

**Julia Mace**

*Writer*

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**PORTFOLIO**

# **University of Cincinnati and University of Cincinnati Foundation**

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## *Gift to Cincinnati Law Targets Injustice:*

Alumnus Bill Morelli gives to the Nathaniel R. Jones  
Center for Race, Gender, and Social Justice

by Julia Mace

July 28, 2020

A University of Cincinnati alumnus has donated \$200,000 to support a center at the law school focused on race, gender and social justice.

Bill Morelli, A&S '74, JD '78, has created the Bill Morelli Endowment Fund for the Nathaniel R. Jones Center for Race, Gender, and Social Justice at the College of Law. Renamed in 2019 after Judge Nathaniel Jones in honor of his career as a champion for justice, the Jones Center trains and cultivates scholars, leaders and activists committed to social change. After his retirement as a federal judge, Judge Jones joined the law firm Blank Rome LLP, serving as its first chief officer of Diversity and Inclusion.

Morelli says the timing of his gift was intentional.

“At a time when national discussion—often divisive—is taking place on issues of race, gender and justice, it’s important for the legal profession to take the lead in framing issues and developing solutions,” he said. “The Jones Center is at the center of thought leadership in this area and I hope this gift can bring together scholars and practitioners in the field to inspire the next generation of lawyers to shape public policy and help build bridges of understanding in the broader community.”

“Bill’s gift not only celebrates our university and the life work of Judge Nathaniel Jones, it supports our commitment to racial justice,” UC President Neville G. Pinto said. “It helps us create more welcoming spaces for listening, dialogue and support as we move forward and work to solve systemic issues of justice.”

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The new fund will be used to establish a practitioner-in-residence program, allowing the College of Law to host a social justice advocate or innovator to teach courses on race, gender and social justice. It will also allow the college to host conferences at which scholars in law and other fields such as philosophy, sociology, political science, or public health, will come together to address, and explore solutions for, issues of race, gender and social justice. The practitioner-in-residence program and conference will occur on alternate years. The first practitioner-in-residence is tentatively scheduled for 2021.

“The practitioner/conference focus allows the Center to take its work to the next level by expanding opportunities for students to work directly with nationally known advocates on cutting edge strategies to make change. The conferences will provide much needed perspectives from disciplines other than law to help craft solutions to the many ills confronting us,” Dean Verna Williams said. “Bill’s generosity and wish to bring people together for discussion and seeking solutions is timely and needed.”

Morelli’s gift is also rooted in personal experience, including his involvement in tutoring elementary and junior high students at UC in the early 70s as part of the Student Community Involvement Program. Also, he and his wife Cindy have realized that having a transgender son and watching his journey have highlighted the need to have idea exchanges around issues involving segments of our community that some still marginalize.

“It is important to have centers of learning and develop legal responses to these issues,” he said. “I’m hoping we can bring people together and be a platform for sharing information in both an academic and non-academic way with a broader community audience.”

three women, one man

Emily Houh, Stephanie Jones, the late Judge Nathaniel R. Jones, Kristin Kalsem and Evelyn Higginbotham. Hough and Kalsem are co-directors of the Jones Center.

Morelli adds that his decision to give to the Jones Center also coalesced with UC’s recent Bicentennial year, the naming of the Center after Judge Jones and his respect and admiration for Dean Verna Williams, a founder of the Center.

This donation supports the priorities of Next, Now: The Campaign for Cincinnati, the comprehensive fundraising effort for UC and UC Health.

## *Adults with Autism Thrive at UC:*

### O'Brien Family Says Experience Has Been Life-Changing

by Julia Mace

January 8, 2019

The O'Brien triplets were born in alphabetical order: Andrew, Kelly, Megan.

If you ask Diana and David O'Brien to describe their 23-year-old children, they will tell you that Andrew is very sweet and loves doing puzzles. He loves work and his job. Kelly is independent, loyal and has strong opinions. She is a "daddy's girl," loves language and being outside. Megan loves to cook, laugh and is very organized. She's the boss of the family and keeps us laughing, they say.

The three O'Brien children currently spend their weekdays cultivating these passions and skills as participants of UC's Impact Innovation program. Created for adults with autism, Impact Innovation exists under the umbrella of Advancement and Transition Services (ATS) in the College of Education, Criminal Justice and Human Services (CECH).

Their day-to-day experiences – walking across campus to internships, lunch at local restaurants and developing friendships – have been life-changing for the entire family.

**“This is a way for them to be in an inclusive environment where they can learn job skills, work on social skills and be engaged in society. Their alternative is to sit at home in front of the TV.”**

— Diana O'Brien

“There are really no good options for young adults with autism to be active and participate in the community,” says Diana. “This is a way for them to be in an inclusive environment where they can learn job skills, work on social skills and be engaged in society. Their alternative is to sit at home in front of the TV.”

Parents of adult children with autism and other intellectual disabilities are challenged once high school ends and services disappear. The O'Briens dreamed of a reality where these young people could learn, be a part of the community and thrive. A grant from the foundation that the O'Brien's helped to start, Impact Autism, has allowed Christi Carnahan, director of ATS, and her team to research best practices and construct a slate of programs at UC that are making an impact on this community.

Three years after its creation, UC's Impact Innovation now serves 20 adults who learn through vocational internships on and off campus; exercise at the UC Campus Recreation Center and participate in a wide range of classes and activities including book club, music and social skills.

Andrew, Kelly and Megan begin their days at UC when they arrive at 9 a.m. via transportation provided by the program. They check in at their cubicles or desks where they store their belongings. These spaces are personalized with calendars, photos, or in Megan's case, beautiful collages she creates from vivid pieces of paper. Each individual has a schedule. Andrew walks to his internships at UC Laundry and Walgreens. He spends the remainder of his day at the Rec Center or in classes. Kelly completes vocational tasks; the program has helped her master public interactions. Megan has an internship at Mick & Mack's on campus.

UC's Impact Innovation program is responsible for raising half its budget— about \$250,000 — each year through private philanthropy. Many of the individuals it serves live at or below poverty level and are unable to contribute to costs.

