



MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021



“Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Monmouth University has advanced in so many good ways—indeed great ways—over the past year. I am very proud of the way our University has evolved in the face of these uncertainties and look forward to our continued growth and distinction.”

—President Patrick F. Leahy



President's Report 2020-2021

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A photograph of a modern two-story building during sunset. The building has a dark brown upper section with horizontal siding and a light-colored lower section with large glass windows. The name "POZYCKI HALL" is visible in gold letters above the windows. To the left, there's a glass-enclosed staircase and a small arched entrance. The right side features a set of double doors. The sky is a warm orange and yellow. In the foreground, there's a green lawn and a paved walkway.

POZYCKI HALL



—[From the President]—

DEAR FRIENDS:

Despite the many and varied challenges that have characterized the last academic and fiscal year (July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021), Monmouth experienced a very good—I might even suggest *great*—year. In a year unlike any other, this was indeed a notable time at Monmouth for so many reasons, all of which make me both grateful and proud to serve as Monmouth University's 10th president.

We enrolled the most academically prepared and diverse class in our 88-year history, increased our first- to second-year retention rate, and improved our graduation rate. We demonstrated flexibility and innovation, offering students the option of in-person or online instruction. We advanced our commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all on campus. We enjoyed winning seasons across so many of our Division I athletics teams, while our student-athletes excelled in the classroom. We stewarded our resources smartly in a challenging environment and had a successful fundraising year. All of this and more resulted in our highest-ever rankings in various third-party reports, polls, and publications.

While managing the University day to day through a global pandemic, we also planned for our future. With input from a broad range of stakeholders, and with the unanimous support of our Board of Trustees, we finalized an ambitious five-year strategic plan to help chart a bold course in our continued evolution into a national university by becoming a leader at integrating excellence and access.

Perhaps most importantly, this was an unequivocally *great* year because it displayed the strength of the Monmouth spirit. Thanks to the resilience of our students, coupled with the compassion of our faculty and staff, we were able to confer 3,257 degrees for both the Class of 2020 and Class of 2021 over a series of 16 in-person commencement ceremonies hosted on campus. I am so pleased that we were able to safely and suitably celebrate the efforts of our students over the course of the 2020–2021 commencement season. After all, in the end, guiding students to the successful completion of their degrees is the ultimate goal of a university.

None of this good work would have been possible without the unwavering dedication of the Monmouth community. I am grateful to all who played a role, big or small, in the successes of this unforgettable year. Thank you all for being a part of it.



Dr. Patrick F. Leahy
President

THIS IS MONMOUTH

Highest-Ever Ranking in U.S. News

Monmouth soared to No. 18 in the most recent *U.S. News & World Report* Best Regional Universities—North rankings, up five spots from its previous high the year earlier.



A “Top Music Business School”

Monmouth was one of just 28 schools nationwide named to *Billboard* magazine's list.



The Best 386 Colleges

The 2021 edition of The Princeton Review's annual best colleges guide named Monmouth one of the nation's best institutions for undergraduates to earn their college degree.



Located along New Jersey's northern coastline, Monmouth University is a top-tier private institution that is home to innovative academic programs, expert faculty, and nationally ranked Division I athletics. Comprehensive in scope, the University enrolls approximately 5,675 students in more than 55 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, including three doctoral programs.



Best Value

Money Magazine cited Monmouth as one of the “Best Colleges for Your Money” in this year’s annual rankings, as it has every year since the list’s inception.

Founded in 1933 as Monmouth Junior College, the institution became Monmouth College in 1956 and received its university charter in 1995. Today, Monmouth University is consistently ranked among the best regional universities in the country in a host of measures related to excellence and access, offering proof that it is possible to make an exceptional private education affordable and accessible.



Committed to First-Gen Student Success

The Center for First-Generation Student Success recognized Monmouth in its 2020–2021 cohort of First-Gen Forward Institutions because of the University’s demonstrated commitment to improving experiences and advancing outcomes of first-generation college students.



One of the Top Private Nursing Schools in the U.S.

Nursing Schools Almanac named Monmouth’s Marjorie K. Unterberg School of Nursing and Health Studies one of “The 100 Best Private Nursing Schools in the United States.”



Striving for Accessibility

We believe that there are a few fundamental attributes that distinguish Monmouth University from the nearly 4,000 colleges and universities in the U.S.—namely, that Monmouth is a private, nonsectarian institution competing in NCAA Division I athletics.

- » WE ARE A **PRIVATE** INSTITUTION, FUNDED BY TUITION, INVESTMENTS, AND PRIVATE DONORS—NOT BY TAXPAYERS.
- » WE ARE A **NONSECTARIAN** INSTITUTION AND DO NOT ASSOCIATE WITH OR ADHERE TO A PARTICULAR RELIGIOUS BELIEF OR TRADITION.
- » WE ARE AN NCAA **DIVISION I** SCHOOL, COMPETING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS.

By our estimates, there are only 50 institutions in American higher education that share these three essential traits. Our goal—as outlined in our new strategic plan—is to become one of the most **accessible** schools in this category, providing our exceptional academic experience to as many deserving students as possible.



SELECT COMPANY

Only 50 private, nonsectarian institutions with Division I athletics programs exist in the U.S. Among these schools, Monmouth is making strides toward becoming one of the most accessible in this category as measured by the total number of Pell Grant-eligible students enrolled.

