

SUMMER/FALL 2020

# WALDEN

MAGAZINE

# 50 YEARS

EVOLVING TO MEET THE MOMENT



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



WALDEN  
MAGAZINE

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DEAR WALDEN COMMUNITY,

I know you are as proud as I am of Walden's 50-year commitment to positive social change. We take our promise of providing Education for Good™ seriously, and that includes our obligation to be excellent global citizens. For the safety of our global Walden community, we have made it a priority to align with the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and federal and state health agencies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

While many universities struggle to teach remotely, Walden has been perfecting distance education since our founding in 1970 and our first online degree program in 1995. It's in our DNA.

We are continuing to evolve our online education experience. In this issue, you'll get a peek at what the future looks like from the innovators who are continuing our heritage of leading the way in higher education. You'll also see how we are promoting Education for Good™. That includes working toward the crucial goal of equity in education.

All of this—along with the response of the educators, nurses, first responders, public health professionals, social workers, counselors, and others in the Walden family who are helping on the front lines of the pandemic's impact—makes me proud to call Walden “my university.”

Sincerely,

Dr. Ward Ulmer  
President  
Walden University

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## THE FUTURE OF LEARNING

New ways to learn are already here.



## LEARNING FROM HOME

Children discuss attending classes online for the first time.



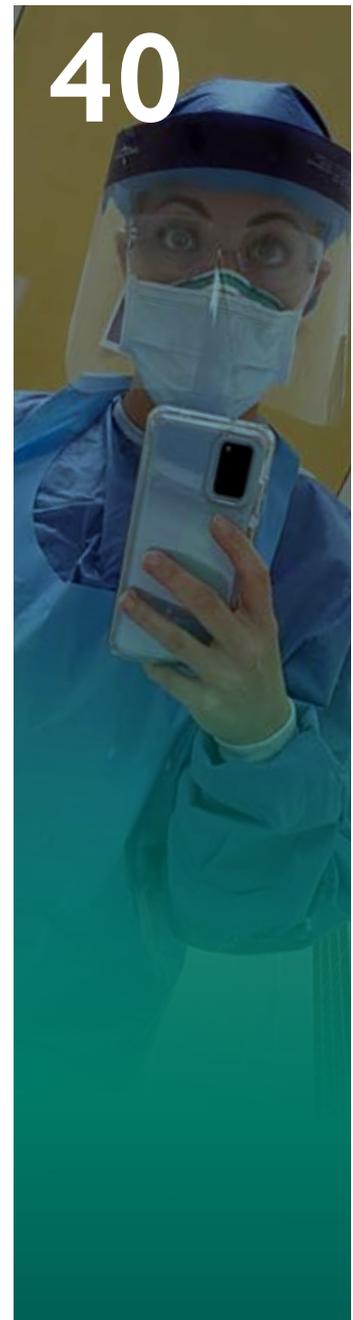
## FACES OF WALDEN

Meet some of the university's inspiring innovators, advocates, change makers, visionaries, and catalysts.



## FINDING THE GOOD

Our community has risen to the occasion.



## MOBILIZE FOR GOOD

We set out on a journey to empower the next generation.



A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a black VR headset, is shown in profile. She is wearing a white top and a necklace. The background is a blurred classroom with a whiteboard and other people. The text is overlaid on a dark blue, semi-transparent geometric shape.

# THE FUTURE OF LEARNING IS HERE

How student-inspired insights are driving Walden's innovation and new technology.

BY KRISTIN HANSON,  
MATT MCDERMOTT,  
AND KEVIN THORNTON

For many, the choice to earn a degree begins with a desire for something more: more career opportunities, more money, more personal fulfillment. Walden has shown how distance learning and online education can provide a path forward, but it is also familiar with the obstacles along the way.

Tight household budgets. Ever-changing schedules. The shadow of self-doubt. Most students have dealt with these concerns—and then some. Walden's beginnings are rooted in understanding personal challenges that many universities have failed to address.

Walden was among the first to show society that an online education is a powerful force for good. It has given generations of students the freedom and confidence to take a leap forward. But the university's evolution has been about more than the internet. It has been driven by anticipating and meeting student needs.

Dr. Andrea Lindell, vice provost of Walden's College of Health Sciences and College of Nursing, notes that to meet the changing needs of society and culture, our roles must change as well.

"There are so many opportunities," she says. "At Walden, we're continuously asking, how can we create a better process, a better model? What can we do to create a better world for the future?"

The answers to these questions are found in the way Walden fulfills its mission of education for good and education for all. This means updating curriculums and processes while utilizing new technologies to ensure students and faculty have the skills to flourish in a changing world.

## INNOVATION IN ACTION

One of higher education's biggest existential challenges—even before the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic—has been finding ways to make learning available and accessible for students leading busy personal and professional lives. "Student-centered learning" has become a common catchphrase in admissions materials, but few institutions have effectively turned this concept into reality.

"When you look at higher ed in general, everyone is experimenting with how to deliver to and reach students," says Walden University Vice Provost Marilyn Powell. "It's a transition from, 'I'm a member of the academy, I have this knowledge, and I want people to have it' to 'I need to know what's going on in your life and your profession, the rhythms and the content that works best for you. I can form the knowledge I have into any of those formats.'"

Over the past decade, Walden has developed new programs and provided new learning options to support this student-centered philosophy. Offerings such as Tempo Competency-Based Learning™, the One-Credit track in the MS in Education (MSEd) program, and microlearning-based experiences are being deployed to empower current and future students on their path of lifelong learning.

"Where Walden, I think, stands out is that we have not sat still on things," says Sue Subocz, Walden's chief academic officer and provost. "I think some other institutions have found a model and feel it's really good, and so they stick with it. That's not us. We're constantly surveying the field."

## CHOOSE YOUR SPEED

About five years ago, Walden introduced Tempo Learning®, a format that allows students to customize the pace of their learning.

"You have more flexibility in terms of when you are graded. You set your pace based on your own schedule," Subocz says.

For example, in professions related to information technology or business management, where the need for upskilling is constant, Tempo Learning allows students to move faster than they would in a traditional 12-week course. But in professions like education—where the time an individual can devote to learning varies significantly during the year—students can choose to go slower when they need to.

## CONTROL YOUR COURSE LOAD

Teachers seeking an advanced degree have long made up a significant portion of Walden's student body. But over the years, leaders like Powell began noticing a concerning trend.

"We were seeing folks take leaves of absence when things got busy. They needed a more flexible way to adjust their course load," she says. "That's when we began talking about one-credit courses."

The One-Credit MEd track requires the same total number of credits as the traditional program track but is structured differently. Students choose a completion option—12, 16, or 20 months—and can complete up to three 1-credit courses during each four-week term.

“The flexibility will be a bonus for teachers who need to ebb and flow in their own learning,” says Powell, who adds that students are currently enrolled in all three tracks of the program.

## UPSKILL AS NEEDED

For many people, an advanced degree program isn’t the ultimate goal. Millions of professionals each year seek opportunities to upskill—to quickly acquire new competencies they can immediately apply in their jobs—without enrolling in a degree program.

After working with employer partners to pilot custom learning programs for their staffs, Walden launched the School of Lifelong Learning in 2019 to provide similar opportunities to the general public. The platform offers single courses, short courses, and microlearning

experiences that range in intensity and length—from a couple of hours to a full semester.

“For employers, we can package together small bits of courses from different disciplines into a just-in-time, curated, tailored learning experience that is specific to job descriptions or promotion criteria,” says Steven Tom, senior vice president of student experience and chief transformation officer.

For students, Walden can offer lifelong learning opportunities that advance their careers, in between and beyond their degrees.

## TECHNOLOGY’S ENVELOPE OF CARE

Any conversation about technological innovation in higher education typically centers on the classroom. But not all online learning is created equal. Walden has been at the forefront of instructional innovation for decades, pioneering the platform and perfecting the experience. That’s evident in Walden’s efforts to use emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

*From then to now, Walden is defined by innovation.*



**1970**

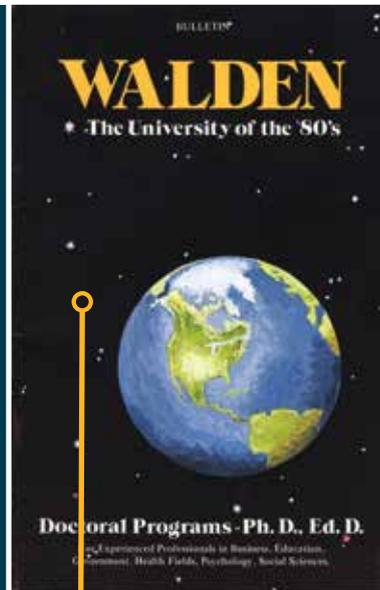
### WALDEN FOUNDED

by Bernie and Rita Turner to help working teachers and school administrators finish their doctoral degrees.

**1979**

### WALDEN EARNS LICENSE TO GRANT PhDs AND EdDs IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board licenses Walden University.



**1987**

### NEW INDIVIDUALIZED DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Walden reformats program to include professional development plan, knowledge area modules, and dissertation.



**1995**

### FIRST ONLINE MASTER'S IN EDUCATION

MS in Educational Change and Technology Innovation is a first in the U.S.

This is not tech for tech's sake. It's a deliberate and sustained commitment to enhancing the student experience at every touchpoint with the aid of new tools.

"We want to be partners in this learning journey with our students to help them get to their final destination," says Tom. "Technology enables us to provide an envelope of care and support for the student experience. The more we can do to essentially walk the journey with our students, the better we can serve them."

It's the kind of thinking that has served as a North Star for some of the most recognized brands in the world. Companies like Amazon and Chipotle have thrived by creating a large variety of offerings, making it intuitive and even enjoyable to find what you need when you want it. Think of Amazon's "Customers who bought this item also bought" feature, which recognizes the behavior and current needs of a customer and helps provide them with possible next steps. Whether you're looking for dish detergent or choosing a degree, a customized experience makes all the difference.

## DIGITAL ASSISTANTS HELP STUDENTS GET IT DONE

Many Walden students juggle work and family responsibilities while pursuing their degrees. Their time to focus on coursework and other school-related obligations often falls outside of the usual schedules of university staff. Who is available to help them with their important questions at 3 a.m.? Walden made challenges like this a priority.

Enter Charlotte, Walden's student support chatbot. Originally programmed to perform fewer than 10 tasks, two years later, Charlotte is capable of more than 80 different functions and can provide students with individualized information.

"Charlotte isn't just answering questions but doing things like ordering official transcripts and checking financial aid status," Tom says. "It's not, 'Here's where you can go,' but, 'Let me do that for you.'"

The reality is that not everyone learns at the same pace. And not everyone is motivated to learn 24/7. To address this challenge, the university has developed tools to guide student learning, not just



2000

FIRST DISTANCE-LEARNING UNIVERSITY TO BE CATEGORIZED "RESEARCH INTENSIVE" by the Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education®.

2006

WALDEN ESTABLISHES FIRST FULLY ONLINE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION.



2008

WALDEN LAUNCHES FULLY ONLINE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM with a Master of Arts in Teaching option and specializations in Early Childhood Education and Special Education.

support it. Based on the principles of “nudge theory,” Walden’s Doctoral Navigator uses positive reinforcement and in-the-moment reminders to keep students on track.

“Instead of you figuring out what you have to do, the Doctoral Degree Coach™ says, ‘You’re at this step—here is the book, or rubric, or resource that you need so you don’t have to go around looking for it,’” Tom says of the technology, now available in almost all of Walden’s doctoral programs. “It helps you get started, saves time, and tracks your progress against your goals.”

### THE VALUE OF VIRTUAL REALITY

Another challenge Walden students face: limited time and opportunities to complete the in-person field experiences necessary for many degrees. The increasing accessibility of virtual reality, Tom says, helps solve that problem.

About a year and a half ago, Walden collaborated with Google to develop a field safety training experience for students in the Barbara

Solomon School of Social Work using the tech giant’s Daydream and Cardboard products. Over 90% of students found the experience helpful in preparing them to go out in the field.

“It was important to our social work faculty to be able to use this tool to help Walden students develop instincts for heat-of-the-moment encounters during home visits,” Tom said in a Google case study about the program. “The more we prepare our students for the most stressful situations, the better our students will be able to help those in need.”

Building on the success of the social work training experience, Walden is working on bringing virtual reality to more programs that can benefit from simulation experiences, including school counseling, education, and nursing.

### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Fifty years ago, Bernie and Rita Turner made their dream of education for all a reality with the founding of Walden University. They recognized an educational need. They built a center of higher learning devoted



## 2014–2019

**LAUREATE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES NETWORK LEVERAGES WALDEN’S EXPERTISE IN ONLINE LEARNING**  
to provide coursework for more than 1.4 million students globally.

## 2015

**WALDEN BECOMES ONE OF THE FIRST SCHOOLS APPROVED TO OFFER DIRECT ASSESSMENT COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION.**



## 2016–2019

**FIRST COMPETENCY-BASED MASTER’S PROGRAM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**  
Nation’s first to use a direct assessment model.

**THE ONLINE LEARNING CONSORTIUM (OLC) RECOGNIZES WALDEN’S EXCELLENCE**  
Student and faculty support services and digital learning advancements receive a total of six Effective Practice Awards.

to positive social change. And they opened it to adult learners from diverse backgrounds. Innovation is woven through Walden's history. As these new technological applications take root, Walden will continue to seek inspiration from its most valuable resource: students.

"The experience is a big reason why a student chooses a place of higher education, or why they would decide to continue once they started," Tom says. "The more we can make the experience frictionless, cater it to you, make it convenient to you, the more we're going to help you be successful."

The tradition at Walden is to always look ahead, developing solutions that give generations of students the freedom to be ambitious and the confidence to take that leap forward. Just as Walden pioneered online learning, it continues to lead in developing new technologies and teaching methods that enhance the experience of today's students, preparing them for the workforce of tomorrow.