The program's success is tied to the generosity of others, and the O'Briens have played a huge role in Impact Autism's support. To date, the foundation has donated nearly \$800,000 towards research and operating costs within ATS. More financial help is needed, especially as the autism population continues to increase.

"This is a real opportunity to change lives, and this is a population that tends not to be served," says Diana. "The difference that donors are making in these kids' lives is amazing. If it wasn't here, I don't know what we would do."

Traditional UC students are also impacted by these program. ATS employs a number of students who work closely with the participants, and many others simply interact with the participants as they all go about their day.

"I think our kids have had a huge influence on a number of students at UC," David says. "They probably have more acceptance and tolerance than they might have had otherwise."

Morgan Smith, a former Impact Innovation employee and UC student, says the program taught her to be an advocate for those with autism.

"Forming friendships is what I will cherish the most," she says. "It's always good to know I have a friend like Megan will be up to eating some Keystone mac and cheese with me!"

That freedom to explore friendships, campus and the world has been invaluable for the triplets, says David.

"Kids with special needs have typically been in closed settings. It can be kind of suffocating," he says. "They come here and literally the whole campus is open to them. It has just opened up the world."

## *Scholarship Support Gives DAAP Student Freedom to Pursue Her Curiosity*

### Alexandra Papaioannou Finds Her Purpose

by Julia Mace

January 30, 2020

“I am in such a fortunate environment and I’m using up oxygen, like why am I on this earth other than to solve a problem?” Alexandra Papaioannou says. “I think everyone finds their purpose when they find a problem that needs solving.”

Papaioannou, a fifth-year student in the University of Cincinnati’s College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP), credits others in helping her resolve obstacles she’s met — including her own desire to solve problems — while pursuing a degree in fashion design.

Scholarships benefiting DAAP’s fashion design students, such as the Jay Ott Endowed Memorial Scholarship and the Margaret Voelker-Ferrier Endowed Scholarship, have been life-changing for Papaioannou. Even though she lives with her parents and commutes from Dayton, Ohio, to UC, juggling tuition, co-op, living expenses and fashion project costs has been tough.

Being a double scholarship recipient has given her much-needed financial help — and a boost of self-confidence.

“I’m just constantly questioning myself and thinking, ‘What if no one sees my vision,’” she says. “The fact that donors and my college would see my work as something worthy of that money and that scholarship title is really huge. I almost can’t wrap my mind around it — that they would give money to a kid they don’t know.”

Papaioannou says her constant questioning and desire to solve problems have made her path less than straightforward than others experience.

**The fact that donors and my college would see my work as something worthy of that money and that scholarship title is really huge. I almost can’t wrap my mind around it—that they would give money to a kid they don’t know.”**

— Alexandra Papaioannou, DAAP student

As a first-year student at DAAP, she had big dreams of designing for what she calls, “big name, glamorous brands.” But after her first co-op rotation, Papaioannou changed directions, developing the craving to solve problems and find what she calls a “higher purpose.”

Things began to look up when Papaioannou heard Liz Ricketts, a DAAP alumna, speak about sustainable fashion in her Fashion History II class. “I learned how much clothing is being thrown away and how this industry is affecting other countries and cultures, and I got fired up,” Papaioannou said. “I heard about sustainable companies and their approach to fashion.”

Papaioannou also took a class in communications and augmented reality, and this exposed her to the IT@UC Center for Simulations & Virtual Environments Research (UCSIM). UCSIM uses immersive technology applications like virtual and augmented reality for research, scientific collaboration and higher education.

Papaioannou was so inspired that she applied for a co-op with UCSIM and was able to work on projects with Cincinnati Children’s, the Medicaid Equity Simulation Project and UC’s Bicentennial — all projects that would make the world a better place.

From these experiences, Papaioannou changed her approach to her fashion designs. Using augmented and virtual reality allows designers to drape on a virtual model and skip the often wasteful and expensive process of draping fabric while designing.

“I started finding so much more satisfaction and happiness in my work,” Papaioannou said. “Not only could I be creative with my 3D modeling and texturing and animation, but, at the end of the day, I knew I was serving some higher purpose.”

Her scholarships were able to help her again when she wanted to pursue a dream internship in New York City. Her personal interest in astrophysics led her to reach out to Final Frontier Design, which specializes in aerospace garments and clients include NASA, Cirque Du Soleil and Boeing. Because of the financial support of the Ott and Voelker-Ferrier scholarships, the prohibitive cost of living in New York won’t stop Papaioannou from taking this opportunity.

Her scholarships continue to help her on her journey, allowing her skills, ideas and craft to evolve.

“I’m just hoping that, through this experience, I’ll learn to be more purposeful with the design and the making process and, again, having clothing that is going to have a higher purpose at the end of the day. After my experience at UCSIM, I didn’t know if I could go back to a regular fashion company,” she said.

Reflecting on her scholarships and all that she has learned at DAAP and through her co-ops and jobs, Papaioannou said she feels fortunate.

“If you’re a curious and self-motivated student, DAAP gives you the freedom to try new things with your career path,” she said. “I’ll miss it when I graduate. I’ve loved it so much.”



# *Creative Buzz at UC's Lindner Amplifies Next Lives Here*

## New Faculty Award Supports Innovative Teaching

by Julia Mace

December 6, 2018

If you stop by David Rapien's office in the University of Cincinnati's Carl H. Lindner College of Business, he may show you a drone or put an Augmented Reality device on your head.

In Elliott Manzon's office, he shares his students' solutions for everyday problems — a Popsicle holder to stop drips or a grocery bag handle for easier transport, both created by a 3D printer.

Rapien, assistant professor-educator of information systems, and Manzon, assistant professor-educator of marketing, become animated when they discuss their students, teaching methods and the Lindner College of Business. Both focus on engaging their students, not talking at them. In their classrooms and offices, teachers and students interact to create, learn and inspire.

UC is putting innovation at the heart of its future through Next Lives Here, the university's strategic direction introduced by President Neville Pinto in early 2018. Daniel Gruber, associate dean for Innovation and New Ventures, says Lindner's creative buzz, the 1819 Innovation Hub and the new Lindner College of Business facility opening in 2019 all dovetail perfectly into how UC will use innovation to bend the future.