Boston University
Bradley University
Brown University
Bryant University
Bucknell University
Butler University
Colgate University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Drake University
Drexel University
Duke University
Elon University
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Furman University
George Washington University

Hampton University
Harvard University
Hofstra University
Howard University
Jacksonville University
Lafayette College
Lehigh University
Long Island University
Marist College
Mercer University
» Monmouth University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Princeton University
Quinnipiac University
Rice University
Rider University

Robert Morris University
Stanford University
Stetson University
Syracuse University
Tulane University
University of Denver
University of Hartford
University of Miami
University of Pennsylvania
University of Richmond
University of Southern California
University of the Pacific
Vanderbilt University
Wagner College
Wake Forest University
Yale University

Sources: ncaa.org/our-division-i-members and usnews.com/best-colleges



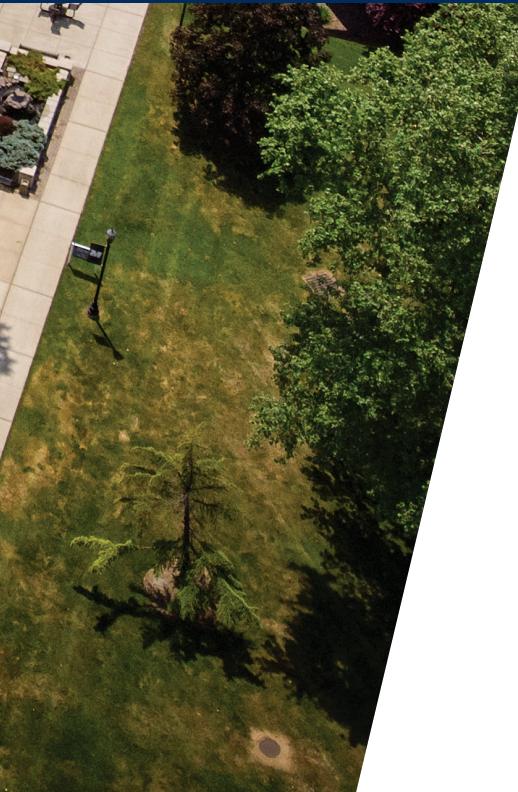




—[*The Strategic Plan for Monmouth University*]—

EXCELLENCE. ACCESS. AMBITION.

Monmouth University is committing to a number of bold initiatives in the coming years that will propel the institution forward, making it a national leader at integrating excellence and access.



Many institutions distinguish themselves by their excellence, as measured by high rankings in various third-party publications. Others make their mark by their accessibility, as measured by their high number of Pell Grant-eligible students.

In recent years, Monmouth University has already begun to integrate excellence and access like few other private institutions in the nation. But, in order to become a national leader, we must become both more excellent and more accessible. →

Excellence.

In order to become more excellent, we must continue to build a first-class, increasingly prestigious, residential university, successfully completing our evolution from a local, junior college to a national, doctoral university. We must rethink our program offerings, systems of support, and recruiting and retention expectations, and we must deliver exceptional outcomes at an entirely new level.

Access.

Then, we must make this prestigious University increasingly accessible to students. We must review our scholarship programs to ensure accessibility, and we must raise more money for scholarship support of low-income students and their families. We must recruit more widely and improve the culture to ensure that an increasingly diverse student population can thrive on Monmouth's campus.

Ambition.

To thrive as an institution while effectively serving a rapidly changing student body, Monmouth University will establish a new paradigm in American higher education, demonstrating that a private institution can be both highly ranked and highly accessible. In five short years, we will become a national leader at integrating excellence and access.





CHARTING OUR COURSE

Monmouth University's strategic plan, developed through a highly collaborative process over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, sets an ambitious path forward.

Through an institution-wide commitment to excellence, access, and ambition, Monmouth University will become a national leader at integrating excellence and access by becoming the most highly ranked private institution with our access measures in our category. In order to meet our ambitious goal, we'll succeed by focusing on six interlocking and mutually reinforcing themes.

Six Key Themes

- 1** INVEST IN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
- 2** ENHANCE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE
- 3** CULTIVATE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS COMMUNITY
- 4** IMPROVE OUR IDENTITY AND IMAGE
- 5** MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE
- 6** ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY

These six themes will guide our activities over the next five years, allowing us to build the best university we can possibly build while making it as accessible as possible to students. This is what inspires all of us at Monmouth and is at the heart of what we do as educators.

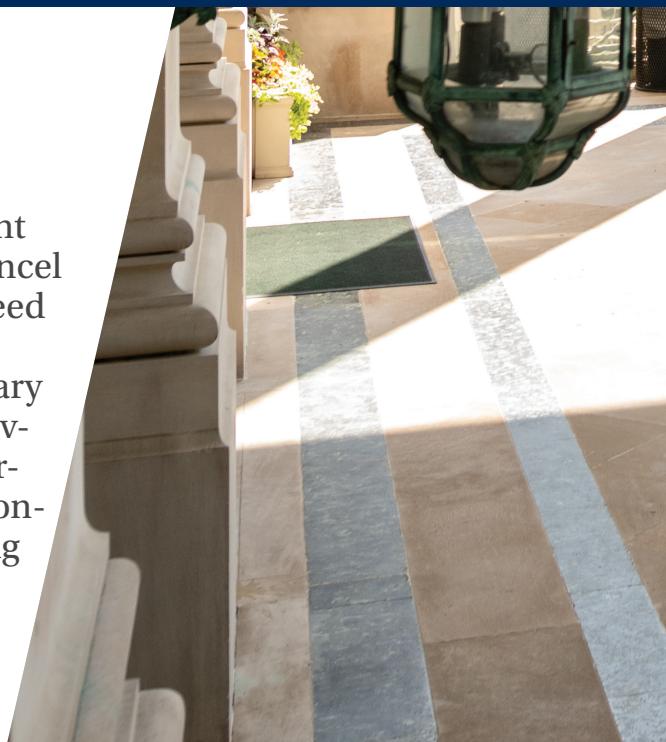
—[Responding to the Pandemic]—

MONMOUTH'S RESILIENCE SHINES THROUGH

In a year like no other, the University community banded together to help one another and our neighbors throughout the region.

March 9, 2020, is a date that will be forever etched in Monmouth University's history. After months monitoring the growing threat of COVID-19, University leadership and the Crisis Management Team (CMT) made the difficult but proactive decision to cancel classes leading into spring break to best assess how to proceed with the rest of the semester.

What unfurled over the next 15 months was an extraordinary effort made by University staff, faculty, and leadership to navigate and adapt to the ever-changing and unprecedented circumstances caused by the global pandemic, ensuring the continued delivery of an outstanding education while protecting the health and safety of all community members. →







Proactive Response

Over the course of a few weeks in March 2020, the Information Management division helped nearly 6,000 students and more than 1,100 University employees transition to a remote working and learning environment.

At the same time, accommodations were quickly made to support students who were unable to safely return to their homes, with the CMT working to ensure each student was able to effectively social distance and continue learning while having access to on-campus resources such as dining services and a place to safely isolate if needed.

To further support students during this difficult time, the Faculty Council quickly approved flexible pass/fail grading and adjusted academic delivery through a blend of in-person, hybrid, and online coursework.