Wherever today takes Walden students and whatever tomorrow demands of them, they'll be prepared. Because, for half a century, Walden's been preparing for them.

## 2017

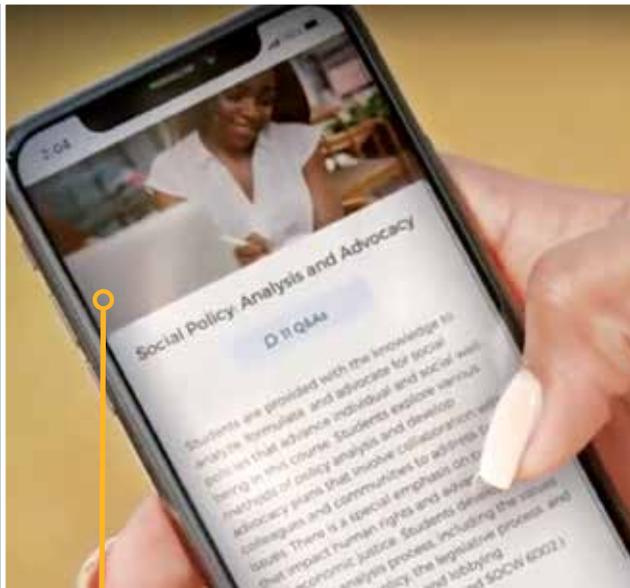
### WALDEN BECOMES A CERTIFIED B CORPORATION®

ensuring the university meets rigorous standards of social and environmental impact, legal accountability, and public transparency.

## 2019

### WALDEN ESTABLISHES SCHOOL OF LIFELONG LEARNING

providing continuing education courses that range in intensity and length.



## 2018

### FIRST ONLINE UNIVERSITY TO USE SIMULATIONS

Walden's MS in Education with a specialization in Special Education launches simulations with interactive avatars.

### VIRTUAL REALITY FIELD TRAINING

tool developed for students in Walden's school of social work.

### WALDEN INTRODUCES AI CHATBOT NAMED CHARLOTTE

Now able to perform 80 different functions for students.

# NURSING SOCIAL CHANGE

*Dr. Andrea Lindell is a  
career healer with a vision.*

BY KEVIN THORNTON

Walden's mission of social change drives every aspect of what the university does—but it's particularly vital to the nursing and health sciences programs and their many students, alumni, and faculty.



Dr. Andrea Lindell, vice provost of the College of Nursing and the College of Health Sciences, joined Walden nearly a decade ago. She brought with her a successful background as a nurse academic, clinician, executive, and administrator.

And equally important, she brought with her a deep commitment to social change.

“I love Walden’s mission, which is to provide opportunity for individuals to transform themselves as scholars and practitioners so they can effect positive social change,” Lindell says. “This enables me in my leadership role to support, facilitate, and advocate for the engagement of faculty, staff, and students—as well as myself—to pursue changes that improve society, or in our case, the ways we educate those who provide healthcare services.

“You only need to look at the recognition nurses have received for their frontline efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic to understand the kind of impact nursing can have.”

Before joining Walden in 2011, Lindell spent 20 years at the University of Cincinnati, where she served as a professor and the dean of the College of Nursing. While there, she built her reputation as a collaborator and a champion for social change—both within the university and across the globe.

During that time, she further developed a belief in the importance of collaboration and cooperation to drive social change, a perspective shared by Walden. While at the University of Cincinnati, Lindell was contacted by a member of the South Korean ministry of health about the need for advanced educational preparation of nurses caring for young children in hospitals.

At the time, no South Korean university had a pediatric nurse practitioner master’s program. Lindell stepped in to help create one, and the result was a partnership with the college of nursing at Yonsei University. Under the program, University of Cincinnati nursing faculty traveled to South Korea to teach graduate-level pediatric content, and Korean students came to the U.S. to engage in pediatric clinical learning experiences and eventually earn their master’s degrees. In the end, more than 300 nurse practitioners specializing in pediatrics participated in the program and established new nursing roles in children’s hospitals in Seoul. Eventually, South Korean universities offered pediatric nurse practitioner training as part of their graduate programs in nursing.

“There are situations where you can look back at your efforts and see the resulting social change that occurred,” Lindell says. “In that case, we can still see the profound and long-term results of trying to enhance the role of a nurse in Seoul, South Korea. There was a healthcare societal structure impact in nursing and medicine from those efforts across the whole country. That’s powerful.”

Equally powerful are the changes Walden’s recently renamed College of Nursing is pursuing, and the results it is achieving.

Much of the social change energy in the college has focused on collaboration and sharing between the educational and clinical roles of the practice. Lindell notes that the goal at Walden is shared discussions related to receiving feedback and sharing information among the full spectrum of healthcare providers, whether it’s nurses, nutritionists, healthcare administrators, physicians, or social workers. “It’s critical we have communication and dialogue going both ways,” she says. “The outcome goal is the delivery of quality patient satisfaction care that you achieve by collaborating to treat the whole patient and family.”

Lindell adds that Walden’s educational approach is working, pointing to several nursing students and graduates who have been at the forefront of recent social change successes. “We had a graduate honored by President Obama for her work on developing protection for nurses and physicians with regard to the Ebola virus,” she says. “And another recent graduate who was assigned to the USNS Comfort naval hospital ship sent to New York Harbor to help with COVID-19 cases. Those are significant examples of social change at work and speak highly of Walden’s graduates.”

But not all social change has to involve a major breakthrough or issue. “In a way, we’re all engaged in social change,” she says. “You can be a social change agent of one. We had a recent graduate who realized there was no medical clinic within a reasonable distance of her town in Colorado, and so she raised the funds and set one up herself. That’s taking social change to heart.”

And taking it to heart is exactly what Lindell has done as well. In looking back on her long and successful career in nursing, she often thinks of a 6-year-old girl who many years ago taught her about the passion that drives nursing and healers, and ultimately the drive to initiate social change.

“When I was a nursing student, for my clinical practicum I was rotated in pediatrics to care for a 6-year-old girl who had fallen off a horse and had a lacerated liver,” she recalls. “At the time, I also worked as a waitress at a diner on weekends to make extra money. One evening, the girl’s father—returning from a sales trip—stopped in, recognized me, and spoke about his daughter’s love for horses. It personalized the experience for me as I gave nursing care to this young girl. It solidified that I needed to focus on the whole patient as a person and the family, not just the illness, condition, and best practices we can achieve.”

“It was during my clinical practicum rotation in the intensive unit when she was admitted with liver failure and was assigned as my patient. When she died,” Lindell adds, “I felt like I was in the process of dying, too. The entire experience taught me about empathy and sympathy and the value of family and life. A change was made in me, and it drove me to want to change things, too. That experience positioned me to focus on what’s important in nursing, healthcare, and life. I’ll never forget it. That’s what social change can achieve.”

# WALDEN GLOBAL DAYS OF SERVICE

BY JOYCE REINGOLD



*The Walden community takes on service projects all over the world.*

On Walden University's first Global Day of Service in 2006, faculty, staff, students, and alumni worked alongside members of their communities on meaningful volunteer activities—neighbors helping neighbors. It was an ideal fit for a university founded to inspire and lead scholars to work for positive social change. Yet as the tradition took root, organizers began to realize that one day of service could hardly contain the passion, vision, and spirit of Walden's change makers.

Fifteen years later, Walden University communities plan and participate in Global Days of Service activities that span four to six weeks starting each October. The projects are diverse, fitting

an area's individual needs: assembling toiletry kits for people experiencing homelessness, beautifying a veterans cemetery, or painting and remodeling school classrooms.

"Global Days of Service was traditionally organized by the marketing team, and they've done a splendid job. When Walden's Center for Social Change was formed in 2017, one of the first things president Dr. Ward Ulmer did was to ask if we would like to take [over] that responsibility," says Dr. Bill Schulz, the center's director. "I bootstrapped it and learned how to coordinate it in 2018, and helped prepare Molly Raymond, the center's associate director, who ran it in 2019 and doubled our impact."

Raymond says leaders in the four Walden University offices—San Antonio, Texas; Tempe, Arizona; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Columbia, Maryland—and the Laureate Education offices in Gdansk, Poland, coordinated events that engaged 2,173 volunteers logging 3,399 hours of service. With planning for 2020 underway, organizers expect to reach greater heights by enlisting a broader Walden community.

"This is a signature event for our employees," Raymond says. "It builds morale, and a sense of pride."



## GLOBAL DAYS OF SERVICE

Jennifer Ramos, senior human resources business partner and Global Days of Service coordinator in San Antonio, says when she joined the company three years ago, she was awestruck by the 86-member team's dedication to community service.

"It's really the people at the San Antonio location that drive the interest in Global Days of Service," she says. "Sometimes we have three to four events and they will attend every single one."

Raymond says the shared vision for Global Days of Service is to expand the commitment and impact beyond the office sites, to wherever students, faculty, alumni, and staff may live. After 2020, the event will take place in June 2021 and then in April 2022. It will then continue yearly in April as part of Global Volunteer Month.

"When you think about Walden University as a community, the heart really lies in our remote and virtual communities,"

Raymond says. "Our alumni, students, and faculty are all remote, and some of our staff are as well. So, if we're not empowering those folks to participate in Global Days of Service and find a home in it, then we're really missing a key opportunity."

A pivotal piece of the strategy to engage that wider constituency is through the Walden Change Action Network (WeCAN) portal. On WeCAN, students and alumni can search for service opportunities or announce their own projects, including virtual activities.

"I've been talking to a lot of leaders and ... the remote Walden community, and everybody wants to experience more Walden humanity in person," she says. "So, we are going to try to empower more remote community members, including alumni, and say, 'Hey, you already have a nonprofit that you need support in,' and then help give them tools and resources to craft a service event."

This year, depending on the trajectory of the coronavirus pandemic, Global Days of Service may offer more opportunities for virtual volunteers. "Right now, with COVID-19, face-to-face volunteering has become very challenging," Schulz says. "But we're working already on, how can we do this virtually? How can we be ready to deploy the WeCAN network for Global Days of Service and do things both large scale and small scale?"

Raymond says the Center for Social Change successfully piloted several virtual events in 2019, including enlisting volunteers to help transcribe the works

## THE YEARS AHEAD



*From big undertakings to small, Global Days of Service is all about lending a hand.*

of the African American activist Anna Julia Cooper (1858–1964) during Black History Month.

So, no matter where or how the Global Days of Service good works are deployed, they share a foundation of social change, service, and volunteerism, Raymond says.

"It's the doorway into long-term, systematic social change," Raymond says. "It is an opening and an opportunity."



*Our volunteers are dedicated to serving their communities.*

# THE WALDEN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

BY JOYCE REINGOLD

In early March, a panel of Walden University faculty—experts in their fields of epidemiology, medicine, nursing, psychology, communications, and social and behavioral sciences—presented the interactive webinar “Global Response to, and Challenges of, the Novel Coronavirus and COVID-19.” Six hundred attendees, listening and watching from around the globe, heard the panel conclude COVID-19 would soon become a pandemic, an assessment validated by the World Health Organization’s declaration one week later.

“The panelists were spot on,” says Dr. William “Bill” Schulz, director of Walden’s Center for Social Change, who, with Dr. Savitri Dixon-Saxon, vice provost of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, was an executive sponsor. “And subsequently, those panelists have been out in the news, and being quoted on shows and in a number of magazines.”

The webinar, part of the popular Real-World Solutions to Real-World Problems series, embodies the center’s mission: “To be a connective hub that promotes, facilitates, and supports collaborative partnerships, action, research, and

projects that lead to purposeful action for sustainable positive social change.”

“I like what Bill did with the conceptualization of the center, and that was to call it a hub,” says Dr. Iris Yob, faculty member emerita and contributing faculty member in The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership.

“So, it wasn’t a place that did all the work, but it was a place that could coordinate and direct and lead and suggest. And it was a place where things could connect—what was being done in psychology could connect with what was being done in health services.”



*Molly Raymond helps lead the Center for Social Change as associate director.*



**WALDEN UNIVERSITY**  
CENTER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

It was Yob's research that paved the way for the center, Schulz says. Her work began in 2012, as Walden was preparing for its 2013 reaffirmation of accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

"The university had the option to choose whether it would do the kind of normal visit, or whether they would do what they called a special emphasis. The university decided it would go with a special emphasis, and they chose social change. I was asked to head up the work around that," Yob says. "We did a lot of research, and we ended up with a curriculum guide and some other things. But among the many things we did was we ... interviewed a lot of faculty, a lot of students, a lot of administrators. We did a survey as well. And one of the suggestions that kept coming through from faculty about what we should do next about social change was to have a social change center."

Walden launched the center in 2017 with Schulz as interim director, and in 2018 he became founding director. Molly Raymond joined the team in 2019 as an associate director of community engagement for social change, and in 2020 assumed the role of associate director of the center. Together, they are working across Walden's vast hub of talent and resources to further three strategic objectives: empower change makers, build community, and elevate social change outcomes across the university.

One of Schulz's main responsibilities is working with academic leaders to strengthen and enhance the role of social change in the Walden curriculum.

"We really want to make sure that both our faculty and our students can have important dialogue about social change, and about the skills that our students are applying, so they can talk to the world and say, the skills I'm learning to be an effective systems thinker are helping me to understand the complexities of stubborn social change issues," he says.

Raymond, who leads the center's Global Days of Service program, says she is working with Schulz to build relationships

across the university to find opportunities for thought leadership and social change collaborations.

"It's very important for Bill and me to not necessarily always be thinking of new ways to have an impact, but to also build on existing efforts and see how we might elevate them, whether that means connecting to additional resources, providing insight and consultation, or building interpersonal connections."

An important tool for bringing Walden's diverse and far-flung populations together is through an online hub, the Walden Change Action Network (WeCAN).

