered by the State of New Jersey. She performed very well, and her scores resulted in Patricia being awarded a full scholarship to Newark State Teachers College – which had just relocated from Newark to Union.

When Patricia's acceptance letter arrived in the mail, her father told her, “You are not going to college; you should be a secretary or a teacher or a nurse. As a matter of fact,



this scholarship would be better suited for a man and, most importantly, we need you to work as your salary pays for room and board in our house.”

For several years thereafter, Patricia worked for IBM in various locations, including Holmdel, NJ, Baltimore, MD, and Atlanta, GA. She initially performed secretarial and administrative work before being promoted to Systems Engineer and eventually moving into a sales role. IBM recognized Patricia’s talents and she found success there.

In 1992, the recession caught up with Patricia and she, like many others at the time, found herself out of work and unable to gain new employment without a college degree. She eventually acquired a position within the School of Nursing at the University of Maryland located in Baltimore, where she worked for a period of time before further economic downturns resulted in unemployment yet again.

One day, Patricia received a letter in the mail from the Governor of Maryland. This letter informed her, as a result of having been downsized twice from her places of employment, Patricia was eligible to receive a Pell Grant affording her the ability to attend college. At last, Patricia would be able to earn the college degree she had longed for ever since childhood – and she did just that! A woman already in her 50s, she went on to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University of Maryland, having achieved a 3.5 GPA and subsequently graduating with honors.

Patricia eventually settled in Durham, North Carolina, where, in light of the recent onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, she has taken the opportunity to reflect on her legacy. She realized how different her life would have been had she attended Newark State Teachers College, and decided she wanted to provide the same opportunity she was given to another young woman. This realization resulted in Patricia making a Bequest, or a written provision in her will allowing for a gift from her estate to the Kean University Foundation shortly after her passing, to establish an Endowed Scholarship – and thusly earning her membership within the Foundation’s Medallion Society.

For more information regarding the Kean University Foundation Medallion Society, please contact James Gurland, Chief Development Officer, via email: [jgurland@keanfoundation.org](mailto:jgurland@keanfoundation.org) or phone: (908) 316-8924.



## **A Message from Bill Miller, Chief Executive Officer**

Dear Kean Alumni and Friends,

I am pleased to share with you this most-recent edition of our Kean University Foundation e-Newsletter. With the partnership of our generous donors and volunteers, the Foundation just closed the books on a groundbreaking year — the most successful fundraising year in our history!

Dorothy Hennings and her late husband, George, played a major role in raising philanthropy at Kean to new heights. Words cannot express our appreciation to Dorothy (and George) for such generosity. Support from the larger Cougar community was also phenomenal, with more than ninety percent (90%) of all donations coming from private donors, including alumni, friends, faculty, staff, parents, and students.

Kean University’s new President, Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., has officially begun his tenure – and he has hit the ground running! Dr. Repollet’s inspiring vision and dedication to Kean students is already energizing our campus. We welcome him to his new role and know he will be presiding over a new era at the University, one defined by continued innovation and growth. Philanthropic giving will play a major role in this and we look forward to working with him to lead the Foundation in deepening its support of Kean University.

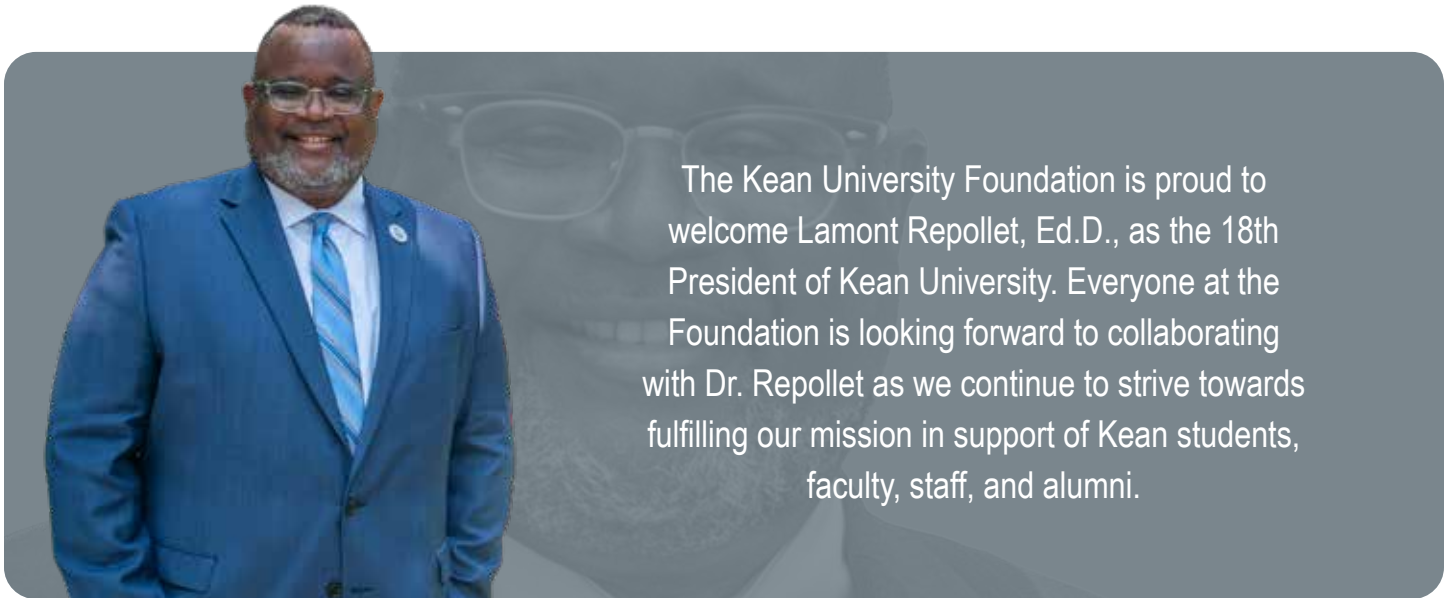
Over the past two (2) years, I have gained a new understanding of the importance of the Foundation’s work within the larger community. Kean University has always emphasized experiential learning, as well as theory. In every discipline, students are encouraged to dive into their studies, fully experience them, and grow from their education. This way, they can, in turn, become positive agents of change in their communities and throughout the world.