Rapien and Manzon's methods are contributing to the almost palpable "buzz" at Lindner, Gruber says. "We're at a space and place where it's about creating a culture where everybody feels like they can try things, that they're supported in doing it, and that they can learn and share."

Contributing to the energy at Lindner are people like Drew Boyd and his wife, Wendy.

Drew, executive director of the Master of Science in Marketing program, and Wendy wanted to give Lindner students an edge in creativity, innovation and subsequently, the job market.

After deciding that supporting faculty was the best approach, they established the Drew and Wendy Boyd Breakthrough in Innovative Teaching Excellence Award, which provides financial support to Lindner faculty for use in their classes.

Manzon and Rapien were the first Boyd Award recipients.

"They are viewed as incredible faculty members who are fully engaged in teaching and very passionate about what they do," Gruber says. "When the two of them were selected, I think there was almost like a ray of light around it, a feeling of, 'Yes!'"

Rapien uses what he calls “toys” in his information systems classes. Through his use of Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality devices, students learn how to innovatively approach and solve real problems in finance, marketing and operations.

“No matter what you’re teaching, it’s got to be the most exciting thing to you otherwise it won’t be exciting to them,” Rapien says.

**“The amazing thing with this department and this college is that there is so much support for creativity and for trying new things.”**

— Elliott Manzon, UC assistant professor-educator of marketing

Meanwhile, Manzon’s marketing students flex their creative muscles by interacting with the world and finding what is needed. After creating a product designed to solve a problem, they create prototypes and then, in the case of the Popsicle-holder and grocery bag holder, use a 3D printer, and market it by building a webpage using Kickstarter.

“By the second week of class, students who might not intuitively believe that they’re creative are prototyping in class,” Manzon says. “They’re building things, and by the end of the semester, we’ve taught them to do basic 3D printing. It’s breaking the mold in what they expect.”

Breaking the mold is exactly what the Boyds had in mind when they created the Breakthrough in Innovative Teaching Excellence Award, and they are thrilled with the first-year award recipients.

“Elliott and David are outstanding,” Drew Boyd says. “The award recognizes teachers for adding creative training into their curriculum. We can get graduates walking out of here with those cognitive skills, that’s what companies want. They need the functional training but they also need the brain skills, the ability to produce ideas in a way that’s systematic.”

Rapien, whose students have secured full-time jobs because of their Augmented Reality skills, and Manzon echo this sentiment.

“Recruiters want students who can be problem-solvers because the real world and jobs in industry are not going to be a test based on memorization,” Manzon says. “In the real world, it’s all about, ‘Here’s a problem we weren’t expecting to have, how do you solve it?’”

“We as a college of business see ourselves as an integral part of Next Lives Here in wanting to enhance many of the different things that are going on across the various areas,” Gruber says. “I think one of the direct ties to the strategic direction is around innovation.”

“The amazing thing with this department and this college is that there is so much support for creativity and for trying new things,” Manzon says. “They want us to create the class that’s best for our students.”

## *UC Blue Ash Receives its Largest Gift*

### Alumnus Eric Broyles Donates \$1 Million for Scholarships

by Julia Mace

January 18, 2019

University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College has received a \$1 million gift—the largest gift in the college’s history—from alumnus Eric Broyles, UC Blue Ash ’90, BBA ’92. The donation supports the Eric C. Broyles Student Success Scholarship Fund, created for UC Blue Ash students intending to pursue a bachelor’s degree at UC’s Uptown campus.

After receiving his associate’s degree from UC Blue Ash, Broyles earned a BBA from UC’s Carl H. Lindner College of Business and his law degree from the University of Virginia. Broyles was a corporate attorney for 10 years and is now an investor and serial entrepreneur based in Washington D.C. and also serves as a UC Foundation Trustee.

“I continue to be impressed by Eric’s story, his accomplishments and his dedication to his Bearcat family,” said UC President Neville G. Pinto. “He understands the importance of scholarships, and his generosity will help many students pursue their dreams and achieve academic and personal success.”

Broyles’ academic journey did not start smoothly—he graduated near the bottom of his high school class at Badin High in Hamilton, Ohio. During his time at UC Blue Ash, Broyles lived in a small efficiency apartment in a rough part of town and maintained a grueling schedule. During the day, he attended classes and sold garage doors for AE Doors; and throughout his freshman year he worked an overnight janitorial shift at a gas station allowing only four hours of sleep per night.

Broyles was able to turn these challenges into victories thanks to the encouragement of his UC Blue Ash teachers and mentors like AE Door Founder Bill Weber who insisted on seeing his report card.

**“Being at the University of Cincinnati was the first time where I actually felt like, ‘Wow, some of these professors actually believe that I have the capacity and the intellect to do great things.’”**

— Eric Broyles

Broyles carried his lessons from UC Blue Ash to law school, where he could have been intimidated by classmates—some of whom were second and third generation law students.

“I told myself, ‘Well, I learned what to do at UC Blue Ash. I made it through there. I made it through UC,’” Broyles said. “I was equipped with how to think, study and work hard so it gave me confidence in my ability to succeed.”

Gratitude for his education inspired Broyles to create the Broyles Student Success Scholarship Fund in 2017 with the intention of helping students facing similar obstacles to his own. Scholarship recipients must work part time while attending UC Blue Ash, and preference is given to first-generation students with a history of overcoming adversity.

“Eric’s support of our students makes an impact on so many levels,” said UC Blue Ash Dean Robin Lightner. “He inspires them with his positive message during regular visits to our campus. As an incredibly successful alum, he shows our students what’s possible when you have a vision, work hard and believe in yourself. Through this extremely generous gift, Eric also provides the practical support of scholarships, which really can be the difference for some students between dropping out and graduating.”

In his post-academic life, Broyles models the behavior of his mentors. He advises several young people and makes frequent trips to UC Blue Ash to meet students and share his story.

One lesson he left with students in a recent visit to UC Blue Ash was that they should make their beds first thing in the morning, a habit he viewed as his first accomplishment of each day long before the concept was popularized by Admiral William H. McRaven’s commencement speech to University of Texas.

“Even when I lived in that terrible apartment, I made my bed every day,” he said. “Use this as the first accomplishment of your day and continue to notch small wins.”