"At its core, WeCAN is a volunteer



*Founding Director William "Bill" Schulz has set an ambitious course for the center.*

management system. But we have the opportunity to build interest groups and create organizational affiliations," Raymond says.

One of the constituencies the center hopes to further engage is Walden alumni, Schulz says. "If there's an alumnus who has a vision for something they'd like to do, and they reach out to the alumni team that's building some sort of social change organization or event, we want to help support them in any way we can. And that's kind of our vision, is to get an ecosystem, where we can support one

another, inside the Walden community as well as outside."

Other plans for this year include an updated website and a blog launch.

Raymond says the blog will be titled *Aspire*, a nod to the book *Aspire Toward the Highest: Bernie and Rita Turner and the Founding of Walden University*.

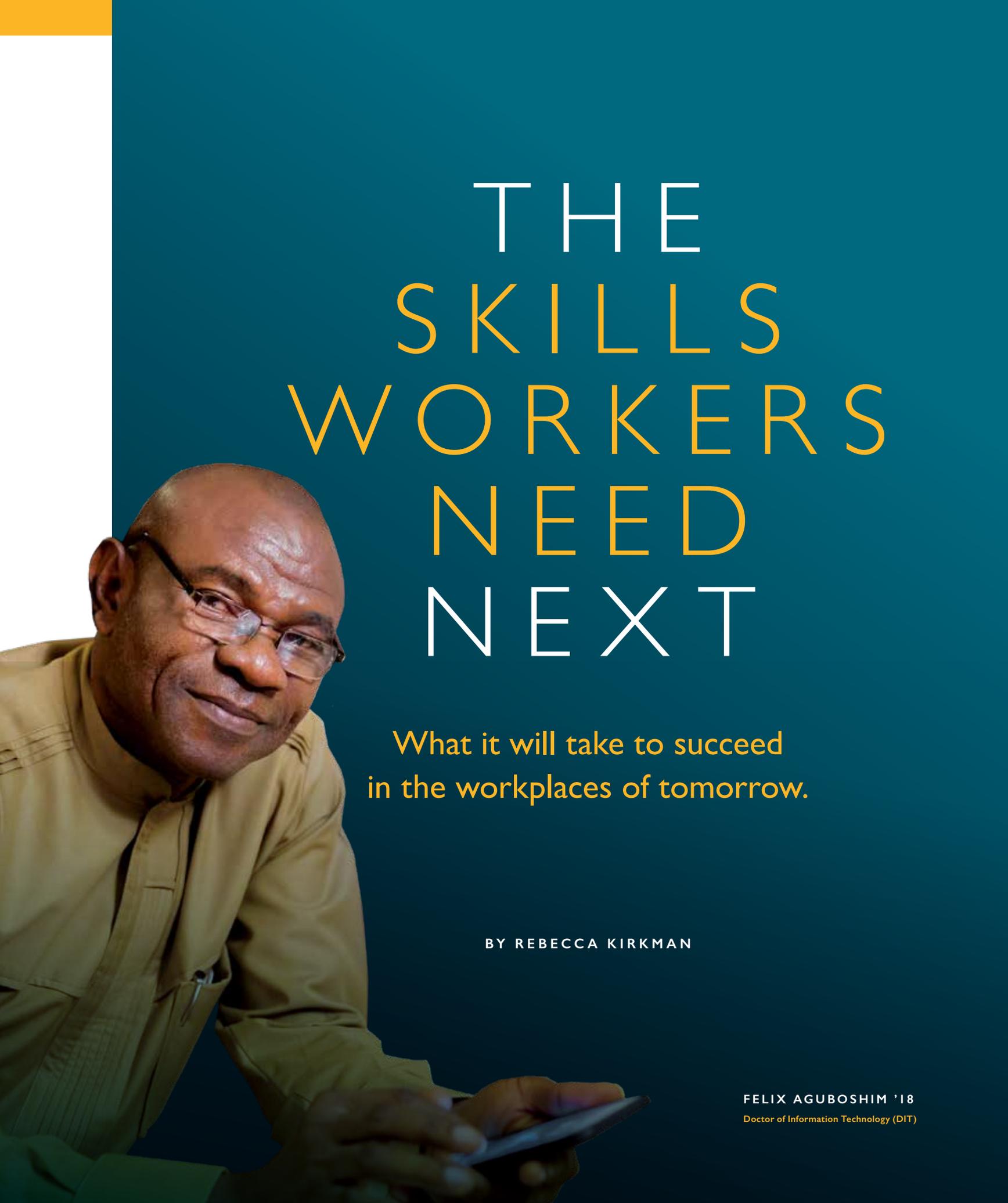
"We're hoping this will be one of those opportunities to build our community by understanding and learning from many different stories of social change so that people have a better understanding of the range of what social change looks like."

And the center's objective-filled 2020 strategic framework includes a fourth objective, a stretch goal: increase external credibility as a changemaking institution.

"If we start thinking about the future, there are two really large aspirational goals that we have shared with senior leadership, and our president, Dr. Ward Ulmer, is very supportive of them," Schulz says. "We'd like to find a way, and it's certainly possible from a legal standpoint, to have the center become a wholly owned 501(c)(3), a not-for-profit entity within Walden, that would allow us to work far more cooperatively on trends and other large-scale social change endeavors in the nonprofit world."

The second is to earn the Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement. "It's a rigorous process in which you show the impact you're making as a university in the world ... and that you're not just exploring inwardly," Schulz says. "There are no online universities that have ever applied for this, and we're hoping to be the first."

With its plans for 2020 and beyond, the Center for Social Change is a bustling hub of activity. "We're doing what Walden does: living and thriving in the virtual space. And we want other people to be comfortable in doing that as well," Schulz says. "The center's here and potentially can support you anywhere in the world."



# THE SKILLS WORKERS NEED NEXT

What it will take to succeed  
in the workplaces of tomorrow.

BY REBECCA KIRKMAN

FELIX AGUBOSHIM '18  
Doctor of Information Technology (DIT)

## What will be the single most desirable skill to employers of the future? A worker's ability to adapt to change.

"In the future, employers will be looking for people who are able to creatively problem-solve. They'll be looking for people who are innovators," says Dr. Savitri Dixon-Saxon, vice provost of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Walden University.

"An employee who's able to make decisions using data knows how to access information to grow with the organization's goals. Those are the people who are going to be able to take advantage of the workplace of the future."

As digitized workplaces become the norm, simply understanding technology is no longer enough. The most desirable employees will be skilled in strategically employing the newest applications and systems to achieve the organization's goals. These employees will continually improve their skills and knowledge, keeping pace with the rate of technology growth.

"In the 21st century, it takes one year to make the technological advances that it took 10 years to make in the 20th century," says Dixon-Saxon, describing technology's exponential rate of change. "The job market changes at the same pace."

For today's workforce, that makes continuing education more important than ever. And it's something Dixon-Saxon prioritizes in her own professional life. "Every three to five years, I need to be thinking about acquiring some significant new skill that allows me to remain relevant," she says. "But it could be even more frequently than that for the next generation."

What are some of the most in-demand skills? We look to some of the world's fastest-growing industries to find out.

### STEM

It's no surprise that the fastest-growing industries are in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). In fact, STEM-related jobs are growing at a rate more than double that of other fields, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and those who hold STEM-related jobs bring home above-average salaries. The biggest need for new workers will be in computer-related and engineering occupations.

"They're producing jobs faster than graduates can be produced to fill their jobs," Dixon-Saxon says. "So graduates are able to be more selective about where they want to go."

She points to several programs within Walden's College of Management and Technology that are designed to give graduates the skills they need to succeed right away—and in the globalized workplace of the future.

The Master of Information Systems Management program, created with input from IT industry leaders and employers, prepares students for the most in-demand careers in this field. The degree helps meet the need for skilled IT workers with management expertise. Additional master's programs in software engineering, data science, and information technology offer graduates valuable future-ready skills.

### EDUCATION

As part of the demand in STEM fields, there's a growing need for STEM educators. There's also a growing need for leaders with the skills to implement the latest technologies in education, from K–12 to professional development programs. "Walden has always had really strong education programs, so we are prepared to meet the needs of our society in those areas as well," Dixon-Saxon says.

Within The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership, programs at a variety of levels prepare educators in these critical areas. They include post-baccalaureate certificate and master's degree programs in instructional design and technology, EdS and post-master's certificate programs in educational technology, and a graduate certificate in integrating technology in the classroom.

### HEALTHCARE

The College of Nursing offers programs to prepare graduates to integrate technology into healthcare delivery as well as improve health outcomes for communities—both essential to the future of healthcare. This approach will be especially critical in managing the impact of pandemics, such as the one that's been caused by COVID-19.

"In our programs, we're responding to what's needed in our society," Dixon-Saxon says. "I think that within our health sciences programs, we have a lot of programs that address the needs of today's society." She points to the MSN specializations in Public Health Nursing and Nursing Informatics as being ideal for graduates looking for an edge in the healthcare industry of the future.

"The future of work is interdisciplinary, and academically prepared individuals who are adept at interprofessional communication and embrace change will thrive," adds Dr. Laurel Walsh, core faculty at Walden University. "It will no longer be sufficient to thrive in your narrow discipline. Employees who show up ready to learn, happy to participate in creative problem solving, and comfortable with ambiguity will be sought after in the workplace of tomorrow."

As scholar-practitioners driving social change, Walden graduates have employed these skills in their pursuit of education in programs across the university. It's what makes alumni prepared for whatever the future may hold, and eager to keep learning.

# How younger students adjusted to the move online.

BY ALAN CARL



*Niamh Doherty attends her fourth grade class alongside her brother.*

# LEARNING

From Walden University's earliest days, our students have learned from home. It's not a new idea to our faculty, staff, or students—but it was a new idea to their children.

As schools across America sent children home in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Walden community found itself in a new reality. It wasn't just higher education that was online. It was all education. And that took some adjustment from the young students who were attending classes at home for the first time. We spoke to several children of Walden's faculty and staff to learn about their experiences.

## FINDING THE RIGHT SPACE

Before anything else, students learning from home needed a place to do their schoolwork. With the entire Walden community working from home at the same time, families had to balance their space to ensure young students could concentrate. The solutions show the can-do attitude of the Walden community.

Some worked at kitchen tables, surrounded by supplies. Some chose a sunroom. Siblings Kate and Julia Little staked out different spots in their house. Julia, a freshman at Dulaney High School in Lutherville-Timonium, Maryland, studied in her home's breezeway, while Kate, an eighth-grader at Ridgely Middle School, set up in the family room.

"I put motivational quotes on sticky notes on the wall above my laptop," Kate says.

*Kate Little captures the experience of only seeing classmates on a screen.*





Erianna Ness expresses the frustration some children felt.

A good study space helped Niamh stay on top of her classwork.

# FROM HOME

## ADJUSTING TO A NEW WAY OF LEARNING

Walden has been developing online learning experiences for decades. Most schools had to come up with a system on the fly. That required students to make some serious adjustments.

“The school day is much shorter,” says Ryan Willard Lynch, a fifth grader at The Hill School in Middleburg, Virginia. “We only have sports class once a week when we used to have it four days a week.”

Julia had a similar experience. “My classes used to be 80 to 90 minutes long a couple of times a week,” she says. “Now they are now 20 minutes or less, once a week.”

## ENJOYING THE PERKS

Being at home did come with advantages. Namely, children had more freedom. “I can eat whenever,” says Erianna Ness, a second grader at Big Woods Elementary in St. Michael, Minnesota.

Niamh Doherty, a fourth grader at Rock Creek Valley Elementary in Rockville, Maryland, notes a few other benefits.

“We can take breaks between our work, like watching TV,” she says. “Or I can have separate time working on my own things like my autobiography ... I’ve been working on an autobiography about myself and what it’s like being home.”

For Kate, being at home even helped her study. “I have more time to finish my work,” she says. “Also, I have my mom to help with my work, so I get A’s and B’s.”

## ENVISIONING WHAT’S NEXT

The shared experience of learning from home will undoubtedly lead to changes in the years to come. What do these students hope will happen?

“I think schools will be bigger,” says Niamh. “Maybe we’ll have a Chromebook charging station on our desk.”

Ryan also hopes for some new perks. “I like starting the school day later,” he says. “I don’t want to follow a dress code. I want to have my pets with me at school.”

Julia, on the other hand, is hoping for curriculum changes. “It would be good to have more community health classes to learn about diseases, how they spread, and how to stay safe.”

Of course, some children simply want to get back to the way things were. “I think school will be the exact same,” says Erianna, voicing a hope that many surely share.



WALDEN'S BOARD  
THE LAST



YEARS



INTRO BY ALAN CARL

**When Bernie and Rita Turner founded Walden University in 1970, they moved forward with hope and a sense of purpose. They wanted to give working professionals a new—and more convenient—way to earn a degree. But success was never a given.**

No university like Walden had ever existed before. And some doubted that a school that provided distance learning and promoted social change could survive. Fortunately, there were others who did believe in Walden. In 1972, the most committed of them formed the university's inaugural Board of Directors.

Those first board members devoted themselves to Walden's mission. And they set the standard with their passion, positivity, and dedication to providing students with the opportunities they needed to do more with their lives and in the world around them.

In the years and decades since, every board member who's served has followed the same standard. It's why Walden has thrived, formalizing its social change mission, earning national accreditations, pioneering online learning, and empowering social change across the world—all while staying focused on the needs of students and working professionals.

Bernie and Rita Turner began Walden with hope and purpose. That same spirit has fueled our leadership for 50 years—and it's what will guide us in the years to come.



**Paula R. Singer**  
2001–Present

Paula R. Singer is the CEO and chair of the Board of Directors of Walden University, which provides quality higher education to working professionals worldwide. She focuses her leadership on three overarching goals: enhancing the end-to-end student experience, expanding access to flexible degree program options, and ensuring student success. Early in her career she was a K–12 teacher and reading specialist focused on struggling students in inner-city U.S. schools. She has long been an advocate for improving quality of life and educational opportunities in local communities. She co-founded the Nurturing Nest Montessori School and has been a lifelong advocate for the United Way.