In closing, I am tremendously pleased our Foundation is on the cutting edge of creating a more vibrant and healthy Kean community. I thank the University's Trustees, the Kean University Foundation's Board of Directors, our Alumni Board, the College of Business and Public Management's Board of Advisors, as well as our dedicated donors, staff, and faculty for the excellent work they do, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of an amazing and growing Foundation team.

I would be remiss if I did not also thank Dr. Farahi for his visionary leadership and inspiring service to Kean. His tireless devotion to our students has well-positioned the Foundation for many years to come.

I eagerly look forward to many more years of success! Thank you for all you do for Kean University.

---



---

## **Dr. Dorothy Hennings Gets a Firsthand Look at the Impact of Her Historic Gift!**

Appropriately masked and practicing social distancing accordingly, Dr. Dorothy Hennings paid a visit to the Kean University campus on a beautiful, sunny day in June; June 16, 2020, to be specific. This, however, was not an arbitrary date selection, as it would have been her beloved husband and philanthropic partner's, Dr. George Hennings, 98th birthday.

Dr. Dawood Farahi greeted her and together they strolled through campus until reaching the memorial park behind Kean's library. There, they paused momentarily to have a seat on the granite bench which memorializes George and again read the inscription, before walking back to the rear entrance of Hennings Hall. Little did Dr. Hennings know of the surprise Dr. Farahi had in store!

"I was speechless when I saw the giant drape on the front of Hennings Hall and the wonderful display of photos of George and me: the two of us in Antarctica, the two of us on our wedding day, the two of us at Kean events. I was thrilled! Those photos celebrate our life together and our finding one another at OUR university. I was thrilled, too, when the signage on George Hennings Hall, formerly known as the Science Building, was unveiled and when Dawood gave me a replica of the plaque which will be hung at 128 George Hennings Hall – the office which was my husband's for many years."

In addition, Dr. Farahi not only revealed signage on Dorothy Grant Hennings Hall, formerly known as Hennings Hall, which houses the College of Education, he also unveiled signage on the elevated bridge connecting George Hennings Hall with Dorothy Grant Hennings Hall, which is now known as "Dorothy and George Way."



“The day was special! It brought back memories of George and our years as faculty at Kean, and it gave me an opportunity to thank Dawood for his fantastic idea to create the complex of buildings – Education, Science, and Science Research – which bears the Hennings’ name.”

Dr. Hennings also had the opportunity to take a very good look at the progress being made at George Hennings Hall, where construction of an 8,000 square-foot bump-out remained ongoing. A more formal dedication and celebration in recognition of this historic gift is forthcoming, pending completion of the new addition.

---

## **Kean Alumna Nora D’Ecclesis Publishes New E-Book**

Nora D’Ecclesis ’71 ’75 is an American, nonfiction author and Haiku poet, with a variety of bestselling titles already in print as she continues to write and be published.

In 2019, the rights to Nora’s book entitled *Spiritual Portals: A Historical Perspective* were purchased by Blackstone Publishing for the purpose of production as an audiobook, where it was professionally narrated by Blackstone Audio’s award-winning narrator, Ann Richardson. The audiobook is available on multiple platforms, including Audible and Apple Books for iPhone, and is also available for purchase in paperback format at the Kean University Barnes and Noble Bookstore. 2019 proved to be a momentous year, as *Spiritual Portals* won the New Apple Literary Award as the Solo Medalist in the Spirituality category, as well as the International Book Award for Best Cover.

Nora’s #1 bestseller, *The Retro Budget Prescription*, was specifically written to help prepare high school students for a lifetime of managing their personal finances. The book maintained its place in the top spot for Kindle e-book downloads in the business/self-help categories for more than a year. In keeping with her areas of expertise, Nora has a long history of presenting at events, retreats, and seminars focused on wellness and stress reduction techniques. Additional nonfiction works Nora has published include the Amazon #1 bestseller *Haiku: Nature’s Meditation*, as well as paperback and e-books regarding topics such as time management, guided visualizations, gratitude/equanimity, journaling, and Zen meditation.