Broyles said his gift to UC Blue Ash also honors the sacrifice of other UC donors; the sense of service, love and generosity instilled in him by his late parents, Howard and Clara Broyles, and his Christian faith.

# Cincinnati Media

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**Movers and Makers:  
After a Brain Tumor, a Walk Brings Hope**

**The Cincinnati Herald:  
\$5 Million of Gift Supports Diversity and Inclusion**

# *After Brain Tumor, a Walk Brings Hope*

by Julia Mace

October 5, 2017

Rick June had to pull his car over and cry.

It was a time of celebration – his son Collin had just graduated from the University of Dayton. They had packed up Collin's belongings and Rick was headed to the graduation party.

He pulled into a Dunkin' Donuts parking lot to collect himself and reflect on his emotion. It had been a challenging journey to arrive at this life milestone.

In August 1995, at the age of 8, Collin suffered a crippling headache and vomiting while on vacation. After a visit to an urgent care and a call to the pediatrician, it was recommended Collin have an MRI when he got home.

Back in Cincinnati, at the end of a busy day – Rick had started a new position at Procter & Gamble and Collin attended hockey camp – Rick took Collin for his scan.

"I knew there was an issue when it was an hour and a half after the scan and no one had come to talk to us," Rick recalls. "I knew something was going on. They had called a neurosurgeon from the University of Cincinnati; it was about 10 p.m."

The scan showed that Collin's right ventricle had a seven-centimeter meningioma, a highly unusual brain tumor for children.

His doctors had every reason to believe it could be removed and there was a high chance it was benign.

Halfway through Collin's surgery, Rick and his wife Heather received bad news.

"A nurse came out and said, 'It's not good,'" says Rick. "It was deeper than they thought, highly aggressive and a stage 4 malignancy. We fell apart – the hope we were holding onto dissipated."

Things continued to get worse. A follow-up scan revealed that 10 percent of the tumor was still in the brain matter. A team from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and UC's Brain Tumor Center decided the only course of action would be the level of radiation given to adults, which has long-term effects on children.

A week after brain surgery, Collin returned to school. Because of radiation, Collin, who had previously scored in the 99th percentile in math, now struggled with the basics.

“I had a lot of problems with my memory, so school was hard for me,” Collin says. “It was definitely very hard. I knew that, on test day, I wouldn’t test well.”

Through the love and support of his family and the care he received at Cincinnati Children’s and UC, Collin went on to graduate from college.

“There were times I would want to give up in high school and college, but my family kept me going,” he says. “I wanted to take a break, but my dad said, ‘Hey let’s just stick with it.’ That kind of pushed me through.”

Today, Collin is not only a college graduate but a healthy, thriving adult. Both father and son channel their gratitude into the Walk Ahead for a Brain Tumor event.

In the last seven years, Walk Ahead supporters have raised \$1.6 million. Awareness and funds for research are crucial – 215,000 individuals in the United States are diagnosed with brain tumors each year. During the last two decades, the incidence of brain tumors has increased 22 percent overall and 55 percent in people over 65 years of age.

Rick has been a Walk Ahead co-chair for two years; Collin has served as volunteer coordinator. Their team, Collin’s Crew, has participated every year.

“The walk is really important to me because it raises awareness and money and it all stays in Cincinnati,” says Collin. “Cincinnati is a big hub for cancer and brain tumor research.”

“There is a depth and meaning and sense of purpose behind this walk,” says Rick. “I think people are touched more deeply. I think the level of despair people go through is deep, and this all translates into this very purposeful experience. At the same time, it’s highly celebratory. It’s the walking manifestation of hope.”

Collin’s life is a testament to the importance of this work. He’s a volunteer mentor to patients at the UC Brain Tumor Center. He has worked in the health care field and married UC physician Rachel June last fall. Perhaps best of all, Collin and Rachel are expecting their first child in December.

“If someone had told me after his diagnosis with his brain tumor that someday his life would be as good as it is today, I never would have believed it,” says Rick. “The veil of despair that comes down when your child experiences something like a malignant brain tumor, you can’t see past it.

“Part of my journey was finding a way to move beyond that despair and put my faith in his physicians and for our family, God, and just persevere. We’ve experienced a remarkable circle of life.”

## **The Walk**

Walk Ahead for a Brain Tumor Cure is Sunday, Oct. 22, at Sawyer Point.

The eighth annual walk/run benefits the research and education efforts of the UC Brain Tumor Center at the University of Cincinnati Gardner Neuroscience Institute.

To participate or volunteer in the walk, or donate to brain cancer research: [walkahead.org](http://walkahead.org)



## ***\$5 Million of Gift Supports Diversity and Inclusion***

**by Julia Mace**

**December 8, 2019**

Richard (Dick) E. Thornburgh, Bus '74, Hon '09, a longtime leader in the financial services industry, and his wife, Cornelia, have made a \$9 million gift to the University of Cincinnati. This significant commitment includes a focus on diversity and inclusion through scholarships and support for the Carl H. Lindner College of Business and UC athletics.

The Thornburghs' gift supports the priorities of UC and UC Health's comprehensive fundraising effort, Next, Now: The Campaign for Cincinnati.

Dick, who earned his MBA from Harvard University, is the former vice chairman of the board of directors of Credit Suisse Group AG. He is a senior adviser and serves on the investment committee of Corsair Capital LLC.

Dick credits attending UC and being a student-athlete with giving him the discipline, focus and sacrifice needed to succeed in the professional world. His collegiate athletics experiences, business acumen and being a father to three daughters have bolstered Dick's belief that all students, including female athletes, should have an equal opportunity to excel in their careers and in their lives.

The Thornburghs' gift includes a \$5.5 million investment in two programs at the Lindner College of Business: Business Fellows and Lindner Honors-PLUS.

The \$5.5 million gift is broken down below:

Their \$500,000 pledge for the Dick and Cornelia Thornburgh Business Diversity Scholarship Fund benefits Business Fellows, dedicated to supporting African American, Hispanic, Latino and Native American students enrolled in Lindner. The fund also will receive an estimated \$4 million from the Thornburghs' estate.

As an early investor in Honors-PLUS, the Thornburghs are continuing their legacy of support for the program by investing \$1 million in an additional estate gift.