**Sean R. Creamer**  
2006–Present

Sean R. Creamer is executive vice president and chief financial officer (CFO) at Merkle. He has extensive experience with mergers and acquisitions and with maintaining high performance while leading teams through transformative change. Before joining Merkle, he spent nine years with Arbitron Inc., ultimately becoming chief executive officer. Prior to that, he was senior vice president and CFO at *Laureate International Universities*. He has also held a number of financial positions at ExxonMobil and Price Waterhouse (now PricewaterhouseCoopers). A certified public accountant, he received a BS in Accounting from Saint Joseph's University and an MS in Taxation from Georgetown University.



**Donna M. Dorsey**  
2009–Present

Donna M. Dorsey is a consultant specializing in nursing regulatory and policy development and leadership. She has served as the executive director of the Maryland Board of Nursing and president of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). She has been instrumental in the development of computerized adaptive testing for the National Council Licensure Examination; the establishment of a national, unduplicated licensee database; the implementation of the Nurse Licensure Compact; and the initiation of the Commitment to Excellence project. In recognition of her work, the NCSBN presented her with the R. Louise McManus Award.



**Luis Duran**  
2016–Present

Luis Duran is CEO of Strategy Primus, a boutique consulting firm. He is also the president of the Education Commission for the National Employers Association (COPARMEX) in Mexico and was previously CEO and president of

Laureate Mexico and Universidad del Valle de Mexico, where he oversaw the strategy and operations for the country's largest private university system with 44 campuses, 210,000 students, and over 22,000 employees. He is a regular columnist in some of Mexico's largest newspapers, including *Reforma*, *Milenio*, *El Universal*, and *El Sol de México*, and frequently participates as a lecturer and panelist in diverse business and education forums.



**Dr. William G. Durden**  
2002–Present

Dr. William G. Durden is president emeritus of Dickinson College and is currently president of the International University Alliance. He received his PhD in German Language and Literature from Johns Hopkins University and was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Basel, Switzerland. He also served as an officer in the U.S. Army and chaired the Middle States accreditation process for the United States Military Academy (West Point). He has published and spoken on topics including German literature, gifted and talented education, international education policy, and the distinctiveness of U.S. higher education.



**Toni Freeman**  
2016–Present

Toni Freeman most recently served as the executive vice president of the Arts & Science Council in Charlotte, North Carolina. She also served as the chief operating officer of The Mint Museum, which has one of the largest art collections in the Southeast U.S. With more than 20 years of executive management experience, Freeman has served on numerous boards for mission-driven organizations, including the Women Executives for Community Service, the YWCA Central Carolinas, Teen Health Connection, and Habitat for Humanity. She is also a former president of The Association of Junior Leagues International.



**Dr. Charles Ota Heller**  
2006–Present

Dr. Charles Ota Heller is president of Annapolis Capital Group, a management consulting and investment firm, and an author. Born in Prague, Czech Republic, he has earned multiple engineering degrees and led a distinguished career that has also included turns in enterprise software and venture capital. He is the author of three memoirs: *Prague: My Long Journey Home*; *Name-Drappings: Close Encounters With the Famous and Near-Famous*; and *Ready, Fire, Aim: An Immigrant's Tales of Entrepreneurial Terror*. He was the recipient of the Maryland Entrepreneur of the Year Award and has been inducted into the Oklahoma State University Engineering Hall of Fame.

## THE LAST 50 YEARS



**John E. Kobara**  
2005–Present

John E. Kobara is the founding CEO of OnlineLearning.net, a pioneering startup that created a number of proprietary systems and processes that were acquired

by Sylvan Ventures and ultimately made part of Sylvan Online Higher Education. The grandson of immigrants who came to the United States with nothing and the son of parents who lost everything as a result of being detained in the Japanese-American internment camps of World War II, he earned degrees from UCLA, Occidental College, and USC and has spent his career working in the nonprofit arena, which he calls the “for-purpose” field.



**Dr. Anita McDonald**  
2003–Present

Dr. Anita McDonald is chancellor emerita at Penn State DuBois and has been a member of the Walden board since 2003. She consults

and speaks about issues related to adult learning services and programs, and women’s leadership and career opportunities. With more than 40 years of higher education experience, including teaching mathematics, she has served as a dean at the University of Arizona and the University of Missouri–St. Louis. In her community, she is active with Rotary International at the district level and serves on the board of the ALS Association Arizona Chapter.



**Lee McGee**  
2001–Present

Lee McGee is an expert in acquisitions and has worked in the higher education industry for much of his career. After serving as the CFO of Sylvan Learning

Systems, he became the senior vice president of new business development for Laureate Education and oversaw the company’s acquisition of Walden University, and was also responsible for several acquisitions for Laureate’s international network of universities. In addition to his role on the board and as the chair of the Governance Committee, McGee served on the boards for Language Stars and Kendall College. Currently, he provides consultation for business owners looking to take advantage of a new ownership structure. Specifically, he focuses on helping small-business owners.



**Richard J. Patro**  
2017–Present

Richard (Rick) J. Patro is a retired Laureate Education Inc. executive. During his 24 years there, he held many senior positions, including chief financial

officer, chief operating officer, and CEO of the Global Products and Services Division. He was also a director on four university boards, both internationally and domestically. Prior to Laureate, he spent eight years at Ernst & Young, primarily in its emerging business group, providing tax audit, tax, and consulting services.



**Dr. Estanislado Y. Paz**  
2004–Present

Dr. Estanislado (Stan) Y. Paz’s career spans more than 45 years in public education. Beginning as a teacher, he rose to become superintendent of

the Tucson and El Paso public school districts and associate superintendent of Dallas Independent School District. He is a former president of the Texas Association of School Administrators; was selected by AASA, The School Superintendents Association, as a Top 100 Executive Educator; and was honored as the Texas Superintendent of the Year. Additionally, he is the founding president of the Association for Latino Administrators and Superintendents and serves as the executive director of the Texas Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents.



**Dr. Barbara Solomon**  
1991–Present

Dr. Barbara Solomon is former dean of the USC Graduate School and vice provost emerita, University of Southern California. She has published

extensively on the delivery of social and mental health services in underrepresented populations. Her book *Black Empowerment: Social Work in Oppressed Communities*, published in 1976, introduced the concept of empowerment as a framework for social work practice. She has been a guest lecturer or visiting scholar at multiple universities in the U.S. and abroad. She has also received multiple awards for community service and advocacy for civil and human rights.

## WALDEN’S BOARD PAST & PRESENT

**Neal Berte**  
1972

**Joseph Carol**  
1972–1973

**Dr. Frank B. Dilley**  
1972–1973; 1977–1982; 1987–2000

**Anthony Ferraro**  
1972–1973

**Dr. Harold L. Hodgkinson**  
1972–2002; 1974–1991; 1993–2000

**Herbert Katz**  
1972–1973

**Ronald McNeur**  
1972–1973

**James Parejko**  
1972

**Charles Raebeck**  
1972–1973

**Edward Schulze**  
1972

**Bernard Turner**  
1972–1996

**Ronald Barnes**  
1973

**Joseph Kariotis**  
1973

**Milton Schwebel**  
1973

**Thomas Woods**  
1973

**Gladys Morano**  
1974–1982

**Dr. Charles M. Odorizzi**  
1974–1978

**Rita Turner**  
1974–1996

**Wilfred D. MacDonnell**  
1982–1994

**Diane Morrison**  
1983–1992

**Thomas A. Coppens**  
1985–1996

**Dr. Harold Abel**  
1989–1990

**Dr. Glendon F. Drake**  
1991–1994

**Burt L. Sanders**  
1991–1992

**Dr. Barbara Solomon**  
1991–Present

**Don E. Ackerman**  
1993–2004

**Kathleen Cote**  
1993–2002

**Lt. Gen. Dave R. Palmer**  
1993–2000

**Lawrence L. Landry**  
1994–1997

**Dr. Roberto Ibarra**  
1996–2006

**A. Bart Holaday**  
1998–2006

**Caesar J. Naples**  
1999–2000

**Jan Balzer**  
2000–2002

**Maj. Gen. Robert H. Scales**  
2000–2002

**Lee McGee**  
2001–Present

**Paula R. Singer**  
2001–Present

**Dr. William G. Durden**  
2002–Present

**Dr. Rochelle C. Ingram**  
2003–2005

**Dr. Anita McDonald**  
2003–Present

**Dr. Estanislado Y. Paz**  
2004–Present

**John E. Kobara**  
2005–Present

**Sean R. Creamer**  
2006–Present

**Dr. Charles Ota Heller**  
2006–Present

**Dr. Paula Peinovich**  
2007

**Donna M. Dorsey**  
2009–Present

**Dr. Nivine Megahed**  
2009–2010

**Dr. David P. Lopez**  
2011–2012

**Jonathan Kaplan**  
2013–2016

**Luis Doran**  
2016–Present

**Toni Freeman**  
2016–Present

**Richard J. Patro**  
2017–Present

# DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ACCESS

BY JOYCE REINGOLD

In this long-overdue historic moment, businesses and institutions are publicly pledging to root out and dismantle practices that have systematically disadvantaged people of color.

But at Walden University, the focus is on building. Recently announced diversity initiatives add new purpose and dimension to the university's long tradition of inclusiveness. For 50 years, Walden has been providing underserved populations with access to quality higher education.

"We were founded to serve working adults at a time when no one else did that," says Ivania Bronson, Walden's chief diversity officer and vice president of human resources. "We focused on serving women at a time when most institutions of higher education did not. We focused on serving African American students—all minority students—at a time when they were not the focus of institutions providing quality higher education. So, the very nature of who we are, and how we've come to be, is founded on this mission of access, which is all about diversity."

Bronson points to university data to illustrate Walden's tradition of access and inclusion: More than half of Walden students are minorities; three-quarters are women. According to the National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates, Walden is No. 1 among 377 accredited U.S. institutions for awarding doctorates to African American students. The university is No. 1 for awarding doctoral degrees in public administration and

social service professions to Hispanic students, and for awarding graduate degrees in multiple disciplines to African American students, according to *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*.

"When you graduate women and minorities with master's degrees and PhDs, you put these underserved populations at an advantage for having a seat at the table where policy decisions are made. And that's a legacy of our mission of diversity as well," she says.

Bronson joined Walden as the human resources VP in 2019, after almost five years as executive director of human resources for *Laureate International Universities*. She stepped into the role of chief diversity officer earlier this year. In June, Bronson wrote Walden faculty and staff to share a multistep plan for improving diversity and inclusion throughout the university. These actions include:

- Increasing efforts in hiring, developing, and advancing a diverse workforce. Efforts will include ensuring collaboration across Walden's footprint, respecting unique differences, and having diverse voices driving decision-making in leadership.
- Hiring a director of diversity and inclusion, who will report directly to human resources and serve as a critical leader on the HR team. (The job has been posted; Bronson encourages all who are interested to apply.)
- Developing a required diversity training program for all leaders, faculty, and staff. This training program will focus on advancing an inclusive culture throughout the university community.
- Partnering with Dr. Sue Subocz, Walden's provost and chief academic officer, to ensure the university's classroom environment provides a safe, civil, and open forum



Ivania Bronson, chief diversity officer and vice president of human resources, is helping lead Walden into an even more diverse and inclusive future.

among people of different cultures and backgrounds—one that is respectful of all points of view.

"As Paula Singer, CEO, stated in her message last week, we are going to advance the civil discourse throughout our university—starting with faculty and staff," Bronson says. "To do so, we need to have shared information, knowledge, and language on these critical topics."

Bronson says these actions, though just a beginning, will further Walden's goal of advancing "Education for Good," for all.

"I've been thinking a lot about Walden, which has been so authentic in this space since its inception. There's something very true about rolling up your sleeves on the ground in the communities that you serve," Bronson says. "To do the hard work of teaching social workers and teaching psychologists, and all the nurses and first responders that Walden teaches and graduates year after year ... I think that's really amazing. And I think that's something that should be celebrated, and especially in a time like this. Because when everyone goes home and when the protesting is over, Walden will still be there, in the community, serving underserved populations and providing access to communities that would normally not have access."

# STAYING **SAFE**. STAYING **HOME**. STAYING **STRONG**.

BY ALAN CARL



From team meetings to virtual residencies, Walden staff and faculty kept spirits high.

Walden University is no stranger to connecting many people across distances great and small. But even at one of the world's top online universities, the stay-at-home orders that affected most of the world required some significant adjustments.

At Walden's offices in Minnesota, Maryland, and elsewhere, the entire staff left their desks behind to isolate themselves in a familiar space being put to an unfamiliar use: their homes.

## FINDING THEIR WAY

Questions abounded: "Where should I set up a work space?" "How do I work efficiently?" "How do I take care of my kids while working?" "How do I keep the cat off my keyboard?"

Unsurprisingly, Walden's faculty and staff proved to be up to the challenge. Dining room tables became control centers. Slack channels lit up with communications. Parents balanced responsibilities with aplomb. And family pets became welcome visitors on video calls.

Most important, through it all, people were there for each other. Moving suddenly from an office to a home is challenging enough; adding in the uncertainty and strain of a national crisis made things that much more difficult. But from administration to finance to academics, our teams came together to lift spirits, provide support, and keep each day meaningful and worthwhile.

Thanks to the optimism, grit, and good natures of the faculty and staff, no one was isolated. Walden was together through it all.

“  
**WE GOT THIS.**”

Most common words spoken during video calls\*

**5:1**

Frequency of dogs appearing in videos to the frequency of cats\*

“  
**I THINK YOU'RE MUTED.**”

Second most common words spoken during video calls\*

\*Based on wild estimates.