Supporting Students Financially

The President's Relief Fund was established to provide immediate financial assistance to students facing unanticipated hardship caused by the pandemic. More than 75% of student aid requests were funded, totaling more than \$267,000 in relief grants to cover a broad range of requests.

The University also issued prorated reimbursements to students for unused room and board, meal plans, and parking through the fall semester. In addition, student employees who could not come to campus to work were still paid throughout the spring 2020 semester.

The University also successfully distributed more than \$2 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act relief funds to all Pell Grant-eligible undergraduate students as well as students who demonstrated financial need.

Keeping Campus Informed

Since the early days of the crisis, University leadership remained committed to being transparent in sharing pandemic-related information with the University community.

Beginning in mid-March 2020, the University launched *Monmouth Weekly*, a podcast in which President Leahy and members of his leadership team share updates on the University's pandemic response. More than 30 episodes have been produced to date.

Early on, President Leahy began hosting bi-weekly open Zoom calls in which he shares the latest updates with faculty and staff, providing employees a forum in which to ask questions and share their thoughts.

A COVID-19 Campus Dashboard website was also created and serves as a one-stop shop for pandemic-related communications and real-time data on confirmed cases on campus.



Student-First, Personalized Approach

Following the abrupt shift to remote classes, Monmouth employees made personal phone calls to more than 2,300 students to check on their well-being, assess how they were adjusting to remote instruction, and troubleshoot any problems. Follow-up calls were made later in the semester to reassess each student's welfare and to offer graduating students strategic introductions to potential employers, industry leaders, alumni mentors, and on-campus resources. Similar calling initiatives were carried out in the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters.

Testing, Tracing, and Vaccination Procedures

In addition to taking aggressive action to create a safe environment for those who remained on campus, Monmouth adopted robust COVID-19 testing and vaccination procedures.

Since September 2020, and in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Health, the Monmouth County Regional Health Commission No. 1, and Atlantic Diagnostic Laboratories, Monmouth's Department of Health Services has provided continual access to testing for University students and employees, with more than 20,000 tests performed last academic year alone.

Once a safe and effective vaccine became available to the public, Monmouth created opportunities for access to COVID-19 vaccines to all interested University community members. Through a combination of both on-campus clinics and hospital-based offerings, vaccines continue to be distributed to members of the Monmouth community.

More than \$267,000 was distributed to students in need through the President's Relief Fund.

SERVING A PUBLIC PURPOSE

Early in the pandemic, Monmouth supported the local community by donating personal protective equipment to community hospitals and providing meals to local first responders.

Later, to meet the growing need for counseling services among external community members, the School of Social Work launched the Monmouth University Community Care Telehealth Clinic—a free, online counseling service available to adults living in New Jersey. Over the last year, graduate social work students have assisted more than 150 individuals from seven counties across the state. Clinic Coordinator Elena Mazza, Ph.D., said the program has been so successful that other universities are looking to adopt a similar model.

Return to Normalcy

With the 2021–2022 academic year now underway, Monmouth remains committed to ensuring the continued health and safety of every member of the campus community through a number of initiatives, including the continuation of our aggressive testing procedures, vaccine distribution, and modified social distancing protocols.

As we continue to navigate the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are confident that the resilience of the Monmouth spirit will continue to shine through.



[The Continued Growth of Monmouth]

EVOLVING INTO A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Monmouth's upward trajectory continued this year with the addition of our third doctoral program, and state approval of our fourth is anticipated soon.

With the launch of the new Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program this summer, Monmouth will soon achieve national doctoral university status, placing the University alongside some of the finest institutions in the nation. →



In less than 90 years, Monmouth has evolved from a junior college offering night classes in the local high school into a comprehensive university on the cusp of being recognized as a national doctoral university by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, the highest classification for institutions in the country.

Over the last decade, Monmouth has strategically grown its master's and doctoral programs and now offers three doctoral degrees and more than 20 master's degree programs across each of its six academic schools.

With the addition of the Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) this year, Monmouth is expected to be reclassified as a doctoral institution when the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education is reevaluated in 2023. The reclassification, which will be announced in 2024, will place Monmouth in *U.S. News & World Report*'s top category, alongside such esteemed institutions as Princeton University, Lehigh University, and Villanova University.

OTD degrees in six years, making Monmouth's OTD program one of a kind in New Jersey.

John R. Patro Jr., OTD, OTR/L, associate professor and chair of the OTD program, says that the addition of more than 3,500 square feet of new and planned laboratory spaces—including a state-of-the-art simulation lab, a pediatric lab, and a committed space for building a multisensory environment for research—will uniquely position Monmouth's OTD students for postgraduate success in a field that is projected to grow 16% over the next decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In addition, there are myriad opportunities for OTD students to partner with faculty and students across multiple degree programs, including in the areas of education, speech-language pathology, social work, physician assistant, and nursing, positioning them for interdisciplinary learning across various areas of health care.

"Our goal is to create leaders in our field and to prepare our students to meet and exceed the demands that are going to be in front of them as they enter into the OT practice of the future," Patro said. "Our graduates will be innovators and entrepreneurs who will effect change in our profession."

In addition to the OTD program, our forthcoming classification as a national doctoral university will be further buttressed by the expected addition of the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) in Human Rights Leadership, which would become the University's fourth doctoral degree-granting program pending final approval from the state this fall.

Grounded in a human rights and social justice framework, the program, once approved, will provide students the opportunity to pursue a degree with a focus that is unique among DSW programs across the country, preparing graduates in human rights leadership to secure human rights for vulnerable populations across local, national, and global communities by advancing social, economic, and environmental justice.

The primarily online, interdisciplinary degree program has the potential to bring in new faculty who are working across the globe. This will provide already practicing DSW students with the real-world human rights leadership skills and practice experience needed to assume leadership roles in nonprofit, government, and for-profit human services agencies at the local, national, and international levels.

Students can enter as undergraduates and complete both their B.S. and OTD degrees in six years, making Monmouth's OTD program one of a kind in New Jersey.

Monmouth welcomed the inaugural cohort of the OTD program this summer, marking the launch of the University's third doctoral degree-granting program. One of only two programs in the state to offer an entry-level doctoral degree, the OTD program will develop occupational therapists who are transformational leaders, scholars, and advocates through innovative teaching, immersive experiential learning, and dynamic community partnerships.