These commitments demonstrate the Thornburghs' passion for advancing diversity in business, which they say makes for a stronger workforce.

"You want to get the best possible people to succeed, therefore you need to get a wider net," Dick Thornburgh said. "If you look at the corporations in Cincinnati that are hiring, they want to have a diverse workforce. As a university, we should provide them with the best product we can, students that can grow to be capable leaders in the business and nonprofit fields."

Going back to his student days as a Bearcat mascot and as the driver in the creation of the UC men's

varsity soccer team, he also is passionate about UC athletics. The Thornburghs have made a \$2 million investment from their estate to ensure the vitality of the men's soccer program at UC.

Part of their overall \$9 million gift also includes a pledge of \$300,000 for UC's groundbreaking Women's Excellence Fund. This initiative provides needed funding for nutrition, recovery tools, special equipment, facility enhancements and more to lift the level of competitive excellence for UC's 11 women's sports programs and spirit squads.

"Athletics have historically been a means for men to break out of their social economic background, and it should be for women as well," Thornburgh, the Women's Excellence Fund's first male donor, said. "Women's athletics have been underfunded."

As part of their overall gift, the Thornburghs are empowering more students in UC athletics with a diversity-focused scholarship fund. The Dick and Cornelia Thornburgh Scholarship for Diverse Student Athletes Majoring in Business Fund has been established with \$200,000; 25% of UC's current student-athletes are business majors.

Throughout his time at UC, Dick Thornburgh was involved in a variety of organizations including Sigma Sigma, a UC men's honorary organization that recognizes students who have made significant contributions to the university. He has established an estate gift of \$1 million to the program.

"Dick and Cornie's vision for our students and the business community exemplifies how we're focusing on innovation and impact," said UC President Neville G. Pinto. "They have a local and global view with a clear focus on inclusive excellence. We are so grateful these dedicated donors are providing the university with this transformative gift."

"I wouldn't be sitting here if someone didn't help me," Dick said. "Without the experiences and help along the way, I never would have succeeded in anything, and it's a chance to give back."

# Scary Mommy Club Mid

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**Why I Still Love Jane Fonda**

**I Know Where I Was When Jerry Garcia Died**

# *Why I Still Love Jane Fonda*

by Julia Mace

February 18, 2016

I first started doing aerobics when I got the Jane Fonda record at 13 or 14. How I admired Jane, her tights, and her legwarmers. I didn't understand why my babysitter's mom hated her. Something to do with Vietnam, my mom explained.

I would put the record on in my mauve room with Laura Ashley wallpaper and wall-to-wall carpeting. I would put on the record and jump up and down in front of Ginger and Fred, my goldfish. I swear they would wag back and forth to the beat. Poor Ginger and Fred. Four years later when I went to college, they didn't make it very long; my family forgot about them.

I graduated to a local studio called "Suzycise" that I could walk to. I had the leotard. Oh yes. My mom took me to the Cincinnati department store Shillito's, and I bought a purple one. I would complement the leotard with Reebok high tops, shiny soccer shorts, blue eyeliner, and Revlon's Silver City Pink lipstick.

My love affair with aerobics continued for many years. I was never an athletic kid. I could swim well but was too nervous to compete. Aerobics made me feel athletic.

In college I would arrange classes around IU Fit, the exercise program at the student center. During the summer, my parents refused to understand that I was upset when I couldn't attend aerobics. They wanted me to work. My brother and I shared a car and a daily 30-minute commute. He worked later than I did, so I had to wait for him, thereby missing aerobics. This was an outrage! Sometimes I would convince a coworker from my high school to drive me home, even though it was 15 minutes out of his way. If I got home in time, I could use my mom's car to get to class.

Sometime in my late 20s or early 30s, life got too real and aerobics and I broke up. I think we just drifted apart. Who knows what happened to the purple leotard. By then, Jane was a long-ago memory, as were Ginger and Fred. I was now navigating divorce, real affairs, and rebuilding my life.

This summer a friend persuaded me to attend a Jazzercise class with her. I arrived at a studio that reminded me of days of yore. Some things were familiar: the studio set-up, the peppy instructor—the majority of participants were women. The music pumped and the instructor made inspirational comments.

Some things were different.

Mostly me.

There's a little more weight on these bones; the pinched nerve in my foot hurts, as do my knees. There is no way I'm putting this body in a leotard. I had twin babies at 40. My outfits consist of old yoga pants and a T-shirt I won at my family reunion that boasts "Proud to Be Italian!" (No one ever believes that I'm Italian.)

There is something to be said about first loves. When I'm in class, I feel like I've come home. I may not look pretty Jazzercising, but I feel awesome. I can still funk it up with the best of them. I'm less manic about attending, I'm just happy when I can carve time out from my family and work to be there. And when I'm not, I dance around the kitchen using my new moves. My family is so lucky.

Aerobics and I are back together. I quit the gym that I never attended and bought myself a Jazzercise pass. I'm even thinking about buying some new exercise clothes—maybe even some new blue eyeliner!

I heard that Jane just rereleased her exercise video on DVD. I need to look into that.

# *I Know Where I Was When Jerry Garcia Died*

by Julia Mace

December 18, 2016

My brother remembers where he was when he found out Jerry Garcia died. He said I called him where he was living in London. I don't remember this, but I recall that when I found out a coworker said, "You look like your best friend just died."

He kind of had. It was a sad day for me and a host of second-generation Dead Heads. As teenagers and twentysomethings we spent our summer job money on tickets, T-shirts and campground fees. We tried to get out of work, family obligations and school to see the Grateful Dead.

My mom dropped a friend and me off at my first Dead show when I was 16 or 17. I was shocked but fell in love with the hippie revelry. I came home and told my parents how cool it was, not mentioning all the drugs I saw.

I started my Dead music collection with vinyl records, but I soon "advanced" to the popular cassette tapes. Collecting and displaying bootlegged shows in my fancy wood tape holder was a point of pride for me. My wardrobe consisted of my prized show shirts, cut-off jean shorts, Birkenstocks and long flowing skirts. Oh, and a hair-wrap thing that college guys loved and my parents hated. I took my Dead posters to college and was outraged when someone at a party stuck tacks in the band members' eyes.