# MOBILIZE FOR GOOD

PARTNERING WITH ALUMNI TO GIVE BACK TO SCHOOLS



BY ALAN CARL

How does a university committed to social change celebrate its 50th anniversary? By taking its mission even further and making an even bigger difference in communities—regardless of any roadblocks. Initiated at the beginning of 2020, Mobilize for Good is bringing Education for Good™ to the people and places that need it most.





“Walden has been mobilizing for good from day one,” Walden University CEO Paula Singer says. “Our 50th anniversary provided an opportunity to put a fine point on the energy and commitment the Walden University family has to this core value.”

The Mobilize for Good team made plans to travel across the U.S. in an RV and coordinate volunteer projects to help Walden alumni give back to the elementary, middle, and high schools that inspire them. A complex task, but one for which Walden was prepared.

“We have many great teams who are out in the field all the time,” Walden University President Ward Ulmer says. “We have the relationships and connections across the globe because of our alumni network, our strategic alliance team, our residencies team, and our faculty and staff.”

### ON THE ROAD

The first Mobilize for Good stop was in February in Tampa, Florida. Alumni gave back to their community through projects benefiting three schools. It was a huge success.

At Earl J. Lennard High School, alumna Katie Patel '17, Master of Science in Nursing, followed her passion for increasing the availability of lifesaving medical equipment in schools. Cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death in student athletes. Walden helped Patel donate five automated external defibrillators to Lennard High School and joined forces with her to provide CPR training to the school and the district's teachers and coaching staff.

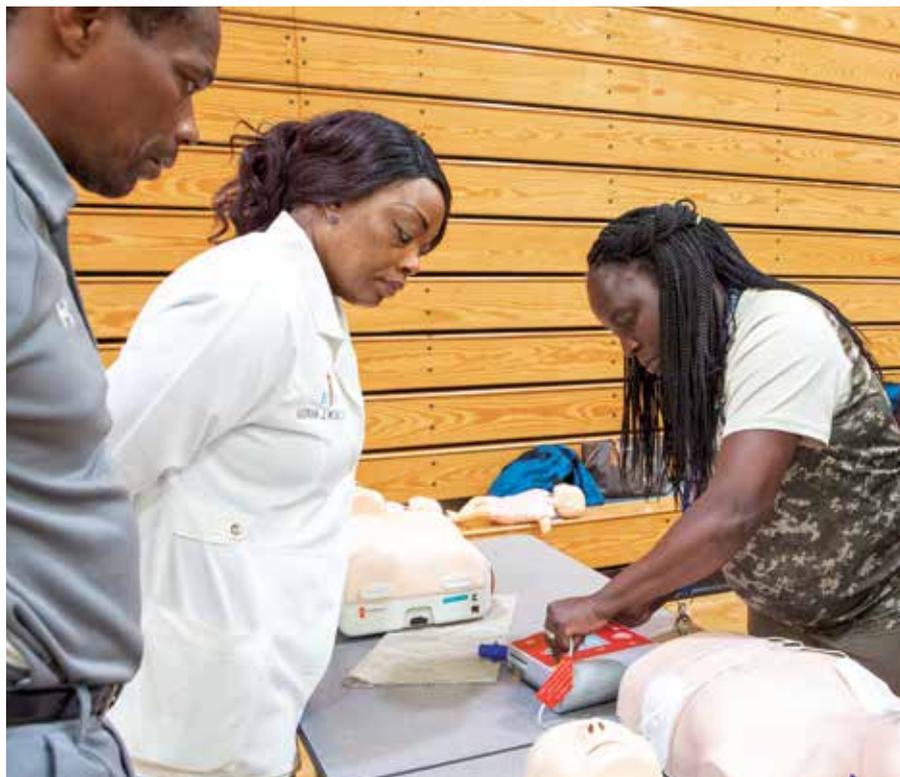
“It gives a level of comfort to the players, the parents, the staff, and hopefully the community as a whole,” Patel says of her and Walden's efforts.



Walden supported Judge's mission of increasing representation among educators by providing resources and funds to the Urban Teaching Academy (UTA) at Howard Blake High School.



Katie Patel '17, Master of Science in Nursing, brought her passion for helping others to Lennard High School.



Walden partnered with Patel's hospital, Memorial Hospital of Tampa, to provide CPR training.



The next stop was Howard Blake High School, where alumna Tanya Batchelor Judge '11, MS in Education, pursued her mission of increasing representation among educators.

“Think about how many minority educators you’ve had since kindergarten,” Judge says. “The students that need the most need people who look like them to teach them.”

Walden provided resources and funds to the Urban Teaching Academy (UTA) at Blake High School and hosted a community event at the school to bring awareness to the UTA.

Finally, Mobilize for Good headed to Reddick Elementary, where Tennith Scott '19, MS in Education, teaches third grade. Inspired by Scott's dedication to providing students with the greatest opportunity to learn, Walden helped her transform her school's outdoor space into a beautiful interactive learning and play area.

“Words cannot express how grateful I am for all of you,” Scott told her students.

For their part, the Walden team was grateful for the opportunity to help alumni make a difference in their community—and thrilled that the events went so well.

But before the RV could get on the road again, the world changed.

### **DRIVING SOCIAL CHANGE IN A CHANGED WORLD**

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, travel was no longer an option. The schools Mobilize for Good planned to help sent their students and teachers home, and everyone entered a new and restrictive reality.



*Tennith Scott '19, MS in Education, spearheaded an effort to build an interactive learning and play space at Reddick Elementary School.*



*Inspired by Scott's dedication to providing students with the greatest opportunity to learn—both inside and outside of the classroom—Walden transformed her school's outdoor space into a beautiful interactive learning and play area.*





“But we didn’t stop what we were doing,” Ulmer says. “Because of who the university is, we just pivoted.”

The university and its alumni refocused Mobilize for Good on the pressing needs of schools and students scrambling to adopt online learning. Walden quickly embraced the change in plans.

After all, Singer says, “The need for acts of good was reinforced as we all faced this new challenge.”

### SPONTANEOUS SUPPORT

While Mobilize for Good was not scheduled to travel to Baltimore so soon, an urgent need arose and the Walden community responded.

Gwynns Falls Elementary and Beechfield Elementary/Middle School reached out to alumna and Walden staffer Val Taylor '18, MS in Nonprofit Management and Leadership, who leads Walden’s social change efforts in Maryland. Both schools faced similar challenges: Students who relied on free or subsidized school meals were struggling to get food, and many students lacked the internet-enabled technology they needed to keep up with their coursework from home.

Taylor swung into action. She connected with the Mobilize for Good team and then personally sourced and assembled 80 backpacks of food and hygiene products, which were delivered to students in need. After that, she sourced and, with Mobilize for Good funding, bought 650 Amazon Fire and Acer tablets, which were also donated to students.

Taylor says she loves the opportunity to do good through Walden. “I get to put a smile on someone’s face,” she says. “I get to change how things would have gone.”

And the Mobilize for Good team wasn’t done. They also partnered with Improving Education, a Baltimore nonprofit, to distribute 300 Learning in a Box kits to parents of

kindergarten through second grade students in six Baltimore City schools. The kits included tools for learning and additional items based on each student’s grade level.

“The need shifted, and we adapted to it,” Ulmer says of the Baltimore efforts.

Thanks to that move, hundreds of Baltimore students were able to continue learning during an exceptionally challenging time.

### CONTINUING TO MOBILIZE FOR GOOD

Mobilize for Good has continued to support the work Walden alumni are doing across the U.S. The pandemic has changed many things—but not Walden’s commitment to community and helping others.

“You’re seeing people know there are more important things in life,” Ulmer says. “What I would like to see come from [Mobilize for Good] is that individuals start to realize, ‘You know what? I can do more.’”



Walden partnered with Improving Education to donate learning kits to 300 children.



# FACES OF WALDEN

In our last issue, we had the honor of featuring 25 members of the Walden community whose passion and work capture the spirit of who we are and strive to be. As we continue to celebrate our 50th anniversary, we're pleased to share the stories of another 25 students, faculty, and staff members who are making their communities and the world a better place.

The innovators, advocates, change agents, visionaries, and catalysts featured here include an educator partnering with NASA, a Buddhist monk helping people handle stress, and a former businesswoman building stronger local organizations in Tanzania. While their stories are diverse, they share one thing: They show the good our community can—and does—create.



**Michele Mailhot**  
*MS in Education '09*

Michele Mailhot '09, MS in Education, exposes young minds to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related subjects, and her commitment is as big and deep as the night sky. Mailhot, a mathematics specialist with the Maine Department of Education, was part of a team of educators and scientists who created the NASA-sponsored Astromaterials Research and Exploration Science (ARES) Expedition Earth and Beyond program. ARES is a class curriculum that uses astronaut photography from shuttle missions and the International Space Station to allow students to study geological features on Earth in ways that mirror the investigations conducted by NASA scientists. In addition to working for the State of Maine, Mailhot's long career in education has included working as a math teacher in middle and high schools.



**Dr. Raquel Battle**  
*PhD in Health Services '19*

Dr. Raquel Battle '19, PhD in Health Services, is an advocate for change and care.

Battle is the founder and executive director of the BlissfulSage Foundation, a nonprofit that operates the Edlin Leslie Sr. Hospice in the village where she grew up in Belize. She's also a leader advocating for improving healthcare for underserved populations.

Battle is a whirlwind of compassion and action. The BlissfulSage Foundation broke ground on construction of a six-bed hospice and wellness center, the first of its kind in southern Belize, and the nonprofit continues to inspire hope and comfort for individuals impacted by cancer, HIV, and diabetes. When the COVID-19 crisis began hitting New York City, where Battle currently resides, she and the BlissfulSage Foundation organized and shipped care kits to families in the Bronx who had tested positive.



**Dr. Dennie Beach**  
*PhD in Public Policy and Administration '10*

From his New York City-based business, Dr. Dennie Beach '10, PhD in Public Policy and Administration, can see change occurring 7,000 miles away.

Beach is CEO and president of Go Africa Network Inc., a nonprofit that advances the trade of African commodities and technologies from a number of perspectives, all with an eye toward improving African economic and business opportunities. As part of its efforts, Go Africa has developed a branded line of African-made goods for retail and wholesale customers, including items such as coffee, cashews, and teas.

In 2019, the company began selling Go Africa branded products on Amazon.com in the U.S., creating additional opportunities for global brand recognition and demand, furthering its goal of improving development opportunities in Africa.

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## Happily Taking Action

*Dr. Shawna Charles helps others by coaching them to help themselves.*



Dr. Shawna Charles '13, PhD in Psychology, is a self-proclaimed “actionist”—someone who moves from intent to achievement and then motivates others to do the same.

Earlier in her career, Charles owned a boxing gym in Los Angeles where she spent as much time counseling and supporting people with their lives and careers as she did with their physical conditioning. In that endeavor and others in her professional and personal life, her core focus has always been about relationships and how they can build better people, better organizations, and a better world.

After selling the boxing gym, Charles exercised her actionist persona by embarking on a challenging personal and professional reassessment. That journey brought her to the realization that her own strength and experiences could be used to help others build personal and professional relationships that create change.

“I had the education, I was a mother, I was financially stable, but I was still trying to find my purpose,” she says. “I hired a coach and

began to let go of my fear of failure. I realized I was good enough.”

Her internal voyage led her to create two successful businesses that, while focused on unique professional areas, are both driven by her core commitment to help others by coaching them to help themselves.

Charles' Information Xchange Group is a public relations firm focused on protecting, promoting, and evolving corporate brands. Her other firm, the appropriately named Think to Be Happy, is a management consulting firm that helps companies develop, build, and maintain strategic partnerships to enhance their image and position.

In short, Charles is not only thinking to be happy, she's taking action on it. “My professional and personal life is driven,” she says. “Being happy is about living intentionally, taking action, and maximizing your strengths. Counseling others how to do that is one way help create change personally, professionally, and globally.”



### **Dr. Alvin Mena Cantero**

*Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) '15  
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) '17*

Compassionate healthcare providers like Dr. Alvin Mena Cantero '17, DNP, have provided healing and hope throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cantero is the founder of the Alvin Clinica Familiar, a Houston clinic that provides cost-effective care to patients in the Hispanic and African-American communities. Throughout the pandemic, he has worked at both the clinic and a local Houston hospital, putting in 14- to 16-hour days.

Cantero has also engaged local food banks, the YMCA, federal organizations, and community leaders to enhance risk perception and support underserved populations.

## Channeling Tough Emotions

*Dr. Avon Hart-Johnson explores storytelling to help children of incarcerated parents.*

While conducting a focus group study with caregivers of children with incarcerated parents, Dr. Avon Hart-Johnson '15, PhD in Human Services, will never forget what one participant told her: An 8-year-old child tried to take his own life after his father went to prison. She says it broke her heart.

“When I think about the stigma and the shame associated with having a parent in prison, I ask myself, ‘Do these children even stand a chance?’ But I always come back with a strong sense of hope,” Hart-Johnson says.

A 2018 Outstanding Alumni Award recipient, Hart-Johnson is president and co-founder of DC Project Connect, a nonprofit organization that aims to provide crisis intervention and information resources to families affected by incarceration and to support reentry initiatives that strengthen families.

A published author and researcher, she has lectured nationally and internationally on the psychological and social impacts of mass incarceration. She was recently named vice president of the International Coalition for Children with Incarcerated Parents, a global consortium that supports the well-being of children of prisoners.

For the past year, Hart-Johnson led a special research project that focused on the use of

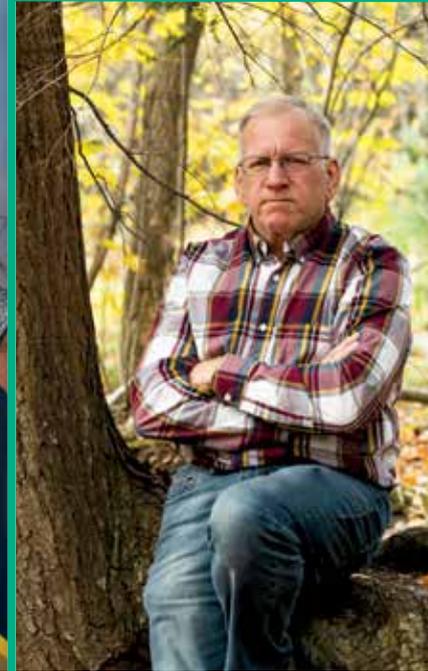
storytelling as an intervention when discussing parental incarceration with children.