As part of the University's new Bachelor's + Master's Program, an exclusive opportunity for Monmouth undergraduate students to explore advanced, interdisciplinary study options and combine their career goals and passions, the 3+3 B.S./OTD accelerated program allows for students to enter as undergraduates and complete both their B.S. and



—[Reaffirming Our Commitment]—

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Monmouth made great strides this year in its ongoing efforts to build a more fair, just, and supportive community for all.

Last fall, Monmouth welcomed the most racially diverse—and best academically prepared—first-year class in University history. As our community continues to diversify, it is imperative to understand what we as a University are doing well in terms of maintaining and supporting that diversity—as well as to better understand the areas in which we need to improve.

To further that understanding, Monmouth completed a university-wide Campus Climate and Culture Study. Employees and students were surveyed on their attitudes, behaviors, and expectations around racism, discrimination, and inclusion; their experiences of bias and discrimination on campus; and their opinions of institutional commitment to equity and inclusion, among other things.

The study's findings, which were shared with the campus community, will help inform possible changes in the years to come. Already they have led the University to expand the options for reporting incidents of bias or discrimination on campus, making the reporting process easier and less intimidating. →







New Diversity Initiatives Fund Paying Dividends

Despite the fiscal challenges brought on by the pandemic, Monmouth signaled its unwavering commitment to advancing an inclusive campus culture by creating a permanent endowment to support diversity-related initiatives.

By a unanimous vote, the Board of Trustees created and dedicated \$3 million in inaugural funding to a new Diversity Initiatives Fund, which will support diversity programming, educational initiatives, and diverse faculty and staff recruitment, among other things, in perpetuity.

The fund is already making high-impact learning opportunities possible. Throughout the spring, several academic and cultural initiatives were made possible by newly created Diversity Innovation Grants, which are funded through the endowment. Programs included “Paradoxical Paradise: An African American Oral History and Mapping Project on Asbury Park”; an exploration of “Genetics, Genomics, and Racism”; and an oral history project commemorating Monmouth’s own “Hidden Figure,” distinguished African American mathematical physicist and former faculty member Walter McAfee, Ph.D., ’85HN.

Growing the Diversity Initiatives Fund will be a priority in the coming years.

Student Research Shines Spotlight on the Great Hall’s Architect

The University remains committed to honoring Julian Abele, the pioneering African American architect who played a key role in designing the Great Hall at Shadow Lawn, Monmouth’s marquee building. As part of those efforts, students in Specialist Professor Melissa Ziobro’s Museums and Archives Management Basics class curated a virtual exhibit highlighting the Philadelphia-based architect and his role as interior design lead on the historic building. Their work can be viewed on the library website.

Abele, who was one of the first professionally trained African American architects in the country, had already risen to prominence for his design work on various architectural projects, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Harvard University’s Widener Library, before designing the Great Hall, which was completed in 1930.

\$2 Million Grant Supports New Social Justice Academy That Fosters Educational Equity Across the Region

The Grunin Foundation awarded \$2 million to Monmouth to fund a four-year Social Justice Academy that will support participating K-12 school systems in their ongoing social justice education and curriculum development efforts.

The academy, which kicked off in July, is providing regional K-12 educators with extensive professional development in social justice, with an emphasis on promoting educational equity, through seminars and lectures led by faculty experts in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Additional programming will be added in future years.

Elevating Diverse Voices

Two new podcasts created by Monmouth faculty and students are amplifying stories about, and increasing our understanding of, the experiences of two historically underrepresented groups.

This Week in Black History, Society, and Culture is a weekly series produced by the Black and African Diaspora Forum United (BAD-FU), an interracial group of Monmouth faculty concerned about issues pertaining to the Black/African American experience. BADFU members interview scholars, authors, activists, and community leaders on matters related to the history, society, and culture of Black and African American communities.

Cross-Gen Pride is a podcast series created by the Monmouth University School of Social Work’s LGBT+ Older Adult Project, which seeks to improve the quality of life of older LGBT+ adults through research, education, advocacy, and community service. In each episode, listeners hear personal stories from LGBT+ people, with the goal being to increase understanding and bridge the gap between generations. The podcast is cohosted by students Chelsea Smith and Dominique Lengel.

Ibram X. Kendi Delivers Powerful Message on Racial Justice to Campus

Leading anti-racist scholar Ibram X. Kendi, Ph.D., who was named one of *Time* magazine’s “100 Most Influential People of 2020,” delivered this year’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Lecture in Social Justice.

Addressing the campus community virtually due to the pandemic, Kendi emphasized the importance of civic engagement in the ongoing struggle for racial justice. “I think it’s important for us to know that when we say ‘I don’t do politics,’ what we’re actually saying is ‘I don’t do power,’” Kendi said. “Politics is another word for power. Think about what we’re saying when we say ‘I don’t do power.’ ... The implication of that is—dominate me. Control me. I don’t need to be at the table of my own existence. I don’t need to be a voice at the table fighting for justice.”

The lecture is an annual event honoring those who carry on the legacy of King, who spoke on Monmouth’s campus in 1968.

Commemorating Juneteenth

For the first time in its history, Monmouth observed Juneteenth as an official University holiday. Also known as Emancipation Day and Freedom Day, Juneteenth commemorates emancipation and the end of slavery in the United States on June 19, 1865.

The observance of Juneteenth as an official University holiday reflects the historic importance of this day of remembrance. It also presents an additional opportunity to renew our commitment to racial justice and equity across the Monmouth community so that together we can continue to foster an inclusive and inviting community for all of our members.



Excellence, On & Off the Field

8

Regular Season
Conference
Championships

4

NCAA
Tournament
Appearances

8

Coach
of the Year
Honorees

70

All-
Conference Team
Selections

3.29

Average GPA
for Hawks
student-athletes

115

Hawks student-
athletes named
to the Chi Alpha
Sigma Honor
Society

—[The Year in Athletics]—

A SEASON FOR THE AGES

While enduring shutdowns, schedule changes, and enhanced testing protocols, the Hawks athletics program soared when teams returned to action this spring, bringing home this year's MAAC Commissioner's Cup for overall excellence.



After the COVID-19 pandemic sidelined every student-athlete for most of 2020, putting events and careers on hold, the Hawks came soaring back in 2021. Every sport returned to competition this spring, which presented a massive undertaking for Athletics Department staff—and perhaps no office was leaned on more heavily than Sports Medicine.

Staff there juggled the traditional duties of athletic training with the additional responsibilities brought on by competing in a pandemic: performing regular testing and contact tracing, and providing guidance on new protocols to keep everyone safe. In fact, Monmouth leadership implemented a more rigorous testing schedule for Hawk athletes than was recommended by the NCAA.

Despite the new and seemingly never-ending challenges that competing during a pandemic threw at them, Hawk teams excelled both on and off the field, cementing Monmouth's place as one of the premier mid-major programs in the country. →

ON TOP OF THEIR GAME

2021 Season Wrap-Ups, by Sport

SPORT	REGULAR-SEASON FINISH	POSTSEASON ACTIVITY
 Men's Soccer	MAAC Tournament Champions	NCAA Tournament, 2nd round
 Football	Big South Conference Champions	FCS Playoffs, 1st round; No. 10 national ranking (tops for private schools)
 Men's Lacrosse	MAAC Tournament Champions	NCAA Tournament, 1st round
 Men's Tennis	MAAC Tournament and Regular Season Champions	NCAA Tournament, 1st round
 Men's & Women's Track & Field	MAAC Champions	NCAA East Regional, 1st round (2 student-athletes)
 Bowling	MEAC Bowling Championships runner-up	Intercollegiate Team Championships, 2nd round
 Field Hockey	America East Regular Season Champions	America East Tournament runner-up
 Softball	MAAC Regular Season Champions	MAAC Tournament, quarterfinals
 Men's Basketball	MAAC Regular Season Champions	MAAC Tournament, quarterfinals
 Women's Soccer	3rd in the MAAC	MAAC Tournament runner-up
 Baseball	2nd in the MAAC	MAAC Tournament, quarterfinals
 Women's Lacrosse	3rd in the MAAC	MAAC Tournament, semifinals
 Men's and Women's Cross Country	N/A	MAAC Championships: 2nd and 4th place, respectively; both program bests
 Men's and Women's Golf	N/A	MAAC Championships: 5th and 6th place, respectively
 Men's and Women's Swimming	MAAC Swimming & Diving Spring Invitational: 3rd and 5th, respectively	N/A
 Women's Tennis	4th in the MAAC	N/A
 Women's Basketball	10th in the MAAC	MAAC Tournament, 1st round



Bringing Home the Hardware



Football



Men's Tennis



Men's & Women's Track & Field



Men's Soccer



Men's Lacrosse



SIMPLY THE BEST

Monmouth was awarded the 2020–2021 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC)

Overall Commissioner's Cup, which signifies broad-based athletic excellence within the league, and also took home the top spot in the men's cup competition.

Monmouth's faculty members, experts in their respective disciplines and industries, foster student growth by involving undergraduate and graduate students in their research and scholarship. Here is a small sampling of their accomplishments from the past year. →

FACULTY RESEARCH & RECOGNITION



Faculty-Authored Book Examines the State of Democratic Institutions Around the World

A cross-disciplinary cohort of Monmouth faculty collaborated on *Democracy in Crisis Around the World*, a new book that examines how the rise of authoritarian regimes and populist leaders is threatening democratic freedoms around the globe.

The book examines the current and historical factors that have led to the erosion of democracy in five key regions—sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa—as well as four major countries: India, China, Russia, and the U.S. Each chapter was written or co-written by Monmouth faculty members whose scholarly and teaching interests cover questions surrounding the democratic foundations of individual rights, efficacy and accountability of political institutions, and historical and contemporary challenges to freedom and civil rights.

Professor of Political Science Saliba Sarsar, Ph.D., '78 and former Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Rekha Datta, Ph.D., co-edited the book and contributed chapters.



Using Novel eDNA Technology To Protect the Region's Fisheries

A partnership between Monmouth and the Rockefeller University culminated last year with the publication of a study that holds groundbreaking implications for fisheries management.

The study, which was conducted in collaboration with scientists from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and published in the *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, found that the amount of fish DNA in water samples collected during the NJDEP's trawls closely corresponded to the kilos of fish captured in their nets. The findings show that marine environmental DNA (eDNA) technology—an approach that allows scientists to confirm the presence of fish and other organisms by testing for trace amounts of genetic material in the water—could be used not only to show the presence of fish, but also has the potential to estimate fish population numbers with accuracy.

Monmouth has been a pioneer in researching how to augment or supplant traditional methods of studying marine life populations by using eDNA technology, which provides a

more cost-effective and humane alternative to capturing fish.

Megan Phifer-Rixey, Ph.D., an assistant biology professor, is one of several faculty members currently pursuing advanced eDNA research. Phifer-Rixey is the marine genetics faculty fellow for Monmouth's Urban Coast Institute, which serves the region as a forum for research, education, and collaboration in the development and implementation of science-based policies and programs that support stewardship of healthy, productive, and resilient coastal ecosystems and communities. This summer, she and her students were part of a collaborative project studying the lower Hudson-Raritan Estuary. They used bioinformatics to analyze eDNA from the waterway. These data will be combined with trawl data, benthic surveys, and physical and chemical data to help characterize a commercially and ecologically important system.



Enhancing Speech Therapy Through Video Games

Yao Du, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology, is a clinical supervisor in teletherapy at Monmouth's Center for Speech and Language Disorders, where she works with clients who use augmentative alternative communication devices to communicate. Du, who believes that technology should be designed with a user-centered approach, is conducting research focused on using and improving voice assistance and voice games for interactive activities during therapy.

Du is studying how virtual play experiences in youths and adolescents, who play games such as Minecraft, can be used to understand their social and emotional development in hopes to develop educational interventions. She is also developing voice games for children using the Amazon Alexa voice assistant in collaboration with the University of California, Irvine and Chapman University. As a bilingual Mandarin-English-speaking clinician, Du has worked on research projects in the areas of bilingualism and multiculturalism and is passionate about expanding opportunities to provide both training and clinical experiences for multilingual individuals.

Professor Selected To Lead Governor's Harmful Algal Bloom Expert Team

Monmouth University Endowed Associate Professor of Marine Science Jason Adolf, Ph.D., was selected to lead a Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Expert Team formed to provide guidance to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) on HAB prevention, mitigation, and management for the state's lakes and other waterbodies.

Adolf, who specializes in phytoplankton ecology and physiology, HABs, and real-time continuous water-quality monitoring in the coastal ocean, will be joined by nine other cyanobacterial HAB and lake management experts, who together will build the state's capacity for HAB response.

The team will complete a comprehensive literature review on the prevention and treatment of HABs, examine HAB and water-quality data, develop guidance documents for New Jersey lake managers that include best management practices for the prevention and management of HABs, provide technical advice and reviews on proposed mitigation technologies for lakes, and review the progress of NJDEP-funded HAB mitigation grant projects.

Adolf runs Monmouth University's Phytoplankton and Harmful Algal Bloom research lab (PHABLab), where he works with undergraduates to study HABs in the region. He also coordinates the Coastal Lakes Observing Network (CLONet), an innovative citizen science effort that is building a greater understanding of the prevalence and causes of HABs in coastal lakes and ponds.





Professional Counseling Professor Named One of the Country's Top "Inspiring Black Scientists"

David J. Ford Jr., Ph.D., LCMHC, LPC, NCC, ACS, assistant professor of professional counseling, was named one of "1,000 Inspiring Black Scientists in America" by The Community of Scholars, a group of persons excluded because of their ethnicity or race that is composed of post-doctoral fellows, early-stage investigators, instructors, and consultants.

Ford is a board-certified counselor and approved clinical supervisor who has experience working in addiction facilities, community agencies, and in college counseling centers. His scholarly and advocacy interests include Black men in higher education (especially at primarily white institutions); Black Greek-letter organizations; queer and trans Black, Indigenous, and people of color; HIV/AIDS; and the intersection of religion/spirituality and affectional/sexual orientation. He is the president of the New Jersey Counseling Association; serves on the planning committee for the National Cross-Cultural Counseling and Education Conference for Action, Research, and Change; and is on the Board of Directors of the LGBTQ Scholars of Color Network.

English Professor Wins Leverhulme Visiting Professorship

Kristin Bluemel, Ph.D., professor of English and the Wayne D. McMurray and Helen Bennett Endowed Chair in the Humanities, was awarded a Leverhulme Visiting Professorship at Newcastle University in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne in northern England. She will begin the seven-month professorship in January 2022 and will work with Newcastle University's School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics on interdisciplinary projects focused on rural modernity, children's literature, and book illustration.

Bluemel's Leverhulme projects are built around Thomas Bewick, an 18th-century Newcastle wood engraver and naturalist whose innovative illustration techniques transformed print culture in Britain and Europe. In addition to delivering a series of Leverhulme Lectures on Bewick as well as the women wood engravers and illustrators who extended his legacy into the 20th century, Bluemel will undertake public impact and service learning projects. She will prioritize facilitation of partnerships and networks among rural researchers at Newcastle in order to transform a national discourse about rural Britain that currently fragments along disciplinary lines. She also hopes to complete a scholarly book titled *An Ideal Modernity: Rural Britain, Women Artists, and the Twentieth-Century Wood Engraving Revival*.





Professor's Award-Winning App Keeps Refugee Children Connected to Their Heritage

Jing Zhou, associate professor of art and design, received the international Creative Work Award of the 2020 Design Incubation Communication Design Educators Awards for her work creating the design and vision for the Cradlr project.

Cradlr is a digital platform that helps keep the world's more than 13 million refugee children connected with their families, resources, and heritage. Parents and guardians of refugee children can use Cradlr to report their child as missing; upload information such as photos and the child's medical and personal history; and even communicate with foster families, teachers, or international organizations caring for their child. The app

also allows current guardians, foster families, teachers, and rescue workers to share information on refugee children with each other and with the child's family.

With a patent pending, Zhou has already donated the platform to multiple international humanitarian organizations, including the United Nations, Save the Children, Rotary International, and the Open Society Foundations for potential future use.

A First-of-Its-Kind Study on Animal Shelters

Lindsay Mehrkam, Ph.D., BCBA-D, assistant professor of psychology, presented her paper, "To Play or Not to Play: Toward an Evidence-Based Analysis of Dog-Dog Play in Shelters" at the Shelter Playgroup Alliance's annual Shelter Behavior and Enrichment Conference. The study was the first to evaluate how different styles of playgroups implemented at animal shelters affect the physical health and welfare outcomes in dogs.

The research was led by Mehrkam and conducted by a team of Monmouth students and recent alumni, in collaboration with Penn State University's Department of Animal Science and four animal shelters across the country. Among the key findings were that shelter dogs that participated in positive reinforcement-based playgroups had lower signs of physiological stress and generally higher behavioral welfare and

adoptability behaviors than dogs that participated in traditional forms of playgroups that used mild aversives and corrections.

A board-certified behavior analyst, Mehrkam is the principal investigator of Monmouth's Human-Animal Wellness Collaboratory Lab, where she conducts scientific research, education, and community outreach services aimed at benefiting both people and animals.





Professor's Research Featured in Top Environmental Law Journal

The *Columbia Journal of Environmental Law* published an article by Randall Abate, J.D., a professor in the Department of Political Science and Sociology, which argues that the animal and environmental law movements should join forces on legal action that would compel the fossil fuel and animal agriculture industries to cease practices that are accelerating climate change.

The article, "Anthropocene Accountability Litigation: Confronting Common Enemies to Promote a Just Transition," highlights how the two industries are major greenhouse gas emitters that have been shielded from accountability through regulatory loopholes and are heavily subsidized by American taxpayers. Abate contrasted this to the auto industry, which has gradually improved its environmental track record in response to decades of bipartisan federal legislation such as the Clean Air Act of 1970.

Abate, who is the Rechnitz Family/Urban Coast Institute Endowed Chair in Marine and Environmental Law and Policy and director of Monmouth's Institute for Global Understanding, delivered several talks on the article, including lectures at the McGill University Faculty School of Law, the Meat the Law Series hosted by the University of Amsterdam, and the Climate Change Symposium hosted by the *Columbia Journal of Environmental Law*.

Examining the Impact of Counseling First-Generation Students

Alyson Pompeo-Fargnoli, Ph.D., and Nicole Pulliam, Ph.D., assistant professors of educational counseling, co-authored the paper "Experiential and Transformative Learning for School Counselors: Impacts of Counseling First-Generation, Low-Income, College-Bound Students" with graduate students Amanda Lapa and Jenny Utili.

Pompeo-Fargnoli, who serves as the coordinator for the Monmouth Future Scholars (MFS) Program, an academic mentoring community partnership between the University and Long Branch, New Jersey, schools, says she was interested in learning more about the experiences of the Educational Counseling program's counselors-in-training who, as part of the MFS Program, run small support groups focused on college- and career-readiness topics for low-income, first-generation, college-bound students.

The study, which was published in the *Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision*, concluded that school counseling graduate student interns, when placed in a culturally diverse experiential learning setting, have the potential to have a transformative learning experience and increase their counselor competencies, including multicultural competencies.



NEW & NOTEWORTHY

Exciting new initiatives, philanthropic highlights, student and administrative honors, and campus updates from the previous year.



Seven-Figure Gift Will Help Prepare Tomorrow's Real Estate Industry Leaders

The Kislak Family Foundation pledged \$1 million in scholarships and \$100,000 in academic programming support for Monmouth students studying real estate. The seven-figure scholarship donation will support a need-based Kislak Family Scholarship for undergraduates pursuing a business degree with a real estate concentration. The \$100,000 pledge will continue to support the University's Kislak Real Estate Institute Academic Challenge, an annual intercollegiate competition for students studying real estate.

The Kislak family's philanthropic support of Monmouth University dates to 2006, when a transformational gift from the family enabled the University to start an academic, credit-bearing program in real estate—which at the time was the first in New Jersey and one of just 65 in the nation. In recognition of that donation, the University's real estate institute, which is housed in the Leon Hess Business School, was renamed to bear the Kislak name.

Today, the number of students studying real estate at Monmouth continues to grow. As part of their studies, students gain hands-on experience in issues related to all facets of the real estate industry, including finance, development, law, and construction.

One of the transformational experiences Monmouth's real estate students have is competing in the annual Kislak Real Estate Institute Academic Challenge. The event pits Monmouth students against their peers from institutions such as Lehigh, Villanova, and Rutgers universities, challenging the student teams to research and present solutions for real-world real estate scenarios. Monmouth's students have won the competition the last two years running.



Monmouth Student Wins Prestigious Fulbright Award

Victoria M. Cattelona, a May 2021 graduate of Monmouth's accelerated Master of Arts in Teaching program, was awarded a 2021–2022 Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to the Czech Republic from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. As part of her Fulbright experience, Cattelona will teach English and plans to host events that promote cultural exchange, including a club for current events, mock elections, and debates to complement the country's fall legislative elections.

Cattelona also earned a bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in history from Monmouth in May 2020. A graduate of Monmouth's Honors School, she credits the mentorship of her Monmouth professors, many of whom are themselves involved with intercultural exchange through service, teaching, and research, with inspiring her and preparing her for her upcoming Fulbright experience.

Monmouth Welcomes Most Diverse and Academically Prepared First-Year Class in University History

Monmouth's Class of 2024 boasted an average incoming GPA of 3.52. One-third of the class are students of color, 34% are Pell Grant eligible, and 42% are the first in their families to attend college.

Springsteen Archives Launches Two New Podcasts



Closed to researchers for most of last year, the Bruce Springsteen Archives and Center for American Music at Monmouth University took to the airwaves, launching two successful podcast series.

What's Up on E Street? highlighted the individual members of Springsteen's band and how they dealt with life during the pandemic. Episodes featured interviews with band members, including Steven Van Zandt and Max Weinberg, as well as special guests Jon Landau, Springsteen's longtime manager and co-producer, and Thom Zimny, a frequent Springsteen collaborator.

The other series, *Soundstage*, explored new works, trends, and contemporary issues in American music. Guests included former Rage Against the Machine and Audioslave guitarist Tom Morello and folk singer-songwriter Arlo Guthrie.

Both podcast series were hosted by music historian Bob Santelli '73, '14HN, a Monmouth alumnus and the founding executive director of the Grammy Museum.

The Bruce Springsteen Archives and Center for American Music at Monmouth University serves as the official archival repository for Springsteen's written works, photographs, periodicals, and artifacts. The Center preserves and promotes the legacy of Bruce Springsteen and his role in American music while honoring and celebrating icons of American music like Woody Guthrie, Robert Johnson, Hank Williams, Frank Sinatra, and others. The Archives comprise nearly 35,000 items from 47 countries, ranging from books and concert memorabilia to articles and promotional materials. The collection serves the research and informational needs of music fans, scholars, authors, and others with a serious interest in the life and career of Springsteen.

Polling Institute Shines During Presidential Election Year



During a busy year that was highlighted by a presidential election, the Monmouth University Polling Institute released more than 50

national and state poll reports, which resulted in more than 40,000 media hits. In that same time, the Institute's director, Patrick Murray, conducted more than 100 interviews with media outlets such as BBC, CNN, Fox, and MSNBC.

Monmouth's Polling Institute continues to be viewed as one of the most highly regarded academic public opinion research centers, receiving an "A" grade in the latest edition of FiveThirtyEight.com's Pollster Ratings—placing it among the 12 most highly rated polling organizations in the country.

President Leahy Lauded for Diversity Efforts



President Patrick F. Leahy, Ed.D., was one of just 14 higher education leaders from across the country honored by the National Diversity Council this spring. The award recognizes individuals who contribute to the growth of their students, organizations, and communities and who are active in mentoring the next generation of professionals in the education sector. Joining Leahy on the short list of honorees were Christopher L. Eisgruber (Princeton), Jonathan Holloway (Rutgers), and Andrew D.

Martin (Washington University in St. Louis).

During Leahy's tenure at Monmouth, he has prioritized diversity and inclusion efforts by expanding access to academic excellence. Among the private, nonsectarian, Division I schools included in *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Colleges for 2020, Monmouth ranks as a national leader at integrating excellence and access. Nearly one-third of Monmouth students are Pell Grant eligible, and more than 40% of first-year students are first-generation college students.

Leahy was also recently named to the 2021 *ROI-NJ* Higher Education Power List, which recognizes the most influential people, by industry, across the state.

Celebrating Our Students' Achievements With 16 In-Person Commencement Ceremonies



Rather than cancel our 2020 Commencement, Monmouth postponed and was able to host a series of nine in-person ceremonies for the Class of 2020 last August. Again, this past May, we were proud to host seven intimate in-person ceremonies on campus for the Class of 2021. While ensuring that all state and regional health guidelines were followed, each ceremony closely replicated previous Monmouth Commence-

ments, with students being called to the stage and recognized individually.

New Campus Sim Lab Takes Health Care Education Into the Future



The Linda Grunin Simulation Lab and Learning Center, a 7,000-square-foot state-of-the-art health care education and training facility, opened at the University's Graduate Center last year. The lab, which was created through a partnership between the University and Monmouth Medical Center (MMC), with funding from the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, provides hands-on learning and training opportunities to students in the University's nursing, physician assistant, and occupational therapy programs. It also serves MMC's resident physicians and medical students and will be a resource for training and continuing education opportunities for the surrounding community.

The ultramodern facility boasts four high-fidelity simulation suites with attached observation rooms for training with computerized manikins in simulated real-life settings, as well as six standardized patient exam rooms. The lab design and equipment incorporate the latest technology and best practices in simulated

learning in OB-GYN, pediatrics, medicine, surgery, and intensive care.

State-of-the-Art Varsity Weight Room Opens

A substantial, six-figure gift from The Jules L. Plan gere Jr. Family Foundation made possible a major renovation of the Varsity Weight Room. Highlights of the new space include the addition of 12 Rogers Athletic steel racks, each of which is equipped with multiple accessories for customized, sport-specific training, and Thor Performance flooring, which is springy enough to accommodate complex plyometric training yet supportive enough to withstand the constant beating of heavy, explosive strength and power training.

Student Newspaper Named “Most Outstanding Weekly” by ASPA



The Outlook, Monmouth's student-run newspaper, was recognized as "Most Outstanding University Weekly Newspaper for 2020–2021" by the American Scholastic Press Association in its annual national competition. This is the sixth time *The Outlook* has won this award and is the newspaper's second back-to-back win.

New Hires and Appointments



Pamela E. Scott-Johnson, Ph.D., joined Monmouth as provost/senior vice president of academic affairs and professor

of psychology in August. She most recently served as dean of the College of Natural and Social Sciences at California State University, Los Angeles, and, prior to that, held faculty and administrative positions at Morgan State University and Spelman College. Scott-Johnson earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in psychology and neuroscience from Princeton University and a B.A. (magna cum laude) in psychology from Spelman, where she was inducted into the Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology.



Raj Devasagayam, Ph.D., joined Monmouth in July as the new dean of the Leon Hess Business School. He was most recently dean of the

School of Business and professor of marketing at SUNY-Old Westbury. Devasagayam graduated from the Institute for Management and Leadership in Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and earned a Ph.D. in marketing from Florida Atlantic University, an M.B.A. from the University of Mumbai, and a bachelor's degree in economics from Vikram University.



Ann Marie P. Mauro, Ph.D., was appointed dean of the Marjorie K. Unterberg School of Nursing and Health Studies in

May 2020. An award-winning certified nurse educator and clinical nurse leader with expertise in educational policy, interprofessional education, and advancing diversity initiatives, Mauro has been working to expand Monmouth's nursing and health studies programs to be more diverse and interprofessional while strengthening the school's commitment to public service and

bolstering its programs to address a growing national demand for highly trained health care professionals.



Jeff Stapleton was appointed director of athletics in July. No stranger to the Hawks' tradition of excellence, Stapleton spent the last 31 years at Monmouth, most recently as deputy director of athletics. One of his primary responsibilities at the University has been to serve as the facilities director for athletics, a role that includes overseeing the development and construction of some of the best fields and facilities that mid-major Division I athletics have to offer.



Amanda Klaus was appointed vice president for University Advancement in April, a role she had filled on an interim basis since last summer. She leads the fundraising efforts around Monmouth University's new strategic plan while working to enhance alumni, donor, government, community, and foundation relations as well as the University's new career development center. A 2009 graduate of Monmouth, Klaus also serves as a key member of the University Cabinet and as a chief liaison to multiple subcommittees of the University's Board of Trustees.



Emily Miller-Gonzalez, J.D., was appointed the president's chief of staff in April, a role she had filled on an interim basis since last fall. She manages special projects emanating from the President's Office, develops strategic presidential communications, and represents the President's Office to internal and external audiences. Miller-Gonzalez has a Juris Doctor and Master of Social Work from Rutgers University and a Bachelor of Arts (magna cum laude) from Georgetown University.



Zaneta Rago-Craft, Ed.D., was appointed advisor to the president on diversity and inclusion and a full member of the University Cabinet,

ensuring her voice is embedded in all University decision-making. Rago-Craft continues to serve as director of the Intercultural Center, which provides programs, educational opportunities, and policy/practice consultation that supports the academic, social, and professional success of historically underrepresented campus community members.



Retired Navy Capt. William Siemer, PE, CEM, CEFP, joined Monmouth as executive director for campus planning and facilities

management in August. He most recently served as executive officer and deputy associate vice president at the Mid-Atlantic Naval Facilities Engineering Command in Norfolk, Virginia. Siemer holds an M.S. in national resource strategy from the Eisenhower School at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, an M.S. in civil engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a B.S. in civil engineering from the University of Cincinnati.



Ginny Boggess joined Monmouth as the head women's basketball coach in April. A 17-year coaching veteran, Boggess was most

recently the assistant coach and head recruiting coordinator at Penn State, where she guided several Nittany Lions to All-Big Ten accolades. Before that, Boggess spent five years as an assistant coach at Marquette University, where she helped guide the Golden Eagles to three straight NCAA Tournament appearances while recruiting two consecutive Big East Player of the Year winners. She has also held coaching positions at Kennesaw State, Hofstra, Jacksonville, and Columbia universities.



University Leadership | ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

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“I look back on this past academic year with an overwhelming sense of pride, grateful for the individual acts of so many whose efforts helped to protect and safeguard the Monmouth community and propel the University forward through such a notable and successful year.”

—President Patrick F. Leahy



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