© Courtesy Julia Mace

Part of the sweetness of Dead shows was exploring the world and its offerings for the first time. Camping and traveling without parents felt empowering. The portable toilets were gross, but the access to friends, music, dancing, hanging out and illegal drinking (for some of us) was a unifying taste of the good life.

On July 5, I relived it all with my brother and two friends as we watched the Dead's final show at Soldier Field in Chicago. We are in our mid-40s now. Before the show started, we chattered about our touring memories, friends and past wild times. We couldn't stop laughing. My brother and my friend still have all their shirts, even the ones stained by sweat. Ticket stubs have been saved.

Here's what was different: We were at a local movie theater. I think I hurt my back trying to dance in my seat. We monitored a friend's Facebook updates from the live show on our phones. As we watched the Chicago crowd, we saw the light of phones and iPads instead of lighters. It was Sunday night with work looming on the horizon after a long holiday weekend. We drank Cokes.

Here's what was the same: We knew our friend at the show was wearing his 28-year-old Grateful Dead jean vest. We missed Jerry, but the music made us as happy as it ever did. The other theatergoers whistled, clapped and sang along as well. The happy feeling we chased at past shows was still there. We knew all

the words and sang along; this time it was tinged with nostalgia for the band, our youth and our friends. As I dragged myself to work this morning, I listened to the Dead as I drove, smiling and singing to myself. The texts and Facebook messages have been flying between those at the movie theater, those at the live show and friends in other cities. Some posted photos of a memorable time in our lives—Buckeye Lake, Ohio, 1988. Yes, we still know the dates and concert venues. I read all the coverage of the shows by the New York Times, sending the links to friends.

It has been a long, strange trip, and I feel lucky to have taken it.

Thank you, Grateful Dead.

# Role Reboot

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**My Kids Love My Body, Why Can't I?**



# *My Kids Love My Body, Why Can't I?*

by Julia Mace

November 5, 2015

A wise friend once told me “The story of your weight is boring to everyone but you.”

This morning my almost 6-year-old son watched as I tried to manipulate my digital scale to do what I want.

“Can I get on?” he asked.

“Yes, but just a minute,” I said grumpily, as I tilted a little to the left, then to the right.

“I want it to go down,” I muttered.

“Why?” he asked innocently.

This hit me hard. I let him witness my insanity. He didn’t understand it, but I did.

I’ve tried really hard not to talk about my constant desire to lose weight around my boys. The parenting slip-up this morning reminded me of all the time I’ve spent cajoling a scale.

It started when I was 13.

In college, I would let a two-pound gain ruin my day—I was 105. Now at 46 and having had babies, the numbers are higher and I’m playing the same soul-sucking game.

I realize this obsession doesn’t make me special. So many women are in the battle.

Recently, a wise friend told me, “Girl, I think the food/fat issue is a nasty ass bitch that never goes away. You just have to continue to tell her to walk on every time she shows up.”

I love this.

Another friend said, “The story of your weight is boring to everyone but you.”

It’s true. My weight isn’t why I have my friends and family.

I have a pretty great life. I adore my husband and three kids, like my job, my parents are living, and I have fantastic friends. Dig deep and I’ve survived divorce, crippling migraines, and the thing that makes the rest look easy, the life-threatening illness of one of my kids.

Yet, I'm still hyper-focused on my weight. And I know I'm not the only one. What woman doesn't get sucked into this never-ending hamster wheel? Recently I shared with a coworker that I knew someone writing a memoir about her eating disorder. She told me that when she was a teaching assistant in graduate school, everyone wrote about their eating disorders. We laughed but really, what is funny about college-age women and 50-year-old women struggling with food and self-love?

Not a thing.

I watch my boys and they are so innocent and free. They run around. They love their reflections. They are beautiful.

I've often thought that one of the reasons I was meant to be a mom to boys is that I wouldn't mess them up when it comes to their weight.

This morning when I let some light shine on my insecurities in front of my son, I remembered that boys aren't immune to the self-destructiveness of dieting and image either. In high school, I was an ally to boys with similar bad habits. One popular guy advised me to eat salad all day so you could save your calories for beer on the weekend. That's what he did, although he did pass out in football practice. The wrestlers making weight were also good for tips. I didn't succumb to spitting, but tried other starvation tips.

One great thing about being a mom to my boys is that they teach me too. They love my body, jiggle parts and all. They often tell me I'm pretty. The other time I slipped up and mentioned weight around them, I said something about getting rid of my belly. With big innocent eyes and sweet faces, they asked, "Why?"

Seriously: Why?

I'm proud that at 40, I carried twin babies. My body made those sweet little boys.

So, I'm going to try, for them and myself. And tell my food issues to walk on by.

# Personal Blog

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Community in a Pandemic

# *Community in a Pandemic*

by Julia Mace

May 17, 2020

I sent my neighborhood friend a text. “It makes me happy to see you walk by my house.....oh, I guess that is creepy.”

She sent me a creepy clown emoji and an lol.

I’ve spent the last weeks working from home in our bedroom upstairs while Eddie tackles the schooling downstairs. Sometimes, the sound of bickering floating up the stairs stresses me out. Other times, a cute kid will pop his head in with a question or story – even if I’m in a virtual meeting. Often, I realize the privilege of my safe perch – a bay window in our sunny room, a cat snoring on my bed.

When I’m not engrossed in my screen, I’ll give myself a break and look out the window. (I have to put my glasses on or it’s all a blur.) I have a spectacular view of our street – green lawns, spring blooms and whoever is walking by.

These days, my view and my daily walks have led me to ponder (when I’m not having a pity party, let’s be frank) my good fortune to live where I do. I think of all the people nestled in their houses, sheltering in place. I consider that I’m lucky to be able to visit a park, walk in a beautiful neighborhood and have six feet conversations with my multiple neighbors.

Walks and chatting at a distance are a balm. My family ran into her our former next-door-neighbors a few days ago. It was lovely. Physically seeing them reminded me of how neighborhoods are made for connections.

My neighborhood friends have certainly both supported and celebrated with my family in the past. In my slice of community, I see kindness all around. My neighbors are stopping to talk as they walk their dogs (the poor dogs don’t understand why others won’t pet them) or work in their yards. Some are checking in on each other through phone calls and texts, dropping off baked goods and generally cheering each other on. I’m so lucky to be around these good people.

These are things I try to hold on to on the days it feels like too much.

## **Now for the books**

Calvin has been cracking up at Mr. Wolf’s Class by Aron Nels Steinke. (There is a mouse called Dr. Cheese.) I think Max has started the third Harry Potter book. Honestly, we just need to get through the last week of school.

I just finished *Normal People* by Sally Rooney. Two friends (hello Kathy and Harper) have been raving about it and they were correct – it's good. My book club is reading *Disappearing Earth* by Julia Phillips. Also amazing. I feel like I'm making progress that I can actually focus on some good literature. (Shout out to Greg at Downbound Books for the delivery.)

## **Class of 2020**

I need to recognize two special young women that are missing their senior year. My former sidekick, Meredith Morgan, and my Ivory Soap baby, Frances Porter. I can't give them back what they are missing but I am proud of them both. (For Mariemont readers, their moms are Karen Sabo and Eloise Waters.)

# The Greater Cincinnati Foundation

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**Taking Risks: Elementz**

**Her Short Life Made a Big Impact**

**Sunshine on a Cloudy Day**

**Most Likely to Succeed**

# *Taking Risks: Elementz*

by Julia Mace

In Cincinnati, 52 percent of teens live in poverty. Many of these tremendously creative youth express themselves at Elementz, an arts center that focuses on the urban art forms of hip hop music, dance, DJing, graffiti art, spoken word, stepping, photography, music and video production.

Elementz opened its doors in 2001 as a response to Cincinnati's civil unrest. Urban youth needed a safe space and Elementz founders provided it, using hip hop as a way to get them in the door.

Executive Director Tom Kent said The Greater Cincinnati Foundation has supported it every step of the way.

"The first grant was a risky investment," said Tom. "It was a risky time for everyone after the riots, and Elementz was a chance to react in a positive way."

As Cincinnati's urban core has changed, Elementz leaders realized providing a safe spot was no longer the main focus. Using art, they could help youth have immediate and future successes.

GCF's Helen Mattheis, program director of Thriving People, suggested they meet with Tom Lottman of Children, Inc. about how to best measure the impact of social and emotional learning. An intentional focus allows individuals to learn and apply skills and attitudes that will help them be successful in life.

With help from a Community Fund grant, this approach has been integrated into all the center's programs. Instructors use art to help young people hone skills, complete tasks, and work with others. This could be writing a song, working with a dance team, completing a painting. Instructors measure emotional and social skills with each student.

"We have an ability to be more effective with the kids we are serving," said Creative Director Abdullah Powell. "There is success in kids graduating (high school) and not getting in trouble and working jobs, but our biggest thing is that is not enough. We want our kids to be in high level jobs. Our discussions now with the community are that our kids are creative, and they could be lending to some of the creative companies as they are looking for diverse talent."

Staff also work to widen the students' support network. Most come in with an average of two adults in their lives. The center's networks include instructors, local artists, and business people.

Each year, 250 youth are served. A recent Community Fund grant allowed the center to hire its first development staff member.

And every evening, the building on Race Street reverberates with energy as young people create art.

“We’ve never walked away from our original mission,” Tom Kent said. “We’re still a hip hop organization, we still work with low-income kids, and we’ve found a niche that works well for the community.”

The Greater Cincinnati Foundation and its donors have invested \$659,525 in Elementz since 2004. In addition, GCF Private Foundations have invested \$109,000. Donial Curry, Elementz manager of development and communications, is a New Faces of Fundraising graduate. New Faces works to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of individuals entering the field of nonprofit fundraising. GCF has invested \$30,000 in this award-winning program since 2013.

**Published in the 2015 Annual Report to the Community.**



# *Her Short Life Made a Big Impact*

by Julia Mace

Morgan Judd as a high school student, Morgan Judd would give up valuable sleeping time – Saturday mornings – to go teach young girls at her dance studio in Blue Ash. This was simply typical Morgan. She was the girl who was always prepared, never late and was always there for people.

When her younger brother was diagnosed with Crohns Disease, she was his biggest supporter. The teenager would run from school to the hospital to dance practice, never missing a beat.

As a freshman at Wake Forest University, Morgan quickly got involved, built strong friendships, made the University dance team and volunteered at a local food pantry during the holidays.

Morgan passed away on December 6, 2011 at age 19 from a blood clot to the brain.

Amid this tragedy, her parents, twin brother and two younger brothers and loved ones found comfort in the knowledge that she would continue to help others after her death. The teenager had made her own decision to become an organ donor and her generosity saved five lives.

“It is amazing the lives that she saved,” said her father Jerry Judd. “That story will be one that unfolds over time, we’re just starting to learn more about the recipients and hope to meet them and hear their stories.”

The lives saved by Morgan include a 37-year-old mother of twin boys needing a heart; a nineteen-year-old teenager who can now go to college thanks to Morgan’s lungs, and a 58-year-old father received her liver.

Morgan’s death also inspired an outpouring of love and support from those who knew and loved the happy and kind young woman. Her friends, unbeknownst to her family, set up a Facebook fundraising site and over 200 people donated more than \$10,000. These gifts and others created the Morgan Judd Memorial Fund at The Greater Cincinnati Foundation which to date has received more than \$100,000. With these gifts, the Judds were able to endow a scholarship at Ursuline Academy and will continue to support other causes Morgan cared about.

To show support, Morgan’s friends also created a virtual phenomenon through social media. Friends posted photos of her initials written on their hands. Thousands participated and a beautiful video captures the effort.

“I think the thing that is so striking is that she went to school on August 26 and she died on December 6, so she wasn’t even there that long but you can see the impact she had on so many people in a short time,” her mother Leigh said.

Morgan and her three brothers also left their parents with another gift – no regrets. The four teenagers deeply loved each other and were very close.

“I don’t think anyone left anything unsaid; they always told each other they loved each other every time they talked,” Leigh said. “I have no regrets, if I had to rewind and do it again; there is nothing I would do differently. That gives me a lot of peace.”

**Read more about a remarkable young woman at [morgansmiracles.com](http://morgansmiracles.com).**

# *Sunshine on a Cloudy Day*

by Julia Mace

It's not hard to see why Judy Schmitz was selected to be the "sunshine girl" by her Kiwanis group. She's upbeat, enthusiastic and willing to try new things. In the recent past, she's fed cheetahs in Africa, learned French, volunteered in Haiti and taught a class at Xavier University.

Her energy served her well as a teacher and former junior high principal. Judy started her career as a teacher, then administrator, and is retiring as curriculum specialist for Mariemont City Schools.

Eleven years ago, this cheerful educator and her husband's lives were forever changed when he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Unsurprisingly, the sunshine girl and her equally determined husband Jerry spent his last months as advocates for others suffering from the same illness.

"He was very positive the whole time," Judy said. "And being an engineer came into play – he was always three months ahead of the disease. The day he needed a cane, he ordered his scooter. When he used the scooter, he ordered his wheelchair."

Judy recalls that they were fortunate. Friends and family rallied around them. They had "good jobs, great insurance benefits and financial security." As they met others fighting the disease, they saw how the disease took a toll on families, both financially and emotionally. "We were dealt a terrible loss, but were lucky with the way we got to deal with it," she said. "We had the privilege of focusing on making Jerry's final days comfortable and filled with family and friends."

Judy explains that the ALS Association assists patients with medical equipment, communication devices, and emotional support.

She's grateful.

"That is why that association continues to be one of the primary targets of my planned giving program," she said. Judy remained active in the ALS organization after Jerry's death nine years ago. She eventually took a break from it – "it got too hard" – but she's returning as chair of its local advocacy group. She also volunteers with The First Tee, a nonprofit organization based around golf that teaches children character and values through the game.

A Columbus, Ohio native, Judy says she was raised in a household where you give back of your time and skills. "My dad, a retired firefighter, is the kindest and most giving person I've ever known," she said. "He and my mother were sensitive to the needs of others and willing to offer their time and talents as needed." Herdad, at 82, still volunteers twice a week at the food bank her brother manages.

Judy recently opened a donor advised fund at GCF.

“I’m pleased with my fund because it’s easy to manage, to monitor,” she said.

“Just by talking to the people at GCF, you get ideas about how to give. I’m just a regular person and this is a great way for regular people to keep track of their charitable dollars,” she added.

Judy remains close to Jerry’s adult sons, Scott and Joe, and often travels with them. She’s looking forward to an upcoming vacation that involves hiking, kayaking and horseback riding. She claims she’s not talented in any of these pastimes but is up to the challenge.

What would you expect from a woman nicknamed sunshine?

**Printed in the 2010 Annual Report**

## *Most Likely to Succeed*

by Julia Mace

Sam Hutson considers himself a person from the streets. He became a single parent when his son Dominique was 17 months old. Sam decided he wanted something different for him and looked to the Catholic school system.

“I wanted something special for Dominique,” he shared. “I understood the point of education, even though I didn’t have it myself.” Sam gushes when he talks about Dominique’s school.

The eighth grader attends St. Francis Seraph, part of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, located on Liberty Street in Over-the-Rhine.

“Once I got to meet Principal Wanda Hill, I fell in love with her,” he said. “She’s truly concerned with inner-city kids and her staff reflects that.”

Despite working two jobs, Sam has little “wiggle room” for school tuition. He receives tuition assistance from the Catholic Inner-City Schools Education Fund (CISE). Founded in 1980, CISE exists to raise funds to supplement the dollars which the Archdiocese of Cincinnati contributes annually to urban schools.

Funds raised provide tuition aid to parents and school operating expenses. There are seven CISE K-8 schools under the umbrella of the Archdiocese. A staggering 82 percent of the students in CISE schools live at or below poverty level.

There were about 1,350 students in CISE schools this year and most of these children receive tuition assistance.

“CISE is what makes this school possible,” Principal Wanda Hill said. “The tuition assistance makes it possible for the neediest people to come here. I tell the people at CISE, you are giving people a choice to come here. When you give them a choice, you give them dignity.” And it works.

The CISE schools, which welcome children of all faiths, have a high success rate – 96 percent attending Catholic high schools successfully graduate and many go on to college. The class of 2006 has an 88 percent college enrollment rate.

Volunteer Harry Santen said part of the success is the commitment of parents to contribute towards tuition; it demonstrates their own commitment to the value of education.

Harry isn’t your average volunteer – he’s been with CISE for 20 years and was chair for 15. He also teaches pottery classes to the students and supports CISE financially through a fund at GCF.

“We don’t have a lot of bells and whistles,” Harry said, “But it’s a terrific education.” It’s this lack of bells and whistles that led Harry to work with the CISE principals and create a program that will allow top students to live up to their potential.

Together with Tracy Moore II, Harry is launching the Leadership Scholars Program. Students at local Catholic high schools will serve as mentors to the top CISE students, with a focus on leadership.

“I think mentorship/role modeling is very important for the African-American community as well as education,” said Tracy, himself a product of Catholic schools. “I think that it will also give the students something to look forward to, to aspire to, help them dream bigger, and know that they can overcome the obstacles in their lives.”

As a father, Sam dreams big for his son and works hard to overcome obstacles. For instance, Sam had reservations about Dominique walking to school, beginning in the sixth grade, but talked to him about being alert and paying attention.

“Where we live on Walnut there is a lot of drama, even though the police have recently cleaned it up around there,” he said. “I’d make pretend I was going back inside the house and watch him, keep my eye on him.”

The father/son team is a dynamic pair. They are just one example of why people like Harry Santen, Wanda Hill and Tracy Moore are dedicated to CISE students and parents.

Dominique’s education at St. Francis will culminate in success – he earned a scholarship to attend Roger Bacon High School this fall.

The soft-spoken, well-mannered 13-year-old hopes to play football next year but said, “I’m going to concentrate on my classes first.”

Spoken like someone who keeps his eye on the obstacles.

His father should be very proud.

Harry Santen established The Leadership Scholars Fund, a designated fund exclusively benefiting CISE, in 2003. Many other GCF donors show support for CISE by suggesting grants totaling more than \$2.5 million since 1996 from donor advised funds and two other designated funds.

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