“My Story and Me” is the result of this research. It’s a digital portal that provides resources, including activity sheets, discussion starters, and answers to frequently asked questions, to help caregivers facilitate healthy conversations with children about incarceration. Hart-Johnson and two fellow researchers wrote four children’s books featuring colorful animal characters who help children make sense of their parents’ imprisonment. Caregivers can access the audiobooks from the portal, or they can purchase paperback copies.

Hart-Johnson and her team used the theoretical framework they developed from their research to create a comprehensive curriculum for social workers and human services workers to help children of incarcerated parents.

Since 2015, Hart-Johnson has served as a contributing faculty member in Walden’s School of Human Services in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

“I feel so grateful and humbled to have the chance to share my passion with doctoral students, and I’m proud to be connected to a group of colleagues who are just phenomenal,” she says.



### **Dr. W. Sumner Davis**

*MS in Forensic Psychology Student  
MS in Criminal Justice '20  
Master of Healthcare  
Administration (MHA) '18  
PhD in Public Health '15  
Master of Public Health (MPH) '11*

After an injury ended his construction career, Dr. W. Sumner Davis '15, PhD in Public Health, turned to education to find meaning. Since completing his bachelor’s degree at 32, Davis has earned multiple master’s and doctoral degrees and advanced certificates. Currently, he is working on another master’s degree at Walden University and a clinical master’s degree in infectious disease and tropical medicine at the University of London. Davis has completed training with the CDC and FEMA. He is a clinical epidemiologist and senior scientific advisor for several nonprofit agencies and a contributing faculty member and research reviewer at Walden.



**Dr. Analena Lunde**

*Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) '18  
Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) '13*

Early in her nursing career, Dr. Analena Lunde '18, DNP, learned about the lack of medical training and information about sexual violence in her community and began spreading awareness. As a human trafficking navigator and youth specialist at Youthworks, Lunde provides training and case management support to survivors of sex and labor trafficking. She is also the lead sexual assault forensic nurse examiner for Central Dakota Forensic Nurse Examiners and serves on various human trafficking and forensic nurse council boards. "Awareness and education are the most powerful tools we have to not only reach and help survivors but also to prevent this from happening," Lunde says.

*Photo: Heather Landis Photography*



**David Hartness**

*Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Student  
Master of Business Administration (MBA) '13*

Hartness is a program manager with statewide educational nonprofit InvestED in Renton, Washington, which helps nearly 25,000 students annually by providing funds to cover fees for academic testing, sports equipment, musical instrument rentals, and more. This spring, Hartness assisted in the creation of an emergency fund to help students impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that raised \$1 million in its first month. He is also working on a second novel. His first novel, *Amani's River*, tells the story of a child forced into the Mozambique Civil War. The story was inspired by Hartness' experience living in the country while working with the Peace Corps. The novel received a 2015 National Indie Excellence Award and an indieBRAG medallion.



**Christina Dalpiaz**

*MS in Psychology '07*

After escaping an abusive home and serving in the U.S. Navy for 22 years, Dalpiaz focused her career on creating safe havens for children. In 1996, she founded CHANCE (Changing How Adults Nurture Children's Egos), a nonprofit agency that trains adults to be advocates for children's health and safety. As an award-winning author and nationally recognized expert on preventing child abuse and domestic violence, Dalpiaz has been featured on CNN International, the Dr. Drew show, and Women's Radio Network. Recently, she has focused her work on ending the stigmatizing labels society assigns to those dealing with mental illness or substance abuse. "By changing labels, language, and attitudes toward those in pain, they are much more willing to open up and empower themselves," she says.

## Acquiring the Future

*Dr. Donald Schlomer uses doctoral research to modernize the military.*



Dr. Donald Schlomer '17, DBA, believes that his doctoral research has directly resulted in his career success.

An acquisition specialist and retired Army officer, Schlomer started working with the Army's Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS) in 2002, aiding in the identification of what equipment and weapons are needed to keep the military running and relevant. He focused his Walden doctoral study on improving JCIDS by focusing on the inefficiencies and delays caused by the approval process.

"Technology advances every 14 to 18 months, but the current process takes 72 to 90 months," he says. "That effectively leaves our military personnel inadequately equipped. By streamlining the process, our troops are better prepared to protect U.S. citizens, all while saving taxpayer dollars."

Schlomer's research has been widely recognized. In addition to receiving Walden's 2018 Frank Dilley Award for Outstanding Doctoral Study, Schlomer has

discussed his research recommendations with top generals, as well as staff members under the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Defense. He has twice shared his insights with former National Security Advisor Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster. In 2017, he was handpicked as the only nonmilitary, nongovernment civilian member of the Army Futures Command, a cross-functional task force that looked at modernizing military equipment.

Since 2015, Schlomer has worked for Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in Tampa, Florida. This year, he was promoted to the role of policy manager for Special Operations Forces Acquisition, Technology & Logistics (SOF AT&L) Acquisition Operations. SOF AT&L is responsible for all SOCOM research, development, acquisition, procurement, and logistics.

The new role allows Schlomer to directly apply his doctoral research to execute strategies for streamlining government acquisitions. He will also have the

opportunity for his work to be featured in publications such as *The International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology* and *Army AL&T* magazine.

"People often talk about the value of getting a doctorate," he says. "I can guarantee that if I did not have my doctorate, I would not be sitting here in the position I'm in today. You can't underestimate the value of a degree like this and the opportunities it can give you."





**Dr. Nicole Rankine**

*PhD in Public Health '15*

*Master of Public Health '10*

A youth influencer, educator, and John Maxwell Team certified personal growth coach, Rankine is the CEO of the COLE Academy of Personal Growth, LLC, which helps students and the leaders who support them enhance their leadership skills, communication, and personal growth. She provides personal development and leadership programs for individuals and communities around the world. In 2019, she served more than 2,500 individuals through various national workshops, trainings, and coaching programs. Recently, Rankine was selected to become a mentor with the Steve & Marjorie Harvey Foundation's Girls Who Rule the World (GWRTW) program. She is the author of *Adulting in My Purpose*, a journal to help millennials with personal development.



**Dr. Alexandria Osborne**

*PhD in Management '10*

Inspired by her PhD to create positive social change, Osborne left a 30-year career at pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer and Upjohn to move to rural Lindi, Tanzania. There, she founded the Lindi Islamic Foundation of Tanzania (LIFT) to provide education, healthcare, and food security to the low-income community. Seven years later, the foundation has secured a reputation of integrity throughout the region by overseeing projects such as the construction of 26 toilet facilities for a local primary school and the delivery of flour and beans for families displaced by flooding. Though she has transferred out of her main leadership role, Osborne continues her involvement with LIFT as a strategist and fundraiser.



**Dr. Derek Olson**

*Doctor of Education (EdD) '15*

Dr. Derek Olson '15, EdD, is a middle school teacher in Minnesota and the 2008 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. Olson advocates for government policies that support effective teacher development and equitable teacher evaluation. In addition to lobbying state legislators, he has co-authored multiple research publications and presentations on teacher quality, including studies with Educational Testing Service, the National Network of State Teachers of the Year, and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Olson is also an adjunct instructor for the University of Wisconsin.

**Gia Smith**

*Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Student*

*Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) '12*

As the former CEO of American Specialty Healthcare Corporation and a former consultant for American Advanced Management Group, Smith's efforts led to the opening of several hospitals and healthcare facilities serving low-income patients in rural Modesto, California. In 2019, she launched her own consulting firm, GRN Consultants, which assists healthcare organizations in developing new patient facilities. Smith has also opened two gyms and a restaurant/bar in her community, and she plans to open a third gym as well as a congregate living facility. In addition to being a successful businesswoman, Smith is a literal lifesaver: In 2018, she saved the life of a man having a heart attack on a cross-country flight. "As a nurse, having the ability to help and save lives is amazing," she says. "I'm happy I was on that plane."



## On the Front Lines of the COVID Crisis

*Dr. Amanda Robison-Chadwell is on the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis, helping lead her Texas county's efforts to manage the pandemic.*

Dr. Amanda Robison-Chadwell '17, PhD in Public Health, is an epidemiologist and the director of the Bell County Public Health District in Central Texas. During the COVID-19 crisis, she's served as the face of the health district—helping manage COVID-related issues affecting the county's more than 350,000 residents as well as participating in press conferences and working to keep the public informed. In addition to her PhD, she holds a Master of Public Health from Walden and an undergraduate degree in anthropology.



### **Kimberly Portanova-Feibus**

*MS in Mental Health Counseling '12*

Since 2011, Portanova-Feibus has worked at Marley's Mission, a nonprofit organization that provides equine-based therapy to youth and their families who have experienced trauma. In addition to seeing clients, Portanova-Feibus was promoted to the position of clinical director, which requires her to work closely with colleagues to ensure they are providing top-quality mental health treatment for each client. In 2015, she and seven teammates received the mission's Remembering Zachary Award, which recognizes the efforts of individuals who promote awareness of child abuse. "Through equine-assisted therapy, we help children shift from victims to survivors," Portanova-Feibus says.



**Dr. Rafael Matos**

*PhD in Psychology '13*

Dr. Rafael Matos '13, PhD in Psychology, uses his Walden education to approach complex defense issues by taking into consideration the human factors involved with them.

After retiring as a lieutenant commander from the U.S. Navy, he went on to a successful civilian career as a research analyst and organizational psychologist. In 2019, he founded management consulting firm Research Alliance LLC, where he combines his psychology training with his experience in trend analysis and mathematical modeling. Research Alliance works with the Defense Intelligence Agency's Joint Counterintelligence Training Activity (JCITA) program, which enables the U.S. intelligence community to protect the country from adversarial intelligence threats. The firm also works with nonmilitary and nonprofit organizations to provide services such as operations research analysis and industrial/organizational psychology solutions.



**Dr. Carol Ikard**

*Doctor of Education '16*

Dr. Carol Ikard '16, Doctor of Education, takes art off the walls and brings it to the people.

In 2009, she founded the Texas Museum of Fiber Arts (TMFA), a unique institution that fosters education and creativity in fiber art expression, experience, and appreciation. The TMFA exhibits works by Texas artists who use natural and synthetic fibers, but what makes it truly distinctive is that it's a museum without walls. Instead of a traditional brick-and-mortar location, Ikard and the TMFA take educational activities and art exhibits to locations where people work and live. Over the years, exhibits have been placed in high-traffic areas, from the Texas Capitol to the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center. As a next step, Ikard is continuing the research she did for her doctoral thesis and looking at ways to extend the visual arts through technology.



**Dr. Krista Laursen**

*Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) '13*

Dr. Krista Laursen '13, Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), has been a contributing faculty member in Walden's DBA program since 2016. This year, she received the Rita Turner Award for her work as chair of Dr. Carolyn Mack's DBA committee. Prior to joining the Walden faculty, Laursen spent more than two decades working as a senior project manager and executive for various organizations in the nonprofit research and higher education sectors. In 2019, she joined the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) to provide project management support for the institution's large-scale strategic initiatives. She is also the founder and principal of a consulting firm that specializes in guiding individuals and organizations in the design and implementation of effective project management plans and processes.

# CATALYSTS



## Laura Bulluck

*MS in Nonprofit Management and Leadership '10*

Laura Bulluck is a leader and forward thinker who continuously works to find new ways to help her community and the people in it.

She earned her MS in Nonprofit Management and Leadership from Walden in 2010, the same year she founded Hope's Crossing, a Phoenix-based nonprofit that helps women in transition build healthy, sustainable lives. Services include training programs in life skills and job readiness.

Bulluck also combines her education and philanthropy as founder and CEO of consulting firm Laura Bulluck LLC. Her "I Can Plan" system guides individuals through seven steps that provide structure, systems, and detailed planning to help make dreams a reality.



## Dr. Quyen Ho

*PhD in Psychology '17*

Dr. Quyen Ho '17, PhD in Psychology, is working to improve the world through a spiritual refuge in Louisiana where seekers can find inner peace.

Ho has been abbot and president of the Buddhist Tam Bao Temple and its associated meditation center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, since 2003. The temple is an inclusive spiritual refuge where more than 100 Buddhists attend weekly Sunday services in Vietnamese, and 50 to 90 people attend a Friday night nondenominational mindful meditation. Ho studied psychology at Georgia State University and earned a master's degree in counseling at Southeastern Louisiana University. He says his education has allowed him to counsel those seeking help, either at the temple or at local mental health and addiction treatment facilities where he also provides counseling. "True Buddhism for me is to encourage everyone to reflect on themselves and discover their own potential," he says.



## Dr. Annette Padilla

*PhD in Public Policy and Administration '13*

Dr. Annette Padilla '13 is building bridges across languages and cultures around the world.

Padilla is a professor and researcher whose educational résumé crisscrosses the globe from Maine to Vietnam to the United Arab Emirates. Before pursuing her PhD in Public Policy and Administration at Walden, a two-year contract at California Miramar University that allowed her to teach in Vietnam inspired her passion for international education and curriculum development. Since then she's also taught undergraduate business classes at Jiangnan University North American College in Wuxi, China. In 2020, she added to her global résumé, taking a position teaching English as a second language to female students with Saudi Arabia's King Faisal University.



## Continuing His Change Journey

*Dr. Walter McCollum believes in celebrating his students and their learning.*

Dr. Walter McCollum '04, PhD in Applied Management and Decision Sciences, has left a significant legacy behind him at Walden. After serving nearly three years as Walden's executive director and dean of student affairs, McCollum this summer began a new position as vice president for online learning at Miami Dade College in Florida. His influence, though, will remain.

McCollum has accumulated vast experience in the worlds of education, military, and business. His greatest impact, though, may have been in his constant effort to mentor students throughout his

time at Walden. He was a counselor and inspiration to countless students, even at one point hosting his own Scholars' Gala to honor those who exemplified his philosophy of achieving academic excellence and impacting social change.

McCollum is a Fulbright Scholar and the author of seven books. He has been employed by several major organizations working in military contracting, including Lucent Technologies and Lockheed Martin. Prior to working in the private sector, McCollum, a Desert Storm veteran, served 13 years in the U.S. Air Force.



### **Dr. Jack Monnell**

*PhD in Human Services '05*

Dr. Jack Monnell '05, PhD in Human Services, is an educator with passion and heart.

An associate professor and program coordinator of justice studies at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) in North Carolina, Monell is a social justice scholar and advocate who uses his personal and professional experiences to make a difference in the lives of others. Courses he teaches at WSSU include Police & Community and Drugs, Crime, and Justice. His research interests focus on Afro-Latino youth and their families, pop culture, and delinquency paradigm shifts.

In addition to his academic responsibilities, Monell serves as a consultant for local, state, and federal agencies. He is a member of the American Society of Criminology, the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, and the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association.



# FINDING THE GOOD IN TROUBLING TIMES

BY ALAN CARL

*While the nation locked down, Walden student Anna Slayton stood up and volunteered to help those in need.*

Moments of crisis can lead to uplifting acts of good—especially when everyone does their part to support one another. For Walden University, this has meant holding true to our core mission of social change.

As the spread of COVID-19 pushed our nation into an uncertain new reality, the Walden community sought ways to help people in need and support the many workers confronting the crisis directly.

While no single group can solve all the problems created by the pandemic, we're proud of the role our community has played—and continues to play. And we're thankful to all the partner organizations who have joined us and who work so hard for the good of their communities, their countries, and the world.

Here is a small sampling of what our community and our partner organizations have been doing.

### VOLUNTEERING ON THE FRONT LINES

When RN and Walden student Anna Slayton, Master of Science in Nursing (RN-MSN), saw the COVID-19 crisis mounting in New York City, she left her family in Texas to join the fight as a relief nurse. Assigned to a night shift at a skilled nursing facility, she used her experience, her grit, and what she's learned in her MSN program to help care for the facility's residents during the crisis. Anna's courage and commitment to service makes her an exemplary member of the Walden community and represents everything we stand for.

### SUPPORTING THE UNITED WAY OF GREATER NASHVILLE

When the American Organization for Nursing Leadership had to cancel its March trade show, our nursing students, alumni, faculty, and partners lost the opportunity to connect—but

Nashville lost a lot more. On the heels of a devastating tornado, COVID-19 closures left the city in serious need. We helped out with a \$9,000 donation to the United Way of Greater Nashville, which is working hard to keep its city and people strong.

### DELIVERING BACKPACKS OF FOOD

With school canceled, students who rely on free or subsidized school meals struggled to get the nutrition they needed. Val Taylor, a Walden alumna and member of the Center for Social Change Advisory Council, spearheaded an effort to deliver backpacks full of food and hygiene products to Gwynns Falls Elementary School and Beechfield Elementary/Middle School students in Baltimore, Maryland.

### CARING FOR NURSES

As a leading educator in the field of nursing, we've always had a deep respect for the work nurses do. We wanted to support as many of these first responders as we could during the crisis. To express our support and appreciation, we provided care packages to nursing staff at our partner hospitals across the U.S.

### HELPING HOUSTON CHILDREN

The sudden unemployment of thousands in Houston, Texas, put a strain on the Houston Food Bank. In support of its tremendous efforts to keep its community fed, we donated \$2,000 to the food bank's Backpack Buddy program, which helps students who rely on free or reduced-price school lunches receive nutritious food over the weekends.

### REDUCING ANXIETY IN FAMILIES

In times of uncertainty, it's natural to be stressed and anxious. We wanted to help kids and their caregivers work through those emotions in a healthy way, so we partnered with school districts in four states and the District of Columbia to provide students with copies of the book *Paint a Double Rainbow*. The book offers 40 mindfulness activities to help kids and their caregivers feel calm, focused, and happy.



*Anna Slayton left home to help New York City during the height of its COVID-19 crisis.*



*Slayton joined other nurses volunteering on the front lines.*



*Slayton and other volunteers made an immense difference.*

A portrait of Sue Subbock, a woman with short brown hair, wearing purple and gold-rimmed glasses, a light blue collared shirt, and a dark blue blazer. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. On the right side of the image, there is a vertical gradient bar transitioning from white at the top to teal at the bottom.

# SUE SUBBOCK

*Preparing Walden for the “forces of change.”*

BY KRISTIN HANSON

Sue Subocz's path to her role as Walden's chief academic officer and provost began, coincidentally, with an experience as a distance education student. In 1998, as an active-duty member of the United States Coast Guard, she enrolled in a history of education course by mailing in a postcard to a midwestern university's extension program. In return, the institution sent her a big box of materials, which she reviewed, completed, and returned to be graded.

Distance education has changed drastically in the 22 years since, and Subocz has spent most of that time at the field's cutting edge as a faculty member and administrator. Subocz most recently served as Walden University's vice provost for curriculum, product strategy, innovation, and design. She formerly served as vice president of product strategy, innovation, and design for Walden's parent company, Laureate Education, where she improved student engagement with leading innovative digital product design and quality program development.

Currently, Subocz provides leadership in a broad academic capacity that encompasses ensuring the academic integrity of the university, overseeing long-range planning and budgeting, and steering curriculum and program development. Her focus is on delivering high-quality curricula and programs that meet the needs of students, align with the Walden mission, and comply with various accreditation agencies and state regulations.

In the following interview, Subocz shares how she went from military engineer to university administrator, and why she's grateful that her career path led her to Walden.

### WHY DID YOU WANT TO PURSUE A CAREER IN EDUCATION?

I love school, I love learning, and I always have. The minute I graduated from the [U.S.] Coast Guard Academy, I made it my goal to go back and teach there. I got to a point in my military career that I knew I wasn't going to have the opportunity to do that, but I said, "I'll give teaching a shot anyway." I thought I'd be a high school teacher—there was a program called Troops to Teachers that made it easier to transition from military to civilian life. I wanted to take classes for free at the

community college, then become a high school teacher, so I became an adjunct professor. As I taught (at the community college), I thought, "Why should I teach high school when I could teach college?"

### HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO SPECIALIZE IN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN?

As I finished my master's in education and started my PhD program, it just so happened that at the same time, online learning was really starting to ramp up. My technical interest combined with all of that, and I did my doctoral degree in instructional design for online learning. That launched into an administrative career as an instructional designer and administrator. It all just kind of happened. I never had a goal to do it, but my take is that you do everything as well as you can while you're there and see what's next. And what came next was this.

### HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR WAY TO WALDEN?

Someone I'd worked with at the community college recommended the job. I knew of Walden from my time as a student at Capella [University]. I chose Capella at the time because they had a great offer going for military people, but Walden stood out as one of the good guys in the for-profit industry along with Capella. Comparing my educational experiences, I worked harder in my PhD and master's programs at Capella than I ever did at my on-ground alma maters. People doubt the for-profits, especially if you've been with public universities. But it didn't even occur to me. I knew I had a great education at Capella, and Walden compared to it. When the opportunity came up in my networking, I didn't think twice about it.

### WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED MOST ABOUT WORKING AT WALDEN?

If there's one thing we're all learning right now through this COVID-19 situation, it's that the forces of change in the world are



coming from everywhere, and you never know what the next one is going to be. It's a great time to be at an organization that believes in innovation, isn't afraid to pivot quickly, has such great internal talent, and cares so much about its students. We moved a residency from face-to-face to virtual in just two days. I don't know who else could have done that. And it went great—most students decided to participate in the virtual format [versus postponing until a later date]. The faculty were so willing to change and respond. We had to train faculty to use Zoom and practice virtual teaching skills, and they jumped right into it. There's a mindset at Walden that not every higher education [institution] is prepared to have.

### WHAT MAKES YOU PROUDEST ABOUT YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH WALDEN?

Our commitment to our learners and their employment outcomes. It's not just about getting a piece of paper, it's about getting a piece of paper that can change your place in the world. We create an avenue for people to create their own change, for themselves and their communities. We create social change with every graduate. They're out there changing their own place in the world, in the lives of their families and those they work with, and in creating inspiration for those around them.

# SOCIAL JUSTICE IN EDUCATION

*Dr. Ayanna Cooper '09 has dedicated her career to advocating for English language learners.*

BY  
REBECCA  
KIRKMAN



Early in her teaching career, Dr. Ayanna Cooper '09 taught in a preK classroom where the majority of students spoke a language other than English at home. Some of the languages represented in her class were Spanish, Russian, and Arabic. Despite this, the students were expected to meet and exceed standards designed for native English speakers.

Cooper responded by creating a print-rich and language-based learning environment. As the year progressed, she saw her students' language skills develop in both their home languages and English. But she wanted to do more.

"I was teaching in classes that had linguistically diverse learners, so it was something I felt I needed to learn more about," she recalls. "I was really just looking for more ways to support them."

The experience would become a turning point in Cooper's career. A colleague at her school and teacher of English language learners encouraged Cooper to pursue an endorsement in teaching English to speakers of other languages (ESOL). Years later, they would both become Walden alumni.

"I fell back in love with teaching," Cooper says of earning the endorsement. "And I found out that the rights that protect these students actually grew out of the civil rights movement, which I was really drawn to."

Completing the ESOL endorsement reignited a passion for scholarship for Cooper. She went on to earn an Education

Specialist (EdS) degree in curriculum and instruction, her Doctor of Education (EdD) with a specialization in Teacher Leadership from Walden University, and then a second master's degree in teaching English to speakers of other languages.

As a full-time teacher, earning her EdD at Walden offered the flexibility Cooper needed. Her dissertation focused on elementary ESOL teacher efficacy and the need for more content-focused professional development.

More than a decade after completing her doctoral degree, Cooper continues to advocate for students. As an independent consultant, she helps school districts and school leaders design and improve professional development programs for teachers of English language learners. Her second book, *And Justice for ELs: A Leader's Guide to Creating and Sustaining Equitable Schools*, to be published in September, serves as a field guide from her years supporting school leaders across the U.S.

"I found that the locations may change, but a lot of the concerns and issues were very similar and the needs were similar," Cooper says. "The school leaders I was supporting would always be so busy, they would have very little time to engage in their own professional learning and reflection." With her book, she hopes to reach busy educators across the country, extending her impact and creating more equitable opportunities for students.

"Educators don't wake up in the morning with the intent of violating their students' civil rights," Cooper says, "but unfortunately it happens often." Through her professional development and coaching work with public school districts and school leadership, Cooper is able to affirm the practices that teachers get right and offer additional tools to increase positive outcomes for traditionally marginalized students.

"My work with educators is really fulfilling, because it's helping them to be better practitioners," Cooper says.

Cooper never planned to be an entrepreneur. But after facing a lack of full-time job opportunities and seeing the huge need that existed for teachers of English language learners, she took a leap of faith and became an independent contractor. Founding A. Cooper Consulting has allowed her to have an impact on curriculum throughout the U.S.—and around the world.

In fall 2019, she traveled to Kuwait as an English language specialist for the U.S. Department of State, working on high school English language curriculum for the Kuwait Ministry of Education.

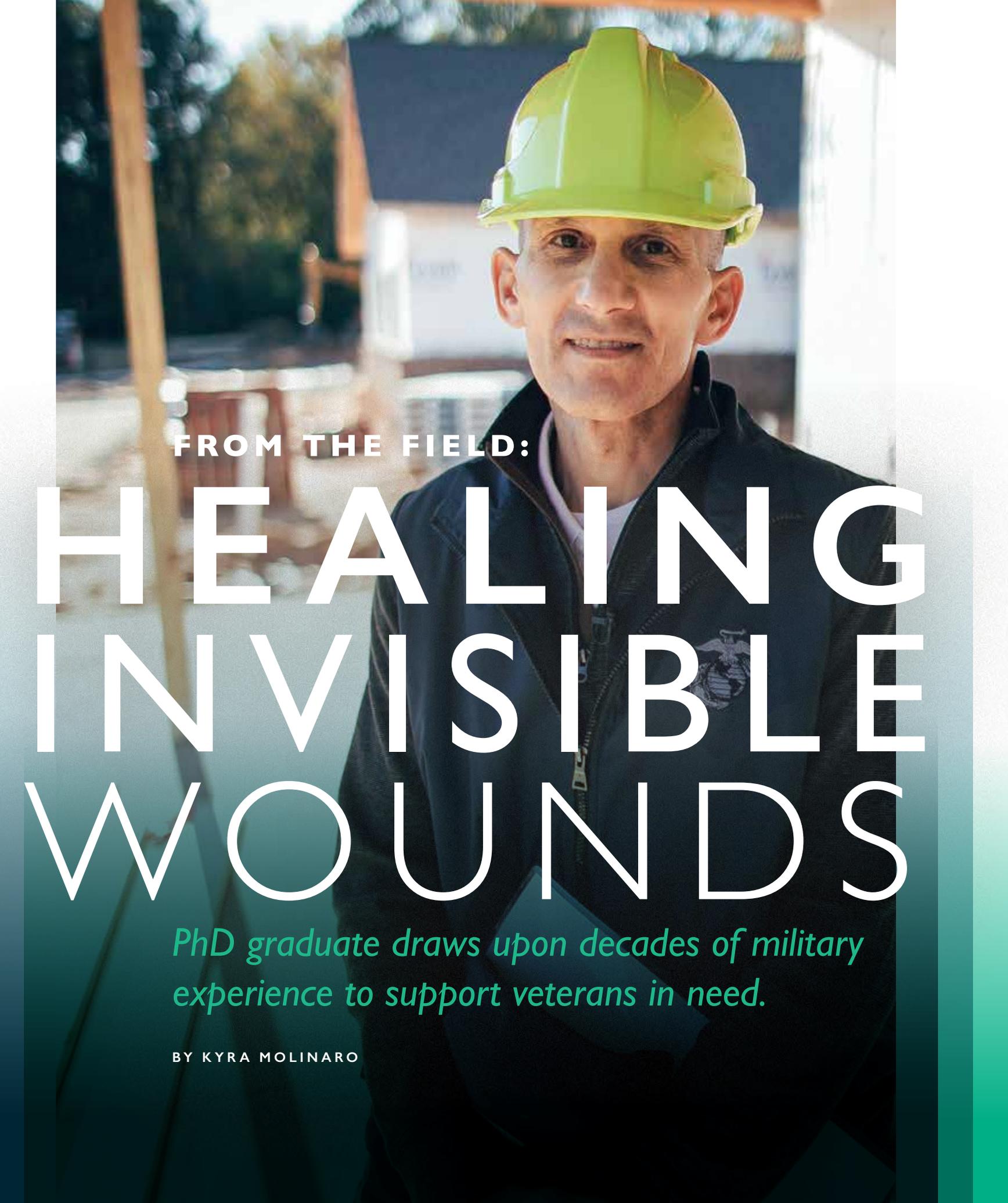
During the trip, Cooper made recommendations that have the potential to improve outcomes for all Kuwaiti high school students. Over the course of the monthlong assignment, she had the opportunity to get to know Kuwaiti educators, discovering that many learned English through YouTube and social media.

"It was an opportunity to see how the English language is taught in another country," Cooper says. "So I was looking for similarities and differences between how English is taught here in the U.S. and in Kuwait."

Cooper hasn't stopped sharing her experience and knowledge. She's currently serving a term on the TESOL International Association board of directors, where she strives to help make the organization as diverse and inclusive as possible.

"I remember thinking that I would have so much free time once I finished my doctorate," Cooper recalls with a laugh. "But I tell other doctoral candidates that I ended up being just as busy, if not more."

As a lifelong learner, she says, interesting projects that foster inclusivity continue fueling her passion for advocacy. "For me," Cooper says, "the learning is never done. It's never complete."

A man wearing a bright yellow hard hat and a dark jacket is standing on a construction site. He is holding a blue folder and looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background shows wooden framing and a building under construction.

FROM THE FIELD:

# HEALING INVISIBLE WOUNDS

*PhD graduate draws upon decades of military experience to support veterans in need.*

BY KYRA MOLINARO

## How does one move forward after mental or physical trauma?

**After experiencing a devastating career setback due to medical complications, Dr. Thomas Gorry '18, a PhD in Management graduate, combined his Walden education with his military experience to help other veterans in need, becoming executive director of the Veterans Life Center of North Carolina, slated to open in Butner, North Carolina, this year.**

Gorry served in the United States Marine Corps for 32 years, beginning as a strategic planner and logistician in 1985. He was deeply involved in higher education throughout his career. Prior to pursuing his doctorate in 2013, he earned three master's degrees—including an MBA from Webster University—and served as an adjunct professor at four universities, teaching courses in business management, leadership, and military strategy, among other topics.

Later, he completed two work assignments in the academic field, first as the commandant of the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy, a college of the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., and second as president of Marine Corps University, a professional military education university system in Quantico, Virginia.

"Education was always an important part of my career," he says. "It made me a better officer and a better leader. It made me a more well-rounded person."

Gorry deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 during Operation Enduring Freedom and served as the joint operations officer for U.S. Forces Afghanistan. Subsequently, he was promoted to brigadier general, and was later named commanding general of the Marine Corps installations on the East Coast.

While in Afghanistan, he severely injured his back, and after returning home in

May 2010, he developed painful digestive problems. These issues worsened as he spent the next six years in doctors' offices hoping to receive an official medical diagnosis. In 2016, he developed a septic infection and was rushed to the emergency room. He underwent surgery to cure the infection, and several surgeries on his back followed. During his recovery, a visiting colleague told him his physical condition would likely mean the end of his military career.



*Dr. Gorry is helping to build a center that helps veterans in need.*

"You have your career that you spent the last 30 years building, and now all of a sudden, that's being taken away from you," Gorry says. "My colleague said to me, 'You have to give yourself time to grieve.' But I wanted to move on as quickly as possible. I wanted to use my experience to help others."

Gorry retired from the Marine Corps in 2017 and moved with his wife to Raleigh, North Carolina. His physical and mental struggles inspired him to write his PhD dissertation on organizational support for wounded, ill, and injured Marine veterans. He used the U.S. Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment as a case study.

"All too often, veterans have invisible mental wounds that cause them to get

stuck in a negative cycle," he says. "They start having family issues, they lose their jobs, or they turn to alcohol and drugs. We are seeing increased homelessness, increased unemployment, and—most tragically—high suicide rates. My dissertation focused on why agencies must better support veterans so we can change these statistics."

Soon after Gorry's Walden graduation, he applied for and was appointed to the role of executive director of the newly founded Veterans Life Center of North Carolina. The center will offer a residential program designed to help at-risk veterans pursue career opportunities and reintegrate into the community by strengthening their mental fitness and physical health, improving life skills, and completing vocational training.

When construction is finished, the center will have over 100 beds and shower and bathroom facilities in each of its four wings. There will be a full commercial kitchen and dining room, a large multipurpose room, two day rooms, a library, a computer lab, a conference room, a store, a dispensary, a nurse/first aid room, and two laundry rooms, as well as office space for more than 30 staff members.

"The center will be a safe, secure environment for veterans to live as they get the support they need to move forward," Gorry says. "We want to help them create a new image of themselves by focusing not on past trauma, but on their future path."

Looking to his own future, Gorry says that after the center becomes established, he would like to write and publish a book. He adds that he keeps in touch with his Walden mentor, Dr. Joseph Barbeau, along with several of his classmates.

"My Walden education has inspired me to share my story and use my experiences to help other people," he says. "I am committed to creating positive social change in my community and using my degree for a higher purpose."

# Dedicated to Excellence:

## New Accreditations and Honors

Walden is not an institution that rests on its laurels. Since our beginning in 1970, we've continually reevaluated and refined our degree programs to keep in step with the evolving needs of our students and our commitment to excellence. In the past year, we've seen our efforts recognized with specialized accreditations for teacher preparation and public health programs as well as honors for our School of Management. Specialized accreditations are typically bestowed at the college, school, or program level within a university. Seeking accreditation is a voluntary effort that, when successful, shows that an institution prepares students to practice at a high level in a certain discipline or profession. Walden earned two distinguished accreditations in 2019 that underscore our commitment to providing students with an education that meets recognized standards of quality.



### CAEP ACCREDITATION: EXCELLENCE IN TEACHER PREPARATION

As a university founded by teachers, Walden's roots in the education field run deep. With more than 60,000 students and alumni, The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership is home to many dedicated and nationally renowned educators, including more than 150 state teachers of the year.

In April 2019, Walden achieved accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the only nationally recognized accrediting body for educator preparation. Of approximately 1,200 educator preparation programs in the U.S., fewer than 250 have earned this distinction.

"Accreditation status is one of the most important decision-making factors for students," says Walden President Dr. Ward Ulmer. "Adding CAEP accreditation to the many others we have earned shows our adherence to the highest education standards and rigorous academic review."

CAEP accreditation covers the Walden initial teacher preparation programs BS in Elementary Education and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) with a specialization in Special Education (K-21), as well as the advanced educator preparation programs MS in Education (MSEd) with a specialization in Educational Leadership and Administration and EdS in Educational Leadership and Administration.

The three graduate programs also achieved national recognition from CAEP Specialized Professional Associations, which define what educators need to master to begin teaching or serving in school leadership. Walden's MAT with a specialization in Special Education (K-21) was recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children, and its MSEd with a specialization in Educational Leadership and Administration and its EdS in Educational Leadership and Administration programs were recognized by the Educational Leadership Constituent Council.



### CEPH ACCREDITATION: HIGH STANDARDS IN PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING

Walden has one of the largest suites of public health degree online programs available today, including the Master of Public Health (MPH). In October 2019, our MPH program earned accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). CEPH is an independent agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for assuring quality in public health education and training to achieve excellence in practice, research, and service.

“CEPH accreditation for our online MPH program demonstrates the exceptional quality of the public health education Walden provides its students, who aspire to effect positive social change through this fast-growing profession,” says Dr. Jorg Westermann, dean of the School of Health Sciences.

For students, CEPH accreditation is a gateway to professional credentialing. Graduates from CEPH-accredited MPH programs like Walden’s are eligible to take the Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam, administered by the National Board of Public Health Examiners. Moreover, they can do so without needing five years of public health work experience after earning their bachelor’s degree. Walden is also now one of the CEPH-accredited members of the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH). This qualifies our students to apply for ASPPH fellowships.

The spotlight has also been on the accomplishments of the College of Management and Technology and School of Management recently, with recognitions that highlight the drive for excellence in the student experience.



### ACBSP ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

In April 2020, the Walden College of Management and Technology and School of Management earned a Silver Achievement Award from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). Walden is the proud first recipient of this award, which is given to colleges that demonstrate performance excellence and serve as role models for excellence in higher education.

In August 2019, Walden was also the first recipient of ACBSP’s Bronze Achievement Award (formerly the Accreditation Plus Award).

“These awards are a testament to the excellent education our students receive and our faculty and staff’s dedication toward providing a high-quality online education,” says Dr. Marilyn Powell, vice provost of the College of Management and Technology.

### PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE NETWORK (PEN) RECOGNITION

Earlier this year, the School of Management was awarded Advancement Level recognition from the Performance Excellence Network (PEN), which represents the Dakotas and Walden’s home state of Minnesota. The award is based on the Baldrige Excellence Framework and is the culmination of a rigorous evaluation of an organization’s management and performance system. The School of Management was evaluated on leadership, strategic planning, customer/student-related processes, measurement and knowledge management, workforce, and operations, and recognized for systematically improving results.

# ACCOLADES: HOLDING OURSELVES TO A HIGHER STANDARD



## Debra Tervala will lead the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation

Debra Tervala has been promoted to associate vice provost for academic accreditation and compliance and will lead Walden's newly created Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation (IEAC).

The purpose of the office is to improve programs and services across the university and continue to elevate student success and institutional

quality. The IEAC will develop, implement, and review ongoing and systematic institutional processes and practices that demonstrate how the university fulfills its mission as a higher education institution. The office also facilitates regional accreditation, such as the university's current reaffirmation of accreditation efforts with The Higher Learning Commission, as well as oversees programmatic accreditations by specialized accreditors, such as those for Walden's nursing, business administration, public health, teacher and principal preparation, counseling, project management, information technology, and social work programs.

"Overall, we aim to take a macro look at what we typically do with assessment and accreditation—not just from an individual program standpoint but from an institutional level," she says. "We want to enhance our efforts so we can examine how we are accomplishing our mission, and how we can continuously improve and grow."

Tervala has been part of the Walden family since 2012, when she was vice president of both The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership and the College of Undergraduate Studies. She left to serve as provost of Santa Fe University of Art and Design in 2014 before returning to Walden as a core faculty member in 2017. For the past year, she has served as director of academic accreditation and compliance.

Since assuming leadership of IEAC, Tervala has seen the efforts of Walden's College of Management and Technology faculty and staff recognized with Advancement Level recognition from the Performance Excellence Network (PEN), which represents the Dakotas and Walden's home state of Minnesota. The 2020 award is based on the Baldrige Excellence Framework and is the culmination of a rigorous evaluation of an organization's management and performance system. The college has also been honored for its continuous improvement in academic quality with the Silver Achievement Award from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). In 2019, the college was the first recipient of ACBSP's Bronze Achievement Award (formerly the Accreditation Plus Award).

"One of the things that makes Walden unique is the commitment that our faculty and staff have to student success," Tervala says.

"We are a student-centric organization. It's that passion that drives us to create the best possible experience for our students."



### Dr. Shelley Armstrong

Dr. Shelley Armstrong (Walden University program director of School of Health Sciences undergraduate programs) received the Outstanding

Youth Program Award from the Road Runners Club of America for her YOUTH FIT program, which combines her passion for cross-country running and promoting a healthy lifestyle for children.



### Emma Frenette

Emma Frenette (BS in Communication '18) founded the Boys Ballet Summer Intensive. The program provides a safe and nurturing environment for young male ballet dancers.



### LaRonda Howard

LaRonda Howard (MPH '12) is Walden's 2019 Outstanding Alumni Award winner. She is the founder of H.E.R. Story Productions LLC,

a platform for courageous speakers to share their stories to help others find freedom in forgiveness and begin the process of healing after difficult times.



### Dr. Jonas Nguh

Dr. Jonas Nguh (Walden University College of Nursing faculty member) was awarded the 2019 Lillian Wald Service Award from the American Public

Health Association in recognition of his work in public health nursing.

### Dr. John K. Amaglo

Dr. John K. Amaglo (DBA '19) has been elected president of the Ghana Institution of Surveyors for the 2020–2021 session.

### Tara Chalakani

Tara Chalakani (PsyD in Behavioral Health Leadership '20) has been selected by the New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies to receive the Yale University Bulldog Award for Outstanding Leadership in Children's Services.

A woman in a graduation cap and gown is shown in profile, looking towards the right. She is wearing a dark blue graduation cap and a yellow and blue stole. The background is a blurred graduation ceremony.

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\*All tuition reductions, grants, and scholarships are subject to specific eligibility requirements. Contact a Walden University Enrollment Specialist for details.



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DR. SHAWNA CHARLES '13  
PHD IN PSYCHOLOGY

Featured on page 31.