Last June, Nora added “novelist” to her biography with the publication of *Twin Flame*, a collaboration with co-author, and New York Times #1 bestselling novelist, William R. Forstchen. *Twin Flame* is a novella which follows a man meeting, courting, and marrying his



soulmate. Nora defines the holistic concept of twin flames within relationships as a blending of views related to faith, love, and perseverance – all stemming from a universal spiritual perspective.

Nora's long-awaited digital book, *Multicultural Mindfulness: Nourishing the Soul*, was published on June 1, 2020.

Following her graduation from Kean University, Nora was an elementary school teacher in her hometown of Millburn-Short Hills, New Jersey. She is currently married and lives in a suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with her family and wonderful dogs. During the recent governance regarding COVID-19, and subsequent sheltering-in-place, Nora was able to achieve calmness while sequestering by utilizing techniques learned during years of mindfulness practice.



---

## **Kean Alumna Marjorie Perry is Featured Panelist on Entrepreneurial Webinar**

Marjorie Perry '74 is the epitome of what it means to be a distinguished Kean University alumna. Not only is she CEO and President of MZM Construction Management, CO., Marjorie is widely recognized as an innovator, public speaker, writer, and role model for women and minorities in business.

On June 17, 2020, Marjorie was a featured panelist, along with three other successful New Jersey entrepreneurs, on a Zoom webinar entitled "How to Support the Region's Startup and Entrepreneurial Community." The program was sponsored by James Barrood, former head of the New Jersey Tech Council, and offered invaluable tips on how to become a successful minority entrepreneur. It highlighted the thriving minority entrepreneurship community within the state of New Jersey and explored ways to make it stronger. Marjorie, in her own words, focused on proactive steps community stakeholders can take to better support a more diverse and robust entrepreneurial ecosystem. She spoke with great passion about her own experiences and shared best practices.

Marjorie brings 26 years of experience to the table and uses this experience as fodder for inspiration. She finds her mission to be one which motivates nascent entrepreneurs to develop and pursue their dreams by sharing the lessons she has learned from her own success – which often meant taking life's lemons and making lemonade. Trained as an educator, Perry's path in teaching was diverted after she was caught in a series of layoffs. In a fortuitous career move, she decided to try her luck in sales and marketing — which turned out to be an unexpected perfect fit. She went on to work for corporations, ultimately cultivating a burgeoning vision for life as a passionate, self-made entrepreneur.

---

## **The Grand Opening of Hynes Hall**

A ribbon-cutting ceremony commemorating the opening of Kean University's newest addition to the Union, New Jersey campus, Hynes Hall, took place on the evening of June 25, 2020.

In keeping with state-mandated guidelines pertaining to social distancing and limitations on in-person gatherings, an intimate event was hosted onsite at the new facility where both Jim '63 H'09 and Carole Hynes who's desire to give back to Kean University made the construction of this grand structure possible, were present to officially mark the building's opening and view first-hand the results of their generosity.



Those in attendance included Dr. Dawood Farahi and Jin Wang, Ph. D., Dean of the College of Business and Public Management, both of whom addressed the evening's guests, as well as Ada Morell, Chair of the Kean University Board of Trustees, and several other members of the Kean community, all of whom were delighted to be present in honor and recognition of that which the Hynes Family had made possible.

The new home for Kean University's College of Business and Public Management, Hynes Hall will accommodate all undergraduate and graduate business programs in addition to providing all Kean students with a variety of technological resources.

### Extra! Extra! Kean University in the News!



Kean University History Professors Receive National Honors

[CLICK HERE](#)

Kean University Names New Director of Athletics

[CLICK HERE](#)

Kean University Hosts Drive-Up Food Distribution

[CLICK HERE](#)

Kean University Dean Pens Article Regarding Colleges and COVID-19

[CLICK HERE](#)



## New Charitable Deduction Limits

As part of the CARES ACT passed in response to economic impact of the Coronavirus, individuals and corporations that itemize can deduct much greater amounts of their contributions. Individuals can elect to deduct donations up to 100% of their 2020 AGI (up from 60% previously).



## Charitable IRA Rollover

The Charitable IRA Rollover allows individuals age 70½ and older to make direct transfers of up to \$100,000 per year (and up to \$200,000 per year for married couples) from individual retirement accounts to qualified charities without having to count the transfers as income for federal tax purposes. This remains the case after the passage of both the SECURE Act, which was signed into law on December 20, 2019, as well as the CARES Act, which was signed into law on March 27, 2020.

## Questions? Comments? Info?

Kean University Foundation, Inc.  
1000 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ 07083  
Phone: (908) 316-8920  
Fax: (908) 316-8921  
[kuf@keanfoundation.org](mailto:kuf@keanfoundation.org)



KEAN UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION